

A CHILLY CONFERENCE CLIMATE: THE INFLUENCE OF SEXIST CONFERENCE
CLIMATE PERCEPTIONS ON WOMEN'S ACADEMIC CAREER INTENTIONS

BY

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JACKLYN M. RATLIFF

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Chairperson Patricia Hawley, Ph.D.

Monica Biernat, Ph.D.

Christian Crandall, Ph.D.

Alice Lieberman, Ph.D.

Ann Schofield, Ph.D.

Date Defended: April 13, 2012

The Dissertation Committee for Jacklyn M. Ratliff
certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

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Chairperson Patricia Hawley, Ph.D.

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Abstract

Despite women's increased presence in academia, women are still underrepresented in faculty positions relative to men. Though many obstacles interfere with women's academic career success, including family responsibilities and disproportionate resources relative to men (Ceci & Williams, 2011; Lewis, 2009), this research focused on the conference context as one potential contributor to women's academic career intentions. The present research explored the extent to which sexist climate perceptions were related to women's experiences during the conferences, their coping tactics, and their academic exit intentions relative to men's. The conference context was chosen because conferences have yet to be empirically examined for their potential to influence women's consideration of an academic career (Jacobs & McFarlane, 2005). Presenters (63% women) from three national academic conferences completed an online survey. Results showed that the greater representation of women at the conference, the less sexist attendees perceived the conference. Additionally, women who perceived the conference as sexist and silenced during the conference expressed increased intention to exit from academic careers. On the other hand, men who perceived the conference as sexist expressed increased intention to exit from that particular conference, rather than academia. Implications for conference attendees, conferences, and academia are discussed.

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A chilly conference climate: The influence of sexist conference climate perceptions on women's academic career intentions

Women have made considerable progress in their representation in academia, yet men still outnumber women in faculty positions. Women in the social sciences receive roughly half or more of the doctoral degrees, yet hold less than half of faculty positions in their respective disciplines (National Science Foundation [NSF], 2007). For instance, in 2007 48.9% of social science and 72.7% of psychology doctoral degrees were awarded to women (National Science Foundation, 2009; Table F-2¹). However, women are still underrepresented in academic faculty positions, especially in the social sciences where only 33.7% are women (National Science Foundation, 2010; Table 5-9). The drop in women's representation in faculty positions relative to doctoral degrees earned is concerning given that PhD programs train students explicitly to go into academia (Austin, 2002; Gardner, 2005; Nyquist et al., 1999). Moreover, earning a doctoral degree requires an enormous expenditure of time and resources and, given the focus of doctoral programs on training students to become academics (Austin, 2002; Gardner, 2005; Nyquist et al., 1999), one would expect that more women who earn doctoral degrees would remain in academia. Given the disproportionately large number of faculty positions occupied by men, understanding the obstacles to career success faced by academic women is certainly important.

Women exit from academia for a variety of reasons. Parenting concerns and barriers complicate women's paths in academia more so than men's (Lewis, 2009; van Anders, 2004; Wylie, Jakobson, & Fosado, 2007). Women receive fewer resources than men because women tend to be in lower status positions relative to men (Ceci & Williams, 2011). Sex discrimination in hiring practices can affect women's exit intentions (Steinpress et al., 1999). Subtle

¹ The National Science Foundation differentiates between social sciences and psychology in its reports.

discrimination, such as implicitly held higher standards for success for women (Biernat, 2005; Ragins et al., 1998), may also impact women's desire to exit academia. Additionally, women's perceptions of their academic department's atmosphere (i.e., climate) as unfriendly for women (i.e., sexist) was related to less productivity and influence in their department (Settles et al., 2007). A woman's career trajectory in academia is complex because many different factors present hurdles for women along the way.

A woman's journey in academia is complicated by sexism. Sexism consists of the attitudes, behaviors, and practices that "reflect negative evaluations of individuals based on gender or [that] support unequal status of women and men" (Swim & Hyers, 2009, p. 407). Because of cultural prescriptions that place men as the dominant group and women as the comparatively subordinate and devalued group (i.e., the "other", de Beauvoir, 1952|1974), the definition of sexism that I adopt in this project is embedded within this ascribed power differential favoring men. Therefore, this definition of sexism is one that necessarily considers women's devalued status; sexism targets women and includes the attitudes, behaviors, and practices that unfairly affect women compared to men. Sexism can range from highly visible and blatant (i.e., overt sex-based hiring discrimination) to less obvious and subtle expressions (i.e., implicitly held higher standards for women's success). "Old-fashioned" sexism was termed by researchers to conceptually represent the relative change in expressions of sexism over time (Swim et al., 1995). Contemporary sexism tends to be more subtle in expression, whereas old-fashioned sexism tends to be more blatant (Swim et al., 1995). Regardless of visibility, old-fashioned and contemporary sexism reflect the same prejudicial attitudes toward women (Barreto & Ellemers; 2005b). Thus, a climate that is perceived to reflect women's devalued status relative to men might serve as another hurdle in women's academic career path.

In the present project, I examined the context of scientific conferences. I explored whether sexist climate perceptions were related to women's experiences during the conferences, their coping tactics, and their academic exit intentions relative to men's. I focused on the conference context because, despite the frequency and importance of attending these conferences for scholars, conferences have yet to be empirically studied for their potential to influence women's consideration of an academic career (Jacobs & McFarlane, 2005). In fact, conferences have received little empirical attention in any capacity. Moreover, academic conferences serve multiple purposes: they are useful for networking, collaboration, proliferation of ideas, and to enculturate the inexperienced on the practices of the field, including the norms of behavior at the conference (Jacobs & McFarlane, 2005; Weissner, Hatcher, Chapman, & Storberg-Walker, 2008). By conceptualizing conferences as a way for scholars to enter and establish themselves in academia, conferences can function to facilitate women's career success in academia or serve as an obstacle to it.

Three main questions, all of which were embedded within a power differential favoring men, guided this research. First, I explored the extent to which women's representation within the conference was related to perceptions of the climate, experiences of minor offenses (i.e., microinequities, Rowe, 1990), coping tactics employed while at the conference (e.g., silence and voice, gender performance), as well as women's desire to leave academia or discontinue attendance at the conference (i.e., exit intentions). Second, I investigated whether women and men differed in their perceptions of the conference climate as sexist, reports of microinequities experienced, coping tactics employed, and exit intentions. Lastly, I explored the extent to which perceptions of the climate as sexist were related to experiences of microinequities, coping tactics employed, as well as conference and academic exit intentions for women compared to men. I

examined these questions in three social science conferences using a self-report on-line survey. The conferences were chosen to reflect varying proportions of women to men presenters (i.e., more men than women, more women than men, about equal men and women) and social science disciplines. The present project's focus on conference experiences provided the first empirical examination of the conference context and how the broad range of experiences and actions while at the conference were associated with academic exit intentions for women and men. The well-documented history of sexist treatment within the academy reviewed below obliges empirical research on the experiences that contribute to women's underrepresentation in academia.

History of Sexism in Academia

Academia was a men's institution for quite some time into which women were flatly denied access. Indeed, Aristotle asserted that women were not equipped to be scholars because they were biologically defective, uncreative, and incapable of advanced reasoning (Lie & O'Leary, 1990). Eighteenth century French philosopher Rousseau alleged that the purpose of women's education should be to train them to serve and make themselves lovable to men: "The whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves loved and honoured by them, to educate them when young, to care for them when grown, to counsel them, to console them and to make life sweet and agreeable to them – these are the duties of women at all times..."(cited in Martin, 1984, p. 34). Further perpetuating these ideas, several hundred years later Benjamin Franklin posited that women's education should merely teach them to be wives and mothers (Lie & O'Leary, 1990). Women were not permitted into academia as students or as scholars. This kept women's scholarly contributions out of academia, and thus invisible.

Although women eventually gained access to academia, the transition was slow and often unwelcome. Oberlin College became the first American college to admit women in 1833. Eight years later, it awarded the first Bachelor's degree to a woman (Lie & O'Leary, 1990). Though Oberlin College was considered the first coeducational college, women were allowed only in circumscribed programs deemed appropriate for them (Lie & O'Leary, 1990; Miller-Bernal, 2004). By and large, men and women did not pursue common degrees and therefore did not even attend classes together. Women's admittance to colleges and universities increased eightfold between 1870 and 1900. This increase, however, was unwelcome because many men feared that women would "take over" colleges and universities (Lie & O'Leary, 1990). Moreover, educated women were considered "asexual and grotesque" and many believed that educating women would hurt their reproductive ability (McDonagh, 1989). These blatantly sexist attitudes restricted women's entry into academia such that by 1921, only seven percent of all assistant, associate, and full professors in American colleges and universities were women. Moreover, women were disproportionately represented in lower ranks compared to their male colleagues (Lie & O'Leary, 1990). Blatant expressions of sexist attitudes continued to restrict women's entry into academia and pursuit of academic careers.

However, the growth of the American women's movement in the 1960s dramatically changed higher education by giving rise to second-wave feminism (cf. first-wave: women's suffrage) and providing a clear focus on gender equality (Biklen, Marshall, & Pollard, 2008; Miller-Bernal, 2004). Feminist sociologist Jessie Bernard argued that second-wave feminism, a movement driven predominantly by college students, changed academia because women became substantially more engaged in academics, both as students and scholars (Bernard, 1986; 1987; Epstein, 2002). Increased involvement in research and scientific discourse proved to be

immensely important for the continual development of academic women because “it rendered possible the autonomous participation of women in the creation of knowledge” (Bernard, 1987, p. xiii). Women made their voices heard and scholarship known by publishing and publicly discussing their work. Academic second-wave feminists created a vocabulary that illuminated subtle expressions of sexism within the academy (i.e., “condescension, innuendo, exclusion, body language”; Bernard, 1987, p. xiv). Before this new vocabulary, subtle expressions of sexism were virtually invisible in academic literature and public discourse (Bernard, 1987). Second-wave academic feminists gave subtle expressions of sexism scholarly legitimacy and brought an awareness of it to the public (Simeone, 1987). Title IX, a federal law prohibiting gender discrimination in federally funded universities, was another major accomplishment of second-wave feminism (United States Department of Labor, 2011). It ensured that federally funded universities admitted women as students and hired women as faculty. Employment of women faculty increased dramatically between 1972 and 1982, particularly in the life and social sciences (Simeone, 1987). The women’s movement illuminated subtle expressions of sexism in academia, which made it increasingly possible for women to challenge sexism and gain substantial access to academia.

Despite the progress women have made over the years regarding their representation in academia, they are still underrepresented relative to men. Using 2008 data from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), Monroe and Chiu (2010) pointed out that, given the number of female doctorates entering the academic job market, fewer women attain faculty positions than would be expected. Moreover, women occupy lower status positions and earn less money at all faculty ranks relative to men. In this light, women’s underrepresentation in academia continues to be a problem. Like a number of scholars from diverse disciplines, I

contend that sexism is one of many obstacles that influence women's exit out of and consequent underrepresentation in academia (Bernard, 1987; Katila & Meriläinen, 1999; Monroe & Chiu, 2010; Simeone, 1987; Rowe, 1990; Wylie et al., 2007). To understand the ways in which sexism continues to influence women's underrepresentation in academia, the cognitive component of sexist attitudes, behaviors, and practices must be considered.

Stereotyping and Sexism

Stereotypes

To understand sexism, and perceptions of sexist climates specifically, a discussion of collective knowledge about men and women is necessary. A stereotype is conceptualized as generalized knowledge about a person based predominantly on a social group to which he or she belongs (e.g., Devine, 1989; Deaux, Winton, Crowley, & Lewis, 1985; Fiske & Neuberg, 1990) and as such, reflects culturally shared beliefs about a social group (e.g., Hogg & Turner, 1987; Moscovici, 1981). Gender stereotypes depict men and women differently such that men are stereotyped as agentic (i.e., independent, dominant, competitive) whereas women are stereotyped as communal (i.e., nurturing, passive, sensitive to the needs of others; Bem, 1974; Deaux, Winton et al., 1985; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). When these gender stereotypes are applied in ways that communicate women's lesser status relative to men, sexism is operating. For instance, if only men are encouraged to publicly comment during conference lectures because doing so is consistent with masculine stereotypes about independence and dominance, this may signal to women that fellow conference attendees perceive gender in stereotypical ways. Furthermore, this communicates to women that their input is not as valued as men's.

Stereotyping contributes to discrimination against women and is problematic for women's career advancement (Kottke & Agars, 2005; Reskin, 2000). Burgess and Borgida (1999) specifically discuss the descriptive versus prescriptive components of stereotypes and how they perpetuate gender discrimination. The descriptive component of stereotypes includes the "beliefs about the characteristics that women *do* possess" whereas the prescriptive component includes the "beliefs about the characteristics that women *should* possess" (Burgess & Borgida, 1999, p. 668). The descriptive component leads to discrimination when women are seen as misfits in a traditionally male domain (see Lack of Fit Model, Heilman, 2001; Role Congruity Theory, Eagly & Karau, 2002). Discrimination from the descriptive component is a result of a mismatch between masculine qualifications for a job and beliefs about the communal qualities women possess (Heilman, 2001; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004). For instance, Heilman et al. (2004) found that both men and women more negatively evaluated successful women in a male-typed job than their equally successful male counterparts. The descriptive component of stereotypes influences perceptions of women insofar as women are seen as not fitting in with expectations for success. Descriptive stereotypes are highly relevant for academic conferences because if women are seen to possess more communal-based traits in an environment where competitiveness and independence are the expected attributes, then women may be seen as not fitting in.

The prescriptive component of stereotyping contributes to discrimination against women as well. The prescriptive component leads to "discrimination against women who violate shared beliefs about how women should behave" (Burgess & Borgida, 1999, p.667). For example, though agentic women may fit the desired attributes for the male-typed job, they may violate expectations about how women *should* act (Heilman, 2001; Kanter, 1977; Rush, 1987; Simeone,

1987; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Prescriptive stereotypes can have detrimental effects for women in traditionally male-typed jobs including disproportionately less reward allocation and diminished interpersonal liking (Heilman et al., 2004; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Parks-Stamm, Heilman, & Hearn, 2008, Priola, 2007). The prescriptive component of stereotyping affects academic women such that those who are not adequately stereotypically feminine are socially penalized by their colleagues. Rudman and colleagues (1998; Rudman & Glick, 1999; 2001) have termed social penalization toward agentic, non-communal women as the “backlash effect”. In an experimental study investigating backlash toward female job applicants, Rudman and Glick (2001) found that agentic female applicants were rated as less nice than their equally agentic and competent male counterparts. However, when agentic women were described as also communal, the backlash effect was attenuated. These findings suggest that acting in accord with prescriptive stereotypes may be protective for women (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Park-Stamm et al., 2008). Similarly, men who lack agency and appear weak also experience backlash (Moss-Rascusin, Pjelan, Rudman, 2010). Academic women might become targets of backlash while at conferences when they are perceived as not being feminine enough, even if they fit in with the expected masculine attributes for success at the conference. Women who receive backlash may wish to exit from the conference and also academia.

Cognition (stereotypes), affect (prejudice), and behavior (discrimination) are interrelated; however, the nature of these relationships has been debated (Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson, & Gaertner, 1996). In this project, stereotypes are conceptualized as the cognitive component of sexist attitudes and behaviors (Brigham, 1971; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Cognitive stereotyping processes may operate well below conscious awareness (Devine, 1989; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995) and impacts the way women are perceived and treated. I now turn to a

discussion of sexism – the attitudes, behaviors, and practices that are in line with gender stereotypes and serve to devalue women relative to men.

Sexism

Though blatant expressions of sexism have become less socially, politically, and legally acceptable, sexist attitudes have not disappeared. Instead, sexist expression has become more subtle. I view expressions of sexism as existing on a continuum ranging from blatant to subtle. Contemporary sexism in academia tends to be more subtle than old-fashioned sexism because of laws and norms against blatant expressions of sexism (Benokraitis, 1997). Contemporary sexism (i.e., ambivalent sexism: Glick & Fiske, 1996; modern sexism: Swim et al., 1995; Swim & Cohen, 1997; neosexism: Tougas, Brown, Beaton, & Joy, 1995; Tougas, Brown, Beaton, & St. Pierre, 1999) reflects the same prejudiced attitudes as old fashioned sexism (Barreto & Ellemers; 2005b) and manifests in ways as pernicious as denying that sexism exists. Those who deny that sexism still exists genuinely believe that they are not sexist because they think American society has moved beyond sexist discrimination (Swim et al., 1995, Swim & Cohen, 1997). In other words, these individuals consciously believe their attitudes are not sexist (Swim & Cohen, 1997). For instance, one may not support affirmative action initiatives because s/he believes that men and women have achieved parity; therefore, s/he believes that women who claim sexist treatment are in error (Swim & Cohen, 1997). Likewise, psychological measurement of sexism sometimes focuses on this “denial of sexism” idea (e.g., modern sexism: Swim et al., 1995; Swim & Cohen, 1997). Research has found that denial that sexism exists negatively predicts treatment and perceptions of women (Swim, Mallett, & Stangor, 2004; Swim et al., 2010). Contemporary sexism might also manifest as hostility toward women who violate gender stereotypes (e.g., backlash toward agentic, non-communal women) and/or as benevolence toward women who fit

with stereotypes (e.g., interpersonal liking of communal, passive women; Glick & Fiske, 2001; Fiske & Taylor, 2008). Whether sexism is expressed as denial of gender inequality or as backlash toward agentic, non-communal women, it communicates to women that their experiences and contributions are not as valued as men's. If this is signaled to women during the conference, they may decide to exit and take their professional life to a more woman-friendly context.

Issues surrounding contemporary sexism are controversial. In American society there is no universal consensus about what constitutes subtle expressions of sexism and whether subtle expressions of sexism matter (Lithwick, 2011; Rophie, 2011). This was evidenced recently during a U.S. presidential campaign bid in which one former contender, Herman Cain, was accused of sexual harassment by several women. Because some of the alleged instances occurred while at a professional conference, this is especially relevant to the present project. The public rhetoric surrounding these allegations suggested two things that both illuminate the ways in which contemporary sexism operates. First, the accusation that women's sexual harassment charges against men are often baseless and financially motivated implies that "unwanted sexual advances" simply do not happen or are not to be considered sexual harassment (Lithwick, 2011; Rophie, 2011). Second, women who claim sexual harassment are often seen as not being able to "take a compliment", meaning that women who experience an "unwanted sexual advance" should perceive it as a compliment regardless of how they personally felt about the experience (see Rophie, 2011). Taken together, these societal responses to the allegations against Cain suggest beliefs that sexism does not exist and minimizes women's experiences by communicating to them that they see sexism where sexism does not exist.

