

SYSTEMIC SEXISM IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES

A Dissertation

by

MELISSA KUMARI OCHOA

Submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Chair of Committee, Joe Feagin
Committee Members, Jane Sell
Kazuko Suzuki
Claire Katz
Head of Department, Jane Sell

May 2019

Major Subject: Sociology

Copyright 2019 Melissa Kumari Ochoa

ABSTRACT

Systemic racism, systemic sexism, and systemic classism are intertwining systems of oppression built into the foundations of the United States to keep elite white men in power and thus, are subsystems of the elite-white-male-dominance system (Feagin and Ducey 2017). However, systemic sexism has structural differences compared to the other subsystems. First, our society is highly integrated forcing the oppressed to constantly interact with the oppressors; Second, misogyny is arguably the oldest system of oppression permeating in most cultures and among all races; and lastly, perhaps as a result of gender integration and the extensive history of sexism, women equally participate in their own oppression. The theoretical differences were apparent in the findings of each article. The most notable distinction was that men did not filter their sexist behavior in front of women whether they were strangers or friends and family. Men did not filter their sexist behavior in front of women. For example, catcalling is typically a male-to-female interaction in a public space. Catcallers will use vulgar comments, threats, whistles, kissing noises and/or engage in “silent catcalling” such as intonations, leering, and winking to objectify women. Men use catcalling as a male-bonding experience or masculinity performance to assert their dominance over women. On the other hand, women genuinely fear sexual violence from these encounters and utilize various strategies to survive. I utilize systemic sexism theory, specifically the male-sexist frame, to analyze data I have collected from two major universities. Participants submitted journal entries over the course of six weeks noting anything they perceived to be sexist. The theoretical differences of systemic sexism lead to the acceptance of men engaging in sexist behavior towards women through commentary, catcalling, or in everyday conversation. Results indicate that men and women live very different realities.

DEDICATION

I dedicate my work to all of the women in my ancestral lineage. Thank you for your sacrifices.

To my mom, my family, and all the strong women who have influenced, inspired, and encouraged me to pursue my dreams.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Joe Feagin, and my committee members, Dr. Jane Sell, Dr. Kazuko Suzuki, and Dr. Katz for their guidance and support throughout my academic journey. Through their phenomenal mentorship, they have positively influenced me academically and personally. I want to thank Dr. Ralph Webb from Purdue University for believing in me and encouraging me to pursue graduate school.

Thank you to my friends and Texas A&M University colleagues for fostering a creative environment of critical thinking, editing my work, and helping me overcome obstacles—Mayra Valle, Cynthia Medawar, Jesus Smith, Kimber Harvey, Katie Constantine, Thaddeus Atzmon, Mabel Tijerina, Katie Scofield, Carly Jennings, Dr. Heili Pals, Dr. Holly Foster, and Dr. Adrienne Carter-Sowell. A special acknowledgement to Dr. Emily Knox for helping me implement the unique study design I envisioned—without her beautiful ingenuity, I would not have any data. I especially want to thank the Sociology department faculty and staff, Christi Barrera, Marisa Winking, and Brynn Pinto, for their extensive knowledge and solutions. I also want to extend my gratitude to all the students who volunteered to participate in the study.

Lastly, I want to thank my mother (Maria Irma Ochoa Garza), my father (Guadalupe Mateo Ochoa Ochoa), my siblings (David Ochoa & Stephanie Ochoa), and my pup (Gaia) for their constant love and support. In addition, I want to thank all of my family members who have encouraged me to pursue my doctorate despite the overwhelming obstacles. There are no words to express my deepest gratitude.

CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

Contributors

This work was supervised by a dissertation committee consisting of Professor Joe Feagin and Professor Jane Sell of the Department of Sociology.

All work for the dissertation was completed by the student, in collaboration with Dr. Joe Feagin for theoretical contribution, Dr. Jane Sell for advisement and study design overview, and Dr. Emily Knox for technological implementation of study design of the Department of Sociology.

Funding Sources

This work was made possible in part by the Diversity Seed Grant from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) at Texas A&M University, endowment funds on behalf of Dr. Joe Feagin, and research awards from the Student Awards Committee in the Sociology Department at Texas A&M University.

Its contents are solely the responsibility of the author/s and do not necessarily represent the official views of the awarding offices.

NOMENCLATURE

SST	Systemic Sexism Theory
SRT	Systemic Racism Theory
MSF	Male-sexist frame
WRF	White racial frame
EWM	Elite white men
EWM-DS	Elite white male dominance system

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES	v
NOMENCLATURE.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SYSTEMIC RACISM AND SYSTEMIC SEXISM.....	4
2.1 Racism and Sexism: Distinguishing Two Intertwining Oppressive Systems.....	6
2.2 Extending Goffman’s Theory for Systemic Sexism.....	8
2.3 Methodological Differences Between Systemic Racism and Systemic Sexism.....	10
2.4 Results.....	13
2.5 Conclusion.....	36
3. UNFILTERED: MALE STRANGERS’ SEXIST BEHAVIOR TOWARDS WOMEN.....	40
3.1 Goffman’s Frontstage and Systemic Sexism Theory.....	42
3.2 Data and Methods.....	43
3.3 Results.....	44
3.4 Conclusion.....	58
4. CATCALLING: A REPRODUCTION OF SYSTEMIC SEXISM.....	61
4.1 Systemic Sexism Theory.....	63
4.2 Different Realities: Men as Subjects and Women as Objects.....	65
4.3 Negative Effects on Women’s Lives: Cognitive and Emotional Labor.....	67
4.4 Male-entitlement, Male-bonding, and Toxic Masculinity.....	69
4.5 Data and Methods.....	70
4.6 Results.....	72

4.7 Conclusion.....	86
5. CONCLUSION.....	89
REFERENCES.....	91

1. INTRODUCTION

Main scholarly focus on sexism has been through the lens of individual discrimination such as prejudices and stereotypes as opposed to a broader, systemic framework. For example, in psychological sciences, sexism is researched under the dichotomy of benevolent sexism and hostile sexism, but the oversimplification omits the everyday forms of sexism that are reproduced by everyone (not just men). In addition, every form of sexism is based on the premise that women are inferior to men and has real negative implications—there is nothing “benevolent” about that. Sociological research focuses on the systematic foundation that men and women are at different social statuses while concentrating on specific issues such as the wage gap, motherhood penalty, sexual assault, etc. Systemic sexism theory helps to connect the everyday micro-level experiences to the macro-level institutionalization of sexism.

For centuries women and men have lived different realities. Most men live their lives as subject while women live theirs as object. In particular, women are regarded as “open persons,” or readily available for interaction in public spaces (Goffman 1963). The three articles in my dissertation will not only show how different women and men perceive interactions because of their different social statuses but also show how systemic sexism differs from other forms of systemic oppression. The uniqueness of systemic sexism enables the standardization of the everyday sexist behavior accepted by both men and women that in turn, helps to maintain the gender hierarchy. The three articles in my dissertation utilize the dimensions of systemic sexism theory to analyze the normative sexism reproduced by men and women on a daily basis then connects these everyday experiences to the larger, systemic framework.

Historically, and in contemporary society, men have created and sustained the subordination of women through the institutionalization of what can be termed the *male-sexist frame* (Feagin & Ducey 2017). While the frame includes sexist prejudices and stereotypes, it is more encompassing, because the frame also includes sexist images, narratives, emotions, and ideologies that generate and sustain an array of sexist actions (Feagin & Ducey 2107). This dominant male-sexist frame has a central pro-male/pro-masculinity (heterosexist) subframe and a strong anti-female/anti-femininity subframe (Feagin & Ducey 2017). Shaped and legitimated by this male-sexist frame, society's sex and gender roles are thus socially constructed (Jewell & Spears Brown 2013). The major roles defined as feminine are typically viewed as inferior compared with those defined as masculine (Brownmiller 2013 [1975]; West & Zimmerman 1987). Sexism is maintained through societal gender norms, or the expectations of how men and women should engage in gender performance, how they behave, dress, and their roles in private and in public (West & Zimmerman 1987). While elite white men benefit the most from systemic sexism because it allows them to remain at the top of the gender hierarchy, all men benefit from this oppressive system to some degree (Feagin & Ducey 2017). Today, the gender hierarchy is maintained and reproduced by both the oppressor and the oppressed (Ridgeway & Correll 2006; Ridgeway 2011).

Unlike other systems of oppression, women are in constant contact with their oppressors, form intimate bonds with them, and have no safe space in everyday life where they do not have to interact with the dominant group. After centuries of living with and taking care of their oppressors, women began to adopt the male-sexist frame. For example, some women participate in perpetuating rape culture and victim-blaming by finding fault in women victims of sexual violence and helping men avoid accountability (Saunders, Scaturro, Guarino, & Kelly 2016;

Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). Narratives like “boys will be boys” suggest that boys are naturally prone to sex and violence (Escove 1998; Chhun 2011; Tuerkheimer 1997) and leaves the responsibility of safety to women (Saunders et al. 2016; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). Men and women place blame on victims by scrutinizing their choices as ‘asking for it’ (Davis 1994; Chhun 2011), even though all women are vulnerable to sexual violence and harassment, regardless of their clothing and behavior (Chhun 2011; Thompson 1994).

My research indicates that sexism is systematically produced and reinforced at individual-interactional levels creating a perpetual cycle of sexism at micro- and macro-levels. Most men do not filter their sexist views or behavior in front of or to women. Their sexist behavior has become normalized in part because it is usually dangerous for women to confront male strangers. I utilize systemic sexism theory to illustrate how sexist actions are embedded in every societal institution and thus, are reproduced in everyday interpersonal interactions with family, friends, and strangers in private and public places (Feagin & Ducey 2017). The theory is distinct from the concept of male-domination because it details dimensions and components that maintain the reproduction of institutionalized sexism. I show how the male-sexist frame, a dominant subframe of systemic sexism theory, is reproduced within heterosexual male-to-female interactions. In these three articles, I will show how systemic sexism differs from the other subsystems of oppression theoretically resulting in men not filtering their sexist behavior or commentary in front of women, and how the normativity of these behaviors, especially catcalling, create an unsafe environment for women. Women’s different lived experiences are a daily reminder that men are in the position of power and women are subjected to their power—a reality mirrored in micro-level interactions.

2. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SYSTEMIC RACISM AND SYSTEMIC SEXISM

The word *sexism* emerged at the later years of the Black civil rights movement as women began to draw parallels between sexism and racism, or more specifically as forms of systemic discrimination. While the study of systemic white racism has remained strong throughout, the study of sexism as systemic has waivered. Scholars and activists would often focus on specific issues ranging from the right to vote to the feminine mystique, the second shift, intersectionality and so forth (Friedan 1963; Crenshaw 1989; Crenshaw 1991; Cohen & Huffman 2003; Correll, Bernard, & Paik 2007; Stone 2008; Levanon, England, & Allison 2009; Hochschild 2012). Most gender scholars may view feminism as a linear progression, but we believe that the wave-approach is faulty in that sexism, gender, and misogyny are complex and fluid throughout time periods and contexts (Caudwell 2017). While the “fight” may seem different or more progressive compared to women’s rights 100 years ago, we are still plagued by the same system of oppression. The system continues to view women as inferior and men as superior at its core. In our patriarchal-sexist society, sexism is systematically produced and reinforced at individual- interactional levels creating a perpetual cycle of sexism at micro- and macro-levels.

