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Not Minding the Gap:

How Hostile Sexism Encourages Choice Explanations for the Gender Income Gap

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Abstract

Researchers have shown that prejudice encourages explanations for inequality that attribute stigmatized groups' negative outcomes to internal-controllable causes. We extend this research by investigating how ambivalent sexism affects attributions for gender income inequality. We argue that hostile sexism facilitates acceptance of gender income inequality through attributions that emphasize individual choice. We tested this hypothesis in two web-based samples of predominately White American men and women, ranging in age from 18 to 82 years ($M_{\text{age}} = 33.8$). In Study 1 ($N = 648$), hostile sexism, but not benevolent sexism, positively predicted acceptance of gender income inequality. Attributions of choice and societal unfairness mediated this effect. In Study 2 ($N = 242$), following exposure to hostile sexism, participants showed increased acceptance of gender income inequality, and choice explanations mediated this relation, although these effects occurred for political conservatives only. Consistent with prior work on attributions, hostile sexism was linked to victim-blaming attributions for gender income inequality. Our findings show that hostile sexism creates an attitudinal barrier to espousing equal pay for women. To overcome this barrier, we recommend that organizations implement strategies aimed at ensuring more objective performance evaluations and pay decisions. Further, we suggest that policymakers and communicators be careful in choosing how they frame the gender pay gap.

Keywords: sexism, pay equity, system justification, attributions

Not Minding the Gap:

How Hostile Sexism Encourages Choice Explanations for the Gender Income Gap

Since the enactment of equal pay legislation in the 1960s, women have made considerable progress toward gender equality in the workplace. However, despite the advancement of women in labor force participation (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014, 2017), educational attainment (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012), and leadership roles (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014, 2017), women remain underrepresented in the highest-paying and most powerful positions in the U.S. (Catalyst, 2013, 2017) and continue to earn less than men.

The size of the gender wage gap depends on how it is measured, but women's average incomes remain lower than men's, even after controlling for hours worked, education, occupation, industry, and other factors related to pay (i.e., human capital; Blau & Kahn, 2006; Corbett & Hill, 2012). While the portion of the pay gap attributable to human capital has shrunk, progress in closing the remaining gap, often attributed to discrimination, has stalled (Blau & Kahn, 2006). To further shrink the gender pay gap, beyond traditional human capital approaches, some researchers (e.g., Lips, 2013) have explored how psychological and cultural understandings of gender perpetuate gender income inequality.

Ambivalent sexist beliefs establish a “coordinated system of rewards and punishments” (Glick, 2006, p. 288) that functions to maintain gender–status divisions: Women who compete with men in the workplace encounter hostility (hostile sexism), and women who embrace limited but traditional gender roles win preferential treatment (benevolent sexism; Glick, Diebold, Bailey-Werner, & Zhu, 1997; Glick & Fiske, 1996). Hostile sexism focuses on beliefs about women's agency at work. Hostile sexists view working women as wanting to gain power over

men, but perhaps also as making incompetent choices to do so. Ambivalent sexism perpetuates gender-based inequalities in close relationships (Lee, Fiske, Glick, & Chen, 2010; Moya, Glick, Expósito, de Lemus, & Hart, 2007), as well as at work (Dardenne, Dumont, & Bollier, 2007). However, its role in shaping attitudes toward gender income inequality remains unexplored to date.

Extending work on the role of prejudice in shaping attributions (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003), we argue that hostile sexism fosters acceptance of the gender income gap by encouraging perceptions that women's inferior economic outcomes result from unconstrained choices, which therefore justifies them. Specifically, hostile sexism encourages choice explanations for the gender income gap, which in turn increase satisfaction with the current system of income inequality between men and women.

Ambivalent Sexism

Ambivalent Sexism Theory (Glick & Fiske, 1996) characterizes prejudice toward women as entailing two correlated but oppositely valenced attitudes. Hostile sexism (HS) comprises openly antagonistic attitudes toward women, and benevolent sexism (BS) entails subjectively positive but paternalistic attitudes toward women. Hostile sexism depicts women as inept competitors who are eager to use their sexuality and feminist ideology to upset men's place in the gender hierarchy, but who ultimately lack the competence to do so. Benevolent sexism emphasizes women's and men's compensating strengths and weaknesses, but also women's lower status. Images of the "purer sex" idealize women, but images of the inherently "weaker sex" patronize women (Welter, 1966).

Consistent with the prediction that hostile and benevolent sexism operate in concert to maintain gender status differences, both forms of sexism correlate with national indicators of

gender inequality in longevity, income, standards of living, and access to power and education (Glick, 2006; Glick et al., 2000; Glick et al., 2004). Although they work together, benevolent and hostile sexism serve distinct functions in maintaining gender inequality. BS rewards women who embrace “traditional femininity”, and HS penalizes women who deviate from gender stereotypes.

Ambivalent Sexism Differs by Female Subtypes

As with stereotypes of other social groups, stereotypes of women vary along the dimensions of warmth and competence (Stereotype Content Model; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). Groups that represent the cultural default (e.g., White, middle class, heterosexual, males) appear both warm and competent, while many other groups seem either warm or competent, but not both (Fiske et al., 2002). Although traditional stereotypes portray women, at a group level, as more warm than competent, stereotypes of women also vary by the perceived status and competition of female subgroups (Eckes, 2002; Fiske et al., 2002). Women who take on traditional roles, such as housewives, seem cooperative and nonthreatening, and therefore, receive a stereotype as warm and incompetent. Women who assume nontraditional roles, such as career women, seem threatening and elicit a stereotype as competent (at least, relative to other women) but cold (Eckes, 2002).

Hostile and benevolent sexism target different subgroups of women. Hostile sexism targets women who, by participating in traditionally male domains, pose a threat to the existing social hierarchy. Hostile sexism predicts negative evaluations of nontraditional women, such as ambitious professional women (Glick et al., 1997; Glick, Wilkerson, & Cuffe, 2015). Further, HS, but not BS, predicts preferences for male authorities (Rudman & Kilianski, 2000), negative evaluations of female managerial candidates (Masser & Abrams, 2004), beliefs in women’s incompetence in the workplace (Christopher & Wojda, 2008), and opposition to equal pay and

opportunity policies (Sibley & Perry, 2010). In contrast, benevolent sexism uniquely predicts positive attitudes toward women who fulfill traditional roles within the home, such as housewives (Glick et al., 1997). Benevolent sexism also predicts positive attitudes toward women who follow role prescriptions regarding female sexuality (e.g., chaste women; Sibley & Wilson, 2004) and motherhood (e.g., breastfeeding women; Forbes, Adams-Curtis, Hamm, & White, 2003). BS encourages women's adherence to traditional gender roles, for instance, by leading them to define themselves in line with gender-stereotypes (Barreto, Ellemers, Piebinga & Moya, 2010). Thus, hostile sexism enforces the traditional gendered division of labor by limiting women's advancement in the workplace, whereas benevolent sexism limits women's status by prescribing roles within close relationships (Hammond & Overall, 2015).

An Argument for Hostile Sexism

A number of studies argue that benevolent sexism, compared to hostile sexism, is more effective in rationalizing gender inequality, precisely because of its ability to subtly elicit women's cooperation with a patriarchal system (Becker & Wright, 2011; Connelly & Heesacker, 2012; Jost & Kay, 2005; Napier, Thorisdottir, & Jost, 2010). Based on this body of research, one might conclude that benevolent sexism would be a stronger predictor of attitudes toward gender income inequality than hostile sexism. However, a more nuanced analysis suggests a stronger role for HS, which focuses on women working (or not).