Behavioral manifestations of contemporary sexism. The women's movement increased the visibility of sexism that exists on the subtle end of the continuum. Academic feminists pointed out that although sexism had become less blatant in the mid-1900s than it used to be subtle expressions were just as harmful as blatant expressions (Clark, 1977; Bernard, 1986; 1987; Shapiro, 1982; Simeone, 1987). Subtle expressions of sexist attitudes quietly convey women's inferiority. Instead of blatant comments about women's lower status relative to men in the workplace (i.e., "a woman's place is in the home"), contemporary sexism may be expressed subtly as jokes, flirtatiousness, or exclusion from certain activities (i.e., golf outings). Researchers from a variety of academic disciplines have termed subtle expressions of sexism microinequities (e.g., Rowe, 1990), subtle discrimination (e.g., Lott, 1985), microaggressions (e.g. Sue et al., 2007), selective incivility (e.g., Cortina, 2008), and interpersonal discrimination (e.g., Lott, Asquith, & Doyon, 2001). The actual corresponding behaviors are relatively consistent across the labels. Therefore, I refer to these behaviors collectively as microinequities (Rowe, 1990). Verbal microinequities include patronizing comments and condescending remarks such as referring to a woman as "sweetie" (e.g., Cortina, 2008; Hitlan, Pryor, Hesson-McInnis, & Olsen, 2009; Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Kaiser, Dyrenforth, & Hagiwara, 2006; Nutt, 2010; Raver & Nishii, 2010; Swim, Mallet, & Stangor, 2004). Nonverbal or physical acts include eye rolling, patronizing smiles, and sighs (e.g., Butler & Geis, 1990; Cortina, 2008; Raver & Nishii, 2010). Exclusionary behaviors consist of not inviting women to informal networking opportunities (e.g., Caza & Cortina, 2007; Cortina, 2008; Nutt, 2010; Raver & Nishii, 2010). Subtle sexist behaviors can also be sexual in nature, such as demeaning sexualized jokes or suggestive glances (e.g., Berdahl, 2007b; Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Cortina, 2008; Lim & Cortina, 2005; Nutt, 2010; Raver & Nishii, 2010). Collectively, microinequities tend to fall

more closely to the subtle end of the sexism continuum, and therefore garner variability in perception and interpretation. As evidenced by the Herman Cain scandal, some may not consider many of the described subtle instances of sexist expression as sexism or as harmful.

Nevertheless, because of the existing power structure favoring men, subtle expressions of sexism may signal to women their devalued status relative to men.

Microinequities are highly relevant for women in academia. Feminist scholar Eileen Shapiro (1982) wrote a guide for women scholars in the academy in which she created a scheme of “nonactionable forms of discrimination” (i.e., not covered under anti-discrimination employment law, p.121), which included several categories of subtle sexist expressions (i.e., condescension, hostility, backlashing, role stereotyping, sexual innuendo, invisibility; Shapiro, 1982). Shapiro contends that these forms of discrimination “can create an environment that can have pernicious and insidious effects” on women experiencing them (1982, p. 121). Shapiro’s ‘Survival Guide’ for women scholars sought to provide a framework for recognizing, acknowledging, and understanding subtle forms of sex discrimination, an understanding she posits is crucial for women’s effective navigation of academic contexts. If microinequities go unnoticed because they are perceived as normative, they are not challenged and will continue to contribute to sexist climates.

Sexist Climate

Organizational life (e.g., within academic departments, at academic conferences) can be understood as a reflection of cultural attitudes (Gheradi, 1994; Priola, 2007; Riley, Firth, Archer, & Veseley, 2006; Rush, 1987). Subtle sexist expressions and practices become normalized and institutionalized in traditionally white male environments. Therefore, recognizing expressions

and practices as sexist is challenging for women in academia (Rowe, 1990; Schmitt, Ellemers, & Branscombe, 2003; Shapiro, 1982). To the extent that sexism is normalized within academia, academics will be more likely to unintentionally engage in the exclusion of women simply because this is built into the norms of academia (Schmitt et al., 2003). Additionally, expression of bias is relatively norm dependent; if it is acceptable for people to express their biases they will (Blanchard, Crandall, Brigham, & Vaughn, 1994; Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991; Fiske, 2002; Stangor, Sechrist, & Jost, 2001). From this perspective, microinequities may be more likely when they are normalized because they go unchallenged. Experiences of microinequities while at a professional conference may contribute to the climate and communicate to women that their contributions are not as valued as men's.

Academia's history of being unwelcoming to women likely contributes to present day academic climate and practices (Riley et al., 2006). Along these lines, Riley and colleagues (2006) contend that the normative culture of academia in the U.S. is masculine, which is reflective of a masculine-dominant society (i.e., one in which men are ascribed more power than women; see also Eagly & Karau, 2002; Gheradi, 1994; Rich, 1973/1979; Unger, Draper, & Pendergras, 1986; Wilson, Marks, Noone, & Hamilton-Mackenzie, 2010). The discourse and practices that have become commonplace within a particular context create the normative culture. A masculine normative culture is characterized by maintenance of men's dominant status through practices and discourse (Bird, 1996). Even objective standards, such as number of first-authored publications needed for tenure, can unfairly advantage men insofar as these standards do not take into account women's fertility concerns which tend to coincide with the tenure timeline (Knights & Richards, 2003). First-authored publications in themselves reflect norms of independence, which are consistent with masculine gender stereotypes. Additionally,

the expectations of academic women differ from those of academic men such that women tend to be placed into situations demanding more nurturance, whereas men tend to be demanded of for academic advice (Knights & Richards, 2003). Thus, a sexist climate reflects a masculine normative culture.

When normative practices and behavior unfairly privilege men and devalue women, the climate is considered “chilly” for women (Hall & Sandler, 1982; Janz & Pyke, 2000; Settles et al., 2006; Settles et al., 2007). In other words, perceived sexist climates are ones in which the environment is thought to devalue women’s contributions relative to men’s and is insensitive to gender inequality. Indeed, perceptions of climate matter; women who perceived their academic department’s climate to be sexist reported experiencing more sexual harassment, less job satisfaction, and less influence in their department (Settles et al., 2006). Given that academic conferences are an integral part of academia, they too are likely to be situated within and reflect masculine norms. For instance, conference presentations are delivered by one person and are generally not interactive. Competitiveness is inherent within much of the conference as well; prospective presenters compete for to give talks, participate on panels, and present posters and attendees compete for networking opportunities with colleagues. Moreover, conferences rarely provide childcare.

Women’s numerical representation within a specific academic context may also influence the norms of the climate. Low representation of women in light of the existing power structure intensifies negative outcomes for professional women (Yoder, 1991; 1994). Kanter (1977) proposed that group culture changes as the proportion of women relative to men changes. Because academia has traditionally been and continues to be predominantly occupied by men, the culture is masculine (Toren, 1990). On the other hand, increasing women’s representation is

likely to influence the climate to be less sexist. Following Kanter's (1977) and Yoder's (1991) perspectives on numerical representation, women's numerical representation at a conference may contribute to the conference climate and experiences.

Feminist Jean Rush (1987) proposed that outside the structured classroom of academia, such as conferences, women are even more likely to be marginalized and singled out because they are trespassers in a territory still occupied predominately by men. Though women were participating in other academic activities, such as attending lectures and conducting research, still they were not welcome in formal (or informal) gatherings of male academics (Lie & O'Leary, 1990). For instance, psychologist Edward Titchener started an informal group of experimental psychologists in 1903 from which women were excluded. Even his female graduate student at the time was not permitted to attend. These days, social science conferences certainly include women. However, because conferences are a component of academia, they are likely situated within masculine norms. As such, women may experience the climate as devaluing their contributions, which may increase women's desire to discontinue attendance at the conference or question academic career intentions.

Coping with Sexism in a Conference Context

A conference climate perceived as sexist may elicit behavioral coping tactics from women while at the conference. Women may choose to speak out against sexism at the conference (i.e., voice) and they may stay silent and say nothing (i.e., silence). Moreover, women may also behave in gender stereotypic ways (i.e., gender performance) in order to fit in with norms of the conference context. Given that academic conferences often occur annually over the course of several days, women may employ a variety of tactics to cope with a perceived sexist climate.

Voice and Silence

Conference attendees who experience or witness sexism can choose to express their discontent about sexism or to ignore it. Voice is conceptualized as speaking out against sexist treatment and is considered an agentic, active response to sexism (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005b; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Garcia et al., 2005). Moreover, expression of voice is empowering for women (Helgesen, 1990; Gilligan, 1982) because it gives those expressing voice the power to alter group norms and the chance to reduce gender bias (Blanchard et al., 1994). Pointing to the buffering impact of voice, Settles et al. (2007) found that academic women who expressed voice experienced more job satisfaction than women who did not. Women who express voice may have influenced their academic climate to exhibit less sexism, and as a result they were more likely to be satisfied with their job.

Engaging in voice, however, is not without potential negative consequence e.g., Garcia et al., 2005; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Major et al., 2002). Considering the social costs associated with expressing voice, such as being disliked, many may choose to say nothing in response to sexist expressions (Garcia et al., 2005). Indeed, the most common response to sexist treatment for college women was to ignore the transgression (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005b). Additionally, Swim and Hyers (1999) explored women's public and private responses to sexist (versus nonsexist) remarks made in a discussion group. The discussion group either consisted of one woman among several men or of several women among several men. The researchers found that women's private thoughts reflected a strong desire to confront the man making the sexist remarks, though less than half of women (45%) actually did so. The fact that women showed an outward preference to silence themselves speaks to the strength of the perceived social consequences associated with expressing voice.

In a context that is perceived to devalue women's contributions relative to men's, women may fear speaking in general as well as in response to sexism. For example, women may resist publicly commenting during meetings or refrain from asking questions after a symposium because they think their comment will not be taken seriously (Rich, 1973/1979; Rowe, 1990; Shapiro, 1982). Women's silence does not necessarily reflect their acceptance of sexist norms and behaviors, though it might be interpreted as such by others (Swim et al., 1998). However, silence perpetuates a sexist climate in two important ways. First, if a climate is perceived to devalue women's contributions relative to men's and as a result women silence, then women's scholarly contributions will continue to not be heard. Second, norms will go unchallenged if women do not confront them. This is not to say that women are to blame for sexist climates; rather, it serves to point out another way in which sexist climates might be maintained (Priola, 2007). If women stay silent, the climate in which sexism occurs will not be challenged to change.

Gender Performance

Gender may be performed in stereotypically masculine or stereotypically feminine ways as a coping tactic in sexist climates. When gender is theorized as a social construction (Butler, 2004; de Beauvoir, 1952/1974), then gender is "something we think and something we do" (Gheradi, 1994, p.592). Gheradi (1994) argues that women are considered the "other" sex (de Beauvoir, 1952/1974) and as such, are devalued in traditionally masculine work settings, such as academia, compared to the male default. Gender can be "done" in both stereotypically masculine and feminine ways.

One way women may cope with and manage a climate perceived as sexist is to behave consistently with stereotypes of men, the dominant group within the existing power structure

(Gheradi, 1994). Furthermore, Deaux and Major (1987) propose that public situations (i.e., a conference) elicit behaviors that are consistent with the demands of that situation. If the public situation is the academic conference, which as discussed above is situated within male norms, women might be likely to “do gender” in an assimilative fashion and present more stereotypically male behaviors (i.e., masculine gender performance). Likewise, Katila & Meriläinen (1999) propose that academic women may assimilate to masculine norms. Assimilation to masculine norms can manifest as masculine gender performance (i.e., agentic, public, independent, and aggressive; Katila & Meriläinen, 1999). Schmitt et al. (2003) also point out that women who conform to and behave consistent with organizational norms of masculinity may do so to avoid being evaluated based on their gender. Illustrating this point, Powell et al. (2009) found that women engineering students assimilated to masculine ideals within their work domain (see also Bennett, Davidson, & Gale, 1999; Watkins, et al., 2006). That is, these women engineering students were more likely to accept gender discrimination and adopt an anti-women approach to other women and other women engineers in particular. Yet another way women may cope with a perceived sexist climate is through feminine gender performance. Feminine gender performance might include communal actions such as helping and nurturance, and for women, perceiving themselves in stereotypically feminine ways (i.e., self-stereotyping, Chiu et al., 1998; Hogg and Turner, 1987; Lun et al., 2009). Women may perform femininity out of fear of behaving counter to gender stereotypes and to avoid backlash (Rudman & Glick, 1999; 2001; Walkerdine, 1989). Subtle environmental cues, such as intergroup contexts, activate stereotypes and consequently can increase stereotypic behaviors (Chiu et al., 1998).

Masculine conference settings may therefore move women’s gender performance toward masculine or feminine behavior, though I do not view feminine and masculine gender

performance as mutually exclusive. Previous research has shown that women who fit in with the stereotypically masculine attributes expected for success in traditionally male domains receive backlash if they are not also communal (Rudman, 1998). Therefore, women may engage in stereotypical masculine gender performance as a way to fit in with the climate and with expectations of success (i.e., descriptive component of stereotyping; Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Deaux & Major, 1987; Heilman et al, 2004; Katila & Meriläinen, 1999; Watkins et al., 2006). Moreover, women may engage in stereotypical feminine performance to fit with what is expected of women (i.e., prescriptive stereotypes; Burgess & Borgida, 1999) and to avoid backlash for not behaving in accordance with gender stereotypes behavior (Heilman, 2001; Rudman, 1998).

Women in contexts that they perceive as sexist may engage in silence, voice, masculine gender performance, and feminine performance for effective navigation of the conference context. The present project examines these tactics in general use at the conference, and not in response to specific instances. Still, these tactics are associated with varying degrees of cost. Silence might be self-protective, but does not afford the target with personal agency. Voice, though it bears personal agency, is not without potential social costs because targets are speaking up about sexist treatment. Both masculine and feminine gender performance might help women fit in with the varying gendered behavioral demands of the conference. However, if women's behavior does not fit in with the masculine expectations of the conference or the expectations for their gender, women may choose to exit from the conference and academia. Women's experiences at and behavioral responses to conferences may all contribute to their academic career decisions.

Present Project

Given women's disproportionate underrepresentation in academic faculty positions relative to men and the explicit emphasis of doctoral programs on training students for academic careers, it is important to understand the reasons why women exit from academic careers. The present project explores obstacles to women's academic career success in the context of academic conferences. Specifically, I examined the ways in which perceptions of a sexist conference climate were related to experiences of microinequities at the conference, how women coped with a sexist conference climate when it was perceived, and how perceptions of a sexist climate affected women's decisions to attend future conference meetings and pursue academic faculty careers in academia. I chose the scientific conference context because of its potential to facilitate or hinder women's academic career success (i.e., through networking opportunities, collaboration, proliferation of ideas, etc). Importantly, conferences also serve to socialize aspiring academics on practices and norms of behavior at the conference (Egri, 1992) and of the field as a whole. If a conference climate is perceived as sexist, this may communicate to the young academic that the field or discipline as a whole shares these attitudes. If climates at conferences communicate to women that their contributions do not matter as much as men's, even if the cues are slight and subtle, the climate may signal to women that the field as a whole does not value their contributions to the same extent as it values men's. Also, conferences might serve as the medium by which aspiring academics get their first experiences with colleagues from other institutions; if these experiences are sexist, they may exit from the academic field in favor of one more friendly to women. Moreover, if sexism is normative at conferences, it is likely that women will continue to experience sexism at future meetings, which may deter them from choosing to attend the conference again. The present project is situated within three academic conferences and focused on women's experiences relative to men's. One of the

conferences is an interdisciplinary social science conference consisting mostly of members from a variety of social science disciplines (e.g., anthropology, communications, psychology, sociology) and had a greater representation of men than women. The other two are annual psychology conferences: one of which had roughly equal gender representation and the other had a greater representation of women than men at the conference.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses below target women because the focus of this project was on women's conference perceptions and experiences relative to men's. Moreover, much of the sexism literature examines only women's experiences and perceptions of sexism (Swim & Hyers, 2009). Given men's dominant group status culturally and specifically within academia, men are not subject to sexism. Men may also be stereotyped, but the existing power structure favors men and makes the experience different for men than women. However, men's perceptions and experiences were included to get a more complete snapshot of the conference experience and to examine the extent to which men and women's experiences are similar to and different from one another. With this in mind, I expect that the relationships and effects between conference climate perceptions, experiences, coping, and exit intentions for men to be either weaker than women's or nonexistent. There are some instances in which I explicitly expected no gender differences to emerge and I discuss these as they arise.

Research Question 1: Is women's numerical representation at the conference related to perceptions of the climate, experiences of microinequities, coping tactics, and exit intentions?

I hypothesize that the greater representation of women at a conference the less likely the conference is perceived as sexist. Gender proportions along with the existing power structure

intensify negative effects in a masculine context. The fewer women represented relative to men, the more likely it is that women will experience prejudice and bias (Burke & McKeen, 1996; Kanter, 1977). Additionally, Kanter (1997) proposed that as the proportion of women relative to men changes, so too does the group culture. Therefore, I expect that women's representation at the conference will influence the culture at the conference such that sexism perceptions will be the lowest. Conferences in which women are well represented will not create the negative effects associated with low numerical representation.

Additionally, I expect the greater representation of women in a conference, the fewer microinequities are experienced, the less silence and the voice are engaged in. When women are well represented at a conference, fewer microinequities will be experienced, and less silence and voice engaged in because the norms of the climate are not as sexist. I also hypothesize the greater representation of women at a conference, the less masculine and feminine gender performance will be engaged in. To the extent that women's representation changes the norms of a conference to be less sexist, women may not feel as compelled to engage in gendered behavior to fit in with the norms and standards of a perceived sexist climate. Increasing women's representation may create a context in which women are evaluated on their scholarly contributions rather than their gendered behavior.

Lastly, I expect that the greater representation of women, the lowest conference and academic exit intentions are expressed. Burke and McKeen (1996) found that when professional women were underrepresented relative to men, women were more likely to express exit intentions and less job satisfaction than when women were equally or predominantly represented. These hypotheses will be tested by comparing mean levels of all variables across the three conference settings.

Question 2: Do women and men's perceptions of the climate, experiences of microinequities, coping, and exit intentions differ?

I hypothesized that women will perceive a conference as more sexist, report experiencing more microinequities, engage in more silence, voice, and feminine gender performance, and express more desire to exit from academia and from the conference than men because sexism targets women (Benokraitis, 1997). Further, I hypothesized that engagement in masculine gender performance would not differ between men and women because stereotypically masculine behaviors are normative and valued in the academia; therefore, both men and women will engage in them.