Sexism is maintained through societal gender norms, or the expectations of how men and women should engage in gender performance, how they behave, dress, and their roles in private and in public (West & Zimmerman 1987). Both sexism and racism parallel as they are intertwining systems of oppression and subsystems of the elite-white-male dominance system, but there are distinct differences as well. Feagin and Ducey (2017) developed the elite-white-male dominance system to explain the way different systems of oppression are co-reproduced and parts of a larger, dominant system created by elite white men. They argue that systemic

racism, systemic sexism, and systemic classism are subsystems that were constructed into the foundations of the United States to keep elite white men in power (Feagin & Ducey 2017). At the time of its theoretical development, we would often discuss how sexism and racism were heavily co-reproducing and comprised of similar dimensions, but I began to note differences in the types of oppression, specifically the lack of censorship of sexist language and behavior in comparison to racism (pre-Trump era).

In *Two-Faced Racism: Whites in the Backstage and Frontstage*, Picca and Feagin (2007) utilized Goffman's theory (1959) described in his book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, and found that white people, the dominant, high-power race, often reported a difference in racial performances in white-only settings (backstage) compared to mixed-race settings (frontstage). They were "politically correct" and avoided racist jokes and behavior in front of people of color, but participated in "behind the scenes" racism when they were among white individuals. I believed that those findings would not be replicated when examining sexism. I wanted to hone in on these differences in hopes to further along the awareness of sexism in our society and our complicit participation.

We compared and contrasted the dimensions of each theory, and discussed how the differences between the two systems of oppression would affect the results despite using the same methodology and theoretical frameworks. To start, Goffman's theory (1959) would need to be modified to analyze the depths of sexism within different interactions, which would also require a change in methodology. In this paper, I will investigate the main differences between the two subsystems of oppression, show that Goffman's theory (1959) required an extension to accommodate studying sexism compared to racism, and share how these revisions resulted in methodological changes when replicating the study.

2.1 RACISM AND SEXISM: DISTINGUISHING TWO INTERTWINING OPPRESSIVE SYSTEMS

Historically, we have operated under a white male-dominant frame, or the combination of the *white-racial frame* and the *male-sexist frame*. Both frames are dominant worldviews encompassing “stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies, images, interpretations, narratives, and emotions” towards racism and sexism (Feagin 2013; Feagin & Ducey 2017). The white-racial frame is inherently racist as it is centered on pro-white and anti-other. The male-sexist frame is a bit more complex in that it is not only pro-male and anti-female, but also pro-masculinity and anti-femininity. Gender performance is expected to be a reflection of gender identity, sex, and sexual orientation, thus the frame is also inherently heterosexist. We police each other’s gender performances through expected roles, behavior, and the every day self-presentation (West & Zimmerman 1987).

Systemic racism and systemic sexism are subsystems of oppression that operate in similar ways, but there are four main distinctions that are apparent in its theoretical dimensions: First, our society is highly integrated forcing the oppressed to constantly interact with the oppressors. The minority group (women) is in constant interaction and personally connected with the dominant group (men). Women develop intimate bonds with their oppressors and do not have physical or emotional safe spaces in which men are not present. While people of color may work with white people, our country is still residentially segregated giving them some space to be without the presence of their racial oppressors. Conversely, men and women are socialized together in all aspects of life such as family (Allen, Swan, & Raghavan 2009; Ronai, Zsembik, & Feagin 1997; Benokraitis & Feagin 2005), work environments (Cotter, DeFiore, Hermsen, Kowalewski, & Vanneman 1997; Levanon et al. 2009), public life, healthcare (Kristof &

WuDunn 2009), as well as political representation (Feagin & Booher Feagin 1986) regardless of racial categories and ethnic backgrounds (Ridgeway 2011).

Second, misogyny is arguably the world's oldest form of systematic oppression dating back to the 8th century B.C.E. (Lerner 1986; Mies 1986/1998; Holland 2006). Systemic sexism and misogyny are reproduced in all racial categories, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses. Sexist discrimination has taken on different forms through the different eras, but was always centered on the male-sexist frame. Women were forbidden to engage in the law, academics, and political life. The brave women who disobeyed were often labeled as demon-lovers or witches and faced tortuous consequences including death (Federici 2004/2014; Morgan 1989/2001; Holland 2006). The fear of defying the system has forced women to adopt the male-sexist frame as a means of survival for centuries, and perhaps eventually come to accept the male-sexist frame as truth in part (Holland 2006; Mies 1986/1998).

Third, perhaps as a result of gender integration and the extensive history of misogyny, women participate in their own oppression equally, particularly through the reproduction of the male-sexist frame. Although white racism is also constantly reproduced and internalized by people of color, most can recognize it and build an active resistance to the white-racial frame—a pro-white and anti-other worldview whereas women actively participate in the reproduction of the male-sexist frame. In addition, gender norms continuously establish the acceptance of differential treatment among men and women—regardless of race or social category. The idea that men are superior, or have higher status, than women is reproduced through the acceptance and participation of gender norms (Ridgeway & Correll 2006; Sell & Kuipers 2009; Rashotte & Webster, Jr. 2005; Webster Jr. & Rashotte 2009; Rudman & Phelan 2007).

Lastly, it is generally perceived as an insult to be labeled a racist, but the normalization of sexism has discounted “being a sexist” as insulting. Our everyday use of language mirrors how little importance we place on sexism. We focus on differentiating individuals that believe in gender equality as “feminists,” which has a negative connotation. Whereas we label those that engage in racist behavior as racists, we label the people who believe in gender equality rather than labeling those that are sexist or misogynist. When someone says something sexist, they are rarely confronted or labeled as a sexist, but when women confront sexist situations, they are often disregarded as “just being feminists,” “man-haters,” or “feminazis” (Anderson, Kanner, & Elsayegh 2009). Whereas most people of color can recognize racist behavior, women may not always be able to distinguish sexist behavior because it mostly consists of gendered expectations—essentially fostering an environment in which women equally participate in their own oppression. These theoretical differences between systemic racism and systemic sexism called for an extension in Goffman’s theory (1959) when examining sexism that was not necessary when Picca & Feagin (2007) utilized it to study racism.

2.2 EXTENDING GOFFMAN’S THEORY FOR SYSTEMIC SEXISM

Goffman’s theory (1959) utilizes symbolic interactionism to describe the various types of micro-level interactions people have with each other. He argues that an individual’s type of interaction will change based on the context of the situation and the relationship to those that are present; he uses a theater metaphor to visualize the differences. The “frontstage” is a setting in which the individual performs “before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers” (Goffman 1959:22). It is also a space in which there is diversity in gender, age, and race (Picca & Feagin 2007). The “backstage” setting is typically a “relatively private and comfortable place” for actors (Picca and Feagin 2007:16). Arguably, the frontstage involves

spaces where actors must contain a form of “political correctness” in the midst of a diverse audience, and backstage is a space where the actors can express their views liberally without feeling they will have negative repercussions. As cultural norms evolve, topics will shift from the frontstage to the backstage. For example, during the Jim Crow-era, white racism was explicitly stated and acted upon in the frontstage, but overtime, it became a backstage topic (Picca and Feagin 2007). However, due to the main theoretical differences between sexism and racism—I suspected there would not be a difference between backstage and frontstage sexism. To examine this question, I had to implement differences in the methodology when utilizing Goffman’s theory (1959).

Picca & Feagin (2007) were able to apply Goffman’s theory (1959) directly to their methodology since two stages were sufficient to study white racism, conversely, more stages needed to be added to study sexism in his theoretical framework. People tend to associate with their same racial groups, which means that gender in the frontstage or the backstage had little to no effect on racist behavior with both White men and White women present (Picca & Feagin 2007). However, sexism is expressed differently depending on the gender makeup of the stages, so in addition to the frontstage, three backstages had to be created for the study: 1) *all-female backstage*, a setting that includes only close female friends or relatives, 2) *all-male backstage*, a setting that includes only close male friends or relatives, and 3) *mixed-gender backstage*, a setting that includes both men and women that are close friends or relatives. These three backstages are important to understand how sexism is reproduced in multiple contexts and among different relationships. Nearly a decade later, we accommodated the theoretical differences and applied current technological advancements when we replicated Picca & Feagin’s (2007) study on white racism.

2.3 METHODOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SYSTEMIC RACISM AND SYSTEMIC SEXISM

The extension of Goffman's (1959) theoretical framework required some changes to the methodology. In addition, we added constructional differences including the wording of the instructions of the study, the manner of the data collection and the population sample, as well as the process of coding and analysis.

Instructions of the Study

When replicating the original study, we immediately encountered issues with the instructions of the study. Picca & Feagin (2007) were able to use "racial incidents," but there was not the equivalent for sexism since "sexual incidents" would have implied sexual encounters rather than acts of discrimination based on sex. I did not want to use the word "sexism" and prime participants if another term worked equally well, so I had to pretest other terms. I conducted a sociological pretest with thirty undergraduate female and male students in which they were randomly assigned to instructions using "gender comparisons," "unequal treatment of sex," or "sexism." The "gender comparison" group provided narratives that discussed basic gender comparisons that were not relative to acts of discrimination. The "unequal treatment of a sex" group provided better examples than the "gender comparison group," but their focus was more on specific incidents, like wage gap, rather than a larger spectrum of sexism. I thought that using the word "sexism" would not only prime the participants too much, but that it would cause them to write narratives only on extreme, visible forms of sexism. However, the pretest revealed that participants in the "sexism" group had the narratives that best described sexist interactions, and provided a very diverse set of narratives ranging from highly visible forms of sexism, as well as more covert and subtle forms.

Collection of the Data and Sample

Compared to Picca & Feagin's (2007) study, we utilized technological advances to collect our data and diversify our sample. To collect their data on racial incidents, they and other instructors from different universities used students in their courses as participants and the students received extra credit in class for participating. Their participants/students also submitted their responses by hand, which made it more tedious for researchers to read and organize. In contrast, we recruited undergraduate students from a large university in the south, as well as a large university in the midwest. Instead of collecting the data by hand, we utilized online research participation systems to recruit participants, and online technology for data submission as well as for cleaning, coding, and analysis. In the southern university, researchers received permission from instructors of various courses to recruit volunteers to be added to the Sociology study participation system; in the midwestern university, participants from various majors were already registered in a Communication research participation system. In order to increase diversity, the target classes at both universities were those required by the universities because of the higher representation of different majors to increase diversity. I initially limited participation to those who fully identified as Black, Latino/a, or White, but beginning in January 2018, we began to also include Asian Americans into the racial group in hopes of receiving their experiences as well as increasing the response rate.

Participants were asked to write fourteen journal entries over the course of six weeks on anything they perceived to be sexism. The journals consist of detailed accounts, or stories, of daily events that were perceived as a form of sexism by the participant. Eligible participants filled out demographic information and were asked to create a unique 8-digit identification number using their birth month, birth day, and last four digits of their phone numbers. Once the

information was filled out, the participants were redirected to a public website where all fourteen journal entry links were listed and submitted through an IRB approved Qualtrics survey. Before completing each journal entry, participants had to input the unique identification number they created to receive compensation after completing the study. After all of the journal entries are submitted, participants receive an online \$20 Amazon gift card to make an online purchase.

Coding and Analysis

Rather than doing the coding and analysis by hand, I analyzed the journal entries using Dedoose, a qualitative website that enabled coding themes and helped to reveal patterns. I created a unique codebook to locate important themes for analysis. In particular, it is important to know how and where these sexist experiences are occurring as well as the demographic information of each person present in the account. Different from Picca & Feagin (2007), we needed three backstages to analyze sexism in various interactions. In all scenarios, we code the stage (frontstage, all-female backstage, all-male backstage, or mixed-gender backstage) as well as who is saying what in the conversation (“said by...”), and their relationship to the narrator (uncle, female professor, boyfriend, female friend, sister, etc.).

I did initial coding through the line-by-line process and gave each entry a broad code such as “discrimination of women by men” among others. I then analyzed the data within the parent code “discrimination of women by men” to create a child code through focused coding. Researchers utilize focused coding to identify codes that are dominant. The narratives coded were then reduced to more focused coding, such as the race of the actors present, the location, time of day among others. Lastly, I used theoretical coding to connect the patterns of the accounts into a theoretical framework.