Contemporary hostile forms of racism and sexism assert Black men and women and all women have unfair advantages. Those espousing hostile beliefs resent this perceived advantage and deny discrimination is an explanation for current inequality (Swim, Aikin, Hall, & Hunter, 1995). Anti-Black attitudes link to particular (stereotypic) attributions (e.g., poor Black people are lazy), which help to justify Black-White income gaps. For example, racial hostility predicts

angry reactions to welfare recipients and lower support for redistributive policy, because of related individualistic attributions for poverty (Federico, 2005; Henry, Reyna, & Weiner, 2004). We argue that, similar to anti-Black attitudes, hostile sexism supports individualistic attributions for women's lower incomes.

Hostile sexism characterizes men as possessing the necessary characteristics for high-status positions, while it characterizes women as whiny competitors who "are seeking special favors," "exaggerate the problems they have at work," and "complain about being discriminated against" when they "lose to men in a fair competition" (Glick & Fiske, 1996). By casting women as complainers unable to succeed in men's work world without special help, hostile sexism justifies men's authority and status in the workplace (Glick & Fiske, 1996). We expected hostile sexist individuals to focus on reasons for gender income gaps that blame individual women for their misfortunes (and credit individual men for their successes).

Paternalistic prejudices, such as benevolent sexism, by contrast, correlate with helping but neglecting reactions (Fiske et al., 2002). Benevolent sexism ascribes men authority and responsibility to act in women's best interests. Thus, benevolent sexism may sometimes foster support for women's equality and rights (e.g., Abrams, Houston, Van de Vyver, & Vasiljevic, 2015). However, such support should only extend to defending women who accept prescribed low-status roles. Women who flout these expectations (e.g., by competing with men in the workplace) do not deserve the same protection. By rejecting dependent roles (thus posing a threat to men's status), working women remove themselves from the "protection" afforded by benevolent sexism and subject themselves to hostile sexism. Benevolent sexism is the "carrot" used to ensure women's cooperation; analogously, hostile sexism is the "stick" used to punish

women who rebel. In the present study, we expected that HS, but not BS, would predict acceptance of gender income inequality through choice explanations for the gender income gap.

Sexism and Explanations for the Gender Income Gap

Causal attributions for a group's negative outcomes determine affective reactions and behavioral intentions toward that group (Brandt & Reyna, 2011). Beliefs that a group's negative outcomes result from controllable factors (e.g., lack of effort, choice), predict hostility and unwillingness to help the group (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Weiner, Perry, & Magnusson, 1988; Zucker & Weiner, 1993). For example, "people on welfare" elicit more negative responses and reduced support for economic assistance programs compared to "poor people," because the former label supports controllability attributions for economic disadvantage (Henry et al., 2004). Conversely, beliefs that a group's negative outcomes result from uncontrollable causes, such as discrimination, predict pity and sympathy for the group and increased support for policies that benefit the group (Henry et al., 2004; Weiner et al., 1988).

However, pre-existing social attitudes also shape explanations for group outcomes. Prejudice encourages system-justifying attributions for existing group status differences (Brandt & Reyna, 2011; Yzerbyt, Rocher, & Schadron, 1997). Highly prejudiced people generate more controllability attributions for stigmatized groups than do people who are less prejudiced (Hegarty & Golden, 2008). For example, people high in modern racism are more likely to view welfare recipients as being in control of their outcomes; racist attitudes in turn, contribute to more negative attitudes toward welfare recipients (Henry et al., 2004). Further, controllability attributions link to heterosexism and anti-fat prejudice (Crandall, 1994; Haslam, Rothschild, & Ernst, 2002). Attributions of controllability locate the causes of consequences to a group in the characteristics of group members and imply that group members are responsible for their

outcomes and therefore deserve the consequences they receive (Crandall et al., 2001; Weiner et al., 1988). In contrast, uncontrollable attributions suggest that group members are not responsible for their outcomes (Brandt & Reyna, 2011; Napier, 2014).

According to the justification–suppression model of prejudice, controllability attributions operate as justifications for discriminatory responses (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003). Egalitarian social norms, which prohibit the blatant expression of prejudice, create dissonance in prejudiced individuals, who wish to express their prejudice. Controllability attributions offer one way to resolve this dissonance, effectively allowing them to release their hostile prejudice.

Controllability attributions appear particularly powerful justifications in individualistic nations, such as the U.S., because they fit a dominant ideology of meritocracy in which people are assumed to receive the outcomes they deserve (Crandall et al., 2001; Kluegel, Csepeli, Kolosi, Orkeny, & Nemenyi, 1995; Kluegel & Smith, 1986).

However, the effectiveness of attributions in justifying prejudice should depend on how well they fit with stereotypes of the groups involved (Winter, 2008). Lack of effort effectively explains race-based and weight-based inequalities because it closely links with negative stereotypes of African Americans and overweight people as lazy (Brandt & Reyna, 2011; Crandall, 1994; Reyna, 2000). In contrast, the rhetoric about gender-based inequalities often centers on choice, rather than differences in effort; this seems particularly true for economic-related outcomes (e.g., Lips, 2013).

Perhaps due to a continued reliance on the human capital framework for understanding the gender wage gap (Lips, 2013), an emphasis on choice typifies popular understandings of gender income inequality. The human capital model is a common framework for studying gender differences in wages. Researchers who use the human capital approach decompose the gender

wage gap into explained and unexplained portions, using regression analysis. The statistically explained portion includes controls for male–female differences in human capital (personal factors that contribute to one’s economic value, e.g., education and work experience). The statistically unexplained portion refers to the variance in wages that control variables do not explain; this portion commonly identifies discrimination (Altonji & Blank, 1999). However, these labels are potentially misleading because the explained portion of the gender gap is not necessarily unaffected by gender bias and discrimination, and the unexplained portion can include both discrimination and unmeasured differences in human capital (Altonji & Blank, 1999; Blau & Kahn, 2016; Correll, 2004).

An often-cited argument, based on the human capital model, is that the gender wage gap primarily results from men’s and women’s different choices, rather than from prejudice or discrimination (e.g., Perry & Biggs, 2014; Syrios, 2018; Tobak, 2013). This perspective assumes that women’s and men’s economic outcomes reflect autonomous and unconstrained decisions stemming from underlying differences in needs, values, and preferences. Further, this argument dismisses experimental evidence of discrimination against women in the workplace and in academics (e.g., Bowles, Babcock, & Lai, 2007; Correll & Benard, 2007; Hebl, King, Glick, Singletary, & Kazama, 2007; Milkman, Akinola, & Chugh, 2015; Moss-Racusin, Dovidio, Brescoll, & Handelsman, 2012), and it does not acknowledge distinct constraints on women’s options (e.g., Bowles & McGinn, 2008; Correll, 2004; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Glick, & Phelan, 2012). In explaining the gender income gap, focusing on women’s gender-expected choices allows for those with sexist views to defend traditional gender roles without seeming sexist.

The present paper proposes that hostile sexism rationalizes gender income inequality by

influencing people's understandings of the reasons for income differences between men and women. Specifically, we expected hostile sexists to focus on choice explanations for the gender pay gap. As a paternalistic prejudice, benevolent sexism is less tied to controllability attributions, thus it is less likely to encourage choice attributions (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008). In addition to choice attributions, we measured another form of causal attribution, one that explains income differences in terms of societal unfairness. Rather than assign personal responsibility, attributions of societal unfairness emphasize external, uncontrollable causes of inequality (e.g., discrimination, lack of access to paid family leave, etc.). In Study 1, we assessed correlations among hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, choice/unfairness explanations, and acceptance of gender income inequality. In Study 2, we activated HS and BS and measured their effects on choice/unfairness explanations and acceptance of gender income inequality.