Research Questions 3 and 4: How are perceptions of the climate related to experience of microinequities, coping, and exit intentions? How do women's experiences compare to men's?

As outlined in Figure 1, I hypothesize that for women, perceptions of the climate as sexist will positively predict experiences of microinequities (Micro), engagement in silence, voice, as well as masculine (MasGP) and feminine gender performance (FemGP). I do not view silence and voice or feminine and masculine gender performance as mutually exclusive. Within a conference that occurs over the course of a few days, I expect that women will employ a variety of tactics. In terms of silence and voice, women may at times engage in silencing, while at others they may express voice. I hypothesize that perceptions of the climate as sexist will make it more likely that women will engage in silence and engage in voice. Women in climates they perceive as sexist may silence themselves in meetings and discussions because they feel their contributions are not as valued as men's (Rowe, 1990; Shapiro, 1982). In terms of voice, if the climate is perceived as sexist, instances of sexism will be more likely. Therefore, there will be more instances in which women may experience sexism and subsequently express voice.

Regarding gender performance, I expect that women's sexist climate perceptions will positively predict their engagement in masculine and feminine gender performance. Women may behave in stereotypically masculine ways in order to fit in with norms of success (1999; Deaux & Major, 1987; Heilman et al, 2004; Katila & Merilainen, 1999; Watkins et al., 2006) and also in stereotypically feminine in order to avoid backlash for acting outside of gender stereotypic expectations of behavior (Heilman, 2001; Rudman, 1998).

In terms of exit intentions, I expected that women's perceptions of the climate as sexist will positively predict their intent to exit from the conference (ExitConf) as well as from academia (ExitAcad). Climate may serve as a contextual cue signaling to women the extent to which the organization values gender diversity (Tsui & Gutek, 1999). If women feel their contributions are not as valued as men's, they may choose to take their professional life elsewhere (Tsui & Gutek, 1999). I also expect that women's experiences of microinequities as well as their engagement in silence will positively predict conference and academic exit intentions. In addition to the climate, microinequities may signal to women their contributions are not as valued as men's. Moreover, silencing may be a result of women feeling their contributions are not valued in a conference context (Gheradi, 1994; Rich, 1973|1979).

Additionally, I expect that expressing voice will negatively predict exit intentions because, although voice can be socially costly (Garcia et al., 2005; Settles et al., 2007), it also is agentic (Barreto and Ellemers, 2005b), empowering (Gilligan, 1982), and carries the potential to change norms (Blanchard et al., 1994). Women expressing voice may do so despite the social risks because they wish to change the normative culture of a conference (Crosby et al., 2003; Kowalaski, 1996).

I hypothesize that feminine gender performance will positively predict conference and academic exit intentions. Women engaging in feminine gender performance may feel as though they do not fit in with the norms of success for the conference or the academic discipline and thus express exit intentions from both the conference and academia. Women's masculine gender performance is expected to decrease women's conference and academic exit intentions because they are seen as fitting in with the norms of the conference and academia (Katila & Meriläinen, 1996; Watkins et al., 2006).

Method

Participants

Participants were 329 presenters from three national social science conferences (62.3% female, 83.7% Caucasian, mean age was 35) who responded to an on-line survey that was sent to 853 presenters whose names were gleaned from conference programs (see details below). The average career status of participants was in-between post-doc and assistant professor, with graduate students and assistant professors making up 54.3% of the sample. A power analysis conducted during the study design phase indicated that a sample size of 152 was needed to detect significance. Participants were told the names of individual conferences would not be published. This was done to increase the likelihood that participants would respond to the survey honestly and to respect the societies from which direct permission to study them was not requested (Jaggar, 2007). One of the conferences was an interdisciplinary, predominantly social science society (Conference LW, for lowest representation of women to men), whereas the other two were psychology conferences based in different content areas predominantly focused on basic research [Conference EW (equal representation of women and men) and Conference MW (more women than men)]. Response rates from each conference were relatively low, but this was

expected given the conditions under which the survey was employed (i.e., electronic survey, academics as participants; Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000). From the presenters invited to participate, Conference LW had a response rate of 9.6%, Conference EW and MW had response rates of 18.2% and 10.6% respectively. See Table 1 for invitee and sample gender proportions and response rates for each conference by gender.

Sampling Procedures

The sample consisted of presenters (authors and coauthors) at three national academic, scientific conferences. Conference LW was oversampled (e.g., Mertens, 2010) because it was much smaller than either of the other two conferences. To oversample, I issued invitations to all conference presenters instead of inviting a subset of conference presenters. Next, the total number of presenters initially qualified to participate from Conference LW was matched in Conference EW (27.72% of total presenters) and Conference MW (12.8% of total presenters) using Microsoft Excel's random selection tool.

Names of participants identified for the sample were found in publicly available conference programs. Research assistants used the information in the conference books associated with the above conferences (name, research, and/or institutional affiliation) to obtain the email addresses of qualifying participants. To find email addresses, research assistants used internet search engines (such as www.google.com) to find publicly available email addresses. Not all participant email addresses were publicly available, giving a total sample size of 853 invited presenters from Conference LW, which was matched in Conference EW and MW. Research assistants also recorded the participant gender based on participant name and photograph on publicly available websites. Such procedures do not accurately depict the exact representation of women at these conferences; however, they capture a subjective and general

numerical representation of women of the conference. Conference MW had the greatest proportion of women attendees in 2011 (71.6% women); whereas Conference LW had the smallest proportion of women attendees (38% women). Conference EW had roughly equal proportion of women to men attendees (53.6% women).

Measures and Design

Demographics. Demographic variables included gender, age, and ethnicity of the participant. To ensure that participants had attended an academic conference recently, an item asking if they had attended a conference in the past 24 months was also included. The academic discipline and educational status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate student, Post-Doc, Assistant, Associate, or Full professor) were included as well as how many times they have attended the conference during their career.

Sexist climate. Conference climate was measured with three subscales: the climate the participant has heard about (i.e., reputational climate), the participants' perceptions of sexist attitudes and treatment of others, and the participants' impressions of the conference material. Broadly, climate is defined as an individual's perception of the atmosphere of a given context (Parker, Baltes, Young, Huff, Atlmann, Lacost, and Roberts, 2003). Specifically, a sexist climate is defined as one that is perceived by the participant to devalue women and their contributions compared to men (i.e., "chilly climate"; Hall & Sandler, 1982; Janz & Pyke, 2000; Settles et al., 2006; Settles et al., 2007).

Reputational climate. This was measured using an adapted version of Janz and Pyke's (2000) validated "Perceptions of Chilly Climate Survey" (PCCS). This measure was originally (2000) created to assess students' perceptions of their university climate and was strongly based

on Hall and Sandler's definition of a sexist academic climate, which they termed a "chilly" climate for women. Because conferences are professional meetings for academics, the measure was appropriate to use with some adaptation to make the items relevant to the conference context rather than the classroom and university contexts. Moreover, the PCCS was created to measure students' perceptions of their academic climate, whereas the present study included students, faculty, and researchers as well as professors. The nature of the measure is such that it captures the character and reputation of the conference, even if conference presenters themselves have not experienced sexism at the conference. This reputational measure was included because it gives a more complete picture of the conference climate as not only consisting of personal experiences, but also the experiences of others. Of the eight items in the PCCS, four were included (e.g., *I have heard of one or more instances where a member of this conference made crude or offensive comments to female students or colleagues*). To be gender inclusive, all items referencing females had mirror items referencing males (e.g., *I have heard of one or more instances where a member of this conference made crude or offensive comments to male students or colleagues*). Two items assessing the climate at conference after-parties/events were included (e.g., *I have heard that the conference after-parties/events center around alcohol*; *I have heard that the atmosphere at conference after-parties/events is sexualized or otherwise inappropriate*). Six filler items assessing positive aspects of the climate were included as a way to balance the perceived negativity of the items of interest (e.g., *I have heard that interactions between members at this conference are generally friendly*; *I have heard that members at this conference will provide career/teaching/mentoring advice to individual members*). All items were measured on a 1 (*never*) to 7 (*many times*) Likert-type scale.

Sexist attitudes and treatment. This subscale measured participants' personal perceptions of sexist attitudes held and expressed by conference attendees as well as their perceptions of their occurrence during the conference. This subscale differs from Reputational Climate subscale in that it reflects the participants' own perceptions of the conference and its members rather than reflecting on things they have heard about. This subscale consisted of items from three different existing scales (The PCCS, the Modern Sexism Scale (MSS), Swim et al., 1995, & the Academic Work Environment Scale for Women (AWESW), Riger, Stokes, Raja, & Sullivan, 1997). All items were measured on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) Likert-type scales and were adapted to reflect the conference context rather than the university context. Seven items were adapted from the PCCS (e.g., *Members at this conference have made gender stereotypical remarks*). To be gender inclusive, all items from this scale referencing females had mirror items referencing males (e.g., *A man must outperform a woman to be taken seriously at this conference*). Two items from the AWESW were included (e.g., *Members at this conference respect both male and female colleagues equally*; *Members at this conference are supportive of colleagues who want to balance their family and career*). Four items (including one male item mirrored from an item referencing women) were included from the MSS, (Swim et al., 1995; e.g., *Many members at this conference believe that society has reached the point where women and men have equal opportunities for achievement*).

Conference material. Six items assessing sexist perceptions of the conference material (i.e., research presented via talks, posters, etc) were adapted from the PCCS (Janz & Pyke, 2000) and the AWESW (Riger et al., 1997) with the remaining items created in the E-SPARC lab. All items were measured on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) Likert-type scale and adapted to reflect the conference context rather than the university context. One item from the

PCCS was included: *Research is presented from a broad range of perspectives throughout the conference (i.e., includes the perspectives of women, feminists, minorities, etc.).* One item along with the male equivalent were included from the AWESW: *During the conference, informal gatherings and conversations about conference material tend to include female[male] students or colleagues).* Items measuring perceptions of sexist content in talks and/or posters (e.g., *Talks or posters given at the conference have contained gratuitous sexual content through verbal and/or visual presentations*) along with one audience reactions (e.g., *Audience reactions to talks or posters at this conference have been uncomfortable (e.g., cat calls, whistles, snickers)*) were added.

Microinequities. Microinequities have been generally understood in the literature as interpersonal, subtle discrimination (Benokraitis, Rowe, 1990; Haslet & Lipman, 1997). Seven items measured microinequities. All items were measured on a 1 (*never*) to 7 (*many times*) Likert-type scale. Four items were adapted from Cortina et al., (2001; e.g., *addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately; ignored or excluded you from informal networking opportunities*). Three items were added to measure microinequities during conference after-parties/events as well as other microinequities not included in the Cortina et al. measure, but were informed from the work of Benokraitis, 1997 (e.g., *made inappropriate comments or advances toward you during a conference after-party/event; ignored a comment you made and later gave someone else credit for it*).

Voice and silence. The extent to which participants engaged in silence versus expressing voice was measured with six items. Three items indicating silence were operationally defined and developed from the work of Powell et al. (2001), Swim & Hyers (1999), and Swim et al., (2010) as not speaking up in meetings, discussions, talks (e.g., *While at the conference, to what*

extent do you refrain from speaking up during meetings or discussions) or not speaking out against sexist behaviors (e.g., *While at the conference, to what extent do you say nothing in response to sexist comments or behaviors*). Three items indicating engagement in voice were operationally defined and developed from the work of Gilligan (1982), Settles et al. (2007), and Garcia et al. (2005) and included different ways in which participants might express voice (e.g., *While at the conference to what extent do you confront someone who made a sexist comment or behaved in a sexist way*). Items were measured on a 1 (*never*) to 7 (*many times*) Likert-type scale. Four items included an additional “N/A” response option, which is discussed below.

Gender performance. Gender performance in this study is measured as either stereotypically feminine or masculine behaviors and is measured with six items developed from the psychological work on self-stereotyping (e.g., Biernat et al., 1996; Hogg & Turner, 1987; Sinclair et al., 2005) and assimilation (Bennett et al., 1999; Deaux & Major, 1987; Gheradi, 1994; Katila & Meräinen, 1999; Sam & Berry, 2010) as well as the feminist literature (Butler, 2004; Gheradi, 1994; Walkerdine, 1989). Three items measuring feminine gender performance were developed from the theoretical work of Walkerdine (1989) and the empirical research on cognitive self-stereotyping (e.g., *While at the conference to what extent do you behave in typically feminine ways, such as being soft-spoken and yielding*). Three items measuring masculine gender performance was developed work on assimilation (Sam & Berry, 2010) and gendered behavior in masculine domains (Deaux & Major, 1987; Katila & Meräinen, 1999; Bennett et al., 1999 (e.g., *While at the conference to what extent do you behave in typically masculine ways, such as being assertive and competitive*). Items were measured on a 1 (*never*) to 7 (*many times*) Likert-type scale. See Appendix A for items.

Exit intentions. Exit intentions are defined as the desire to quit or leave the organization to which someone belongs. Here, I was interested in measuring intent to exit tenure-track academia as a profession and intent to exit from the conference. These items were informed by the work of Cortina et al. (2001), Lim, Cortina, and Magley (2008), and King, Hebl, George, and Matusik (2010). All items were measured on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) Likert-type scale. Three items measured intent to exit the society and conference specifically (e.g., *I plan to attend this conference in the future*). Three items measured intent to exit the tenure-track academic profession (e.g., *I intend to pursue or continue a tenure-track academic career*).

See Appendix A for items.

Open-ended question. To allow participants to elaborate on any of the items and/or their experiences, an open ended item was included at the end of the survey (e.g., *Here we would like to invite you to provide a richer contribution if you choose. You may consider sharing a personal narrative, responses to the survey itself, or things we may have missed*). Substantive participant responses to this item are included in Appendix C.

Covariates. To control for other constructs that may influence exit intention, three covariates were included that measure the extent to which financial obligations, family responsibilities, and lack of resources make it difficult to have or maintain a tenure-track academic career. These have been shown in previous research to negatively affect women's career decisions (Ceci & Williams, 2011; Ginther, 2003).

Design. The primary hypotheses for this study were gender-focused and therefore, the main analyses were between-gender. Between-conference effects were also tested, but using an alternative analysis technique because of sample size limitations. There was not sufficient power

to test main effects of conference or the interaction between conferences and gender within the SEM framework.

Procedure

Study procedure. The survey was web-based and conducted using Qualtrics survey software. The demographic items were placed in the beginning of every survey. Each of the following scales had its own page in the survey²: Climate, Microinequities, Voice/Silence, Gender Performance, and Exit Intentions. The order of these scales was randomized by scale and also by item within scale thus eliminating issues of order effects between and within scales.

The survey was piloted to graduate students and faculty members in the Psychology department (no data were collected) to ensure the survey was working properly and to check for mistakes, awkward wording, etc. Study participants were recruited via email using Qualtrics' email distribution method (see Appendix B for recruitment email). The survey was initially sent out to 50 participants from each conference with a follow-up reminder email sent to participants who had not completed the survey two weeks after the initial recruitment email was sent. I sent the survey out to a subset of my sample so that any problems with the survey not illuminated by piloting could be addressed early on in data collection. Comments left in the open-ended question at the end of the survey indicated that four items needed to include a response option of "not applicable" because a precondition must be met in order to answer these items. These four items came from the Voice and Silence scales (*While at the conference, to what extent do you: [voice1] express concerns to others regarding sexist comments or behaviors, [voice2] report/file an official complaint for sexist comments or behaviors, [voice3] confront someone who made a*

² Survey page titles were not visible to participants.

sexist comment or behaved in a sexist way, [silence2] say nothing in response to sexist comments or behaviors). The response category, “N/A because I’ve not encountered sexist behaviors/comments” was added to the existing scale and all subsequent participants received the updated survey.

Analytic procedure. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to analyze these data for research questions two and three. SEM is an analysis technique that permits researchers to test relationships between latent constructs, corrects for measurement error, and provides unbiased parameter estimates (Kline, 1998). Correcting for measurement error was particularly relevant for the present project because the scales and items were created and adapted to fit the conference context. In SEM, researchers specify a theoretically derived measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The measurement model derived from CFA is then used as the baseline model for the structural model. The structural model tests hypothesized regression paths between latent constructs, can model several complex relationships at once, and allows for model comparison between groups (Kline, 1998). These benefits also informed my decision to use SEM to test my gender hypotheses because I wanted to capture several experiences within the conference simultaneously and compare the models between men and women. I also wanted to examine the indirect effects of microinequities and coping tactics on exit intentions. My data are not longitudinal in nature and do not speak to temporal causality (Maxwell & Cole, 2007). However, perceptions of the conference climate, experiences within the conference, and coping tactics at the conference occur concurrently, which makes drawing temporally causal conclusions a challenge. This project sought to illuminate how a climate might influence a variety of experiences and coping tactics and then in turn, how experiences and coping tactics predict exit intentions.

Estimation method and missing data. A majority of the manifest indicators had a low rate of missing data (ranging from 2-6%). Four manifest indicators included the “N/A because I’ve not encountered sexist behaviors/comments” option noted above and had a missing data rate near 55%. “N/A” responses were treated as missing because CFA and SEM require a complete dataset to estimate parameters. If these respondents were to be simply dropped from the sample, the analyses would be generalizable to only a subset of participants who have personally experienced sexism toward them while at the conference. Instead, I wanted to capture perceptions of the climate by sampling a diverse range of experiences and thus have included participants who responded “N/A” on these indicators in the sample.