2.4 RESULTS

When replicating the original study on racism utilizing an extension of Goffman's theory (1959), theoretical differences between systemic racism and systemic sexism emerged. In all cases of the *frontstage* and the *backstages*, the reinforcement of patriarchy was evident through the acceptance, usage, and lack of confrontation towards sexist behavior by both men and women. Regardless if they were family, friends, partners, acquaintances, or strangers, men frequently displayed, stated, and behaved in sexist ways in front of women freely without repercussions. Men and women in every racial category struggled to recognize the male-sexist frame so they inadvertently or overtly reproduced it within their daily interactions. Unlike most people of color who can identify racism and resist the white-racial frame, women hardly countered or resisted the anti-female/anti-femininity narratives.

However, perhaps the most notable distinction between studying racism and sexism using an extended version of Goffman's theory (1959) is the actors' behavior in the frontstage and mixed-gender backstage. Unlike the findings of Picca & Feagin (2007) in which the frontstage (in the presence of people of color) resulted in less frequent displays of blatant racist behavior by White individuals, as I anticipated, the same was not true in cases of sexism. There were no differences in sexist behavior between the *frontstage* (mixed-gender public settings) and the *mixed-gender backstage*.

FRONTSTAGE & BACKSTAGE: RACISM

A clear distinction was found between white people's behavior in front of people of color (frontstage) and in white-only settings (backstage) (Picca & Feagin 2007). In white-only spaces, people were much more likely to espouse and exchange racist jokes and commentary. For

example, the following two excerpts are from Picca & Feagin (2007) in a backstage (all-white) setting:

With the full group membership present, anti-Semitic jokes abound, as do racial slurs and vastly derogatory statements. Jewish people are simply known as “Hebes,” short for Hebrews. Comments were made concerning the construction of a “Hebeagogue”—a term for a Jewish place of worship. Various jokes concerning stereotypes [about] Jewish people were also swapped around the gaming table—everything from “How many Hebes fit in a VW beetle?” to “Why did the Jews wander the desert for forty years?” In each case, the punch lines were offensive, even though I’m not Jewish. The answers were “One million (in ashtray) and four (in seats)” and “because someone dropped a quarter,” respectively. These jokes degraded into a rendition of the song “Yellow” ... re-done to represent the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. It contained lines about the shadows of the people being flash burned into the walls (“and it was all yellow” as the chorus goes in the song).. A member of the group also decided that he has the perfect idea for a Hallmark card. On the cover it would have a few kittens in a basket with ribbons and lace. On the inside it would simply say, “You’re a nigger.”...Supposedly, when questioned about it, the idea of the card was to make it as offensive as humanly possible in order to make the maximal juxtaposition between warm- and ice- hearted. After a brief conversation about the cards which dealt with just how wrong they were, a small kitten was drawn on a piece of paper and handed to me with a simple, three-word message... and the people of Mexico were next to bear the brunt of the jokes. A comment was made about Mexicans driving low-riding cars so they can drive and pick lettuce at the same time. (White, male university student) (Picca & Feagin 2007: 5)

The white male student details various racist jokes said by his white college friends at a gathering. It appeared that they were trying to cover all the races and make their racist jokes “as offensive as humanly possible” in the presence of an all-white backstage, which can include both men and women. According to Picca & Feagin (2007) the majority of racist commentary and jokes came from white men while white women would often stay quiet or try to change topics.

In the next scenario, a white woman describes being present when three of her white friends began bantering racist jokes. She states:

Three of my (white) friends and I went back to my house to drink a little more before we ended the night. Dylan started telling jokes: “What’s the most confusing day of the year in Harlem?” “Father’s Day . . . Whose your Daddy?” Dylan also referred to black people as “Porch Monkeys.” Everyone laughed a little, but it was obvious that we all felt a little less comfortable when he was telling jokes like that. My friend Dylan is not a racist person. He has more black friends than I do, that’s why I was surprised he so freely said

something like that. Dylan would never have said something like that around anyone who was a minority. . . It is this sort of “joking” that helps to keep racism alive today. People know the places they have to be politically correct, and most people will be. However, until this sort of “behind-the-scenes” racism comes to an end, people will always harbor those stereotypical views that are so prevalent in our country. This kind of joking really does bother me, but I don’t know what to do about it. I know that I should probably stand up and say I feel uncomfortable when my friends tell jokes like that, but I know my friends would just get annoyed with me and say that they obviously don’t mean anything by it. (White female university student) (Picca & Feagin 2007: 17-18)

She describes feeling uncomfortable and not knowing how to respond while also excusing her friend’s behavior by claiming he isn’t racist because he has more black friends than she does.

The white female student describes the white-only interaction as a “behind-the-scenes racism” and notes that it is detrimental to achieving racial equality. Had a person of color been in the room, more than likely the backstage racism wouldn’t have taken place.

Occasionally the backstage and frontstage settings can blur creating a change of behavior. “Slippage” occurs “when whites do not completely secure backstage parameters or when whites forget that they are not in a safe backstage area” (Picca & Feagin 2007: 23). For example, a conversation in a public environment, like a coffee shop or a student center are likely places for slippage as was the case in this next scenario:

I was hanging out at the Union with a bunch of friends, all being white kids from [the West]. Our conversation was about nothing important, but when a couple of black kids walked up, everybody got kinda quiet and weren’t being themselves anymore. I’m not sure if they stopped talking because they felt threatened or if they thought they might accidentally say something that would offend the two black kids. But it was obvious that the black kids were definitely the cause of the conversation changing. (White, male university student) (Picca & Feagin 2007: 23)

He says he isn’t sure why everyone was quiet and not being themselves when two black kids entered the public space, but that he is sure that it was because of their presence. They weren’t talking about anything important or saying anything racist, but they still changed their behavior.

White people's behavior would change in slippage situations suggesting a monitoring of conduct in the frontstage. However, the same was not true for sexism.

No Slippage: Sure-footed in Sexism

The data indicates that whereas white individuals reserved their racist behavior in front of whites-only in the backstage, men did not contain their sexist behavior to *all-male backstages*. Men were outright sexist regardless of their relationship to the women present. Without stage distinction for sexist behavior, there were no situations for "slippage" to occur, as was the case for white racism. For example, many female participants described overhearing men being sexist in all-male backstage settings. The men were within their own group, but unlike white people around people of color, were not careful to censor sexism when women were visibly present.

A 21-year-old white woman recalls an incident in which she heard a group of men discussing birth control for women:

I was in school and I overheard a group of five guys (white men in their 20's) talking about current events and politics. They went on and on about how it wasn't the government's job to give women birth control because "if they don't want to get pregnant, then they just shouldn't have sex," which is a pretty common phrase. These men shouldn't be speaking about birth control to begin with since they, after all, don't have to take it. But to assume birth control is solely used to prevent pregnancy is a misconception (that I thought we had clarified, apparently not) and it's just really obnoxious to have men speaking of birth control as if they understand it, in society and definitely in Congress. (White, female, 21 years old)

The interaction of these men mirrors the reality of older white men in positions of power controlling women's reproductive rights. To many, birth control, abortion, and sexual activity are controversial topics, but these men engaged in this conversation freely without censoring their opinionated views on women's issues in the presence of women. She states that she isn't sure if her experience could be classified as an example of sexism, but was confident that it was an example of mansplaining—which is interesting, because mansplaining is inherently sexist.

Perhaps because women are used to men controlling their reproductive rights and their bodies, the normalization of it made her question whether it was sexism. Like most women who witnessed all-male backstages, the participant did not intervene their conversation.

The data showed that in these “slippage” type scenarios, men were rarely confronted with their sexism—some participants state that it was because they were outnumbered. In general, most women described being disgusted by the conversations they overheard and would move away. The men typically sexually objectified women in their conversations. For example:

Two young white males about the ages of 18 and 20 were sitting at a table doing what I suspect was homework at the university library. I was at the table next to them with my back facing their table, but they were talking pretty loud so I could overhear what they were saying. They seemed to be rating their mutual female friends on how much they want to have sex with them or “bang” them as they put it. Their commentary went back and forth explaining why they rated certain girls the way they did. After 10 minutes, I got really annoyed with their behavior so I left to go study someplace else. These boys were talking about girls like they were only there for their sexual satisfaction and not for anything else. (White, female, 19 years old)

Not only did men *not* censor their sexist talk in the visible presence of women, but they also did not do so when women were in earshot of their conversations. The 19-year-old white woman is aware of their presence, so they have to be aware of hers and yet, they still didn’t censor their conversation. She can easily overhear the entire conversation between two college-aged men who were grotesquely rating not just women, but their *friends*, which is even more daunting as it is reflective of rape culture. Eventually, she becomes annoyed with them and relocates to study elsewhere, but doesn’t report the behavior to a librarian. Most women find these situations difficult to report because they are normative experiences and authorities may dismiss the event.

These scenarios are examples of “slippage” or when the frontstage and backstage settings get blurred due to being in a relatively public place. Whereas Picca & Feagin (2007) found that white individuals would stop talking about racism or racist issues in front of people of color,

conversely, the data showed that men did not censor their sexist views in the presence of women. There may be many reasons why women don't confront men, but only one is mentioned in the data. They fear retribution since they are one woman confronting a group of men. However, additional potential reasons have emerged from other types scenarios in the data such as fear of being dismissed, being labeled "too emotional," or the normalization of the behavior and the acceptance of the narrative that "boys will be boys." It is not entirely clear why men don't censor their sexist behavior around women the way that white people censor their racism around people of color, but results indicate that it may be due to the theoretical differences between systemic racism and systemic sexism.

There may be four reasons for the distinction of behavior in slippage situations between the two types of oppression: First, women are highly integrated with men and also participate in upholding the male-sexist frame regardless of racial category, so men might feel that their sexist comments are acceptable. Second, whereas white men can be physically threatened by men of color, men in general do not fear physical retribution from women. Third, the male-sexist frame has been engrained for centuries so many of these sexist beliefs aren't interpreted as sexism. The data showed that women often had difficulty discerning sexism. Lastly, at least in the pre-Trump era, it was insulting for people to be labeled as a racist, but we have not reached the same level of repugnance towards sexism for men to fear being labeled a sexist. We found that there was no difference in sexist behavior between the frontstage and the backstages.

FRONTSTAGE: SEXISM

In the frontstage (mixed gender strangers), men frequently expressed sexist views in front of women in a variety of ways and in different contexts. Female participants described sexist interactions from male strangers in religious settings, school campuses, the workplace, and in the

public in general. Systemic sexism is reproduced through our micro-level interactions that are often overlooked, because they are seen as normative behavior especially when sexism is heavily embedded into the English language. For example, in a frontstage setting an 18-year-old white woman realizes this as she hears a group of male college students talking:

I was hanging out with a group of other college students this weekend where one guy dared another to do something stupid, and since he said no, he got called a pussy. I've never personally understood this form of name calling/phrase because it's basically just saying that they're a woman's private part. More importantly, this phrase is translated in the guy's world to "You're a woman." Men calling females pussies is highly offensive to women and very much sexist. In what world would it be okay to call someone who chooses not to do something dumb or to not take a dare a woman? 1) Who says women can't be daring and 2) How come women are classified as people who aren't? Saying this insinuates that women are lesser compared to men. It's not like we have a phrase to call someone a man when women do something dumb or they're scared to do something. Not to mention, this phrase is centered on the particular body part, not just a woman in general, which in my opinion is even more offensive. It's objectifying; they view us as objects instead of people—the basis of sexism. Instead of calling each other women (which would still be offensive to our character), they call each other a woman's vagina. The worst part is that they were talking about this with us girls right in front of them! At least they could talk about it in private, and then we wouldn't have to know. But they had no filter, and kept repeating it—they saw nothing wrong! (White, Female, 18 years old)

Unlike most of the data entries, this participant not only described her experience with sexism, but also reflected on the situation and analyzed the use of sexist language. The white woman gives a very thorough evaluation of men using “pussy,” a woman’s body part, to demean one another and the implications it has on the perceptions of women as well as women’s capabilities. She reflects on the common narratives and stereotypes of women and femininity as weak by broadly asking, “How come women are classified as people who aren’t [daring]?”