Study 1

In Study 1, we examined how the components of ambivalent sexism related to explanations for and acceptance of gender income inequality. We expected that people high in hostile sexism, but not benevolent sexism, would endorse choice explanations for gender differences in income, which would, in turn, predict perceptions that the gender income gap was fair. We expected that people high in hostile sexism might also reject unfairness attributions, leading to more acceptance of gender income inequality. Thus, we also tested unfairness attributions as a mediator of the relation between sexism and acceptance of gender income inequality.

Method

Participants. We recruited seven hundred participants online through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). We excluded data for 52 participants from analyses because they

participated in the study more than once ($n = 3$), completed the study too quickly or too slowly ($n = 33$; more than 50 percent faster or 500 percent slower than the median time, ² $Mdn = 7.25$ minutes), or failed an attention check ($n = 16$). The final sample included 648 participants (43.8% female ($n = 284$), 55.9% male ($n = 362$), .3% other/nonbinary ($n = 2$); $M_{age} = 34$, age range: 18-72 years; $M_{political\ views} = 4.62$).

Most participants identified as White (81.6% ($n = 529$); 6.6% African American ($n = 43$), 4.3% Latin American ($n = 28$), 7.4% Asian American ($n = 48$), 1.2% Native American ($n = 8$), 1.9% other ($n = 12$), .2% Pacific Islander ($n = 1$)). Percentages add up to more than 100 because participants can be in multiple racial/ethnic categories. In the final sample for Study 1, less than 1% of data was missing for each variable. We used person-mean imputation to replace these missing values.

Materials and procedures. This study was part of a research project probing the causal relationship between attitudes about gender income inequality and ambivalent sexism. We were predicting a bi-directional relationship between gender income inequality and hostile sexism (such that exposure to inequality increases sexism, and exposure to sexism increases acceptance of gender income inequality). In addition to the reported predictions, we predicted that exposure to gender income inequality would increase women's endorsement of benevolent sexism. We tried to manipulate exposure to gender income inequality by having half of the participants read an article containing information about gender income inequality. Participants assigned to receive the manipulation did not differ by political ideology ($t = -.01, p = .99$), hostile sexism ($t = 1.25, p = .21$), benevolent sexism ($t = 1.04, p = .30$), acceptance of gender income inequality ($t = 1.27, p = .20$), choice explanations ($t = .59, p = .56$), or unfairness explanations ($t = -1.34, p = .18$). Controlling for assigned condition does not affect the results of the mediation analyses.

Because this manipulation failed to affect responses on the dependent variables, we do not discuss it further in the paper. MTurk workers who consented to participate in a “survey on social attitudes” completed the following measures.

Ambivalent sexism inventory. The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996) measures hostile sexism (HS) and benevolent sexism (BS). The ASI consists of two 11-item subscales that assess openly hostile attitudes toward women (e.g., “Women are too easily offended.”) and apparently positive but patronizing views of women (e.g., “Women should be cherished and protected by men.”). Participants responded to each of the 22 items on a 6-point scale (1 = *disagree strongly* to 6 = *agree strongly*). We created HS and BS scores by averaging each set of 11 items. Higher scores reflect greater endorsement of sexist ideologies. The ASI is associated with other measures of sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996) and has demonstrated reliability and validity in multinational studies (Glick et al., 2000; Glick et al., 2004). Internal consistency reliability was .93 for HS and .89 for BS.

Explanations for the gender income gap (EGIG). We developed this measure based on results from a pilot study. In the pilot study, we gave participants ($n = 191$) basic information about the gender income gap, and we asked them for their opinions on the most important causes of the gap. The first author categorized the open-ended responses by common themes. A total of 16 items (eight for each subscale) were derived from these themes. Subsequent exploratory principal axis factoring (PAF) analyses with promax rotation suggested the presence of three factors that accounted for 55.1% of the total variance. We dropped two unfairness items and two choice items because they had low factor loadings, cross-loaded, or loaded on the opposite subscale. An analysis on the remaining items yielded two factors that accounted for 54% of the variance. We used this revised scale (see Appendix A for scale & Appendix D for factor

loadings) in the current study.

Participants rated their agreement with twelve explanations for gender income inequality on a 6-point scale, ranging from *disagree strongly* (1) to *agree strongly* (6). Six statements attribute the gap to women's and men's choices (e.g., "Men enter higher-paying fields, and women choose jobs that pay less"), and six statements attribute the gap to unfairness in society (e.g., "Women face discrimination in hiring, promotion, and/or performance evaluations"; see Appendix A). Choice and unfairness explanations were not highly correlated ($r = -.16, p < .05$); thus, averaging each set of items created separate scores (Choice: $\alpha = .81$; Unfairness: $\alpha = .82$).

Acceptance of gender income inequality (AGII). On a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly* to 6 = *agree strongly*), participants indicated their agreement with seven statements about the gender income gap (see Appendix B). We modified three items from the Opposition to Equality subscale of the Social Dominance Orientation scale (Jost & Thompson, 2000) to refer specifically to gender income equality. For example, we changed "We should strive to make incomes more equal" to "We should always strive to make men's and women's incomes more equal." Opposition to equality is a system-legitimizing ideology associated with the justification of economic inequality and negative attitudes toward economic redistribution (Jost & Hunyady, 2005; Jost & Thompson, 2000). In addition, the measure included four items that relate to the rationalization of gender income differences (e.g., "There are perfectly understandable reasons why men and women often receive different pay"). Thus, higher scores on the AGII reflect stronger justification and support of gender income inequality. This measure showed good reliability in this sample, $\alpha = .93$.

Socioeconomic status. We measured perceived socioeconomic status using the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status (Adler & Stewart, 2007). Participants indicated

their relative social standing on a 10-rung ladder representing the range of socioeconomic status in the U.S.: 66.2% of participants indicated moderate subjective SES, 26.5% indicated low subjective SES, and 7.1% reported high subjective SES. Due to associations with the dependent measures (see below), analyses include SES as a covariate.

Political views. We measured political ideology as a potential confounding variable. Compared to political liberalism, political conservatism is characterized by principled resistance to social change and tolerance of inequality (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008). Furthermore, political conservatism is associated with the tendency to attribute social outcomes to personal responsibility rather than the sociocultural environment (Crandall, 1994; Skitka & Tetlock, 1993; Zucker & Weiner, 1993), as well as system-justifying ideologies that depict economic outcomes as fair (Jost & Hunyady, 2005). Finally, conservatism is associated with two related ideological orientations, Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA; Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994), which predict different aspects of sexism (Duckitt & Sibley, 2009). Based on this prior research, we expected political ideology to correlate with the variables in the model.

Three items assessed participants' political views. One asked for their political affiliation using a 7-point scale ranging from *strong Republican* (1) to *strong Democrat* (7). Two additional items measured participants' political leanings on economic and social issues (1 = *very conservative* to 7 = *very liberal*). We averaged the correlated items ($r_s > .57$) to create a composite measure with good reliability, $\alpha = .83$. Typical of MTurk samples, participants were slightly liberal leaning ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.38$). Political conservatism predicts the endorsement of ambivalently sexist ideologies (Sibley, Wilson, & Duckitt, 2007), as well as acceptance of

inequality (e.g., Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008); thus, we included political views as a covariate in analyses.

Results

Mediation model for benevolent and hostile sexism. Because hostile and benevolent sexism are correlated, controlling for HS isolates the unique effect of BS (and vice versa for HS). Studies on ambivalent sexism routinely report partial correlations for hostile and benevolent sexism (e.g., Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick et al., 2000). After controlling for HS, BS was not significantly correlated with acceptance of gender income inequality ($b = -.003$), unfairness ($b = .01$), or choice explanations ($b = .04$). Accordingly, we focused analyses on estimating the total and indirect effects of HS on choice/unfairness explanations and acceptance of gender income inequality.