Missing data were estimated using full information maximum likelihood (FIML), which is an iterative parameter estimation process (Graham, 2009). FIML is a model-based estimation technique that uses only data from the variables in the model to perform its estimation (Enders, 2010; Graham, 2009). FIML is a widely accepted and state-of-the-art technique for missing data (Schafer & Graham, 2002; Enders, 2010). It uses the EM Algorithm (E=Expectation, M=Maximization), which is an iterative optimization algorithm that is appropriate for SEM analyses with missing data (Enders, 2010). The EM Algorithm is a two-step process. The E-step is a regression-based procedure that uses information from the mean vector and covariance matrix (parameter estimates) to create a set of regression equations that are used to predict incomplete variables from complete variables (Enders, 2010). The M-step applies the formulas derived from the complete data to estimate the incomplete cases, which is used to create updated mean vector and covariance matrix. The updated mean vector and covariance matrix are taken back to the E-Step, which then uses them to create a new set of regression equations. The M-step

then re-estimates the mean vector and covariance matrix (Enders, 2010; Schafer & Graham, 2002).³

Latent constructs. Eight latent constructs were included in the analyses: climate (Climate), microinequities (Micro), silence (Silence), voice (Voice), masculine gender performance (MasGP), feminine gender performance (FemGP), exit intentions from the conference (ExitConf), and exit intentions from an academic career (ExitAcad). Voice, MasGP, and FemGP were each measured with two indicators. One indicator for Voice was dropped because one of the indicators had no error variance (e.g., *While at the conference, to what extent do you report/file an official complaint in response to sexist comments/behaviors*). All but three participants answered “Never” or “N/A” on this item. Thus, this indicator does not add to the model and moreover hinders the model from being fully identified (Brown, 2006). The two latent constructs Climate and Micro were created from parceled indicators. Parceling is an analysis technique that creates aggregates of specific items (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). Empirically, parceling provides researchers with better reliability and less likelihood of dual factor loadings than item-level modeling (Little et al., 2002). Three subscales formed separate parcels for Climate: Reputational Climate, Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others, and Conference Material (i.e., facet-parceling, Little et al., 2002; see Materials section above for details about these subscales). Three parcels of indicators were created for the latent construct Micro. Micro did not include subscales and therefore the indicators were placed into parcels based on their relative loadings. A parcel included indicators with high and low loadings to keep balance between parcels. See Table 2 for latent constructs, their parcels and/or indicators, and factor loadings.

³ See Graham (2009) for a detailed discussion of missing data techniques, including criticisms.

Results

See Table 3 for means and standard deviations of each measure for gender at each conference.

Research Question 1: Women's Numerical Representation at a Conference

To test the hypothesis regarding the relationship between women's numerical representation at the conference and attendees' perceptions of conference climate, experiences of microinequities, coping tactics, and exit intentions a 2 (gender of participant: male or female) X 3 (conference: MW, EW, LW) MANCOVA was run with financial resources, family obligations, and resource availability as covariates. Gender main effects were tested both using MANCOVA and SEM. Both the MANCOVA results and the SEM results are reported under research question two, which addresses mean difference between men and women.

Conference effects. The overall multivariate test of a main effect of conference [*Wilks' λ* = 0.85, $F(20, 538) = 2.60, p < .01$] was significant. Given the significance of the overall test, the univariate main effects of conference were examined and included gender and status to control for their effects. Specifically, conference significantly predicted Reputational Climate, $F(2,298) = 11.73, p < .001$, and Conference Material, $F(2,298) = 4.74, p < .01$. Tukey post-hoc tests indicated that Reputational Climate in the LW conference ($M = 2.35, SD = 1.03$) was equally sexist as the Reputational Climate in the EW conference ($M = 2.39, SD = 0.92$), and both were more sexist than the Reputational Climate in the MW conference ($M = 1.67, SD = 0.73$). None of the Tukey post-hocs for Conference Material were significant (p 's $> .05$). The interaction between conference and gender was not significant ($p > .05$). Thus, in partial support of my hypothesis, attendees of the conference in which women were best represented reported the least sexist reputational climate and conference material. However, contrary to my hypotheses, there

were no significant main effects for experiences of microinequities, coping tactics, or exit intentions. See Table 3 for means and standard deviations and Table 6 for all univariate tests.

Research Question 2: Difference between Women and Men's Conference Perceptions, Experiences, and Exit Intentions.

Gender differences were examined using both MANCOVA and SEM. The MANCOVA results are reported first, the SEM results come next, followed by a discussion of any different effects between the tests.

MANCOVA results for mean gender differences. The overall multivariate test of a main effect of gender [*Wilks' λ* = 0.87, $F(10, 269) = 4.85, p < .001$] was significant. Given the significance of the overall test, the univariate main effects of conference were examined and included conference and status to control for their effects. Specifically, significant univariate main effects for gender were obtained for Reputational Climate [$F(1, 298) = 5.05, p < .05$], Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others [$F(1, 298) = 14.28, p < .001$], Conference Material [$F(1, 298) = 10.40, p < .01$], Microinequities [$F(1, 298) = 10.65, p < .01$], Feminine Gender Performance [$F(1, 298) = 8.47, p < .01$], and Academia Exit Intentions [$F(1, 298) = 6.40, p = .01$]. Pairwise comparisons using Tukey post-hoc tests ($\alpha = .05$) were run to examine mean gender differences for each dependent variable. Post-hoc tests revealed no significant gender differences ($p > .05$) for Reputational Climate. However, significant mean differences were found for perceptions of Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others ($M_{\text{women}} = 3.35, SD_{\text{women}} = 0.79; M_{\text{men}} = 2.95, SD_{\text{men}} = 0.72$), Conference Material ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.62, SD_{\text{women}} = 0.62; M_{\text{men}} = 2.38, SD_{\text{men}} = 0.57$), Microinequities ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.02, SD_{\text{women}} = 1.15; M_{\text{men}} = 1.77, SD_{\text{men}} = 0.73$), Feminine Gender Performance ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.29, SD_{\text{women}} = 1.27; M_{\text{men}} = 1.77, SD_{\text{men}} = 0.72$), and Academia Exit Intentions ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.43, SD_{\text{women}} = 0.79; M_{\text{men}} = 1.96, SD_{\text{men}} = 1.17$). As

predicted, the same pattern was found for each of the above constructs such that women reported greater sexist perceptions of the climate, more frequently experiencing microinequities, greater engagement in feminine gender performance, and greater academia exit intentions. See Table 3 for means and standard deviations.

SEM results for latent mean gender differences. Before mean differences or predictive paths were investigated, a multiple-group confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to specify the theoretically derived measurement model (Brown, 2006). Then, measurement equivalence (i.e., factorial invariance) across males and females was tested. Establishing factorial invariance (i.e., configural invariance, weak invariance, and strong invariance) indicates that the researcher is measuring the same construct across groups and allows for cross group comparisons (Brown, 2006). The model was identified using effects coding, which produced means that are set to scale and thus interpretable (Little, Slegers, & Card, 2006).

Measurement model. The measurement model (i.e., Configural invariance) demonstrated acceptable fit [$\chi^2(455, n = 329) = 711.93, p = <.01, RMSEA = .06_{(.050, .067)}, NNFI = .90, CFI = .90$], indicating that the pattern of loadings was invariant across gender. Weak invariance (i.e., equality of factor loadings across gender) was established and indicated by RMSEA values for the weak invariant model falling within the 90% confidence intervals of the configural as well as less than a 0.01 change in CFI and NNFI. Strong invariance (i.e., equality of indicator means across gender) was met using the same criteria as the weak invariant model (Brown, 2006). See Table 2 for all items and their factor loadings and Table 7 for fit indices of model invariance testing.

Chi-square differences tests were used to examine mean gender differences on the latent constructs with significant chi-square difference tests indicating that mean differences were significant. Before testing gender differences on specific latent constructs, an omnibus test of latent means was conducted to see if any one of the latent means differed between women. This omnibus test was significant [$\Delta\chi^2(2, n = 329) = 30.65, p < .001$]. Thus, the latent means were not equal on all constructs and follow up tests were conducted to examine gender differences on each latent construct. As hypothesized, women reported perceiving the climate as more sexist ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.73, M_{\text{men}} = 2.46$), experiencing microinequities more frequently ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.02, M_{\text{men}} = 1.76$), engaging in more silence ($M_{\text{women}} = 3.45, M_{\text{men}} = 2.99$), and more feminine gender performance ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.38, M_{\text{men}} = 1.59$) than men (all $\Delta\chi^2$ tests significant at $p < .05$; see Table 8 for all constructs' chi-square difference tests). Also as hypothesized, women reported more academic exit intentions than men ($M_{\text{women}} = 2.42, M_{\text{men}} = 1.59$). As predicted, no gender differences on engagement in voice or masculine performance were found. However, contrary to my prediction, no gender differences emerged on conference exit intentions. See Table 9 for latent construct means and variance.

The same pattern of effects was found for all of the constructs except silence. In the ANOVA framework, no gender differences emerged on Silence. This is likely because measurement error was not accounted for in the ANOVA, whereas error was taken into account in the SEM analyses.

Research Questions 3 and 4: The Effects of Sexist Conference Climate Perceptions for Women Compared to Men.

The remaining research questions were tested using the structural model depicted in Figure 1 which specifies directional pathways between latent constructs. The structural model allows for predictions regarding causal directionality. It should be noted that because these data are not longitudinal or experimental, causal relationships cannot be truly examined. Instead, these relationships are theorized sequential causation. All reported results are unstandardized.

I investigated how well the data fit with the hypothesized model depicted in Figure 1. I tested how well these data fit with the hypothesized model. This model demonstrated acceptable fit [$\chi^2(493, n = 329) = 820.81, p = <.01, RMSEA = .06_{(.05, .07)}, NNFI = .85, CFI = .87$]. Non-significant predictive paths (b) were dropped from the model one at a time based on chi-square difference tests such that a no change in chi-square indicated the pathway should be eliminated from the model. Additionally, the construct ‘microinequities’ was operating as a suppressor variable.⁴ A suppressor variable has a low or zero correlation with the dependent variable, yet still significantly predicts the dependent variable (Lancaster, 1999). Suppressor effects (i.e., beta estimates) are not trustworthy (Lancaster, 1999). In this case, for women, Microinequities and Academic Exit Intentions were not correlated ($r_{females} = .02$) and for men Microinequities and Conference Exit Intentions had a low correlation ($r_{males} = .18$). However, Microinequities negatively predicted Academic Exit Intentions for women ($b_{females} = -0.34, SE = 0.16$) and Conference Exit Intentions for men ($b_{females} = -1.02, SE = 0.50$). These suppressor effects were not included in the final model.

The final model for women is depicted in Figure 2 and the final model for men in Figure 3. As predicted, women’s perceptions of the climate as sexist positively predicted their

⁴ Microinequities were examined in CFA as part of the latent construct Climate. However, the model displayed worse fit, indicating Climate and Microinequities are separate latent constructs.

experiences of microinequities ($b = 1.63, SE = 0.19$), engagement in silence ($b = 0.60, SE = 0.21$), expressing voice ($b = 0.89, SE = 0.35$), engagement in feminine ($b = 0.97, SE = 0.27$), and masculine ($b = 1.24, SE = 0.32$), gender performance, as well as academic exit intentions ($b = 0.86, SE = 0.39$). Additionally, silence positively predicted academic exit intentions ($b = 0.22, SE = 0.08$), indicating as hypothesized, an indirect path between sexist climate perceptions and engagement in silence on exit intentions. This result suggests that those women who perceived the conference climate as sexist and also engaged in silence during the conference were the most likely to express academic exit intentions. Contrary to my hypotheses, engagement in voice, feminine or masculine gender performance did not significantly predict academic or conference exit intentions for women.

For men, perceptions of the climate as sexist positively predicted experiences of microinequities ($b = 1.37, SE=0.28$), engagement in silence ($b = 1.38, SE=0.41$), expressing voice ($b = 1.93, SE = 0.65$), engagement in feminine ($b = 1.12, SE = 0.34$) and masculine ($b = 1.71, SE = 0.60$) gender performance, as well as conference exit intentions ($b = 3.14, SE = 1.03$). Surprisingly, men's perceptions of the conference climate as sexist positively predicted conference exit intentions. The greater magnitude of the relationship between climate and silence, voice, and feminine gender performance for men relative to women was also unexpected.

The final structural models for men and for women were compared to see if they differed from one another. Results indicated that the final structural model men for was not equal to women's [$\Delta\chi^2(9, n = 329) = 45.92, p < .01$] and that the final structural model for women was not equal to men's [$\Delta\chi^2(9, n = 329) = 34.91, p < .01$]. Examination of the Akaike's Information

Criterion (AIC, ranks model based on fit; smaller AIC value indicates better model) also indicated that separate models for men and women better fit the data.

An alternative model testing the reverse directionality of the (*b*) pathways was conducted. The alternative model displayed worse fit [$\chi^2(519, n = 329) = 931.50, p = <.01, RMSEA = .07_{(.06, .08)}, NNFI = .82, CFI = .83$] and the AIC was larger in the alternative model. These two tests indicated that the hypothesized model was the better and more appropriate model (Brown, 2006).

Discussion

The present research intended to provide a comprehensive picture of the academic, scientific conference experience for women relative to men. Women's current underrepresentation in academia compared to men compels research on understanding obstacles to women's success and the reasons for which women exit academic careers. The conference context was chosen because conferences are important for networking, collaboration, and socialization (Jacobs & McFarlane, 2005; Weissner, Hatcher, Chapman, & Storberg-Walker, 2008). As such, conferences can serve to facilitate a women's career success in academia or serve as an obstacle to it. The present research focused on sexist climate perceptions as the central focus because previous research has shown that perceptions of professional climates as sexist was related to less job satisfaction and productivity (Settles et al., 2007). This research adds to the feminist and psychological literature in that it is the first of its kind, to my knowledge, to examine women's and men's conference perceptions, experiences, and behaviors. Moreover, it shows connections between sexist climate perceptions, silencing, and academic exit intentions

for women. Taken together, the results of this research provide an initial snapshot of the conference experience.

Women's Numerical Representation at Conferences

The first research question concerned women's representation at the conference. Previous research has suggested that gender proportions in professional contexts influences professional outcomes, including the culture of the organization (i.e., the climate; Burke & McKeen, 1996). The combination of women's numerical underrepresentation and women's devalued status within a masculine professional context produces negative outcomes for women (Kanter, 1977; Yoder, 1991), such as increased exit intentions (Burke & McKeen, 1996). The present research provided support for the hypothesis that a conference climate would be perceived as the least sexist when women were the most proportionately represented. Results showed that the greater the representation of women at the conference, the less sexist the conference was perceived to be: Conference MW participants reported the least sexist climate. Women's representation at a conference did not affect their coping strategies during the conference, but did influence perceptions of sexism during the conference that then triggered behavioral responses including silence, voice and gender performance. Similarly, comments from the open-ended question at the end of the survey provided subjective interpretation of gender representation at the conferences. One conference attendee at conference MW wrote, "The [MW] conference is very heavily female—perhaps even a majority of the researchers in this field are female." Likewise, an attendee from conference LW commented, "The men in charge of [Conference LW] (and it is mostly men it seems) are well known for being 'cads'".

Ragins and Sundstrom (1998) argued against trying to fix the problem of women's underrepresentation in academia by simply increasing women's representation. Instead, these researchers posited that the organizational culture must change, otherwise women will be forced to adapt to an inhospitable context (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1998). The data from the present research, however, suggested that women's greater representation impacted the culture of the conference such that Conference MW attendees reported the least sexist perceptions of the conference climate whereas Conference LW attendees reported the most. Likewise, the content of the research of the selected conferences differed meaningfully between the conference with the greatest representation of women and the conference with the lowest representation of women. Conference MW predominantly included research on proximal environmental and biological underpinnings of child development, whereas Conference LW predominantly included research on evolutionary foundations of human behavior.

Gender and Sexism at Conferences

The second research question concerned whether women and men differed in their perceptions of the climate as sexist, experiences of microinequities, engagement in coping tactics, and intentions to exit from the conference and academia. As expected, women reported greater sexist climate perceptions, experiences of microinequities, engagement in silence and feminine gender performance, and academic exit intentions than men. Given that the existing power structure makes women the targets of sexism, it was not surprising that they were more cognizant of gender inequality in the conference climate (Swim & Hyers, 2009), experienced more microinequities (Rowe, 1990) and engaged in more silence (Swim et al., 2010). Moreover, as expected, women expressed greater intentions to exit from academic careers than men independent of the effects of family responsibilities, financial obligations, and resource

availability, which supported data about women's underrepresentation in tenured faculty positions.

Unexpectedly, no gender differences emerged in expression of voice. The lack of gender differences in voice was likely a result of little to no personal experience with sexism during the conference for most, as evidenced by the relatively low frequency of microinequities experienced by men and women and the relatively low sexist climate perceptions. This may also reflect both men and women's desire to avoid the negative social consequences of speaking out against sexism (Garcia et al., 2005; Settles et al., 2007). Women and men did not differ in the extent to which they engaged in masculine gender performance, which supported my hypothesis that both men and women would engage in stereotypically masculine behaviors during the conference because these behaviors are normative in academia (Bernard, 1987; Katila & Meriläinen, 1999; Schmitt et al., 2003). Because men were the reference group by which the norms of behavior of the conference were developed, men's behavior would not be viewed as performance, but rather as normative. I did not think that men's masculine behaviors were a performance. This idea was supported by a comment left by a man from conference EW: "It was difficult answering several questions because they didn't apply to me. For example, even though I listed my sex as male, I still received questions that seemed primarily meant for females." By questioning why "female" items even applied to him, this participant illustrated the devaluing of the feminine in masculinized contexts. Perhaps what was most important to note about these comments was that not one woman wrote anything suggesting she thought it strange she was answering questions about her own stereotypically masculine behavior during the conference. This lack of comment by women exemplified the normativeness of stereotypically masculine behaviors during the conference.

Women's Conference Experience Relative to Men

The remaining research questions addressed the extent to which sexist climate perceptions were predictive of experiencing microinequities, engagement in coping tactics, and intent to exit from the conference and academia for women relative to men. Supporting my hypothesis, climates perceived as sexist made it more likely that women would experience microinequities during the conference. Though experiencing microinequities during the conference probably made the conference experience less enjoyable, encountering microinequities was not related to women's exit intentions from the conference or academia. This result may be reflective of the extent to which microinequities have become normative within these conference contexts. Furthermore, women's sexist climate perceptions were also predictive of women's conference coping tactics. Specifically, sexist climate perceptions increased the likelihood that during the conference women engaged in silence, expressed voice, and engaged in feminine as well as masculine gender performance. Women's engagement in silence and voice as well as feminine and masculine gender performance highlighted that these coping mechanisms were not mutually exclusive. Moreover, women's feminine and masculine gender performance were positively related, suggesting that women strategically engaged in feminine and masculine gender performance depending on the demands of a situation. The present data could not speak to this question because gender performance was measured in general terms rather than in specific instances. Future research should examine gender performance within the conference context more closely.

As hypothesized, women's academic exit intentions were a partially a result of their perceptions of the conference climate as sexist and their engagement in silence. Indeed, one women attendee commented, "But more covert sexism persists - men do all the talking at most

meetings at the university as well as conferences and my own difficulty with assertiveness is in part my own shyness and in part a gendered phenomenon.” Perceptions of a sexist conference climate can signal to women the extent to which the conference value women’s contributions relative to men’s. When women felt their contributions were less valued than men’s, they were more likely to silence, which in turn increased their intent to exit from academia.