One man puts on a display of masculinity by challenging the other man to a dare (pro-male/pro-masculinity), and then uses “pussy” (anti-female/anti-femininity) to tarnish the other man’s masculinity after his refusal to do the dare. The use of the word pussy as an insult reinforces the idea that women are weak and incapable of being daring in comparison to men. Its

usage also reduces women to a single body part reproducing the objectification of women. In addition to noting that using pussy as an insult is highly offensive and sexist, the white woman also expresses anger and frustration that the men said it *repeatedly* throughout the night in front of a group of women without a second thought. Interestingly, she would be less offended if the men used “pussy” as an insult when women weren’t around, or in the *all-male backstage*, but the data indicates that men engage in sexist behavior regardless of whether women are present or not and without any fear of negative repercussions.

Sometimes women will not confront men for fear of retribution or being labeled a negatively, but other times it is because women also accept the narrative and reproduce the male-sexist frame. Some religious beliefs reinforce the idea that women are submissive to men and so often hold women to higher standards of “morality” in comparison to men. A 20-year-old white woman describes a scenario in which her pastor espoused sexist views to his congregation:

I was in church with friends this last Sunday. The pastor (white male in his 30s) was addressing the congregation. He was talking about that no matter what you have done Jesus always loves you. He specifically said that even if you are a girl who has been used up by sex you can still follow Christ. I thought this was sexist because he made no other specification of things that men may do. He only pointed out what girls do and he made it seem that no matter how much sex guys have, they are never seen as unclean. (White, Female, 20 years old)

One common narrative is that men have higher sex drives than women and are unable to control their sexual desires, so many faiths may excuse men’s impure behaviors while expecting women to be “pure” until marriage. The pastor’s sermon reflects this belief as he equates girls to objects that can be “used up” by sex, but makes no mention of men also being unclean and used up if they also engage in sexual activity. He reinforces the double standard by shaming women for their sexual pasts and desires while basically giving men a free pass because of their masculine tendencies. The participant makes no note of the congregation’s reaction to his sermon, but the

pastor has a following as a higher authority figure in the church. In addition, the data indicates that women also accept and reproduce the male-sexist frame, so many women in the congregation may not have perceived his sermon as sexist. Nevertheless, the pastor did not filter or edit his sermon for fear of offending the women in his congregation. Many female participants described situations in which they experienced sexism by members of authority whether it is religious leaders, bosses, or professors—most of which are white men.

One way that women cope with these experiences is by sharing them with other women. In the next scenario, the 19-year-old Black participant describes her 19-year-old Latina coworker's experience with a 60-year-old white male professor:

I was at work talking to my coworker Gabby (a 19 year old Latina) who received a lower grade from her 60-year-old white male professor on a group project she took part in during a lab in which she was the only girl. When she spoke to her professor about the grade, he told her that because she was a girl she couldn't get as high of a grade as her group members. (Black, Female, 19 years old)

As expected, women participants in STEM fields often describe being the only woman in their male-dominated group projects and experiencing sexism from their male group members. However, the data showed that male professors—mainly older white men—also freely espoused sexist views. A 60-year-old white male professor tells Gabby that she did not receive as high of a grade as the rest of her group members “because she was a girl.” In this frontstage scenario, Gabby could also be experiencing gendered racism as a Latina since according to the data, it is more acceptable for men to be sexist in front of women than for white people to be racist in front of people of color. The distinction between racism and sexism in the frontstage might be why he is able to specify just her gender and not her race as the reason for her alleged lack of intellect. Unfortunately, he wasn't the only older white male professor to be sexist towards female students—others report being told to smile and being referred to as terms of endearment such as

“adorable.” The anti-female/anti-femininity subframe of the male-sexist frame is apparent when men view women as inferior and incapable of accomplishing “masculine” tasks.

An 18-year-old Latina woman is confronted by a male stranger who insists she is a damsel in distress in need of his chivalrous strength. She describes:

I went to the mailbox to pick up a package before going home for the weekend. The box was pretty large but not very heavy at all. I was about halfway home when a boy stopped and asked me if I needed help. I politely declined his offer and proceeded to continue when he stopped me and said, "Are you sure? That box looks pretty heavy." Again, I politely declined and started to walk again. Once again, he stopped me and said, "No girl as small as you could possibly be able to carry that giant box all the way home." Once more, I said “no thanks” and continued to walk hurriedly away so he couldn't stop me again. I understand he was just trying to be polite, however, the box was not heavy at all and I refused his offer three times. This guy was a complete stranger and seemed a bit rude when he implied that I would not be able to lift the box on my own. (Latina, 18 years old)

He offers to help carry her large box with the initial assumption that she couldn't do it on her own. After she refused his offer “politely” twice, he makes it known that he doesn't think “a girl as small” could carry the “giant box” all the way home. He operates under the male-sexist frame that women are physically weak and in need of masculine assistance and has no problem expressing that to her, but she does not consent to his help. Nevertheless, he disregards her answer and continues to press—his anti-female/anti-femininity subframe views don't trust she was making the right choice for herself. She hurried away from him, but most women in similar situations describe the nice, chivalrous men becoming angry with them for not accepting their help. This participant doesn't state that she was afraid, but he obviously didn't consider how she might feel having a male stranger not only know where she lived, but also be inside her home to leave the box. It is a common experience for women that may seem subtle, but it is a clear disregard for women's independence and capability in making their own decisions.

The next two scenarios are similar in topic and show how sexism is experienced the same whether it is in the frontstage or mixed-gender backstage. A Latina describes being offended when a male stranger assumes that she could not be a STEM major:

I was at a bar, and an Asian man (around 22 years old) started up a conversation with me. He said his major is engineering, so I told him my dad majored in engineering. He misunderstood me and thought I said that was MY major, not my dad's. He said, "You don't look like an engineer." I immediately took offense to this, and said, "Just because I'm a woman, I can't be an engineer?" He responded by saying, "It's not because you're a woman, it's because you're an attractive woman." I'm not sure if this was his way of trying to hit on me, but it completely failed. I'm not sure if he meant that I'm too pretty to do a job like that, or if I don't look smart enough to be an engineer, but regardless I took offense to his comments and discontinued the conversation. (Latina, Older than 21 years old)

When confronted about his reaction towards the possibility of her being an engineer, he says that he's not shocked by it because she is a woman, but because she is an *attractive* woman. While he may have thought that he wasn't being sexist by clarifying that it was because she was attractive, in actuality, he is still operating under the male-sexist frame. The pro-male/pro-masculinity and anti-female/anti-femininity subframes include narratives and stereotypes of expected gender roles, and women in STEM fields do not fit the narrative. In addition, the stereotype of women in engineering is that these women are unattractive, which is why he reacted in that manner. However, he wouldn't make the same kind of assumption to a male engineer indicating that it's not entirely about beauty, but also about capability and intellect. Her attractiveness is an added layer to the anti-female/anti-femininity subframe in that attractive women are especially not expected to be in STEM fields.

Unlike people of color and white people, the oppressed (women) and the oppressor (men) live together, work together, and form intimate bonds in every racial group, ethnic background, culture, and socioeconomic status. People of color adopt and reproduce the male-sexist frame as well. In this case, the Asian man does not filter his beliefs on what women engineers should look

like even when she counters him. Despite her pushback, the male-sexist frame remains validated, because she is not an actual engineer. The Asian man was a complete stranger to her, but had no problem divulging his view of women, especially attractive women, being engineers. Whereas white racism was mainly quieted in front of people of color, sexist behavior by men was not silenced in the presence of women.

MIXED-GENDER BACKSTAGE: SEXISM

As expected, male friends, relatives, and boyfriends were blatantly sexist in front of women as much as male strangers were. Women experienced the same types of sexism from men in both the frontstage and the mixed-gender backstage. For example, in the scenario above the Asian man (male-stranger) was forward on his thoughts about women as engineers to a woman stranger, but so was Doug to his female friend in the next scenario:

I was with my friend Allison (Chinese engineering student) at the campus library studying when one of Allison's friends, Doug (a Chinese college engineering student around the age of 22), started talking to us. Allison and Doug began discussing the issue of how challenging one of their civil engineering tests were and how everyone scored really low on the test. Doug told Allison that even though it was a challenging test, he heard that all of the really low scores were from girls. He began telling Allison that the material is a lot harder for girls to understand, because their brains are not as fixated on science as males' are. Allison thought Doug was joking with her, until he told her he was not kidding. As Doug walked away, Allison starts becoming really frustrated, and tells me that she hates how the engineering program at our university is so male dominant, because it leads to stereotypes against women. (Latina, 20 years old)

Doug is a friend of Allison and is in the same major and engineering course. In front of both women, he blatantly states that science is more difficult for women because their brains cannot handle it to the same capacity as men. Initially Allison thought Doug was kidding, but he wasn't. He blatantly expresses his worldview that men are superior in intellect and women are not as capable in male-dominated fields. In a way, he was preserving his masculinity, because although he also scored low on the test, it wasn't as bad as the women.

Like the Asian male in the frontstage scenario, Doug does not filter his beliefs on women as engineers that are clearly based in anti-female/anti-femininity stereotypes and narratives. It is also another example of people of color adopting the male-sexist frame. Allison does not counter him when she realizes he was not joking and is frustrated by it. It does not appear that this is her first experience, because she notes that her male-dominated engineering program leads to stereotypes against women. Her sexist experience also shows the importance of female representation in male-dominated fields not just as support for women, but to counter the male-sexist frame that women aren't equally capable to be engineers. Unfortunately, this was a common occurrence in the data. Another Latina reported being with three white male friends who laughed at her when she told them she planned on being an environmental engineer because "science was not a field for women to be in and women were not educated enough to understand the science world." Her friends "jokingly" told her that women only belonged in the kitchen making sandwiches and being stay-at-home moms. Men put women down a lot in regards to their capability, whether it was in science, driving, or controlling their emotions.

Men, whether strangers or known to the female participants, would assume and blatantly ask if the participants were on their periods when they expressed any sort of unpleasant emotion.

A 21-year-old white woman describes an incident with a white male friend:

I was trying to make some last minute adjustments in between classes on a big research paper, so I was slightly on edge. Well a friend (white, male, 20's) comes up behind me and scares me, so I react slightly rude because it scared me and I was already stressed. He says, "Wow someone is on her period." First of all, that joke is old. Any time a woman is slightly in a bad mood it's always because we're on our period, and all other times we should be in the best mood, always smiling, and happy. I just rolled my eyes and let it slip but I really should have said something about it, I was too focused on my paper to put too much energy into it though. (White, Female, 21 years old)

The participant reacted to being scared while stressed like most would, but her male friend assumes that she is on her period because she was rude to him. Her sexist experience was a

common theme in the data—most women also expressing the same frustration when asked if they are on their periods by men. She understands the expectations of femininity in the male-sexist frame, because she is annoyed that women “should be in the best mood, always smiling, and happy” and if they are not, it is assumed they are being hormonal. She did not counter him, because she didn’t want to expend the emotional labor and time to do so, but also says she “really should have done something about it.” Male strangers, friends, and relatives blatantly express the “old joke” of blaming women’s bad moods on their periods directly to women. It is difficult for women to counter them without further appearing emotional and angry to the men.