Regression analyses, conducted to determine whether demographic variables might qualify any of the dependent measures, revealed that political liberalism negatively predicted the acceptance of gender income inequality, HS, BS, and the endorsement of choice explanations (bs from $-.36$ to $-.21$), and it positively predicted the endorsement of unfairness explanations ($b = .27, p < .001$). Also, subjective SES was negatively correlated with AGII ($b = -.07, p < .01$) and BS ($b = -.07, p < .01$), and positively correlated with unfairness ($b = .05, p < .05$). Due to their relations with the variables of interest, we included SES and political views as covariates in mediation analyses. Excluding these covariates does not change results. Because ASI studies routinely control BS when examining HS (and vice versa), the current analyses followed that practice (HS and BS correlated $r(648) = .38, p < .001$).

To determine whether choice and unfairness explanations mediated the relation between hostile sexism and acceptance of gender income inequality, we estimated a multiple-mediation

model (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) using the SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2016) (see Figure 1). The total effect of hostile sexism on AGII was significant ($b = .59$, 99% BCCI [.49, .69]). The relation between HS and AGII was reduced but remained significant when choice was added to the model ($b = .31$, 99% BCCI [.20, .42]). The confidence intervals for the indirect effects through choice ($b = .15$, 99% BCCI [.10, .21]), and unfairness ($b = .13$, 99% BCCI [.08, .20]) provided evidence of mediation. The indirect effects did not differ in magnitude ($b = .02$, 95% CI [-.06, .10]).

Study 2

In Study 1, we tested if participants who endorsed hostile sexism, but not benevolent sexism, would be also likely to agree that the gender income gap results from men's and women's choices, disagree that income differences between men and women were due to societal unfairness, and accept gender income inequality. Study 1's results are consistent with research suggesting that hostile sexism functions to diminish women's status in the workplace (Glick et al., 1997; Masser & Abrams, 2004; Rudman & Kilianski, 2000).

In Study 2, we conducted a second test of a proposed mediation model. Following the lead of other researchers who have manipulated hostile and benevolent sexism (Jost & Kay, 2005; Dardenne et al., 2007), we exposed participants to hostile and benevolent sexism and then measured their explanations for the gender income gap and acceptance of gender income inequality. To minimize participants' awareness of the manipulation, we used a scrambled-sentence task to activate HS and BS. We expected exposure to hostile sexism would increase participants' endorsement of choice attributions and decrease their use of unfairness explanations, and increase their acceptance of gender income inequality. Further, we expected that choice and unfairness explanations would mediate the relation between HS exposure and

acceptance of gender income inequality.

Method

Participants. The sample consisted of 275 participants recruited through Mturk. We excluded responses for 33 participants from analyses: Five individuals had previously participated in a related study, and 26 failed the attention check. We discarded the second sets of responses for two individuals who participated in the study twice. The final sample included 242 participants, an adequate sample to detect small-to-medium mediational effects (Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007). In this final sample, no participants were missing data. Demographic characteristics of the sample were similar to those in Study 1 (43% female ($n = 104$), 57% male ($n = 138$); $M_{age} = 33.71$, age range: 18-82 years, $M_{political\ views} = 4.82$; 83.5% White ($n = 202$), 5.4% African American ($n = 13$), 5.8% Latin American ($n = 14$), 7.9% Asian American ($n = 19$), <1% Native American ($n = 2$), <1% other ($n = 2$)).

Materials and procedure. Our priming manipulation exposed participants to hostile and benevolent sexism using a scrambled-sentence task (see Appendix C). We constructed two sets of five-word target sentences based on the HS and the BS subscales of the ASI (e.g., HS: *women are too easily offended*; BS: *women should be rescued first*). We also created six neutral sentences unrelated to sexism (e.g., *they laughed at the joke*). We added an extra word to each sentence (standard procedure to make primes subtler) and scrambled the order of the words in the sentences. We assigned participants to one of three priming conditions: hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, or control. Participants in the hostile and benevolent sexism prime conditions saw six neutral sentences and ten target sentences. Participants in the control condition saw only the six neutral sentences. All participants were instructed to sort six words into five-word sentences, leaving one word unused. Sentences were constructed so that meaningful sentences

could not be created using the extra word.

Responses to the EGIG (Choice: $\alpha = .81$; Unfairness: $\alpha = .86$), AGII ($\alpha = .94$), and ASI followed the scrambled-sentence task. Measures were identical to those used in Study 1 (i.e., EGIG, AGII, political views), with the exception that the shortened version of the ASI was used to minimize participant fatigue (Lee, Fiske, Glick, & Chen, 2010). The shortened subscales demonstrated good reliability in this sample (HS: $\alpha = .92$; BS: $\alpha = .88$).

Results

We used multiple regression analyses to determine whether the hostile sexism manipulation affected participants' attributions for and acceptance of gender income inequality. We created two dummy indicators, each set to 1 for the HS and BS exposure conditions respectively and 0 for the control condition. We also dummy coded gender with men set as the reference group. Although no a priori predictions concerned the influence of political views, analyses revealed that political views moderated the effects of the manipulation on acceptance of gender income inequality and explanations for the gender income gap; therefore, we included (standardized) political ideology and its interactions with gender and condition in analyses. We report regression results in Tables 2-4.

Testing hypotheses. We expected (Hypothesis 1) that exposure to hostile sexism would increase choice and decrease unfairness attributions. Women endorsed choice explanations less than men ($b = -.51, p < .05$). Political ideology moderated the effect of hostile sexism on choice ($b = -.40, p < .05$). For liberal participants (1 SD above the mean of political ideology), exposure to hostile sexism decreased choice explanations (but non-significantly so, $b = -.48, p = .14$). By contrast, for conservative participants (1 SD below the mean of political ideology), exposure to hostile sexism increased choice explanations ($b = .63, p < .05$). Thus, only conservative

participants showed the predicted effect.

Gender predicted endorsement of unfairness explanations, such that women endorsed unfairness explanations more than men ($b = .53, p < .05$). Political ideology again moderated the effect of HS on unfairness ($b = .44, p < .01$). This effect was qualified by a significant three-way interaction between gender, political ideology, and HS ($b = -.59, p < .05$). To examine the interaction, we conducted a simple slopes analysis. Liberal participants (+1 SD above the mean) exposed to HS (relative to the control condition) showed increased endorsement of unfairness explanations ($b = .86, p < .05$). However, a two-way interaction between HS and participant gender ($b = -1.01, p < .05$) suggested that this was true of liberal men only (liberal women: $b = -.15, ns$; see Figure 2). For conservatives, gender did not moderate the effects of the manipulation, nor did hostile sexism significantly affect unfairness. Contrary to hypotheses, exposure to hostile sexism led to greater endorsement of unfairness explanations for liberal men. Liberal-leaning men showed lower endorsement of unfairness explanations than liberal-leaning women, except in the HS condition. For liberal women and conservatives, there was no effect of exposure to hostile sexism on unfairness.

In testing Hypothesis 2, that exposure to hostile sexism would increase acceptance of gender income inequality, women were less accepting of gender income inequality than men ($b = -1.05, p < .001$). In addition, political ideology moderated the effects of hostile sexism ($b = -.74, p < .001$) and benevolent sexism ($b = -.47, p < .01$) on AGII. Conservative participants scored higher on AGII when exposed to both hostile ($b = 1.05, p < .01$) and benevolent sexism ($b = .74, p < .05$), relative to conservative participants in the control condition. By contrast, hostile sexism significantly decreased liberal participants' AGII scores ($b = -1.04, p < .01$); results for benevolent sexism were in the same direction but non-significant ($b = -.60, p = .09$). A three-way

interaction between gender, political ideology, and hostile sexism was nonsignificant ($b = .42$, $p = .10$). Thus, predictions were confirmed for conservative participants only. However, unexpectedly, exposure to benevolent sexism also increased acceptance of gender income inequality.