The conference experience for men differed significantly from that of women in three ways. First, men’s perceptions of the climate as sexist predicted increased desire to exit from the conference, but not from academia. Women might choose to exit academia to the extent that they perceived the conference as a representation of their academic discipline as a whole. If the conference climate communicated to women that their input was not as valued as men’s, women might leave academia because it is not friendly or receptive to them. Men, on the other hand, chose to exit from the conference and not from academia. If the conference did not appeal to them, they would choose to exit it, but this had no impact on their decisions to exit from academia as it did for women. Conferences very well may communicate to women and men the norms and values of their academic discipline. If conference norms appear unfriendly toward women and behaviors associated with femininity, women may then consider career opportunities outside of academia.

Second, the relationships between perceptions of the climate as sexist and engagement in silence, voice, and feminine gender performance were more extensive than expected in men. The relationship between experiences of microinequities and feminine gender performance was positive for both men and women; however, men who behaved in stereotypically feminine ways were behaving outside of the gender expectations for men in addition to the academic conference expectations for success (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Knights & Richards, 2003; Moss-Rascusin

et al., 2010). Indeed, previous research found that men who behaved counter-stereotypically received backlash (Moss-Rascusin et al., 2010). Therefore, men behaving in stereotypically feminine ways may have more often been the targets of microinequities than men and women who did not display stereotypically feminine behavior (Bird, 1996). If these men were more often the targets of microinequities, it follows that they would also have engaged in more voice. Along these lines, men's sexist climate perceptions predicted engagement in voice and the magnitude of the relationship was stronger for men than for women.

Third, there were no significant relationships between coping tactics and either conference or academic exit intentions for men; however, for women engagement in silencing predicted greater academic exit intentions. When women perceived the conference climate as sexist and they refrained from giving input and speaking out against sexism, they consequently expressed intent to exit from academia. This meaningful difference between men and women implies that when women felt they could not or should not informally contribute at the conference, they expressed desire to leave academia. Women's silencing behavior at the conference predicted their intent to exit from academia, whereas men's behaviors at the conference were unrelated to conference and academic exit intentions.

Limitations and Future Directions

Academic conferences have not been the target of empirical research and that fact presented challenges for this project. First, there were no published and validated measures for conference perceptions, experiences, or coping tactics. Thus, some measures were adapted from those validated for use in other contexts and others were created based on social psychological and feminist literature (see Method section for specific items and measures). The combination of

adapted measures and newly created measures introduced a significant source of measurement error. To account for measurement error, structural equation modeling was conducted for the between gender tests. Future research should work toward developing and validating measures relevant to conferences.

Another limitation was the low response rate (i.e., 9.6%-18%). Even though the low response rate was expected, this calls to question the extent to which the samples were representative of their respective conferences. The low response rate was related to another limitation. The sample size was not large enough to permit cross conference and gender tests in SEM. Thus, the between conference effects were measured using the ANOVA technique, which does not account for measurement error. Additionally, this project was neither longitudinal nor experimental and therefore I cannot draw causal conclusions based on these data. Future research should aim to achieve a higher response rate as well as collect data over the course of the conference.

Two important conceptual limitations of this research project were that it did not address race or social identity. I recognize that race meaningfully intersects with gender and that by considering gender differences in absence of race, the experiences for women of color are minimized. The importance of examining race and gender was expressed by a participant in conference EW, "Difficult to respond to this with gender in mind only. Should have included comparable items assessing race-related issues." The experience of women of color at academic conferences is extremely important and should be examined. This may best be approached with qualitative methodology due to the predominantly white representation in academic contexts (Jaggar, 2007). Additionally, this research focused on women's behavioral performance at conferences and did not examine the extent to which their gender identification influenced their

behaviors at the conference. Moreover, I acknowledge that gender is not always a performance. Indeed, the ways in which women behave at the conference may be reflective of who they are and how they identify (Schmitt et al., 2003; Skevington & Baker, 1989) rather than a result of stereotypic expectations for behavior. Women's gender identity and their professional identity may overlap or be distinctive (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). For instance, women in masculine domains reported a professional identity that is more stereotypically masculine than how they identified outside of the professional context (Katila & Meriläinen, 1999). Future research should examine the conference experience from a social identity theory framework.

Implications and Conclusions

The present research demonstrates the complexity of the conference experience for all attendees, but especially for women. Many factors contribute to perceptions of the conference climate, including gender proportions, the reputation of the conference, the attitudes and behaviors of attendees, and the material presented at the conference (i.e., research topics, graphics, posters, etc.). The perceived sexist climate of a conference has meaningful implications for individuals, for conferences, and for academic departments.

Implications for conference attendees. The finding that women who engaged in silencing during the conference expressed greater desire to exit from academic careers is concerning. The conference represents the academic discipline as a whole and for many new and aspiring academics the conference might have provided some of the first instances of socialization of the norms of the discipline. For women, the conference might have been signaling to them their devalued status relative to men in this academic context (Tsui & Gutek, 1999), which in turn led them to silence and subsequently express academic exit intentions.

Moreover, the data showing that women expressed academic exit intentions whereas men expressed conference exit intentions illuminated the potential for the conference to serve as more of an obstacle to women's than to men's careers.

Voice was unrelated to conference and academic exit intentions. This might be a result of the overall low frequency attendees reported sexism at the conference as well as engaging in voice. However, to the extent that expression of voice is considered agentic and empowering (Gilligan, 1982), it might also change the norms of the conference (Blanchard et al., 1994). Indeed, researchers have proposed the benefit of expressing voice is that it brings attentions to objectionable situations (Crosby et al., 2003; Kowalski, 1996). Expressing voice at a conference despite the social costs of doing so (Garcia et al., 2005) exemplifies a commitment to changing the sexist norms of the conference. It would be my hope that expressions of voice change the norms of the conference to be more women-friendly. To the extent that women's contributions at the conference become valued as much as men's, women will hopefully not feel pressured to behave in stereotypically masculine or feminine ways. As such, I do not advocate for women changing their behavior in order to fit in with the demands of the conference climate. Instead, women and men should aim to change the norms of their conferences. One way to accomplish norm change is by speaking out against sexism at the conference.

Future research should examine more pointedly the conference context. For instance, women's gender performance in different situations of the conference would provide valuable insight into how women behaviorally navigate the conference. Future research should also examine ways in which women can express voice and change the norms of the conference without experiencing negative social costs.

Implications for conferences. If conference organizers recognize and acknowledge the conditions that contribute to perceptions of sexism at conferences they could actively implement strategies to improve these conditions. For instance, a conference that has low representation of women could increase recruitment of women scholars and actively support their development through mentorship programs and professional development activities (Austin, 2002). However, increasing women's representation within a masculine context should be met with active anti-discrimination policy and an awareness and understanding of contemporary sexism in academia (Monroe & Chiu, 2010). One woman commented, "For the most part, the symposiums and poster sessions appear very professional. It is the mingling between or during these sessions where both sexist attitudes tend to be more allowed while simultaneously networking appears more imperative." As such, conferences should host workshops aimed at the recognition and prevention of sexism during the conference and especially during informal interactions during the conference. Additionally, societies hosting conferences should strive to make visible women's influence and input at the conference (Bernard, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1952|1974; Katila & Meriläinen, 1999). To this end, conferences should have women involved in all levels of conference leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2005) and include women's perspectives on research topics during the conference as well on their conference experiences.

Implications for academia. Scholars attend conferences annually over the course of several days whereas they spend considerably more time than that in their academic departments. However, the effects of sexist climate perceptions and silencing on academic exit intentions were evident within a short-term conference. Therefore, I would expect that these relationships would be even more substantial within academic departments (see Settles et al., 2007). Future research

should investigate women and men's climate perceptions, coping tactics, and exit intentions within academic departments and across disciplines.

Conclusion

These results illuminate the ways in which sexist climate perceptions influence women's coping tactics and academic career intentions. The extent to which conference climates communicate to women that their scholarly contributions were not as valued as their male colleagues contributes to women's silencing behavior at the conference and their academic exit intentions. For women to gain equal access and influence in academia, they should actively challenge the masculine norms and behaviors to which they object. Moreover, as academic women continue to gain parity with academic men, they influence the norms of academia. Ideally, these norms will become such that women and men are evaluated on their contributions rather than on gender.

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Table 1.
Conference Gender Numerical Representation and Response Rates

	Conference MW		Conference EW		Conference LW	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Number of presenters contacted (invitees)	238	599	376	435	486	298
Number of presenters who completed survey (sample)	14	76	59	94	50	36
Response rates	6%	13%	16%	22%	10%	12%
Gender proportion of invitees	28%	72%	46%	54%	62%	38%
Gender proportion of sample	16%	84%	39%	61%	58%	42%

Note. 853 participants were contacted from each conference. Totals by gender do not add up to the total number of participants actually contacted. This is because information regarding participant gender was not available for all participants contacted. Conference MW=conference with most women represented, Conference EW = Conference with about equal women and men represented, Conference LW = Conference with the least women represented.

Table 2.

Factor Loadings for Indicators of Latent Constructs

Construct	Men	Women
CLIMATE		
RC (reputational climate)	0.51	0.73
SAT (sexist attitudes and treatment of others)	0.57	0.55
CM (conference material)	0.63	0.56
MICRO		
micro1 (condescending, ignored comment)	0.60	0.83
micro2 (addressed in unprofessional terms, inappropriate advances during conference)	0.75	0.86
micro3 (little interest in opinion/contribution, excluded from informal networking, inappropriate advances during after-conference event)	0.87	0.94
SILENCE		
silence1 (refrain from speaking up during meetings/discussions)	1.00	1.00
silence2 (say nothing in response to sexist comments/behaviors)	0.50	0.33
silence3 (resist commenting during/after talks)	0.66	0.73
VOICE		
voice1 (express concerns to others about sexist comments/behaviors)	0.73	0.64
voice3 (confront someone who made sexist comment/behavior)	0.77	0.71
MasGP		
gpmas2 (behave in stereotypically masculine ways)	0.84	0.58
gpmas3 (try to act like “one of the guys”)	0.75	0.65
FemGP		
gpfem1 (try to act like “one of the girls”)	0.59	0.66
gpfem3 (behave in stereotypically feminine ways)	0.42	0.64
EXITConf		
exitc1_r (plan to attend this conference in the future)	0.92	0.95
exitc2_r (intend to continue membership in conference hosting society)	0.75	0.83
exitc3_r (like attending this conference)	0.80	0.70
EXITAcad		
exita1_r (intend to pursue/continue tenure-track academic career)	0.58	0.59
exita2_r (feel well-suited to chosen discipline)	0.56	0.78
exita3_r (confident of success in academia)	0.84	0.89

Note. Factor loadings are standardized.

Table 3.

Means and Standard Deviations for all Measures

Construct	Conference MW		Conference EW		Conference LW	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
RC (reputational climate)	1.79 (0.46) [1-2.57]	1.65 (0.77) [1-4.14]	2.29 (0.86) [1-5.14]	2.46 (0.96) [1-6.14]	1.98 (0.74) [1-4.43]	2.79 (1.21) [1-5.43]
SAT (sexist attitudes and treatment)	2.75 (0.71) [1.14-3.86]	3.25 (0.71) [1.14-5]	2.98 (0.70) [2-4.71]	3.39 (0.87) [1-5.57]	2.98 (0.86) [1.57-5.29]	3.51 (0.87) [1.86-5.43]
CM (conference material)	2.17 (0.38) [1.20-3]	2.50 (0.47) [1.40-4.20]	2.37 (0.52) [1-3.60]	2.61 (0.57) [1.50-5.20]	2.42 (0.70) [1-4.40]	2.82 (0.87) [1.40-4.80]
MICRO (microinequities)	1.57 (0.64) [1-3.57]	1.83 (1.06) [1-6]	1.79 (0.76) [1-4.29]	2.07 (1.16) [1-6.7]	1.80 (0.76) [1-4]	2.23 (1.15) [1-5.80]
SILENCE	3.58 (1.66) [1-7]	3.26 (1.29) [1-7]	3.10 (1.41) [1-6.3]	3.44 (1.54) [1-6.5]	2.59 (1.22) [1-4]	3.10 (1.67) [1-7]
VOICE	2.41 (1.64) [1-4.5]	1.88 (1.28) [1-4]	1.96 (1.44) [1-7]	2.08 (1.48) [1-6.5]	1.98 (1.34) [1-4]	2.65 (1.79) [1-7]
MasGP (masculine gender performance)	2.86 (1.74) [1-5.5]	2.07 (1.06) [1-5]	2.51 (1.32) [1-5.5]	2.81 (1.34) [1-7]	2.68 (1.43) [1-7]	2.97 (1.65) [1-7]
FemGP (feminine gender performance)	1.61 (0.81) [1-3]	2.06 (1.11) [1-5.5]	1.54 (1.87) [1-4.5]	2.38 (1.21) [1-6.5]	1.57 (0.90) [1-4]	2.24 (1.43) [1-7]
EXITConf (exit conference)	2.17 (1.61) [1-7]	2.17 (1.36) [1-7]	1.66 (0.96) [1-5]	1.78 (1.05) [1-7]	1.85 (1.36) [1-6]	1.93 (1.49) [1-6.3]
EXITAcad (exit academia)	2.04 (1.32) [1-5]	2.43 (1.35) [1-6.31]	1.89 (1.13) [1-5.67]	2.55 (1.53) [1.6.67]	2.02 (1.18) [1-6]	2.11 (1.29) [1-6.67]

Note. Mean (standard deviation) [range]. All indicators were measured on a 1-7 Likert-type scale with higher numbers indicating endorsement of the construct.

Table 4.

Correlations between Constructs: N/A and Missing Responses Excluded Pairwise

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.Reputational Climate	—	.35** 203	.41** 203	.54** 202	.05 203	.33** 89	.34** 203	.15* 203	-.05 202	-0.00 201
2.Sexist Attitudes & Treatment	.28** 115	—	.40** 205	.41** 203	.22** 204	.18 90	.13 204	.16* 204	.11 204	.13 203
3.Conference Material	.27** 115	.36** 118	—	.31** 203	.16* 204	.23* 90	.20** 204	.18** 204	.11 204	.10 203
4.Micro	.39** 115	.18* 118	.23* 118	—	.15* 203	.34** 89	.24** 203	.21** 203	.03 202	-.03 201
5.Silence	.11 113	.10 116	.16 116	.26** 116	—	.05 90	.11 204	.38** 204	.04 203	.22** 202
6.Voice	.25 48	.00 50	.18 50	.49** 40	.21 50	—	.17 90	.00 90	-.06 89	-.07 88
7.MasGP	.18 113	.11 116	.13 116	.22* 116	.08 117	.22 50	—	.32** 204	-.07 203	.00 202
8.FemGP	.11 113	.07 116	.21* 116	.28** 116	.35** 117	.37** 50	.36** 117	—	-.05 203	.10 202
9.ExitConf	.16 115	.32** 118	.35** 118	.17 119	.16 116	.16 50	.08 116	.06 116	—	.19* 203
10.ExitAcad	-.03 115	.11 118	.13 118	.06 119	.15 116	-.03 50	.02 116	.12 116	.19* 119	—

Note. In each cell, the correlation coefficient is on top with the sample size below. Intercorrelations for women are presented above the diagonal, and intercorrelations for men are presented below the diagonal. For all constructs, higher scores indicate more extreme responding in the direction of the construct measured. Micros=microinequities. RC = Reputational Climate, SAT = Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others, CM = Conference Material, Micro=Microinequities experienced, Silence=engagement in silencing, Voice = engagement in voice, MasGP = Masculine Gender Performance, FemGP = Feminine Gender Performance, ExitConf= conference exit intentions, ExitAcad = academic exit intentions. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 5.

Correlations between Constructs: N/A Responses Estimated with FIML

Measure	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>
1.Reputational Climate	—	.35**	.41**	.53**	.15*	.35**	.36**	.17*	-.04	-0.01
2.Sexist Attitudes & Treatment	.32**	—	.39**	.41**	.22**	.11	.11	.16*	.11	.12
3.Conference Material	.26**	.33**	—	.29**	.19**	.16*	.21**	.19**	.11	.11
4.Microinequities	.42**	.17	.23**	—	.20**	.33**	.25**	.22**	.02	-.05
5.Silence	.22*	.08	.08	.32**	—	.08	.08	.33**	.01	.21**
6.Voice	.13	-.13	-.13	.39**	.21	—	.08	.03	-.06	-.05
7.MasGP	.17	.09	.11	.21*	.05	.09	—	.33**	-.07	-.00
8.FemGP	.15	.09	.25**	.29**	.27**	.20*	.36**	—	-.04	.11
9.ExitConf	.22*	.34**	.30**	.15	.25**	-.07	.09	.14	—	.19
10.ExitAcad	.00	.16	.16	.04	.13	-.02	.05	.15	.19	—

Note. Intercorrelations for women ($n=206$) are presented above the diagonal, and intercorrelations for men ($n=123$) are presented below the diagonal. For all constructs, higher scores indicate more extreme responding in the direction of the construct measured. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$,

Table 6.

MANOVA and Univariate Tests by Conference and Gender

	<i>Wilks' λ</i>	df	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Conference	0.85	20	2.60	<.001**
RC	--	2	11.73	<.001**
SAT	--	2	0.92	0.40
CM	--	2	4.74	<.01**
Micro	--	2	1.44	0.24
Silence	--	2	2.07	0.13
Voice	--	2	0.69	0.50
MasGP	--	2	0.70	0.50
FemGP	--	2	0.60	0.55
ExitConf	--	2	1.83	0.17
ExitAcad	--	2	0.68	0.51
Gender	0.87	10	4.85	<.001**
RC	--	1	5.05	<.05*
SAT	--	1	14.28	<.001***
CM	--	1	10.40	<.01**
Micro	--	1	10.65	<.01**
Silence	--	1	3.37	0.57
Voice	--	1	0.05	0.82
MasGP	--	1	1.97	0.16
FemGP	--	1	8.47	<.01**
ExitConf	--	1	0.83	0.36
ExitAcad	--	1	6.40	<.05*
Conference*Gender Interaction	0.92	20	1.39	0.12
RC	--	2	5.82	<.01**
SAT	--	2	0.55	0.58
CM	--	2	1.99	0.14
Micro	--	2	0.71	0.49
Silence	--	2	1.30	0.27
Voice	--	2	2.70	0.07
MasGP	--	2	3.42	<.05*
FemGP	--	2	0.56	0.57
ExitConf	--	2	0.05	0.95
ExitAcad	--	2	0.79	0.45

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. RC = Reputational Climate, SAT = Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others, CM = Conference Material, Micro=Microinequities experienced, Silence=engagement in silencing, Voice = engagement in voice, MasGP = Masculine Gender Performance, FemGP = Feminine Gender Performance, ExitConf= conference exit intentions, ExitAcad = academic exit intentions

Table 7.