Often times men would “joke” about women being on their periods, being in the kitchen to make men sandwiches, or poke fun at women’s issues. Whereas white people frequently told racist jokes in the backstage, the data showed that sexist joking was more outright and heavily based on the male-sexist frame than on specific sexist jokes. An 18-year-old Latina describes:

At dinner in our university’s dining courts, one of our friends, Caucasian male (18 years old) made a comment. After I complained about the Internet page not loading, he said, "You tried to load the page, but it will always stop at 77%." This was obviously a joke on the wage gap between men and women. My friends laughed as did I, but I can never help but get a little mad since it's obviously a very serious issue. Even though I know he's just kidding, I get a sense that they're making it seem like it isn't that big deal if they can just joke about it. (Latina, Female, 18 years old)

The participant’s male friend made a joke about the gender wage gap, and while everyone laughed, she reflects on seriousness of these issues not being taken seriously if they are joked about. He linked a typical technical problem to a gender inequality issue simply because she was a woman and it was applicable. Neither she nor her friends countered him on his joke either. However, even when men are countered for further explanation about their sexist views, they will sometimes dismiss the topic to avoid evaluating their male-sexist framing.

A Latina woman describes hanging out with her boyfriend and wanting to watch a movie with a female-lead. She states:

My boyfriend (white, 21 years old) and I were in my room trying to decide what movie to watch. I stumbled across "Wonder Woman," and I told him that I had wanted to see that movie, and my sister had told me that it was really good. His immediate reaction was "I don't want to watch that." When I asked him why not, he said, "Because it's stupid." When I further pressed him on the matter, he said, "She's not a prominent enough character to have her own movie." I said, "You loved Deadpool, which is a spin off from the Wolverine." He told me, "That's different." He wouldn't come right out and say it, but I know him well enough and long enough to know that he did not want to watch a movie with a female-lead character promoting the empowerment of women. It makes no sense, because that was one of the highest grossing films of 2017 and it got great ratings. I guess some traditional people are stuck in their ways and are only accustomed to male superheroes. (Latina, Older than 21 years old)

He initially tells her that he doesn't want to watch the movie, because Wonder Woman is not a prominent character, but when she counters that he enjoys watching other movies that are also not prominent superhero characters, he disregards the connection. She also provides evidence that the movie is good because of its ratings and financial success, but he still doesn't budge. The Latina woman knows that the real reason is because he didn't want to see a movie promoting women empowerment and accepts it as "traditional people stuck in their ways" even though he is her age. The boyfriend expresses a strong pro-male/pro-masculinity and anti-female/anti-femininity view in his selection of acceptable superheroes, which is also a reflection of the general beliefs within the movie industry. On the other hand, the Latina woman accepts the male-sexist frame as a reality that some people are accustomed to rather than directly confront him about it. Women typically let go of incidents in which their boyfriends expressed sexist views or commentary as they also did for their parents and grandparents. Latinas especially described dealing with the differential treatment they received in comparison to their brothers.

One Latina participant talked a lot about having different household responsibilities than her brother and having to accept her traditional parents' views. She talks about the first moment it dawned on her. She states:

I was about 13 years old. It was summer time and my father was giving my brother and I a set of chores to do. He told me to wash the dishes, do laundry and fold, vacuum a couple of rooms and sweep the dining room. He then just told my brother to take out the trash and clean his room. I asked my dad, "Why do I have to do all these things and my brother doesn't?" and he simply replied, "Because he's a boy." This mad me very upset to the point of tears. It made me angry because I had to do more than my brother. I just sucked it up and did it because my parents needed help around the house, and it was what a good child was supposed to do. But little did I know this was one of the first forms of sexism I've ever experienced. (Latina, 19 years old)

Often times women's first experience with sexism is in the home through their parents' own reproduction of the male-sexist frame. It can especially become accentuated in families that come from male-dominated cultures, such as Latinos. Her father gave her a significant amount of chores compared to her brother just because she was a girl. Even though she was upset about it, she did it and continued to do it, because her parents needed the help and it was what was expected of a "good child." She felt a sense of responsibility since it was an expected role for a girl. Through the acceptance of her differential treatment and responsibilities, the Latina also inadvertently accepts the male-sexist frame as a stagnant reality. In the previous scenarios in the frontstage and mixed-gender backstage, the men were prominent in reproducing the male-sexist frame and espousing sexist views, but women also gender-police other women and men in accordance with the pro-male/pro-masculinity and anti-female/anti-femininity worldview.

ALL-FEMALE BACKSTAGE: SEXISM

Through the centuries of misogyny and systemic sexism, women have adopted and upheld the patriarchy by participating in sexist behavior through the internalization of the male-sexist frame. The *all-female backstage* exercised a form of sexism consistent with internalized

oppression, which can be defined as an individual of lower social status (like women) believing in the justification of their lower social status and inequalities as truth and fixed. Women may not even be consciously aware that they are supporting the system that maintains their own oppression.

Fathers weren't alone in treating their daughters differently compared to their sons. A common all-female backstage scenario was mothers perpetuating the male-sexist frame to their daughters. For example, a 19-year-old white woman describes:

I was on the phone with my mother on my way back to my dorm after class. My parents still help my brother and me out with paying for our cell phone bills so they have access to our records. My mother uses an application on my phone to track my location, which seems fair due to the fact that I'm not paying the bill. However, on the phone yesterday, I learned that she does not track my brother's location. When I asked her why, she responded, "It's different for boys and girls out there. If you were a boy, I wouldn't have to track you. It's just the way it is." I felt frustrated since my brother and I are very close in age and are both in the same financial situation, but I lose part of my privacy simple because I was born female. (White, Female, 19 years old)

The participant realizes for the first time that her brother's location wasn't tracked, which was an assumption she had since they are both relatively the same age and still under their parents' financial care. Her mother plainly states that "it's different for boys and girls out there" further reproducing the notion that women need to be taken care of more than men for their safety. While this belief seems harmless, it reproduces anti-female/anti-femininity subframe by labeling women as more weak and incapable of handling themselves compared to men as well as not trusting women to make their own decisions in their independency. However, it also indirectly reproduces rape culture ideology and victim-blaming by monitoring women's behavior but not holding men's behavior accountable. Like the Latina's experience with her father, the white woman feels frustrated and realizes that she is being treated differently than her brother simply because she was born female.

Mothers also gender-policed their daughters' to promote femininity and expected beauty standards in accordance to the male-sexist frame. An 18-year-old white woman describes struggling with self-confidence issues and unable to overcome them because of her mom's lack of support:

I am a female studying Engineering. Last semester was my first semester and as I adjusted to school, I struggled with a large amount of self-doubt. This led me to hate many things about myself, especially the way I looked. After a few months I decided to make a step-by-step change, beginning with giving up make-up. I was hopeful that I would learn to like myself without make-up as well as clear up acne. When I came home for break, I told my mother of my goals with giving up make-up and that I had already seen improvement on my self-esteem. She wasn't impressed. She told me that make-up isn't the reason that I was depressed and that I shouldn't bother giving it up. I then felt again as if I needed make-up to look pretty, or as my mother felt, presentable. Later on, my family decided to take family pictures, something we hadn't done in a long time. I decided to wear make-up that day so that I wouldn't ruin the pictures. Before we left for the photos, my mom stopped me and told me that I looked beautiful. After that incident, I now wear make-up almost every day. It upsets me that others only think I look pretty with make-up on, including my mother. (White, Female, 18 years old)

She describes struggling to adjust to school as an engineering major causing her to be insecure about the way she looked. The white woman decides to rid herself of the superficial beauty standards of make-up to build self-confidence. Her efforts paid off as she saw improvement in her self-esteem, but her mother didn't agree. It is clear that her mother deeply connects make-up with feminine identity—in particular, the idea that women need cosmetics to be presentable. Her mother's message, which mirrors the expected beauty standards for women, is so strong that the participant believes that she would “ruin” the family pictures if she didn't wear make-up. In addition, her mom is more approving of her when she did wear make-up by physically pulling her aside to compliment her on her beauty. Her mother fails to see the toll the beauty industry's message can take on one's self-confidence that can lead to mental health issues like depression, but instead, she reinforces it by dismissing her daughter's concerns. Now without the support of her mother, the participant is unhappy and wears make-up almost every day.

Parents police their daughters' behavior by reinforcing gendered expectations, but female friends and relatives that were closer in age to the participants also engaged in reproducing the male-sexist frame.

I had an exam so I decided to dress comfortably. I had basketball shorts and a medium shirt with my hair in a ponytail. When I arrived my friend (female, half-white half-Mexican) said I looked like a boy. Her comment made me upset because I was really not in the mood to argue or care about the clothes I had on, because my focus was on the exam. I told her, "I am here for my exam, not a fashion show" and went in to take my exam. I don't understand the reason girls can't wear basketball shorts with a baggy shirt without being labeled as a tomboy or looking like a guy. (Latina, 20 years old)

It is expected that women be smiling and in cheerful moods as well to always prioritize their physical appearance. Her female friend not only gender-policed her physically because she was not looking feminine, but also was inadvertently reinforcing that it is more important for women to look good than focus their academic goals. Aside from accentuating the importance of feminine standards of beauty, women would also reproduce the notion that motherhood should be a priority over career choices.

A 20-year-old White woman describes a conversation her 26-year-old Latina friend had with her academic advisor:

A close friend of mine (26 years old Hispanic woman) went to her medical school advisor for help with her application. She was told by the advisor, a ~50 year old white woman, "Yikes, you'll be 27 by the time you enter medical school and 31 by the time you leave. You're about the age to have kids already. Are you sure you want to go through with this?" The friend called me afterwards very upset about the advisors assumptions that she not only wanted children, but also needed to have them in a narrow biological window and at the expense of her education. (White female, 20 years old)

The data showed many examples of men in academia saying sexist comments to women but women did as well. The participant's friend was upset by her academic advisor's response, all of which are heavily construed through the male-sexist frame: First is the assumption that as a woman she *wanted* to have children. Second, the "biological clock" ticking belief that is imposed

onto women to encourage them to have children before a certain age. Lastly is the assumption that she should sacrifice her career goals to have children. The worst part is that not only did it come from an academic advisor whose job is to encourage and help students pursue careers in the medical field, but also that it came from a woman. Just as is the case in the frontstage, all backstages regardless of whether they were mixed-gender, all-female, or all-male were overt in their sexist behavior.

ALL-MALE BACKSTAGE: SEXISM

Whereas the data was full of sexist experiences in the frontstage, mixed-gender backstage, and the all-female backstage, there were very few entries in *all-male backstage* settings. We expected to acquire accounts representative of “locker room talk” from men, but instead most men reported observations or incidents that were recounted to them by female friends or family. They rarely reported sexist behavior in environments where only men were present. I suspect that it is because men do not believe that the behavior is sexist if there is not a direct “target” present to be offended, but further analysis needs to be conducted. For this reason, we created the second part of the study but are still in the process of collecting data. However, in the few all-male backstage entries, hypermasculinity, or a performance of showing extreme forms of masculine behavior expected of men, was salient.

A 19-year-old white man wrote two thoughtful all-male backstage experiences and reflected on them. He states:

I was meeting with my group for my engineering class to work on our project. My group consists of me and three other males: one is a Japanese international student, one is an Asian American, and the other is a white American. All of us are 19 years old and Freshmen. While we were working, we had gotten started talking about how there was way more guys than girls in our engineering class. Paresh, the Asian American, said, “The reason that there are way more guys than girls is because a lot of girls don't want to do engineering where they have to work their butts off as they can just marry an

engineer.” We kind of laughed it off at the time because it was just a group of guys, but I had noticed in my mind that was pretty sexist thing to say. The other guys in the group just seemed to think it was funny, so I didn't really say anything more about that. (White, Male, 19 years old)

Other accounts of women in engineering show that they struggle being accepted as productive group members in engineering projects and that both classmates and male professors doubt their intelligence because they are women. In this scenario, we get a backstage glimpse of how male classmates view women as potential engineers in general. Rather than see the systematic inequality that derails girls from STEM fields, they attribute women's lack of interest in engineering to a stereotype that women would rather be trophy wives and be taken care of by financially successful husbands than work hard on their own. The participant says that it was “just a group of guys” present so they laughed it off and while he considered the comment sexist in private, he didn't vocalize his opinion because the other guys thought it was funny. He let it go, because no women were harmed by the sexist comment and it was a way to protect his own masculinity in front of a group of guys who may genuinely feel this way about women.