We had hypothesized (Hypothesis 3) that choice and unfairness explanations would mediate the relation between HS exposure and acceptance of gender income inequality. We evaluated choice and unfairness explanations as mediators of the relation between exposure to hostile sexism and acceptance of gender income inequality using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2016), which calculated the relative total and direct effects of the hostile and benevolent sexism conditions on AGII compared to the control condition (Hayes & Preacher, 2014). As the effects of the HS manipulation differed by gender for liberals, we conducted a moderated moderated mediation analysis, in which gender and continuous political ideology were permitted to moderate indirect effects (Hayes, 2018; PROCESS Model 12).

Consistent with mediation, the indirect effect of HS through choice explanations was significant for conservatives (-1 SD political ideology; .28, 95% BCCI [.04, .56]). However, this indirect effect was not significant for liberals (+1 SD political ideology; -.21, 95% BCCI [-.58, .10]). The indirect effect of BS through choice was not significant for conservatives (.23, 95% BCCI [-.01, .51]) or liberals (-.02, 95% BCCI [-.39, .29]). The index of moderated moderated mediation (Hayes, 2018) through choice was not significant (-.05, 95% BCCI [-.25, .22]), indicating that the indirect effect of HS, although dependent on political ideology, was not further moderated by participant gender. In sum, conservative participants exposed to HS perceived gender income differences as more acceptable compared to those in the control condition, and their greater use of choice explanations for gender income inequality explained

this effect. Figure 3a depicts the mediation model for conservatives.

For unfairness, the index of moderated moderated mediation (.34, 95% BCCI [.07, .70]) indicated that the moderation of the indirect effect of HS on AGII through unfairness by political ideology depended on gender, with significant mediation present for liberal men (-.50, 95% BCCI [-.98, -.09]) but not for liberal women (.09, 95% BCCI [-.17, .35]). Contrary to predictions, for conservatives, unfairness explanations did not mediate the relation between exposure to sexism and AGII, regardless of gender (-1 SD political ideology; .23, 95% BCCI [-.17, .68]). As expected, the indirect effect of BS through unfairness was not significant for conservatives (.13, 95% BCCI [-.23, .48]) or liberals (-.18, 95% BCCI [-.67, .23]). Thus, for liberal men, the indirect effect through unfairness was in the opposite direction from predicted. Compared to liberal men in the control condition, liberal men exposed to HS showed an increased focus on unfairness explanations for the gender gap, which in turn, led to less acceptance of income differences between men and women. Figure 3b depicts the mediation model for liberal men.

General Discussion

Prior research claims that hostile and benevolent sexism play distinct roles in maintaining gender inequality; hostile sexism penalizes women who challenge gender expectations (Glick et al., 1997; Masser & Abrams, 2004; Rudman & Kilianski, 2000), whereas benevolent sexism rewards women who embrace prescribed low-status roles (Hammond, Sibley, & Overall, 2013; Sibley & Wilson, 2004). The present studies expand on previous work by demonstrating that hostile sexism legitimizes gender income inequality by promoting perceptions that gender differences in income result from individual choices.

Two studies found support for a mediation model in which hostile sexism leads to

acceptance of gender income inequality through increasing the use of justifying explanations for women's and men's economic outcomes. In Study 1, we provided evidence of positive relations among hostile sexism, choice explanations, and acceptance of gender income inequality, and negative relations of hostile sexism and acceptance of gender income inequality with unfairness explanations. In Study 2, we found that relative to the control condition, priming hostile and benevolent sexism *increased* acceptance of gender income inequality, an effect that occurred through choice explanations and for conservatives only. While priming hostile and benevolent sexism had no apparent effects on liberal women's attitudes, for liberal men, priming hostile sexism decreased acceptance of gender income inequality through increased unfairness explanations, opposite effects compared to conservatives. These two studies fit prior theorizing on the system-justifying role of hostile sexism in the work domain (Glick et al., 1997; Masser & Abrams, 2004). Activating hostile ideologies that depict women as whiny, incompetent competitors for status led conservative participants to view income differences between men and women as justified (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Rudman et al., 2012).

In contrast, results provided minimal support for the role of benevolent sexism in justifying gender income inequality. Unlike hostile sexism, benevolent sexism centers less on preserving male dominance than on enforcing prescriptive femininity (Masser & Abrams, 2004). As equal pay for women threatens male dominance, hostile, more than benevolent, sexists should be motivated to justify gender pay gaps. Although, in Study 2, the benevolent sexism prime increased conservative participants' acceptance of gender income inequality, it did not affect choice and unfairness explanations, nor did choice and unfairness explanations account for the relation between BS and AGII. Thus, results for hostile sexism are more consistent with the hypothesized model than those for BS.

In addition to hostile sexism, in Study 2, political ideology predicted attitudes toward gender income inequality. Following exposure to sexism, conservatism led to greater endorsement of choice explanations and acceptance of gender income inequality. By contrast, liberal men exposed to hostile sexism increased their endorsement of unfairness explanations and decreased their acceptance of gender income inequality. A number of studies demonstrate that conservatives are more likely than liberals to attribute social outcomes to personal responsibility (the *ideo-attribution effect*; Crandall, 1994; Skitka & Tetlock, 1993; Zucker & Weiner, 1993), at least when doing so is consistent with conservative values (Skitka & Washburn, 2016). Consistent with the motivated reasoning explanation for the *ideo-attribution effect*, results for liberal men suggest the hostile sexism manipulation prompted them to revise responses in line with egalitarian values. Alternatively, conservatives, who more strongly endorse sexism (Christopher & Mull, 2006), should have been less conflicted about making dispositional attributions (Skitka & Washburn, 2016).

In Study 2, we found that exposure to hostile sexism led conservative men, as well as conservative women, to view income differences between men and women as fair. In this respect, the data seems at odds with findings that hostile sexism elicits reactance from women (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Becker & Wright, 2011). For example, Becker & Wright (2011) found that exposure to hostile sexism induced negative affect, enhanced women's awareness of group-based disadvantage, and ultimately increased women's willingness to engage in collective protest. On the other hand, prior work also shows that women do not differ from men in implicit sexism or implicit gender stereotyping (Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman & Kilianski, 2000), and women are as likely as men, and sometimes more likely, to punish women who violate gender stereotypes (Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006; Parks-Stamm, Heilman, & Hearn, 2008;

Phelan, Moss-Racusin, & Rudman, 2008; Rudman, 1998).

Becker and Wagner's Gender Identity Model (2009) posits that women's endorsement of sexism is determined by gender group identification, in addition to perceptions of prototypical in-group norms. Compared to liberal women, conservative women should be more likely to view traditional femininity as normative. Relative to women who have internalized progressive gender roles, women who embrace traditional gender roles and highly identify with their gender group show stronger endorsement of hostile and benevolent sexism and report less engagement in collective action (Becker & Wagner, 2009). Depending on the values they associate with their gender group (traditional or progressive), individual women may be more or less motivated to support gender inequality.

In contrast to conservatives, in Study 2, liberal-leaning participants did exhibit gender differences. Although HS decreased liberal women's (and liberal men's) AGII, the mediation model was supported for liberal men only. Across mediating and outcome variables, liberal women exhibited relatively extreme responses with low variability. Thus, we think it possible that the lack of differences across conditions for liberal women may be due to restricted variance.