Fit Indices for Model Invariance Testing

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	RMSEA (90% CI)	NNFI	CFI	Constraint Tenable
Configural Invariance	711.93	455	<.001	.06 (.05,.07)	0.87	0.90	---
Weak Invariance	743.26	468	<.001	.06 (.05,.07)	0.86	0.89	Yes
Strong Invariance	774.24	482	<.001	.06 (.05,.07)	0.85	0.88	Yes

Note. All model invariance tests were evaluated with the RMSEA model test. Each nested model contains its constraints, plus the constraints of all previous, tenable models. Group and Time invariance was tested simultaneously.

Table 8.

Test for the Equality of Latent Means Between Gender

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δ <i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Equality Constraint Tenable
Strong Invariance (Baseline model)	774.91	482	<.01	---	---	---	---
Latent Mean Invariance	804.89	480	<.01	30.65	2	<.01	No
Climate	789.91	483	<.01	15.67	1	<.01	No
Micro	780.04	483	<.01	5.79	1	<.05	No
Silence	784.62	483	<.01	10.37	1	<.01	No
Voice	775.42	483	<.01	1.18	1	>.05, <i>ns</i>	Yes
MasGP	774.34	483	<.01	0.10	1	>.05, <i>ns</i>	Yes
FemGP	814.93	483	<.01	40.68	1	<.01	No
ExitConf	776.73	483	<.01	2.48	1	>.05, <i>ns</i>	Yes
ExitAcad	1024.65	483	<.01	250.41	1	<.01	No

Note. Climate included three subscales RC, (Reputational Climate), SAT (Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others), and CM (Conference Material). Micro=Microinequities experienced, Silence=engagement in silencing, Voice = engagement in voice, MasGP = Masculine Gender Performance, FemGP = Feminine Gender Performance, ExitConf= conference exit intentions, ExitAcad = academic exit intentions

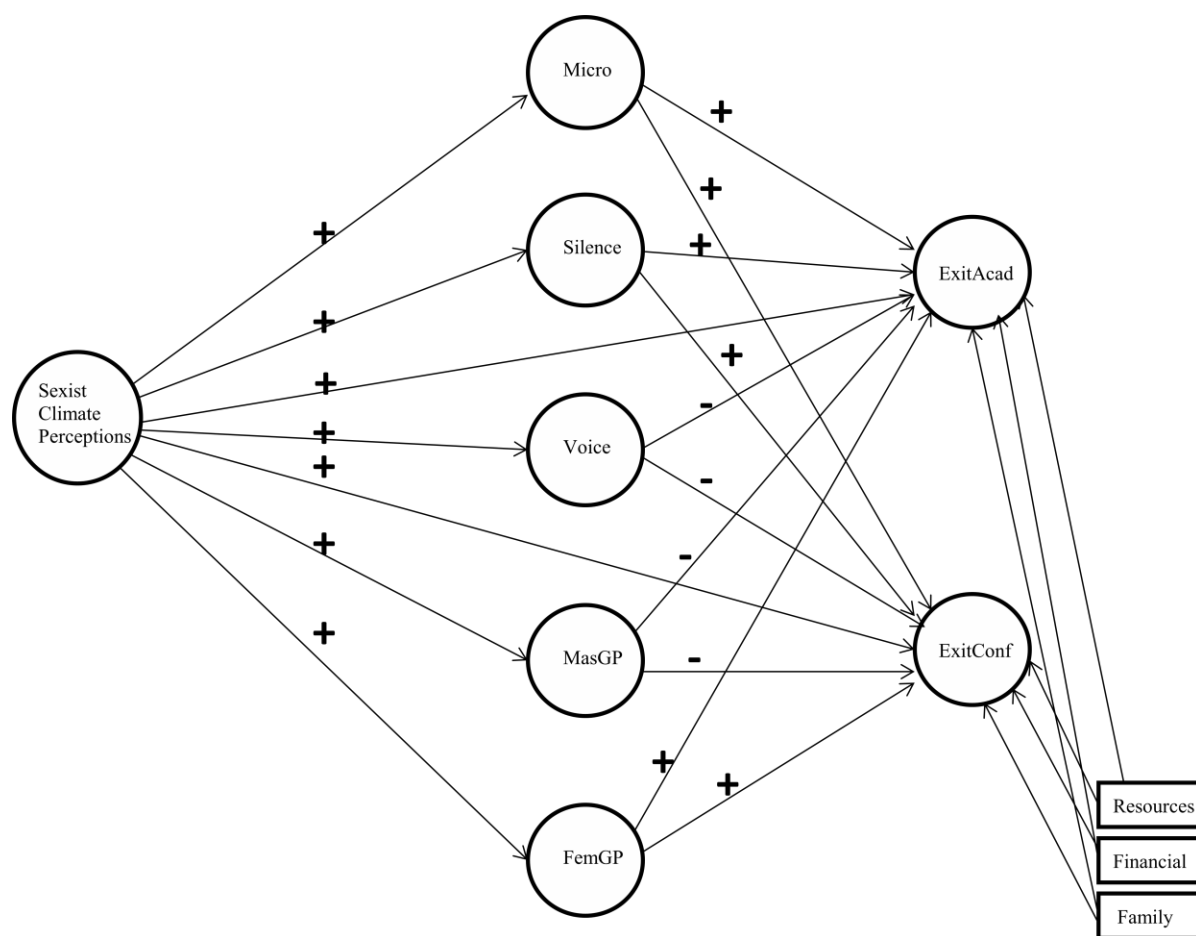
Table 9.

Latent Means and Variances by Gender

Construct	Men	Women
Climate	2.46 (1.0)	2.73 (1.0)
Micro	1.76 (0.43)	2.02 (0.47)
Silence	2.99 (0.82)	3.45 (0.94)
Voice	1.71 (0.60)	1.95 (0.83)
MasGP	2.58 (0.82)	2.54 (0.72)
FemGP	1.59 (0.60)	2.38 (0.81)
ExitConf	1.97 (0.53)	1.59 (1.0)
ExitAcad	2.0 (0.85)	2.42 (0.83)

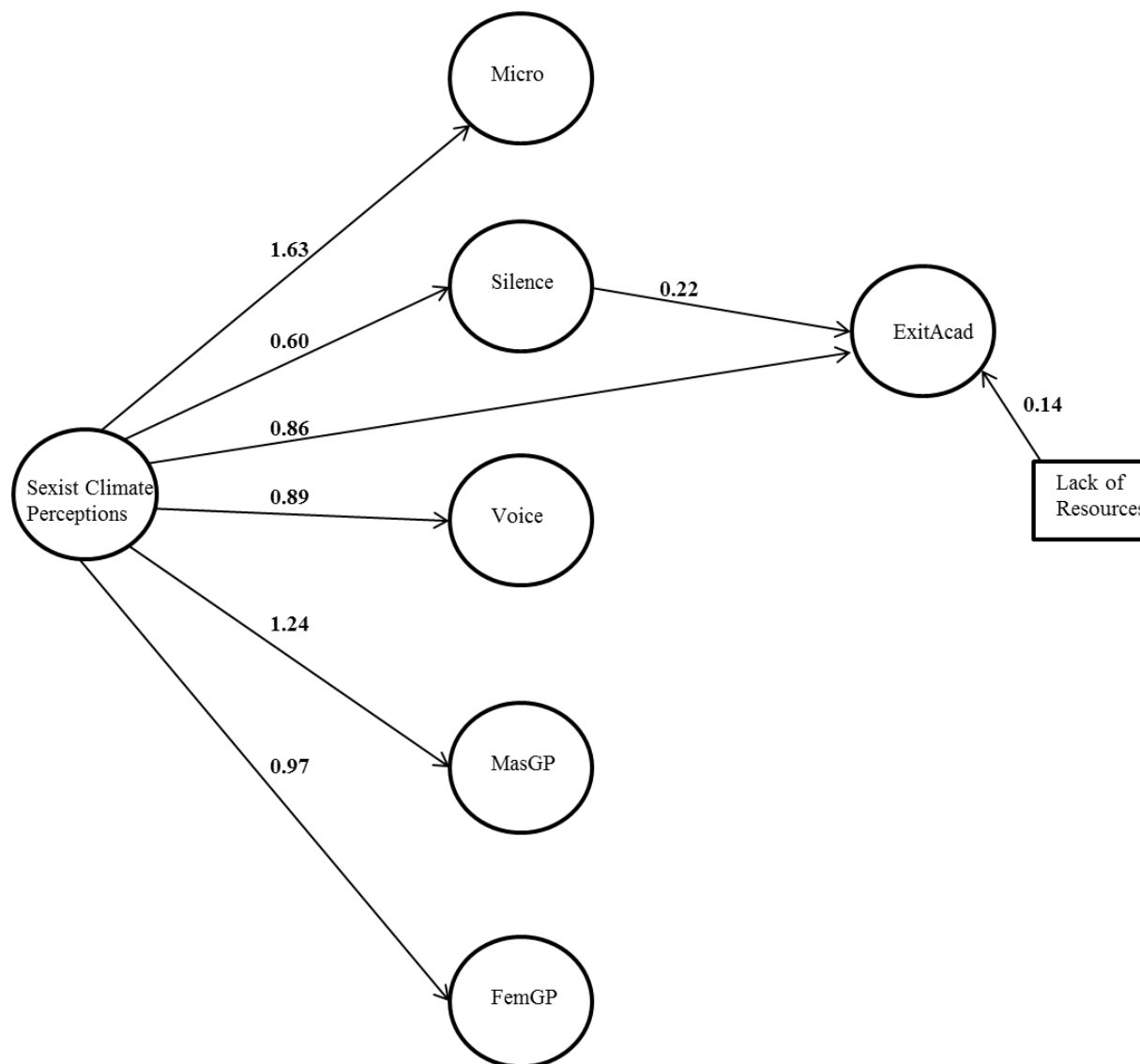
Note. Latent means (variances). Climate included three subscales RC, (Reputational Climate), SAT (Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others), and CM (Conference Material). Micro=Microinequities experienced, Silence=engagement in silencing, Voice = engagement in voice, MasGP = Masculine Gender Performance, FemGP = Feminine Gender Performance, ExitConf= conference exit intentions, ExitAcad = academic exit intentions

Figure 1.

Hypothesized Model

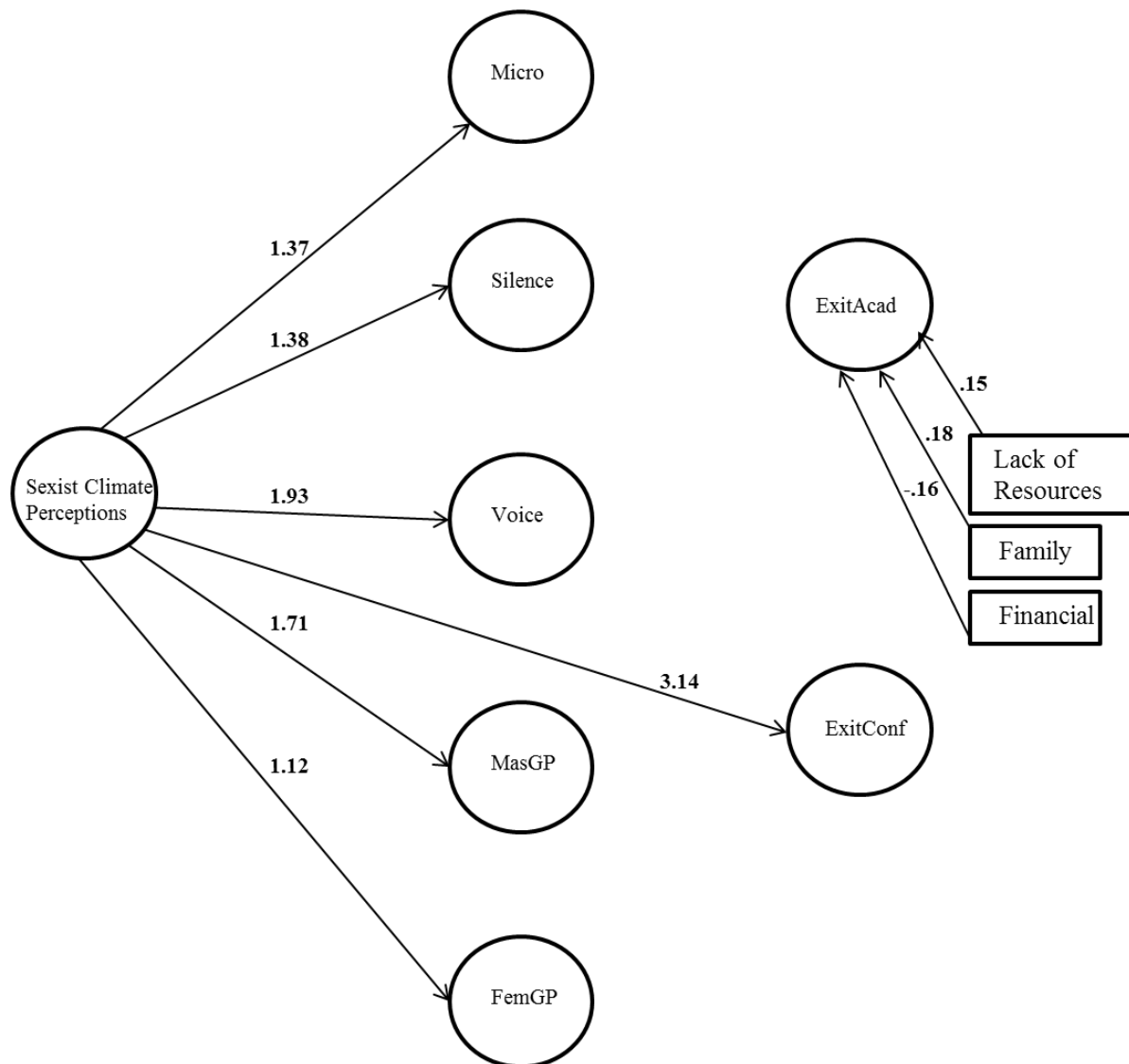
Note. Climate included three subscales RC, (Reputational Climate), SAT (Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others), and CM (Conference Material). Micro=Microinequities experienced, Silence=engagement in silencing, Voice = engagement in voice, MasGP = Masculine Gender Performance, FemGP = Feminine Gender Performance, ExitConf= conference exit intentions, ExitAcad = academic exit intention. Resources, Financial, and Family were covariates.

Figure 2.

Final Model for Women

Note. Model includes all significant pathways for women. Climate included three subscales RC, (Reputational Climate), SAT (Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others), and CM (Conference Material). Micro=Microinequities experienced, Silence=engagement in silencing, Voice = engagement in voice, MasGP = Masculine Gender Performance, FemGP = Feminine Gender Performance, ExitConf= conference exit intentions, ExitAcad = academic exit intention. Resources, Financial, and Family were covariates.

Figure 3.

Final Model for Men

Note. Final Model includes all significant pathways for men. Climate included three subscales RC, (Reputational Climate), SAT (Sexist Attitudes and Treatment of Others), and CM (Conference Material). Micro=Microinequities experienced, Silence=engagement in silencing, Voice = engagement in voice, MasGP = Masculine Gender Performance, FemGP = Feminine Gender Performance, ExitConf= conference exit intentions, ExitAcad = academic exit intention. Resources, Financial, and Family were covariates.

Appendix A:
Latent Constructs and Items

Construct	Subscale	Specific Items
Climate	Reputational Climate (RC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. † I have heard of one or more instances where a member at this conference used gendered humor (e.g., sexually suggestive jokes) to liven up a talk 2. † I have heard of one or more instances where a member at this conference put a female student or colleague down because she was female 3. † I have heard that a member at this conference made crude or offensive comments to female students or colleagues 4. † I have heard of one or more instances where a member at this conference engaged in inappropriate physical contact toward a female student or colleague 5. I have heard that individuals who propose feminist theoretical perspectives on research are laughed at, belittled, or not taken seriously 6. I have heard that the atmosphere at conference after-parties/events is sexualized or otherwise inappropriate 7. I have heard that conference after-parties/events are centered around alcohol
Climate	Sexist Attitudes & Treatment (SAT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. † A woman must out-perform a male colleague to be taken seriously at this conference 2. †† (R) Many members at this conference believe women miss out on good job opportunities 3. † Members at this conference have made gender stereotypical remarks 4. †† (R) Members at this conference are supportive of colleagues who want to balance their family and career 5. †† (R) Members at this conference respect both male and female colleagues equally 6. ††† Many members at this conference believe that discrimination against women is no longer a problem in the United States 7. ††† (R) Many members at this conference believe that society has reached the point where women and men have equal opportunities for achievement
Climate	Conference Material	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Audience reactions to talks or posters at this conference have been uncomfortable (e.g., cat calls, whistles, snickers) 2. Talks or posters given at the conference have contained gratuitous sexual content through verbal and/or visual presentations 3. † (R) Research is presented from a broad range of perspectives throughout the conference (i.e., includes the perspectives of women, feminists, minorities, etc) 4. Talks or posters at this conference have been presented from a gender stereotypical perspective (e.g., making assumptions about gender not supported by empirical research) 5. †† (R) During the conference, informal gatherings and conversations about conference material tend to include female students or colleagues

Note. † = adapted from Janz & Pyke, 2000, Perceptions of Chilly Climate Survey, PCCS; †† = adapted from Riger, Stokes, Raja, & Sullivan, 1997; Academic Work Environment Scale for Women, AWESW; ††† = adapted from the Modern Sexism Scale (Swim et al., 1995);

(R) = Reverse scored

Construct	Subscale	Specific Items
Microinequities	--	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. † Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately 2. Made inappropriate comments and/or advances toward you (e.g., suggestive glances, comments on appearance, etc) 3. † Put you down or was condescending toward you 4. † Paid little attention to your contribution or showed little interest in your opinion 5. Ignored a comment you made and later gave someone else credit for it 6. † Ignored or excluded you from informal networking opportunities 7. Made inappropriate comments or advances toward you during a conference after-party/event

Note. † = adapted from Cortina et al. (2001) Workplace Incivility Scale; (R) = Reverse scored

Construct	Subscale	Specific Items
Silence	--	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refrain from speaking up during meetings or discussions 2. Resist commenting during and/or after talks/presentations 3. Say nothing in response to sexist comments or behaviors
Voice	--	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Express concerns to others regarding sexist comments or behaviors 2. Report/file an official complaint for sexist comments or behaviors 3. Confront someone who made a sexist comment or behaved in a sexist way
Masculine Gender Performance (MasGP)	--	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. De-emphasize your physical features with conservative clothing 2. Behave in stereotypically masculine ways, such as being assertive and competitive 3. Try to act like "one of the guys"
Feminine Gender Performance (FemGP)	--	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Try to act like "one of the girls" 2. Accentuate your physical features 3. Behave in stereotypically feminine ways, such as being soft-spoken and yielding
Exit:Conference (ExitConf)	--	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I plan to attend this conference in the future 2. I intend to continue my membership in the academic society associated with this conference 3. I like attending this conference
Exit: Academia (ExitAcad)	--	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I intend to pursue or continue a tenure-track academic career 2. I feel well-suited to the academic atmosphere of my chosen discipline 3. I am confident that I can succeed in a tenure-track academic career

Appendix B

Email Recruitment

Initial Email recruitment email:

Email Subject - Request for research participation: Conference experiences

Dear colleague,

You are receiving this email because you have presented at an academic scientific conference recently. You were randomly selected from thousands of attendees from a number of societies. We would like to request your participation in our survey assessing your perceptions of the conference atmosphere and your personal experiences at the conference.

The survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and your name and/or email address will in no way be tied to your responses. Your participation is completely anonymous and confidential. Moreover, the name of specific conferences will not be published. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

If you would like to participate, please use this link:
[link provided here]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
[URL provided here]

Please direct any questions to me, Jacklyn Ratliff, at JRatliff@ku.edu or (785)864-9824.

Thank you in advance for your time,
Jacklyn Ratliff

Approved by the Human Subjects Committee, University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL# 19028).

Jacklyn M. Ratliff, M.A.
Doctoral Candidate
University of Kansas

Reminder Email:

Email Subject - Reminder: Request for research participation

Dear colleague,

About two weeks ago you received an e-mail asking you to assist us in completing an online study assessing your perceptions of and personal experiences with scientific conferences.

We know this is a busy time of year, but your perceptions and experiences are very important to us. If you can at all manage, we would greatly appreciate your participation at the following link: [PLACE LINK HERE].

The survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and your name and/or email address will in no way be tied to your responses. Your participation is completely anonymous and confidential.

Thank you in advance for your time,

Jacklyn Ratliff

Jacklyn M. Ratliff, M.A.
Doctoral Candidate
University of Kansas
JRatliff@ku.edu
(785) 864-9824

Appendix C

Comments from Conference MW attendees:

Gender	Age	Comments
Female	25	I do have one professor that is highly inappropriate in speaking down to his female colleagues. He 'joked' to a female colleague that she better get tenure because the only other place she could get a job was in porn. She didn't file any complaint against him. His name was on my poster, but he did not present the poster or attend any conference sessions with me. I think he signed up just for the vacation. So yes sexism does exist within the field but mostly in small psychology departments with a 'boys club' attitude from my experience. I don't think sexism would be initiated or allowed in a large professional conference like [Conference MW].
Female	39	I have not been to this particular conference in years. I attended recently and it was extremely large and overwhelming. So I only witnessed the tip of the iceberg, but sensed and witnessed not alarming or disturbing treatment that was gender-based. I have seen such things in other academic settings and other conferences, but not this one.
Female	55	I think the issue of attention to being female is different when you are at mid-life and don't have the 'looks' of a younger woman. I receive far less attention now than I did 30 years ago (I was in a different career). I enjoy not having the attention paid to my body and feel that I can attend to the academic / work at hand when at a conference. I also tend to ignore arrogant people and don't talk to folks who feel they can use insults to socially climb the academic ladder. Hence, a lot of my responses show that I don't see or hear the remarks or poor treatment of others at conferences. I set myself up to not be around it
Female	25	I want to clarify the reason why I do not speak up during discussions; it is not a question of gender but rather inexperience and a bit of intimidation of the experienced speakers.
Female	33	It was interesting to consider how many of the questions were not applicable and perhaps it is discipline specific – [this field] is comprised of huge numbers of prominent female and male researchers...if anything, young male colleagues are outnumbered by female colleagues...
Female	30	My impression as a female graduate student at [Conference MW] was very positive - of course, there are many women in this field, and it is certainly more female-friendly than the hard sciences. Good luck with your research!
Female	29	My particular field and the corresponding conference ([Conference MW]) is female dominated. Thus, the gender issues hinted at by many of these questions are rare as far as I can tell.
Female	54	My responses are skewed because my conference is very gender equal, and because I chose a teaching track rather than a tenure track because my husband is retired. I have experienced gender inequality experiences working in the research field and I do not at all believe they have disappeared. However, the conferences I attend are self-selected and I

		probably wouldn't wasted my time going to one where the experiences you are describing are par for the course.
Female	37	Some of the gender related issues you referred to have happened to me and other colleagues, just not at the conference you asked about. I rarely attend that conference and am less active in that organization therefore may not have been exposed to opportunities to experience many of these issues.
Male	49	Some women look at you with suspicion when you are a male conference [MW] because men can't possibly know anything about children. Some women are more interested in ideas than gender. I tend to hang around with the latter and avoid the former.
Female	26	[Conference MW] is a great conference and I don't notice any gender issues.
Male	48	The field (and, thus, the biennial [Conference MW] conference) is very heavily female -- perhaps even a majority of the researchers in this field are female. Thus, it is not surprising that I have never witnessed incidents of sexism at this conference.
Female	31	The survey was very thorough. Of course my responses are driven entirely by my own experience at my professional meetings. My experiences have been only positive, but I work in a discipline that has a strong female presence. I have heard differently from friends/colleagues in other disciplines. Best of luck with your research.
Female	51	These comments are specific only to [Conference MW]. I've been at other conferences where my experiences are VERY VERY different
Male	33	Thought provoking survey. In this field you sometimes feel like a minority as a man but I can't say I have ever experienced that as a problem.
Female	38	You hit on a few questions concerning balancing family life and an academic career. This is quite the challenge for me- In fact I am delaying applying for tenure track positions until my children our in school (at least Kindergarden) so I can rely on set times to dedicate to my work. Even then, I am not certain I can devote the time necessary to my work in order to get tenure. This may result in working in industry rather than academia, which would be a shame.

Comments from Conference EW attendees:

Gender	Age	Comments
Female	28	<p>A gender issue that I feel is hard to tap but does impact women at the conference (i.e. me) and in career goals in general is that the people who are in charge of the tenure-track climate and word tend to be very dominant and competitive males. They don't act directly sexist toward me or my colleagues, however I feel that my personality and my personal approach to science (i.e. less competitive, more collaborative and relaxed and not vying for position constantly) is not respected, or there is not room for it. It is seen as a weakness, for example, among the 'higher-ups' (almost always white males, old) if you see multiple sides to things and don't overstate your own theory. I think this competitive alpha-male climate makes academic less comfortable for women like myself, and for males like my advisor, who happens to be very uncompetitive. This subtle gendered atmosphere is prevalent in academic and in the business world, in my opinion, and makes one feel one has to act different and act harsher than one really is.</p>
Male	25	<p>As a young man, I have not had much personal experience with the sorts of sexism in academic contexts which seems to be the subject of this research. I think [this field of psychology] is acutely sensitive to many of these issues, due to the explicit theoretical interest of the field in issues of stereotyping, discrimination. Moreover, a substantial percentage of researchers in this area are female, and the field is very liberal as a whole. However, on several occasions female colleagues have shared with me certain negative experiences they have suffered with particular individuals, in which they were the object of unwanted sexual advances. Frequently, these situations involved older male professors whose research had proved of professional interest to aspiring female graduate students. As a result, these young women were often deeply hurt, since they suffered (beyond the discomfort of the advance itself) disillusionment regarding researchers they had once respected greatly and frustration that their intellectual potential could be seen as less important than their sexual attractiveness. I do not believe that these incidents reflect a systematic problem, and may simply reflect the unfortunate tendency (not unique to or characteristic of psychology in any respect) of men in positions of power to take advantage of bright young women with relatively low status. The situations is complicated by the fact that sincere romantic relationships sometimes develop between junior individuals and their academic seniors. I do not believe that the offending professors mentioned above intended their actions to be predatory, but were instead inclined to see the interest of a young woman as romantic in nature, when they would not have interpreted a young man's professional interests in such a light. The greatest fault for these individuals, in my opinion, is their inability to appreciate the incalculable personal harm that such advances can have upon the young women at which they are directed, leading them to question both their future in psychology and the good faith of their colleagues. For professors</p>

		who study psychology at a professional level, this kind of blindness to the effects of their own actions on young women is truly inexcusable. Of course, as a young man, I have not experienced any of these things personally, and my interpretation of the events may itself be biased by my perceptions of those involved.
Male	40	Because so much of the content of psychology is focused on gender stereotyping, sexism and social justice, people tend to be on their "best behavior" at [Conference EW]. HOWEVER.....the after parties are a completely different story. Lots of inappropriate sexual comments and behaviors. I avoid them, but have heard horror stories. You may wish to explore this issue further in future surveys, because that is where the sexism happens.
Female	40+	Difficult to respond to this with gender in mind only. Should have included comparable items assessing race-related issues.
Female	25	Especially for graduate students and young PhDs, the age and gender of their superiors really matters. In my experience, an older White man thinks that it is okay to say sexually suggestive comments to his male and female graduate students. It is a combination of too much power for too long, being professionally socialized in a different era, and the decreasing ability to self-monitor. However, I am fortunate to be in a field that takes gender bias very seriously, and I think most people watch themselves carefully to make sure that they are behaving in egalitarian ways.
Female	29	For the most part, the symposiums and poster sessions appear very professional. It is the mingling between or during these sessions where both sexist attitudes tend to be more allowed while simultaneously networking appears more imperative. On occasions, there can be a sense that because females outnumber males in graduate student populations, males are treated with an increases priority or with more academic respect.
Male	63	Gender is one variable to consider in people's academic conference experience, but it is only one of many. For example, one of the best things about the conferences this conference is that that they are open for graduate students to attend. Graduate students not only comprise a large portion of the attendees, but they bring a level of energy and enthusiasm to these conferences that simply isn't apparent at conferences of related organization which have traditionally limited graduate student attendance and involvement. In addition to encouraging graduate student attendance, [Conference EW] has developed special initiatives for its graduate student attendees, such as mentor lunches and special opportunities for graduate students to give talks. In my opinion, it is graduate student involvement that defines the unique character of [Conference EW] conferences much more than "gender effects" do.
Female	27	I also do gender research, so I may have had a non-representative experience; few people would make sexist comments/behaviors during a professional conference toward a researcher in my area. I hope.

Male	26	I am a white male graduate student. I just finished my 3rd year of graduate school and I have a great publication record (10 publication, 3 of which are first author, and 4 first author currently under review). I sometimes feel frustrated when I see a female and/or minority secure a good assistant professor positions when their publication record is clearly not as good as a white male's (I have seen this happen just a couple times). I have discussed this multiple times with my advising professor, but I would never bring this up publicly or mention it to my female and/or minority colleagues because I feel certain that I would be accused of being racist or sexist. However, I believe this is an issue that is worth discussing publicly.
Female	43	I am lucky that I haven't experienced much direct discrimination or other gender-based threats; I also haven't witnessed too many recently (I saw many in grad school). Most of my own experiences like this in recent years have been with one or two individuals who I think have serious interpersonal problems and I attribute their inappropriate touching/comments and attempts to use emotional intimacy as a way of getting me to do their work and support their ideas to their pathology as well as to the fact that I'm a woman. But more covert sexism persists - men do all the talking at most meetings at the university as well as conferences and my own difficulty with assertiveness is in part my own shyness and in part a gendered phenomenon. I have gotten in trouble with colleagues and (mostly female) supervisors when I've spoken out about ethical violations in the lab and I think this would have been seen differently (less easily dismissed as a shrill/hysterical personal/emotional issue) if I were a man. For the record, the lab I've been working in for 8 years studies gender-based rejection sensitivity (although that is not my line of work personally).
Female	34	I have not noticed any of these gender related issues at the [Conference EW] conference but I have noticed behaviors at other conferences.
Female	27	I realized that although I do not think there is overt sexism, I do still feel there is actually a young boys club where young men become friends as grad students, collaborate more with each other as professors, write up symposium conferences with each other and it can be hard for women to break into that. I'm not even sure they mean to do it, I think they just find it easier to talk to the other men.

Female	35	I think that the [Conference EW] is a good reflection of the field more generally. There are dominant/popular research topics and ways of approaching these topics. If one is doing what is popular in a way considered 'good', he or she is in. I don't think it has anything to do with gender. Feminist theories do not have to be the thing of the day and that is why they are confined at best to specific areas of research (e.g., STEM and education maybe). There is a lot of research on stereotyping (that is one of the 'in' topics) so people are very careful not to say or do something that explicitly implies them endorsing a stereotype in research. / One area where this is not the case is of balance between work and family life. Taking a maternity leave or wanting to spend any time with a child is considered a sign of weakness or lack of commitment to work. I have heard comments at this conference and outside of it to that regard. It seems that the only way to actually do what the field considers needs to be done to have a tenure track career anywhere other than at a small teaching college is to follow a path my office mate is taking. She leaves home before her infant son is awake and comes home often after he is asleep. If a woman decides to have a child, she is assumed to be less ambitious (and probably less able).
Female	26	I think the concept of benevolent sexism is the most important issue facing female graduate students studying personality and social psychology.
Male	35	People are likely to respond in a way that will advance their particular philosophical or political viewpoints rather than provide an accurate assessment of their experience at conferences. In any case, for the amount of time involved in taking the survey, I was hoping for something much more substantial. There are problems with conference structure and the impact on scientific knowledge that are far more significant and alarming than anything addressed here in this survey. Even so, I hope you find something interesting and rewarding, I know it's difficult to achieve a good balanced sample for this type of study.
Male	27	In regard to the ideas expressed in this survey, [Conference EW] feels very black-and-white. The conference itself is very collegial, and I have neither experienced nor heard anything in the way of sexism during the proceedings. Everything outside the conference, however, is centered around alcohol and very sexual. I can only imagine an uncomfortable shift in power and roles for women attending these events - it often feels like the "boys club." There is also a lot of professional pressure (i.e., "networking") to attend these events, despite how uncomfortable or unseemly they can be.
Male	30	It was difficult answering several questions because they didn't apply to me. For example, even though I listed my sex as male, I still received questions that seemed primarily to be meant for females.
Male	33	item: "that the atmosphere at conference after-parties/events is sexualized or otherwise inappropriate" [Conference EW] typically has an unofficial afterparty that is drunk and sexy, but I don't think that's at all inappropriate. Why does sexualized (OUTSIDE a professional context)

		mean inappropriate? Women like sex too, geez.
Female	33	It's been a little sad for me to grow up within [Conference EW]. From my current vantage point, there are precious few women my age attending conferences and events as regularly (most are younger or older). This is mostly due to family and financial constraints, and my male colleagues are less encumbered. The ickiest part is watching older men soak in (or seek out) the fawning attention from mostly young women. There's an element of being starstruck that I very much understand, but I hear stories of and see many examples of men taking advantage of that imbalance. / Good luck with your research!
Female	34	It's hard to say, right? I mean, whether or not my successes and shortfalls are due to my sex? I caught myself attributing some of my shortfalls due to my sex, but not my successes. I know that the interpretation may seem as though I want to blame sexism for my falling short, but to take personal credit for when I do well. But I really don't think that that is the case. I know that my academic advisor discriminated based on sex; he was much harder on his female graduate students than he was on his male graduate students. The common interpretation was this was his fear of abandonment; women were much more likely to put up with his antics but men were much more likely to simply switch advisors. Thus, he could "get away" with being a bad advisor with his women grad students, failing to give us good feedback, but wouldn't dare do that with his grad students who were men. I also know that he tried to steal many of my ideas, but I don't know if that's because I'm a woman or because he just had problems. He was quick to praise me, but I don't think that had to do with my being a woman (and his expectations of me being lower), or if he just wanted to point to my successes as his successes. All in all, I'm glad to be done with graduate school.
Male	35	I've never heard sexist jokes, comments, or seen either. I've seen in after parties not associated with the conference flirting and maybe inappropriate comments - but this was outside the conference, in a social setting, and thus I cannot be sure that either party was in attendance at the conference (but thought they may be).
Female	37	Most of the gender-based harassment I see is directed toward the female PhD students (e.g., my grad students). It's generally sexualized situations (flirtatiousness, efforts to create compromised situations, etc). It's almost all at the parties where the women stop attending when they "grow up" and become faculty members, but a subset of men regularly attend, despite the fact that they are "old geezers" in the students' eyes. Nonetheless, the students are taken by their "fame" and enjoy the attention until they realize that there might be more than meets the eyes in terms of sexualized motives. As a more established faculty member, my conference experiences are limited by the reality of being a parent and the difficulty of balancing conferences and child care, time away from home, etc.

Female	31	My field is very aware of sexism and problems women face, and it is generally a great field to work in, but as always there are a few bad apples -- people who behave inappropriately. I think the biggest problem in our field regarding gender issues is not so much that there a lot of offenders, but that most men aren't aware that there are still some offenders - enough that many women I know have had the experience, at some point in their career, of a man in the field behaving inappropriately towards them in a sexist way. Again, it doesn't happen often, but I suspect many men in my field think it is still more rare than it actually is.
Female	30	Some of the evening events--ones that are intended to be primarily social--are sexualized, but not in a way that I would necessarily consider bad. I have never felt unsafe at them.
Female	43	[Conference EW] is the most diverse conference I go to, and this I love. In general the discipline and conference are welcoming to all people, including women. Having said that, there are some bad apples in the field. These include men who purposefully or unconsciously (can't be sure which!) are sexist, sexualize women, or marginalize women. Also included are women who sexualize themselves.
Male	30	[Conference EW] wouldn't let kids in free for many years. Not family friendly.
Female	25	Thanks for the opportunity to share. I've only been to [Conference EW] once, and though I've never experienced anything personally that I would consider offensive, there are a couple instances that fell in a "gray area": / 1) When I was presenting my poster, a male attendee (probably a professor based on age) came up to my poster and stayed for a really long time. After a while he had nothing left to say and just stared at the poster which was awkward, and I felt like I missed the opportunity to talk with other colleagues because of this. He didn't actually say anything inappropriate so I don't know if me being a woman was the cause, but when I mentioned it to my advisor she seemed suspicious. I think I had many more male visitors to my poster than female ones, which surprised me since I think there were more women overall at the conference. (My poster topic was sexuality-related--perhaps this is relevant?). / 2) A friend of mine told me she had a similar experience--presenting her poster and a man came up who stayed a really long time. She said he made some comments about feminism that were odd--as if he were trying to be feminist but missing the point a bit. / 3) This conference was interesting in that it was a mix of perspectives, including feminism and evolutionary psych, which tend to butt heads. Though I didn't always agree completely with some of the assumptions/interpretations/focuses of some of the evolutionary psychology presentations, I think that overall the atmosphere was respectful of differing ideas.
Female	33	The conference that I attended is one that caters to research on sexism and harrassment issues. It would be very surprising (although not improbable) for members of this conference to behave in such a manner.