The same participant provides another account of an all-male backstage in which he later reflects on the ideology of the male-sexist frame and its negative implications to men. He states:

I was eating at a campus-dining hall with my friend Federico, who is a Filipino American male and is 19 years old. We were talking about one of our mutual friends, Matthew, who is Asian American. Matthew has a serious relationship with his girlfriend as of late, and they are always together, leaving some of his other guy friends to feel like we don't get to hang out with him anymore. Federico stated, “Matthew is so whipped. He's always following around his girlfriend, doing whatever she wants him to without question and I'm tired of seeing that.” Although I agreed with Federico, I could see how this line of thinking could be seen as sexist, because Matthew and his girlfriend have a healthy relationship where they both respect each other. Yet, we were saying how Matthew was less masculine and “soft” because he was respectful and loyal to one girl. I think this line of thinking comes from the youth society today where guys think that in order to be cool you have to get lots of girls and treat them poorly, while in reality the best relationships are the ones that are the most loyal and loving. (White, Male, 19 years old)

When men are told they are “whipped” by their girlfriends or wives, they are being told that they aren’t masculine enough because she is the boss. In the pro-male/pro-masculinity subframe, a dominant belief of masculinity is to be the one in control of a relationship, and have multiple sexual partners simultaneously. Not meeting these expectations, the male participant and his friends see Matthew as “less masculine” and “soft” due to his caring relationship with his girlfriend. After some reflection on why the conversation was actually sexist, he attributes the masculine ideals to “youth society today,” but in actuality, it is the basis of the male-sexist frame, which has been built upon and reproduced for centuries. He indirectly notes that these expectations for men can inhibit them from being in healthy, loving relationships. While men cannot experience sexism directly, they can experience the side effects of a sexist system such as having to choose to not be compassionate in order to maintain masculinity ideals.

The majority of our all-male backstage accounts were actually retold by women who either were targeted by a group of men through a catcall, witnessing other women being catcalled, or overhearing their conversations in “slippage” situations. We previously noted that the “slippage”-type scenarios for sexism are vastly different than for racism, and in these situations, the usual conversation consisted of men speaking crudely about women’s bodies. An 18-year-old white woman describes overhearing a conversation between two college-aged men in a student building:

I was in the student building on campus for lunch when I overheard a conversation between two white male college students. Their conversation was about their female professors where they were essentially rating them on how hot they were. The scale they were rating them on they called a "Bang scale," rating them on how much they'd like to have sex with them or not. This is an example of sexism on an everyday basis—where males degrade women or treat them like objects. Not only was this conversation wildly inappropriate due to the authority professors have over us students, but it was also an offensive conversation to those around them and the professors...Conversations like these happen everywhere around us, we just don't always notice due to their subtlety

(even though in this situation, they weren't being too subtle and quiet). (White, Female, 18 years old)

The participant thinks that maybe the men thought she couldn't hear them, because she had headphones in, but according to the data men did not censor their sexist behavior in the presence of women visibly or within earshot. More than likely, they didn't care that she was there and continued sexually objectifying their female professors in conversation. She notes that it was inappropriate conversation because of the authority professors have over students, or what she means is the respect that they deserve. The men have a strong anti-female/anti-femininity subframe to reduce their female professors to sex objects dismissing their intellect, authority, and overall worth as human beings.

Despite not being the target, the participant was offended in overhearing them rate female professors on a “bang scale.” She notes the normality of degrading and objectifying women on a daily basis—an everyday type of sexism for women not just in personal interactions, but the images and narratives of the portrayal of women in general. Although she says that these sexist conversations are sometimes not noticed because of their “subtlety,” what she really means is that these conversations are standard—not subtle, because she simultaneously acknowledges that they were not at all subtle or quiet. The pro-male/pro-masculinity subframe (the “boys will be boys” narrative) and the anti-female/anti-femininity subframe (the objectification and hypersexualization of women's bodies) are normative for men and women in both the frontstage and the backstages. Everyone adopts the male-sexist frame and accepts it to some degree by either participating in it or tolerating it as a bystander; the daily interactions we have with strangers, family, and friends is reflective of the system that reproduces gender inequality as normative.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Sexism and racism are co-reproducing subsystems of the elite-white-male dominance system, but despite being similar, there are four main theoretical differences between systemic sexism theory and systemic racism theory. First, women and men are highly integrated within the family, workplace, and public areas in all racial categories, ethnic backgrounds, and socio-economic statuses. Women live with and form intimate bonds with men—their male relatives, friends, and partners. While people of color are residentially segregated resulting in spaces where they are not in contact with white people, women do not have legitimate spaces without men. Second, historians and scholars have argued that misogyny and sexism are the world's oldest form of prejudice dating its origins around the 8th century B.C.E., which means that systemic sexism has been maintained and reproduced for centuries. Misogyny and systemic sexism have accommodated to various cultures and time periods, but the male-sexist frame remains at the core. For centuries, women were prevented from having basic human rights and suffered severe consequences if they attempted to achieve equality.

Third, although people of color adopt the white-racial frame, arguably, most are able to recognize its existence and build a sort of resistance to it within their communities. Conversely, women are unable to identify the perpetuation of the male-sexist frame and equally participate in reproducing it—perhaps because of the centuries of misogyny and societal gender integration. Nevertheless, women gender-police other women including mothers instilling the male-sexist frame to their daughters and sons. Lastly, the MeToo movement has made significant progress in recognizing the male-sexist frame, but still the anti-female/anti-femininity subframe generally inhibit accountability towards men for their sexist behavior towards women. Most individuals would be insulted if they were labeled a racist, but to be called a sexist is not at the same level of

repugnance. We label the individuals who engage in racist behavior as racists, but in regards to sexism, we label those that are fighting against gender inequality as “feminists” as opposed to labeling others as sexists for not wanting women to have equal rights.

The theoretical differences between systemic sexism and systemic racism required an extension to Goffman’s theory (1959) by creating more than one backstage. As opposed to a frontstage and one backstage, which worked well for studying racism, we added three backstages: a mixed-gender backstage, an all-female backstage, and an all-male backstage. These additional backstages were necessary to understand the way sexism was being reproduced in different contexts and who was participating in perpetuating the male-sexist frame. In order to test our expectations of the theoretical differences between sexism and racism, we replicated Picca & Feagin’s (2007) study. However to accommodate the extension of Goffman’s theory (1959) and the differences between the subsystems, we also needed to modify the original methodology. We utilized technological advancements to recruit participants, and to collect and analyze the data. In addition, the instructions were slightly modified due to a difference in terminology as well as three backstages were added to analyze the reproduction of the male-sexist frame in various contexts.

Overall, when we utilized the extension of Goffman’s theory (1959) to our methodology, we found that there were theoretical differences between systemic sexism theory and systemic racism theory. Unlike the results from the study on racism, there was no difference in sexist behavior in the frontstage compared to the mixed-gender backstage. Essentially, men did not filter or censor their sexist behavior and commentary in front of women the way white people censored their racist joking in the presence of people of color. For this reason, we also did not find any evidence of “slippage” situations like those found in Picca & Feagin’s (2007) study on

racism. However, men were not the only culprits engaging in sexism, women also participated in reproducing the male-sexist frame in the all-female backstage as well as accepting sexist behavior in the frontstage. All of the stages contained some aspect of the pro-male/pro-masculinity and anti-female/anti-femininity subframes whereas Picca & Feagin (2007) found racism to be more prevalent “behind the scenes” or in the all-white backstage.

Another main difference in the findings between the two studies is the way racism and sexism were expressed. White people mainly told specific racist jokes in all-white backstages to express overt racism, but men and women utilized every day male-sexist framing as “jokes.” For example, men would tell women to “get back in the kitchen and make me a sandwich” or they would ask women who expressed discontent or frustration “are you on your period?” These weren’t standardized jokes against women, like racist jokes, but instead played on the everyday stereotypes and narratives of women. It was evident that women not only received these messages through the media, but also within their everyday interactions with people—strangers and family alike. Many of these people that reproduced the male-sexist frame were those in authoritative positions like parents, religious leaders, and professors—including women.

The data showed that no space was safe for women to just *be* without being bombarded with messages of whom they should be and what they should tolerate. These women were college students with academic goals, but their worth was constantly being questioned through these interactions. How can women feel safe in environments where they constantly overhear men degrading and objectifying women’s bodies? How can women succeed academically when male professors and classmates treat them differently under the assumption that women aren’t as intelligent as men? Or female academic advisors, mothers, and female friends frequently placing motherhood above their individual desires to pursue a career as well as imposing feminine

standards of beauty? In these situations, women weren't physically harmed or sexually assaulted, but the anti-female/anti-femininity subframe message remains the same within these verbal interactions.

For centuries, women have been subjugated through physical punishment and torture, but it was the beliefs of their inferior status that enabled their physical harm as acceptable. Words that spread these beliefs through interactions are dangerous. Powerful men created the male-sexist frame to maintain their power over the law, politics, academia, family, and social life. Though women have made some strides of progress in all of these institutions, our interactions with each other continue to mirror what powerful men have dictated us to believe for hundreds of years. We have helped to maintain our unequal social status, or systemic sexism, by upholding the male-sexist frame and thus keeping elite white men in power. Systemic sexism, systemic racism, and systemic classism are co-reproducing subsystems that are heavily intertwined, but by teasing out the unique theoretical differences, we can begin to dismantle the elite-white-male dominance system to achieve true equality.

3. UNFILTERED: MALE STRANGERS' SEXIST BEHAVIOR TOWARDS WOMEN¹

“I was in class waiting for my professor to arrive and start lecture in the afternoon. I overheard the group of students (white) behind me. A boy said, ‘Hey why aren't you guys sitting next to us today?’ The girl replied, ‘Because we don't want to, Don't feel like it.’ He did not like her tone and replied, ‘Oh shit, ok, chill out. Stay there for all I care.’ He then proceeded to say to his friend, ‘Must be that time of month I guess, because shit—’ It sounded like she turned around to face him, but didn't vocalize anything. No one around really said anything, and they stayed quiet the rest of the time. I found it very shocking that this male student actually said this and that no one said anything. I didn't say anything I guess, because it maybe wasn't my place, but I probably should have.” (Latina, 19 years old)

Most women can probably recount a few instances in their lives where male strangers expressed sexist views or behavior directly to them. While the sexist behavior above is shocking and distressing, it has become normalized, in part because it is usually dangerous for women to confront male strangers. In the example, a 19-year-old Latina student recounts an incident she witnessed in a classroom among her classmates. A group of White women chose to not sit next to a group of White men, and when questioned by a male student, one female student responds, “Because we don't want to, don't feel like it.” Instead of accepting their decision and letting this go, the male student insinuates that it was an out of control, irrational statement and attributes it to her menstrual cycle. The participant believes that the White woman gave him a dirty look, but no one said anything. The women did not defend themselves, the other men did not say anything, and the participant did not say anything, but indicates that she probably should have. Most importantly, the male student who made the comment does not apologize. In this instance, it was a small, populated public setting, so the women probably didn't feel physically in danger, but

¹ Reprinted with permission from *Women and Inequality in the 21st Century*, edited by Brittany C. Slatton and Carla D. Brailey. New York: Routledge. Copyright Routledge.

perhaps, they refrained from addressing his comment for fear of being gaslighted or otherwise verbally assaulted.