Liberal men exposed to hostile sexism were less likely to agree that the gender income gap could be explained by men's and women's choices and more likely to report that it was due to unfairness in society. Relative to the control condition, liberal men in the hostile sexism prime condition perceived gender income differences as less fair and justified, because exposure to hostile sexism increased perceptions that the gender income gap stems from societal unfairness. As men benefit from gender inequality regardless of their political ideology, they tend to be more supportive of gender inequality than women. Liberal men exhibited this ingroup bias in the control condition, but those exposed to hostile sexism opposed gender income inequality as

much as liberal women did across conditions. Although we employed a subtle priming procedure, the relatively overt sexist beliefs expressed in the hostile sexism manipulation may have reminded men not to justify their ingroup advantage, perhaps from feelings of guilt (Miron, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2006). This explanation would be consistent with the manipulation's effects on unfairness attributions.

It is worth noting that political ideology did not matter in Study 1; it only mattered when we manipulated sexism. Theoretically, culturally-shared sexist attitudes can be activated regardless of personal endorsement (e.g., Jost & Kay, 2005). But explicit activation of stereotypes sometimes leads to reactance (e.g., Kray, Thompson, & Galinsky, 2001). That conservatives and liberals responded in line with prior beliefs suggests that the manipulation was not as subtle as intended. Future work may wish to employ a more subtle manipulation (e.g., a lexical decision task; Rudman & Borgida, 1995).

Although we have argued for a causal chain in which hostile sexism affects acceptance of gender income inequality through system-justifying attributions, other causal relations are possible (e.g., choice attributions → HS; Crandall et al., 2001), and could be tested in future research. Furthermore, as our participants were American, predominantly White, and middle-class, findings may not generalize to non-U.S. or more demographically heterogeneous samples. Choice explanations serve as compelling justifications of inequality in Western individualistic nations, especially in the U.S., because they emphasize personal responsibility and control. Outside Western individualistic contexts, choice does not appear to have these same associations, and it may not carry the same system-justifying power (Crandall et al., 2001; Savani et al., 2011). For example, when the concept of choice is activated, Indian participants do not show reduced empathy for a disadvantaged target, unlike American participants (Savani et al., 2011).

Furthermore, choice explanations for social inequalities resonate with White, middle-class ideals, interests, and perspectives (Bullock, 1999; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Stephens, Fryberg, & Markus, 2012), thus a more demographically heterogeneous sample might yield different results. In Study 1, the mediation model held when we excluded White participants, when including only African American and Latinx participants, and when examining low-SES and high-SES individuals. However, we did not design this study to test these differences, so we cannot draw any meaningful conclusions about potential differences.

Our findings may seem to contradict studies that demonstrate benevolent sexism's particular effectiveness in rationalizing gender inequality (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Becker & Wright, 2011; Connelly & Heesacker, 2012; Dardenne et al., 2007; Hammond & Sibley, 2011; Jost & Kay, 2005; Napier, Thorisdottir, & Jost, 2010). However, our findings converge with other research showing that hostility is closely tied to victim-blaming explanations for social inequalities (Brandt & Reyna, 2011; Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Henry et al., 2004; Reyna, 2000; Sears & Henry, 2003; Weiner et al., 1988; Zucker & Weiner, 1993). Benevolent sexism may affect attitudes toward the gender pay gap in other ways not examined in our research. For example, hostile and benevolent sexism might lead to acceptance of gender income inequality through supporting different attributions for the gender income gap. Hostile sexists should more readily endorse more blatantly status-reinforcing explanations that attribute women's lower incomes to incompetent choices. Alternatively, benevolent sexists might more heavily rely on complementary stereotypes to explain the gender income gap (e.g., "Compared to men, women more strongly prefer emotionally rewarding jobs over those that pay the highest salaries"). However, more research is needed to evaluate this possibility.

Note on Cross-cultural Applicability

The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory has demonstrated cross-national reliability and validity (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick et al., 2000; Glick et al., 2004); further, a number of studies conducted in other countries support the predictions of ambivalent sexism theory (e.g., Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Becker & Wright, 2011; Chen, Fiske, & Lee, 2009; Dardenne et al., 2007; Durán, Moya, & Megías, 2014; Expósito, Herrera, Moya, & Glick, 2010; Sakallı-Uğurlu & Glick, 2003; Sibley & Wilson, 2004). Therefore, hostile sexism might also be expected to facilitate opposition to gender income equality in other nations. However, the specific justifications for gender income inequality used by hostile sexists may differ cross-culturally. Research suggests that choice may operate as a particularly powerful justification in individualistic nations such as the United States (e.g., Crandall et al., 2001; Savani, Stephens, & Markus, 2011). Therefore, findings may not generalize to more collectivistic cultures.

Practice Implications

In the US, women continue to earn less on average compared to men, even after accounting for differences in human capital (Blau & Kahn, 2006; Corbett & Hill, 2012). Over the lifespan, this pay gap becomes even larger, resulting in huge losses for women and their families (Hartmann, Rose, & Lovell, 2006). The present study points to hostile sexism and choice attributions as barriers to gender income equality. Against a meritocratic milieu, hostile sexism draws attention away from prejudice as a possible causal explanation for gender differences in income and directs attention to men's and women's individual choices. Viewed as freely chosen rather than coerced, women's economic outcomes seem justified and fair. However, this perspective assumes that men's and women's economic outcomes reflect their autonomous decisions, failing to recognize a social science truism—individuals' "choices" are shaped and constrained by cultural and social forces (e.g., Correll, 2004; Lips, 2013).

Our results are consistent with other research demonstrating the negative consequences of hostile sexism for women in the workplace (e.g., Christopher & Wojda, 2008; Masser & Abrams, 2004). Hostile sexism could contribute to gender pay gaps by influencing how supervisors evaluate workers and set salaries and bonuses. To guard against this possibility, organizations could implement more objective measures of performance, collect information on and regularly monitor the impact of supervisor assessments on women's and men's pay, or make part of supervisors' salary dependent on how well their departments perform, thereby increasing accountability (Bohnet, 2016).

Conversations about the gender income gap are often dominated by a rhetoric of choice. This framing can have important consequences; individualistic attributions for social inequality negatively predict intentions to help disadvantaged groups, as well as support for policies aimed at helping these groups (Crandall et al., 2001; Henry et al., 2004; Sears & Henry, 2003; Zucker & Weiner, 1993). A continued emphasis on choice as a frame for understanding gender income inequality could shape policy decisions and public opinion in ways that perpetuate gender pay gaps; for example, by creating an undue focus on individual behavior rather than on institutions and their practices. Our findings highlight potential harms of choice framings, and researchers, educators, and journalists should be careful in communicating about the gender wage gap, not to mischaracterize or oversimplify the problem.

Identifying factors that predict acceptance of gender income inequality can provide important insight for policymakers. The Paycheck Fairness Act, which strengthens equal-pay protections for women (National Women's Law Center, 2015), was first introduced in 1997 (Civic Impulse, 2017), but has never passed the Senate. Targeting attributions, by drawing attention to the ways in which women's choices are constrained, might be useful in increasing

support for equal pay policy.

An overemphasis on “choice” attributions allows for the persistence of sexism and gender-based inequalities by providing ostensibly reasonable and unbiased explanations for gender differences (Barreto, Ellemers, Cihangir, & Stroebe, 2009; Charles & Bradley, 2009; Crandall & Eshleman, 2003). While blatant discrimination may be readily identified and decried, subtle discrimination creates ambiguity about the source of women’s disadvantage. In individualistic contexts such as the workplace, women may be particularly likely to attribute outcomes that are actually the result of unfair treatment, to individual factors (Barreto et al., 2009). Both failing to recognize discrimination and attributing negative outcomes to personal responsibility are psychologically costly for women (Barreto et al., 2009). Therefore, it could be helpful for clinicians to be aware of these potential risks to women’s psychological well-being.