Male	52	The survey is poorly designed and contains many questions that are irrelevant to my experience.
Female	23	There may be some generational gap in my experiences at the conference. I was surprised by how many male and white professors were senior members of the society, mostly because I am used to the graduate student composition at my school and similar schools being highly racially diverse and including lots of women. That surprising new demographic division itself made me feel slightly less comfortable than normal, but it was also my first time attending the conference so that could be it.
Male	50	This survey is clearly about gender bias, so let me address that topic squarely. For better or for worse, there is a bias against males in the field. The bias is not in getting into grad school, treatment at conferences, getting published, or getting tenure. I know of no one who would tolerate such discrimination. The bias is in hiring and we go along with it because we want diversity and we desperately need more faculty. I have three times sat on search committees at two different universities where it was clearly communicated by the dean that we were to hire a woman or minority or not hire at all. I sat on a fourth search committee that was at the assistant/associate level but we were told that only women would be considered at the associate level. This is not just my experience. A colleague told me his search for senior faculty member was shut down because the committee submitted to the dean the name of a white male. His problem was that his university was not in a desirable location and he could not get senior female or minority faculty to apply. I don't entirely object to this bias because we need lines and I'll take 'em any way I can get them. Also, I want to see more women and minorities in the field. Finally, in the last few years we have had superb female applicants to faculty positions. Indeed, 3 of the top 6 graduates from my PhD program in the last 20 years have been women. However, I wish search committees were allowed to be more honest when they have gender or race constraints on their hiring.

Comments from Conference LW attendees:

Gender	Age	Comment
Male	28	A lot of my research focuses on sexual behaviors, and it is a prominent topic in the type of psyc presented at the conference I attended. I don't think inappropriate sexual bx occurs frequently- the question posed-but there is a certain amount of sexualized interactions.
Male	39	sexuality, sex differences, and sex acts are regular topics at the [Conference LW]. It is therefore to be expected that these will be topics of conversation throughout the conference socialising and will be used in jokes, 'banter' etc. It is therefore difficult to ascertain in this context what is appropriate and what isn't. It is very clear that at an accountants conference, jokes about double entry book-keeping are appropriate but sexualising this joke may not be. When the topic of research is just this kind of area, what jokes are appropriate? That said, I have attempted to answer the questions in the spirit they are being asked and have assumed appropriate means inclusive, non-exclusionary and respectful behaviour. P.S. [Conference LW] is also a science conference and therefore anyone attempting to introduce literary criticism (e.g. post-modernism) as a valid scientific method is legitimately excluded.
Male	41	Any gathering of people, for a number of days, away from their normal lives, will engender a series of social interactions across the board. People do the science, they do the formal and informal networking and I imagine they do other things too. My experience of [Conference LW], as understood in terms of its meeting and the formal and informal gatherings associated with it, is of relaxed professionalism. The sex ratio is fairly even in terms of representation and many of our leaders are women. The issue of sex differences is one of our scientific concerns and people are frank about their views on the topic but they are respectful of others and not sexist. I have seen romantic relationships seeded, blooming and, sadly, failing in this context, but that is normal behaviour. I have never sensed coercion or people taking advantage of status etc. but have sensed shared interests leading to mutual affection. Likewise, many of my best friendships have been developed in the context of this conference and other similar meetings. One cannot really extract the science from the scientist. But this study clearly wants to probe inappropriate behaviours and ask the question 'do conference settings relax social norms?' One might predict that as the community serviced by this meeting is small and most everyone knows each other by name that strong injunctive social norms are more likely to prevail.

Female	30	<p>If someone says something about me or someone else being attractive then of course it is because we are female if they are heterosexual males but I don't think that making comments about others being attractive is necessarily inappropriate or sexist. Also, this conference embraces that men and women are different and while some might overstep what is shown empirically it isn't necessarily a "stereotype". Finally there is some titillating material presented at these conferences but by and large nobody is offended so in some ways I think I may not really "get" the whole premise of this survey. This field of psychology has some incredibly strong women researchers who are very well respected and I always feel heard and appreciated so at the core, to me, that's what matters.</p>
Female	30	<p>This field is by its nature is concerned with gender differences, biological and socialized, as well as their adaptive implications. Topics of a sexual nature (mate selection and sexual strategies) are also very common. Hardline feminints may take offense at these topics but in general those offended by evolution are falling prey to the naturalistic fallacy--just because something exists in nature and does not mean it is good or right. For instance, Thornhill's notion that rape maybe be adaptive and evolved does not mean that rape should be condoned, as the extreme feminist camp has accused him of saying.</p>
Male	44	<p>First, I tend to be a little more sensitive than most to gender issues because of my background in Anthropology. In addition, being a scholar of sexual selection requires a working knowledge of and sensitivity to feminist concerns and perspectives. I have witnessed gratuitous sexualized images included in posters and presentations on very rare occasions. However, I have also witnessed senior [Conference LW] members "police" and educate fellow members to appropriate behavior. In general, the degree of inappropriate behavior is on par with or less than any other Psychology conference I've attended.</p>
Male	35	<p>For [Conference LW] some questions are difficult to answer since a major part of the research that is presented is on sexual selection in humans. Content on mate choice etc is thus necessary and if there were no controversies on human evolution and especially sexual selection in humans scientific progress couldn't be made. The difficulty for the questions was rather to distinguish between scientific remarks and private remarks.</p>

Female	27	<p>[Conference LW] is not a typical conference atmosphere for psychologists due to the nature of evolutionary research. Most women involved in this type of research are less offended by research on gender differences and less sensitive to suggestive research in general (at least for me personally and other women I know). Research on sex or "mating behavior" is far more common than at other meetings I've attended. There is some disregard for "feminist" theories if they are seen as only a knee jerk response to evidence of gender differences and are not well supported. Of course this is not the only topic at the conference and much of the research has nothing to do with gender issues.</p>
Male	43	<p>[Conference LW] members are sensitive to issues of gender discrimination - and I think has more female participation than most science societies. Sometimes feminist theoretical positions are ridiculed in private (not in public generally) - but it's not because of gender/sexual discrimination - it's because those theories run counter to the theories of the conference members. They (including women) just think the people are wrong. I think that sometimes sexual attraction researchers use "sexy" images and other media material in their talks for glitz, but most of these researchers are outspoken proponents for gender equality. The conference is also gay friendly. Overall, I believe the conference environment is very open, liberal, and gender equal.</p>
Male	24	<p>I attend a conference on sexual behaviour and mate preferences. Many of the talks contain sexually graphic content, but it is generally handled respectfully. Because of a historical lack of female researchers in this field, and a lack of research focus on female mate preferences and female agency in mate selection, female colleagues are well respected, especially if they offer a perspective which attributes greater female agency to the process by which humans attract and retain mates. Despite this, some colleagues are notorious for the 'male gaze' and generally taking advantage of the asymmetrical relationship between eager graduate student and famous professor. Luckily, the few who engage in this behaviour are not well regarded for it and it is generally regarded as a shame on the conference.</p>

Male	41	I did experience too many of the questions as biased, which probably provoked me a little and could have influenced my reporting - although I tried not to let this happen. If this was intended, that is ok, but if not this might be a problem for this survey. In general there is a theoretical dispute between some feminist theorists and some members of the society - and while I previously have had to moderate such as session chair, in general this does not get too bad. On the other hand suggesting that all sexual contact between consenting adults after sessions at a conference like this seems a little strange to me - and I found it very difficult to respond as I had to decide that what was meant was really something I would not call inappropriate...
Male	34	I had a problem with your definition of "gender stereotypical" as "unsupported by empirical research". This is not the way most people use the term, and it might confound your results. I am a sex differences researcher, and can attest that a large number of "gender stereotypes" are actually supported by empirical research. This is a tricky issue.
Female	33	I have a problem with the first series of questions because I know of many rumors that circulate regarding interactions between male and female colleagues at [Conference LW] and yet no one ever has any hard evidence to back up the rumors. It seems as though these findings will just replicate what those of us in the field (and those of us who are members of one specific lab in this field) have to contend with on a yearly basis. No our advisor does not sleep with his female grad students, no he does not pick his grad students because they are pretty, and no he does not collect us as trophies to feed his male ego. Some of the best researchers in our field are female and have come up with some of the most well respected theories. I have never once witnessed an incident where a female (or male) was disregarded for expressing a feminist viewpoint or for suggesting that females contribute something unique to culture. I also have never once witnessed a female grad student be taken advantage of, or sexually harassed, or anything of the nature. I have been to many academic conferences other than [Conference LW] and I find the behavior of academics at [Conference LW] to be no differ than the behavior of academics at other conferences. I think rumors fly more often at [Conference LW] as result of it being a smaller more close knit community than other conferences I have attended.

Female	38	<p>I have attended this conference several times. I have had occasional experiences with drunk male older colleagues flirting with younger women. This has always been after hours, however, and perpetrated by people who have a bit of a negative reputation for doing this type of thing. I would NOT say that this is a pervasive norm or something promoted by the conference itself. Most people's behavior at the conference is very professional. Likewise, some of the people who do sex research, both men and women, sometimes include images that could possibly be viewed as gratuitous in their talks. It is hard to view this as sexist in the stereotypical sense, however, since it is done by both men and women and the images may be of either men or women and sometimes the results being presented confirm stereotypes, sometimes they do not. In fact, some of the hot areas of research right now are focused on problematizing traditional 'stereotypical' evolutionary perspectives about gender and behavior. Several of the questions don't apply well to the conference. There are some people who identify as feminist evolutionary anthropologists/primatologists, but this really isn't a subdiscipline the way it is in other fields. Most women (and men) are more focused on theoretical questions or topics which aren't clearly related to anything one could call feminism. There are also conference attendees who would call themselves feminists in their politics and personal lives, but again this isn't really what people are focusing on when attending the conference. Much of the work presented, even the work on gender, would not fall under most stereotypical ideas of what a 'feminist perspective' would look like--not because it is anti-feminist in content, however, but because that terminology is really borrowed from other disciplines and doesn't have a clear meaning in this context.</p>
Female	27	<p>If I have experienced any judgment at this conference because I am a woman it has been judgment by other women rather than by men.</p>

Male	31	<p>I'm sure sexism exists at these conferences - especially evolutionary ones. The idea that social norms shape men's or women's behavior is not taken seriously. It appears the dominant perspective is men will be men and women will be women. In many ways hearing about reproductive value and evolutionary success all day gets to these men and women and they start acting the part. However, [in other fields] the idea that innate differences or evolution has shaped men's or women's behavior is not taken seriously. One would be skinned and broiled if an inappropriate comment was made - yet they happen. [Conference LW] seems to have an "out in the open" sexism of men having an "excuse" to "just be men." By contrast other (more PC) psychology conferences have this weird sexual tension. Take another field of] psych- they have a party that originated as a method of profs. hooking up with students .Yet, they research sexual harassment, sexism, gender equity, etc. and claim to be the strongest proponents (or so they say) of equality and anti-sexism. I do think there are people at [Conference LW] who are innately sexist and others who go out of their way to be equal and treat people fairly. Good luck with your research.</p>
Female	27	<p>overall, I feel there are some pig-heads at this conference. But more important to me is that my colleagues - male and females, grad students and professors alike, all recognize these people as creepy and/or sexist. Some of the stories of "inappropriate material" that I have heard about past conferences (such as photographs of breasts accompanying a data-poor study on breast morphology) were told specifically because a female academic immediately tore one poster off the wall and threw it in the trash. This was, as far as I can gather, supported by most conference attendees. It is retold as a sort of heroic tale, and was repeated to me with glee by a male professor at my university. It has been nice to be involved in the [Conference LW] community and to see so many strong female researchers (and male researchers, too) who are completely willing to confront blatant sexism or even just machismo.</p>
Female	40	<p>Many of the topics of [this] conference were sexual because it is a frequent subject of empirical investigations--thus, attendees may be desensitized to some of the phenomena about which you asked.</p>

Male	37	<p>Most of the social drama that I see at [Conference LW] revolves around status and power, both people marketing themselves and also those trying to gain the favor and attention of high status people, e.g., trying to get in with important people for lunch or dinner. This is very apparent at times and both men and women are involved. Yes, I have heard of both lecherous males and women who use their sexuality to gain advantage. I rarely witness these interactions in person; I guess I am not invited to the risqué parties. I have also seen specific women try to exclude others from group activities, like a Junior High “we are popular kids” game. I will be interested to see the results of this study, especially if there is a comparison amongst conferences in other fields.</p>
Female	36	<p>Re. the earlier questions: I am a female who studies females, and I think that female colleagues at this conference have been favorable toward me because they are women in a woman's world, like I am. My interactions with males are fine, but it's hard for them to intuit my research, so they sometimes dismiss it, but are usually very curious and attentive when I tell them recent findings. The sex difference in with whom I interact , I think, isn't due so much to male disinterest, but a much larger interest by females--so they're the ones I hang out with for much of the conference time.</p>

Male	35	<p>Regarding [Conference LW], you need to understand that much of the research centers on sex differences, and although certain discussions may seem offensive to a casual observer, the shared background in evolutionary theory informs much of the conversation, both formal and informal. Regarding the evolutionary theory, both male and female researchers recognize that both men and women (and boys and girls) can be powerful drivers of evolutionary change. A leading theory of human evolution, for example, suggests that some of the unique characteristics of our species (e.g., the late age of reproduction relative to other primates, predominantly monogamous marriages, etc.) are the result of female mating strategies (i.e., sexual selection by females). It is probably inevitable, therefore, that some of the shared perspectives show up during informal gatherings. My impression is that after-hours events at [Conference LW] are no more sexually-charged than at other conferences. It would likely seem different to an outsider, though. I can remember, for example, approaching a couple of young ladies from a well-known lab group that specializes on mating psychology. Well, after a few pleasantries, the conversation turned toward a casual discussion of the mating strategies at work around us. A couple of minutes later, I found myself confessing to these women that I could certainly imagine myself having sex with them . . . and they were totally cool with this. And when I said that I could envision them as both a short-term or a long-term mate (this is an important distinction in this line of work), they said something like, "That's so sweet." I'm not doing a good job of describing it, but [Conference LW] is just different. [Conference LW] is a place where women present research on pornography. During some of those presentations, they will sometimes make offhand comments about the sexual inclinations of men, which almost inevitably elicit some chuckles from both male and female participants. But attention soon returns to the data, the analysis, and the interpretation. We are products of our culture, and we may therefore feel a little uncomfortable discussing sex, but because reproduction is so crucial to the understanding of human evolution, we wade through as best we can while trying to discern the important details that inform our research.</p>
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Male	37	Scholars at [Conference LW]--both men and women--universally recognize that there are differences between the population-average behaviors of the sexes and that many of these differences are consistent with the predictions of evolutionary theory. No one feels threatened by this proposition, nor, in my experience does anyone treat their male or female colleagues any differently because of it. [Conference LW]ers are comfortable with recognizing that these differences exist without making a value judgment that such differences are good or bad, or assuming that the existence of such differences is any kind of justification for discrimination. Contrast this with(the other major conference I regularly attend), which is generally hostile to science, more specifically hostile to evolutionary science, and in particular hostile towards men who do evolutionary science. One need look no further for an example than the witchhunt Napoleon Chagnon experienced during the "Darkness in Eldorado" debacle. It is difficult to imagine that Dr. Chagnon would have experienced the same hatred and hostility and the same a priori assumptions of guilt and malfeasance if he had been female. The irony for me is that the scientists who study sexual differences are far less sexist and discriminatory, in my experience, than the humanists who purport to hold the moral high-ground.
Male	65	Since i am a male academic, many of these questions really did not apply to me.
Male	34	The major criticisms lodged against feminist studies at this conference have largely concerned the interpretive epistemology and methodologies employed in that field of study.
Female	33	The men in charge of [Conference LW] (and it is mostly run by men, it seems) are well known as being "cads". That's what I hear, and what I've experienced (I've experienced significant harassment and discrimination at my university, which is one of the primary reasons I've decided not to pursue a career in academia- I was disgusted with the men's egos, and how academia doesn't have sufficient rules and policies against sexual harassment and gender discrimination. Female grad students have little protection.
Female	26	There are some men that act inappropriately towards women and make crude comments, but overall the conference, and other conferences as well, are professional and very non-sexist. I don't think the conference can be judged by the few that make it inappropriate.
Male	42	There is typically a lot of research on sex differences at this conference, pretty much all very strongly theoretically based. This tends to create a context in which people understand implications of gratuitous gendering (versus theoretically based hypotheses) and are avoiding the former.

Female	36	<p>I think they reflect sexual tension that is especially present at [Conference LW], as compared to other conferences that I have attended. (My area of psychology is primarily dominated by women, which may be why I experience many fewer sexualized interactions there.) I haven't attended [Conference LW] since becoming an assistant professor but, as a graduate student and post-doc, I frequently sought out opportunities to talk with well-established colleagues, most of whom were male. I did so because I recognize the value of networking and I wanted to hear their opinions on my work. Almost invariably, these colleagues really listened to what I had to say and were very supportive. However, these interactions were often sexually-charged (e.g., inappropriate comments, glances, etc.). While I don't doubt that these colleagues were sincerely interested in my work and career, I have been bothered by the sexualized nature of these interactions. I don't know if they would have taken me more seriously if I were male. Or, alternatively, if they would have been less interested in talking to me if I were male. In any case, the fact that my status as a young single woman undoubtedly affected my interactions with my senior male colleagues is indicative of the rampant impact of gender bias still present at all levels in academia.</p>
Female	40	<p>While I wouldn't suggest that there is a complete absence of sexism among members of [Conference LW] (and I have encountered a couple of absolute dolts who seem to be clueless about actual evidence regarding gender/sex differences) I find that the subject matter we cover lends itself to a field that displays a 'different but equal' attitude. As a female grad student and starting academic, I have had wonderful mentors and contacts within the society (both male and female) and have never felt that my gender/sex was either a barrier or a benefit. Finally, the one time that I experienced mildly inappropriate (and easily dealt with) sexual advances, it was from a female grad student, not a male colleague or superior.</p>