Gaslighting is a form of emotional manipulation, which strives to make the target feel as if his/her reaction is crazy and irrational (Abramson 2014). Like the woman who didn't want to sit next to her male classmate, most women have experienced being gaslighted by family, friends, and even strangers (Abramson 2014). Some research indicates women are more likely to be the targets of gaslighting, while men are more likely to be the perpetrators—a tactic that is used to maintain the gender hierarchy by making women doubt their own perceptions (Abramson 2014).

My research indicates that most men do not filter their sexist views or behavior in front of or to women, because not only do they not receive any negative repercussions from women or other men, but also because we do not have a widely accepted “political correctness” in regard to sexism that restrains the oppressor group from degrading the oppressed group publicly. Women are a vulnerable population, and according to my data, all women, regardless of race or class report instances of experiencing sexism from male strangers. While U.S. racism is still rampant, most white groups will usually refrain from engaging in blatantly racist talk or overtly racist behavior in front of people of color (Picca and Feagin 2007). Men, on the other hand, can assert their gender dominance overtly, such as the male student in the above scenario. He felt rejected by a woman and reasserted his power by invalidating her choice to not sit by him as irrational. He reduced her to her biology and exclaimed out loud that she must be menstruating, because to him there was no good reason as to why she wouldn't want to sit next to him. It seems absurd, and yet, it is a common sexist scenario women experience. Many women can recount a memory of a man accusing them of being on their periods for just expressing firm statements. Men will

assert their superiority to women in multiple ways, regardless of the context. Women experience similar types of sexism from male strangers as they do with male friends and relatives, which indicates that systemic sexism is still perpetuated openly in public settings.

3.1 GOFFMAN'S FRONTSTAGE AND SYSTEMIC SEXISM THEORY

Renowned sociologist, Irving Goffman, investigated the roles people play in society and when they enact these roles. In his book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959)*, he describes two different contexts: the “frontstage” and the “backstage.” The “frontstage” is where people follow a socially acceptable script and present their best selves to others, or the strangers around them. They are spaces where there is diversity in gender, age, and race (Goffman 1959; Picca & Feagin 2007). On the flip side, the “backstage” is where people are more relaxed, because individuals are around people they know and trust. They don't have to be “politically correct” (Goffman 1959; Picca & Feagin 2007). I will be focusing on the “frontstage,” because women are describing instances of sexism from male strangers, where arguably, these men should not be comfortable enough to behave that way. However, according to Feagin and Ducey (2017), men and women do engage in sexist behavior in frontstages, because not only is male-sexist framing embedded and normalized in our social structure, but also it is reproduced by the oppressors and the oppressed, that is sexism is foundational and fully systemic.

Feagin & Ducey (2017) pointed out some key points in systemic sexism theory, but my research suggests that there are six dimensions of systemic sexism: 1) the male-sexist frame that includes the many stereotypes, ideologies, emotions, prejudices, images, narratives, and interpretations that are essential to the everyday reproduction of sexism; 2) The discrimination of women by men; 3) the maintenance of the gender hierarchy (men are unjustly at the top and benefit the most and women participate in their own oppression); 4) Impact on men (side-effects

and social costs of the system); 5) Impact on women and counterframing; and 6) Gendered racism. The dominant male-sexist frame perpetuates the notion that male supremacy and heteromascularity is the ideal, and the opposite (women and femininity) is inferior (Feagin & Ducey 2017). Both men and women, including those of lower socio-economic status and people of color, participate in maintaining the systematically sexist structure of the United States by perpetuating everyday forms of sexist attitudes and behavior, including everyday discrimination of women.

Women experience male-sexist behavior in multiple ways such as in occupational discrimination (Cohen & Huffman 2003; Correll, Benard, and Paik 2007; Stone 2008) economic wages (Cotter, DeFiore, Hermsen, Kowalewski, and Vanneman 1997; Cohen & Huffman 2003; Correll et al. 2007; Stone 2008; Levanon, England, and Allison 2009), healthcare (Kristof & WuDunn 2009; Hudson, Ballif-Spanvill, Caprioli, and Emmett 2012), violence (Ronai, Zsembik, and Feagin 1997; Kristof & WuDunn 2009; Allen et al. 2009; Hudson et al. 2012) legal justice (Crenshaw 1989; Crenshaw 1991; MacKinnon 2005) and political representation (Ronai et al. 1997; Kristof & WuDunn 2009; Hudson et al. 2012) just to name a few areas. These forms of sexism are systematically produced, but are reinforced at an individual-interactional level creating a perpetual cycle of sexism at micro and macro levels. Often times, women's negative experiences with sexist behavior have come from male strangers. After describing the data and methods, I will discuss the themes that emerged from female participants.

3.2 DATA AND METHODS

Recruitment & Sample: The study was conducted using undergraduate students from a large university in the South, as well as a large university in the North. In the Southern school, researchers received permission from instructors to recruit volunteers to be added to the

Sociology study participation system; in the Northern school, participants were already registered in a study participation system. In both schools there is representation of different majors and departments to increase diversity, and the target classes were those required by the universities. The sample size will eventually be a total of 240 participants. The sample is divided so that 120 participants are from the large university in the South and 120 participants are from the large university in the North. Each sample group will further be divided by gender and race equally, the breakdown is as follows: 20 Black men & 20 Black women; 20 White men & 20 White women; 20 Latinos & 20 Latinas. However, the study in this paper focuses on the experiences of 9 Latina women and 38 White women retrieved from both schools totaling 85 entries from Latina women and 187 entries from White women. The undergraduate students wrote journal entries over the course of six weeks with a minimum of 14 entries. The journals consist of detailed accounts, or stories, of daily events that were perceived forms of sexism by the participant. After all of the journal entries were submitted, participants received an online \$20 Amazon gift card to make an online purchase at Amazon.com.

Analysis: After receiving the journal entries, I analyzed the 272 data entries using ATLAS.ti, a qualitative coding program that helped me code the themes and reveal patterns. I coded words or phrases that were repeated within the data. For the case of the paper, I focused on frontstage settings, in which male strangers were one of the main actors.

3.3 RESULTS

In line with systemic sexism theory, the results indicate that the male-sexist frame shapes the conversations and actions men have with women in a way that reproduces gender inequality and perpetuates discrimination against women. I found that male strangers often made sexist remarks in the following ways: catcalling, objectifying women in conversation or in actions,

claiming male superiority, and discrediting women's experiences of sexism. Each scenario described by the female participants is a frontstage setting, because it is in the presence of strangers, although it does not deter male strangers from engaging in male-sexist behavior. Whether the men are catcalling women, objectifying women in conversations or in actions, claiming male superiority, or discrediting women's experiences of sexism, we can see the key points of systemic sexism theory in these interactions. These men know that they are in positions of power and use sexist behavior to sustain themselves at the top of the gender hierarchy by using the male-sexist frame to discriminate against women. In the process, their remarks, behaviors, and actions reproduce our society's gendered norms that perpetuate inequality for women.

CATCALLING

The images, stereotypes, narratives, and prejudices towards women promote the objectification of women by men. Catcallers operate in the male-sexist frame when they call out to women walking outside. Not only are they asserting their position in the gender hierarchy by objectifying women, but also they are only doing so to women. This behavior is an overt display of the reproduction and maintenance of gender inequality, because the perpetrators are men and the targets are women insinuating male superiority. In the cases described below, all of the incidents were in public settings indicating that the men did not feel the need to censor themselves. Both Latina and White women recalled instances of catcalling from groups of men, which suggests that the act of catcalling is tied to the performance of hetero-masculinity amongst male peers. One 18-year-old Latina describes a day, in which this happened more than once:

After baking cupcakes with a group of friends, four of my friends and I went to the bus stop to wait for the bus. We were there for only about 2 or 3 minutes before a truck with a couple of guys drove by and whistled. We all laughed about it and kept talking. A few

more minutes later, two more cars came by and whistled. It was pretty cold out so we were all wearing jackets and pants (so the "what were you wearing" excuse cannot be used here). I was amazed by how many guys felt the need to whistle at us while we were just minding our business. (Latina, 18 years old)

In the span of less than 15 minutes, this group of women was catcalled three different times by men in vehicles. The narrator makes it a point to state that “victim-blaming” could not be applied, because none of them were wearing revealing clothes. The notion that their clothing could have been a reasonable explanation to being catcalled is an example of how the male-sexist frame is also adopted and reproduced by women. According to the male-sexist frame, if women are objects for men, then what a woman *chooses* to wear is directly linked to her potential victimization, and therefore, her fault should an assault happen. Victim-blaming is perpetuated by both men and women when they believe that it is a woman’s fault for acting or dressing a way that would result in an assault.

Two other women make a note of their clothing as well when they were catcalled. A 20-year-old White woman states:

I was walking down the street at about 2pm when a pick-up truck full of men drove by me. As they drove by, the passenger (white male, ~22 years old) leaned out of the window and SCREAMED at me as the car passed me. For the record, I was wearing a t-shirt and jeans. I don't think he said any words or maybe he was going too fast to hear, but I was scared out of my skin. The rest of the walk to class and several days afterwards I was paranoid about cars passing me. (White, Female, 20 years old)

Like the 18-year-old Latina, this woman is making a note that she did not dress a certain way to deserve to be catcalled. She describes her clothing to indicate that it was not a case of “victim-blaming” and so she truly was not at fault. Nevertheless, the event clearly affected her enough to be on high alert and not feel safe after, because she was scared and paranoid about cars passing her for days after the incident. Another woman contemplates whether her work out attire makes her more “prone” to being catcalled, so she justifies her use of spandex to reaffirm that her

clothing choice is not for the male gaze. She claims:

Some random stranger yells out of their car and makes an obscene comment. As I am a young adult who is 20, Mexican American, and a female, it sucks and is really gross for some random stranger to yell out of their car and make a comment. Now I am never able to really identify who the guy is, because they are in a car and I am not. It bugs me that if a guy is running outside most of the time, he does not get hit on or get catcalled. I also don't know if it's because I wear leggings, a shirt, and a hat while I run, which makes me "prone" or "deserving" of getting called on by a guy. But that is complete BS, I wear spandex because I hate when my legs rub together, so that is why I wear them. (Latina, 19 years old)

Instead of claiming that it is BS for men to catcall her regardless of what she is wearing, she states a reason that points to the male-sexist frame, in which women are objectified by men. She recognizes that the catcallers may think that she is wearing spandex to arouse their attention rather than to make her workout more efficient. The catcallers probably believe that women dress for men to observe, as opposed to women wanting to look good or dress appropriately for the weather and activity.

Not only is the act of catcalling a way to target and objectify women, but it is also a way to promote hetero-masculinity amongst the catcallers. The catcalling is usually done by at least a couple of men, and often they do not refrain from catcalling a woman even when she is accompanied by a man. One 20-year-old White woman describes being scared after being catcalled by a group of men, and frustrated because her boyfriend thought it was funny:

My boyfriend (19 year old Asian male) and I were walking to the mall around 4pm. I was wearing a cute dress with some makeup and feeling good. As we crossed the street, a group of guys in an SUV (unknown age/race) yelled out of the window, "Mmm girl I'd like that ass." My boyfriend thought it was funny. I was scared and wanted to go home. Why do men think that's an okay thing to do in public? (White, Female, 20 years old)

She asks why men, including her boyfriend, think it's okay to catcall a woman in public. Men are performing masculinity by degrading a woman with their group of friends, and feel no threat of receiving negative repercussions or punishment. In two cases described above, the women felt

threatened even though the catcallers were in vehicles and the event was over in a matter of seconds. These experiences have a real emotional implication to the targeted women.