Conclusions

In America, the “dominant ideology” of personal responsibility serves as a powerful justification for status structure (Kluegel & Smith, 1986). “Choice” rationalizations allow for the moral dismissal of group-based inequalities as “true” inequalities, on the grounds that they do not actually reflect any sort of injustice, but rather individual choices.

In the present studies we found that hostile sexist ideologies, which differentially attribute status characteristics to men and women, promoted the use of system-serving attributions that blame women for their economic disadvantage (and credit men for their advantage). A focus on individual responsibility places the onus on individual women to make the “right” choices, and undermines their recognition of unfair treatment. The acknowledgement of discrimination is an important precursor to social change, as it signals that group membership, as opposed to merit, determines the outcomes of low-status (and high-status) group members

(Ellemers & Barreto, 2009). Our research contributes to the literature on the distinct system-justifying functions of hostile and benevolent sexism; it highlights the importance of examining psychological barriers to gender income equality, such as hostile sexism and attributed choice. In light of our findings, we recommend that organizations take steps to reduce the influence of hostile sexism on workplace gender inequities, and that policymakers and communicators be careful when choosing how to frame the issue of gender income inequality.

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Notes

¹ To discover whether political ideology and gender also moderated effects of HS in Study 1, we re-ran Study 1 analyses as a moderated mediation model. In this new model, relations among HS, choice, unfairness, and acceptance of gender income inequality remained significant.

Mediation was still supported and was not moderated by participant gender or political ideology.

² Quick completion times can indicate careless responding. Following Greszki, Meyer, and Schoen (2015), a relative measure of speed was computed, and the lower cutoff set at .50. In addition, we excluded three participants with very long completion times (over 1 hour). Results do not differ if these responses are included.

Table 1

Study 1: Zero-order correlations between hostile and benevolent sexism and model variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Hostile Sexism	–						
2. Benevolent Sexism	.38***	–					
3. Choice Explanations	.49***	.22***	–				
4. Unfairness Explanations	-.39***	-.14**	-.09*	–			
5. AGII	.61***	.23***	.50***	-.55***	–		
6. Socioeconomic Status	-.005	-.12**	-.03	.09*	-.11**	–	
7. Political Ideology	-.41***	.32***	-.27***	.35***	-.41***	.10*	–

Note: AGII = Acceptance of Gender Income Inequality. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table 2

Study 2: Results of Regression Analyses on Choice Explanations.

Outcome Var.	<i>t</i>	B	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>R</i> ²
Overall Model			5.36***	241	.20
HS	.35	.03			
BS	1.11	.10			
Political views	-.68	-.10			
Gender	-2.10*	-.23			
HS x political views	-2.43*	-.32			
BS x political views	-1.28	-.14			
HS x gender	-.18	.02			
BS x gender	.58	.05			
Political views x gender	1.16	.19			
HS x political views x gender	-.50	-.07			
BS x political views x gender	-.52	-.06			

Note: HS = Hostile Sexism; BS = Benevolent Sexism. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Study 2: Results of Regression Analyses on Unfairness Explanations.

Outcome Var.	<i>t</i>	B	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>R</i> ²
Overall Model			7.59***	241	.20
HS	1.07	.10			
BS	.18	.02			
Political views	1.49	.21			
Gender	2.12*	.22			
HS x political views	2.63**	.33			
BS x political views	1.18	.12			
HS x gender	-.55	-.06			
BS x gender	.63	.05			
Political views x gender	1.08	.17			
HS x political views x gender	-2.41*	-.34			
BS x political views x gender	-1.09	-.11			

Note: HS = Hostile Sexism; BS = Benevolent Sexism. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4

Study 2: Results of Regression Analyses on Acceptance of Gender Income Inequality.

Outcome Var.	<i>t</i>	B	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>R</i> ²
Overall Model			12.59***	241	.38
HS	.01	.00			
BS	.32	.02			
Political views	-.16	-.02			
Gender	3.98***	-.39			
HS x political views	-4.21***	-.49			
BS x political views	-2.77**	-.27			
HS x gender	.83	.09			
BS x gender	.60	.05			
Political views x gender	-.84	-.12			
HS x political views x gender	1.64	.22			
BS x political views x gender	1.18	.11			

Note: HS = Hostile Sexism; BS = Benevolent Sexism. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

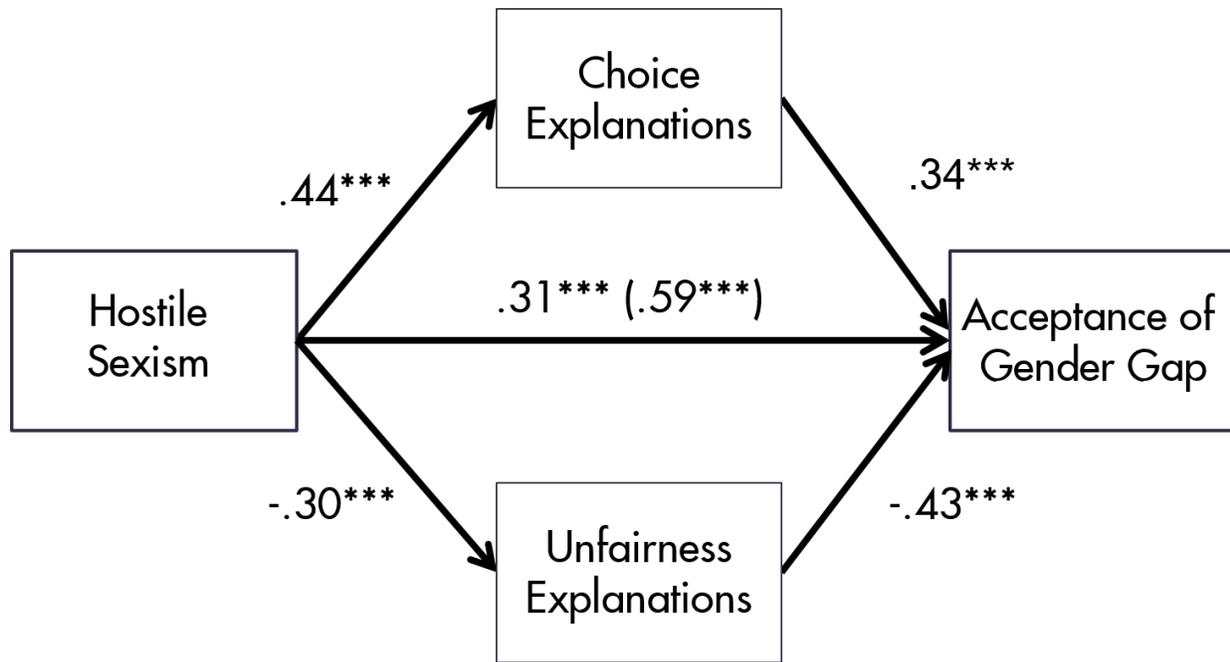


Figure 1. Tested mediation model for Study 1. All unstandardized coefficients are significant at the $p < .001$ level. Unmediated total effects are enclosed in parentheses.

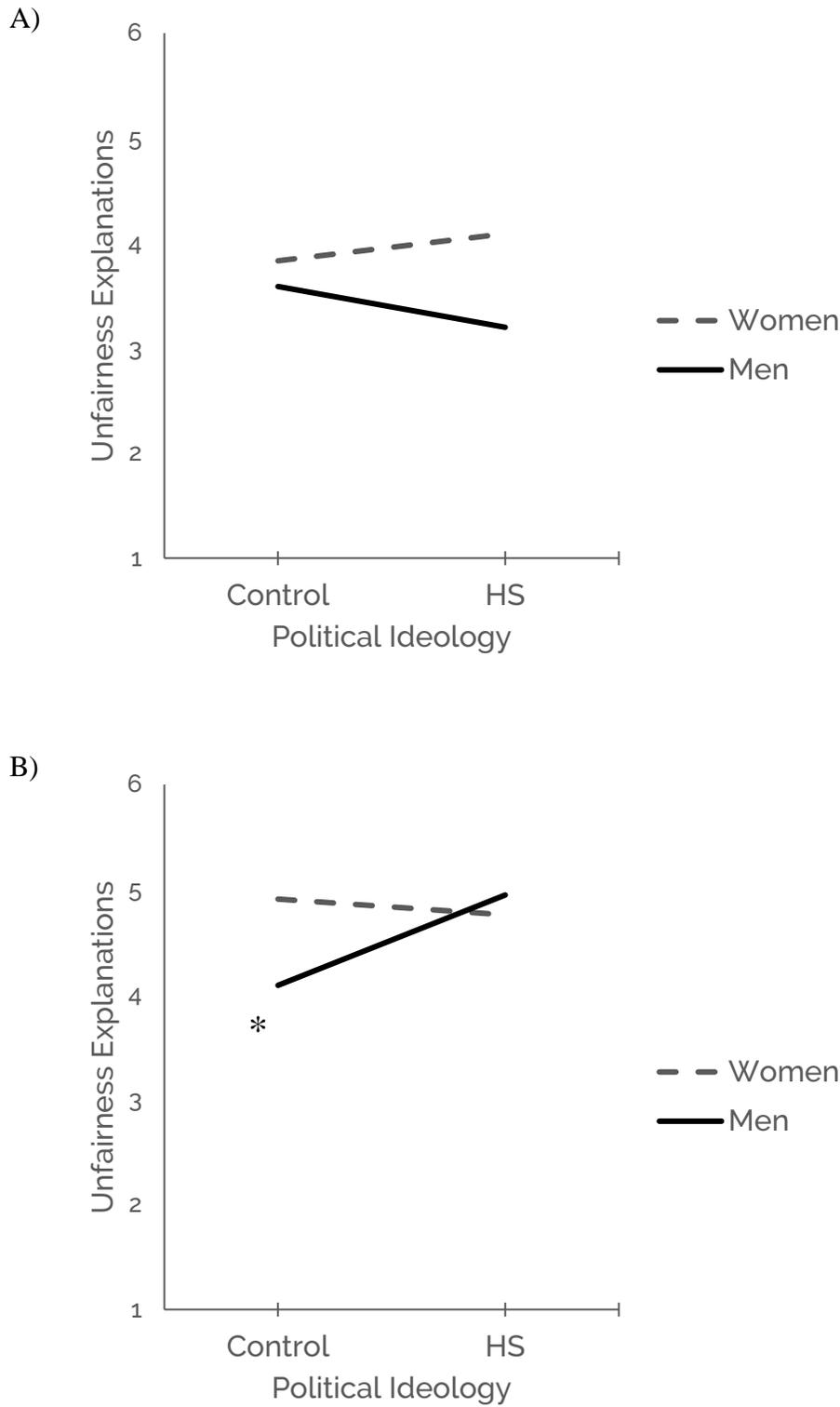


Figure 2. Study 2. Relation between HS condition and unfairness explanations for conservatives (-1SD; a) and liberals (+1 SD; b). Slope for liberal men is significant at $p < .05$.

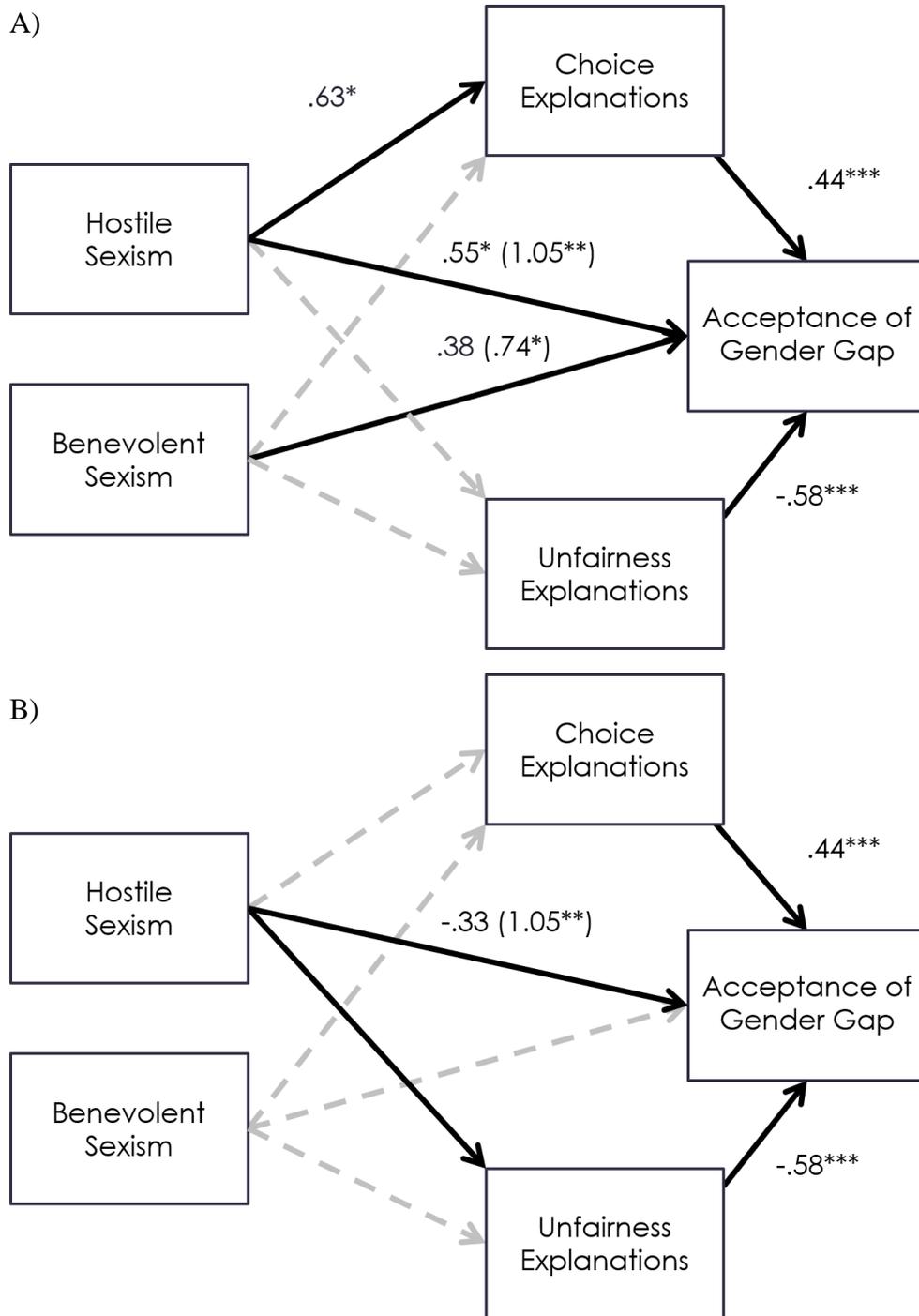


Figure 3. Study 2. Mediation model for all conservatives (a) and for liberal men (b). Unmediated total effects are enclosed in parentheses. Paths represented by dotted lines are not significant. $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.