Another 19-year-old White woman describes being with a male friend who is “a little over 6 foot and is very intimidating at first glance.” He was walking her home around 1:30am when *many* cars passed them and screamed comments like, “tap that ass!” In the situations in which other men are accompanying the women being catcalled, the men in the vehicles get a double boost of masculinity: one for degrading a woman, the other for doing so in front of a possible boyfriend without an altercation. They get to objectify someone else’s “girl” and get away with it. Meanwhile, the group of men doing the catcall bonds over their masculinity performance, which may be particularly important in a college atmosphere, as is experienced by these female participants:

I got catcalled while walking by a fraternity. There were several males there, so I'm not sure which one did it, but two were Caucasian and one was African American. They all seemed to be in their early 20s... After they catcalled me, the guys were laughing and high-fiving each other. (White, Female, 20 years old)

Similarly, a 19-year-old White woman describes an incident while she was walking on campus:

It was in the late afternoon, and there was a gathering of males outside of the building. As I was briskly walking by, one of the white male students scoffed under his breath and coughed the word “bitch” at me as I walked past them. His “friends” (also male students) all giggled and no other words were spoken. I didn't look at him or acknowledge them since that's probably what they were hoping for. I think it is sexist to call women names like that when you don't even know them or they haven't done anything specific to “earn” being called this. I was by myself when this happened and I did not know any of the males that were present. (White, Female, 19 years old)

In the incidents described above, the women were alone and did not know any of the men involved, but the men laughed and high-fived. They don't feel any fear of repercussion by catcalling these women, and may think that they are not doing any harm. However, as many women report, they are scared and are often affected after the incident. Even being with a male

companion does not prevent the catcalling they receive.

One 19-year-old woman describes how she has experienced much more catcalling since attending the university, and how insulted she is when it happens to her. She states, “I am not being seen as a human being with a real personality, but rather a body that can be used for sex and only that...they don’t focus on what I have to offer outside of the bedroom.” These women understand that they are being objectified from male strangers whom they may never encounter again, however, women also experience this from male strangers they see on a regular basis. Catcalling is an interactional, micro-level behavior, but it is representative of macro-level sexism. Men discriminately target women to catcall, because of their male-sexist framing while simultaneously reinforcing their top position in the gender hierarchy.

OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN IN CONVERSATION OR ACTIONS

The catcallers objectify women in brief seconds as their vehicles drive by, but women also deal with being objectified in face-to-face conversation. Men don’t have to censor themselves in front of women, because they are in positions of power, both in the gender hierarchy, and often times, in the workplace. In the examples below, many are not just random strangers, but rather male strangers that vary from coworkers, classmates, preachers, and professors. Women sometimes share these experiences with other women to deal with the cognitive labor. A 19-year-old White woman describes situations that were currently happening to her sister who is training to be an athletic trainer:

My sister was paired with another female student to work with a ~20-30 year old male. While they were taking the job very seriously, he was making inappropriate comments. They had asked him what they should wear to the games so they would look professional and appropriate, but his response was “a thong and high heels.” After this comment, he laughed and said it was a joke when the girls looked uncomfortable. Later during my sister's time with this man, he had to teach her a technique for constricting blood flow. She told me that he taught them a method that uses a baseball, which worked well for her and

she liked using. When she told him that she liked that method, his response was to ask if she liked “to be choked in bed or something.” Since this was her superior, this was a highly inappropriate situation for my sister to be in and he obviously has a blatant disregard for filtering his sexist comments. (White, Female, 19 years old)

For the participant’s sister, these were not one-time incidents; the man was using his superiority to his advantage. The participant notes in other entries that athletic training is male-dominated, so her sister faces other challenges as well, which may be a reason why her sister and her female partner remain silent about these events. The male superior is using male-sexist framing, specifically the images and stereotypes that women are sex objects for men. When he states that his female coworkers should wear “a thong and high heels” or asks if they like “to be choked in bed,” he is reproducing the notion that women are inferior to men, and he dismisses their uncomfortable responses. His sexist commentary is specific to women.

Men in superior positions, such as bosses, religious leaders, and professors often go unscathed for their sexist and discriminatory actions. For example, a 20-year-old White woman describes her Pastor addressing the congregation on a Sunday:

I was in church this last Sunday, and one of the pastors who is a white male in his 30s was addressing the congregation. He was talking about that no matter what you have done Jesus always loves you. He specifically said that even if you are a girl who has been used up by sex, you can still follow Christ. I thought this was sexist because he made no other specification of things that men may do. He only pointed out what girls do and he made it seem that no matter how much sex guys have, they are never seen as unclean. (White, Female, 20 years old)

She doesn’t mention that anyone spoke up about the double-standard or showed any form of disapproval, but in this case, a religious leader felt comfortable enough to claim that some girls are “unclean” and “used.” He described women’s bodies as objects, higher in value if virginity is in tact, although he still offers “salvation” for those women that have been “used.” The Pastor reproduces the Madonna/Whore dichotomy by only viewing women’s bodies as either “clean and untouched” or “unclean and used.” As the participant mentions, his comments are specific to

women and do not include men. He used his position of power, both at the top of the gender hierarchy and as a religious leader, to reproduce male-sexist framing to a congregation comprised of men and women.

Male professors and teachers also tend to make sexist remarks, and because of their superiority and authority, female students may be less likely to confront them or report it. One 21-year-old White woman tells of a time that she had to present a proposal to the Head of her department, a White male about 60 years old:

I did research for the Communications Department, so I had to present a methods proposal to the Head of the Department. It was just me and the Head in his office. When I was done presenting everything, the first thing the Head of the Department that I was doing research for said was, “Well aren't you adorable!” (White, Female, 21 years old)

The participant does not counter his comment, so we can presume that he then went on to critique her presentation and did not reflect on his gendered language. In this scenario, we can see the male-sexist framing take place—there is a connotation that women are inferior in the workplace and in society. Had a male student given the presentation, the Head of the Department probably wouldn't have called him “adorable” or any similar adjective.

Interestingly, out of the many entries citing male strangers' sexist remarks to women, the majority seems to be from older white men. One participant recalls being told by a ~60 year old White male customer that she was “too pretty to work and should just marry rich and be a stay at home mom” after she told him about her career goals, as well as her lack of desire to be a stay at home mom. In another case, an older male stranger scoffed at a 19-year-old woman on her way to a workplace harassment training telling her, “we should get to have some fun at work.” In both of those cases, the men disregarded what the women were choosing to do (pursuing a career or going to a harassment training for a job) and gave very “pro-male” replies implying that the women's choices were unnecessary. Male strangers, whether complete strangers or those that are

interacted with occasionally, tend to speak degradingly to women without any thought to filter their comments. The men's comments are male-sexist framed in that these men feel superior to judge women on their appearance, as well as to make inappropriate sexist remarks to women regardless of the context. The men insinuate male-superiority and female-inferiority, which extends to intelligence, physical capability, and general knowledge.

MALE SUPERIORITY AND FEMALE INFERIORITY

The belief that men are superior to women has an extensive history that has been reinforced for centuries through macro-level systems such as religion, education, economic system, and the government (Mies 1986/1998; Morgan 1989/2001; Holland 2006; Federici 2004/2014; Feagin & Ducey 2017). This male-sexist framing on a macro-level is reproduced at interactional levels, in which women are presumed to be incompetent or incapable compared to men. One common theme among the female participants was being told to refrain from some activities because the men presumed that they were physically stronger and more capable to do "male" tasks. The women explained how frustrating it was to experience condescending remarks from male strangers. One 20-year-old Latina woman who is part of a military program at her university states that a male stranger laughed her at when she volunteered to help carry some military training tools:

Someone from the class across the hall came in the classroom and asked for volunteers to help bring in rubber ducks (fake rifles used to train) from someone's car parked outside. I stood up and the guy asking for volunteers kind of chuckled and said 'it might be too heavy for you, we meant for guys to come help.' I was immediately offended and walked past him to help. I go past the female max in push-ups for the Physical Training test to prove I am just as strong and fit as my male buddies. I helped bring in the ducks with just as much ease as the other volunteers, the only difference was I was in my skirt and pumps. (Latina, 20 years old)

The same woman describes another situation, in which an older male Alumnus restricts her from

carrying heavy items at a tailgate:

I was at a tailgate for some alumni. We were helping them set up, me and two guy friends. The male Alumni's truck pulled up with two coolers filled with ice and sodas obviously weighing it down. He, my friends and I approached the truck to unload it and he automatically handed me the napkins and said, "It might be best to let the boys get the heavy stuff." As if I'm incapable of carrying heavy things because I'm a girl. (Latina, 20 years old)

The fascinating aspect of her interactions, as well as those of other women who experienced similar situations, is the complete disregard of their decisions by men. Despite the women volunteering their help—an indication that they believe they will be capable of carrying the heavy items, the men take away their agency. To preserve their masculinity, men are told to take care of women and to be stronger, so if a woman would prove to not need a man and be equally capable of carrying heavy items, it would break norms disrupting the gender hierarchy. Also, in both scenarios, the male-sexist frame is hidden in gender inclusive language and context, and is only revealed when she volunteers to help. In the first case, the male student asks for *volunteers*, a gender-neutral term, but when she offers to help, he clarifies, "we meant for *guys* to come help." In the second scenario, she was there with her friends to help set up for the tailgate, which presumably entails carrying and moving heavy items. As she approached the heavier items in the truck, the older man just hands her the lightest object, napkins, and tells her that it is better for the boys to carry the "heavy stuff." The men are reproducing gender inequality by taking away her agency in disregarding her choice to help, and discriminating against women. Any "guy" or "boy" seemed to be a better choice to assist than a woman.

Women in male-dominated fields may struggle to succeed, because they are a challenge to the male-sexist frame. One 19-year-old White woman shares her friend's story:

She is Hispanic and an engineering student, like me. She plans on going into mechanical engineering. We were talking about our engineering class and the current assignment we were working on. She was ranting about one of her group members because he made a

very rude and sexist comment to her. They were starting to code for the final project and she was struggling to fix the errors her code produced. The guy who was best at coding turned to help her fix the codes, but after he was finished he said that it was ok she couldn't code because she was pretty. (White, Female, 19 years old)

In the case above, the male classmate not only reasserts his power by completing the “male” task, but then uses gendered language condescendingly. He implies that she may still be successful in other areas, because she is “pretty.” The male classmate would probably not have made the same comment to another male classmate with the same coding issue. Similarly, another female student attempted to work with a group of male students on a Math problem, but was ignored. The 18-year-old White woman states:

I attempted to talk through problems with them, but they would either ignore me or argue that I was wrong. They rarely ever argued with one another, so it was odd to me that they were so quick to shut my ideas down without a thought. Later on, I was stuck on a problem so I asked them for some help. Without even looking at me, one of the boys sternly said, “It's literally on the board, you don't need our help.” Little did he know that I had already checked the board and did not understand it...I felt very offended that they felt that I wasn't on the same level as them. (White, Female, 18 years old)

It was common for female students to be ignored or given secretarial work in engineering group projects, because “they have nice handwriting.” Women often reported feeling anxious to admit that they did not know an answer or felt silenced when they did know and tried to give their input. One participant said her lab partner insisted that he deal with the chemicals so frequently, that she finally thought it was just best to “let him be nice” to her in order to get the project done. Not only are women not treated as equals, but also their agency is taken away when their male classmates refuse to let them participate equally. Their male classmates were unjustly benefiting in male-dominated areas, simply because they were men and were presumed to be more competent. Women who go into male-dominated fields face backlash from instrumental male strangers---their peers, professors, and bosses. Their male classmates can more easily maintain relationships with these other male strangers—a manifestation of the “old boys club.”

Women in these situations often have to make the choice to concede and risk not learning as well as their male counterparts, or feel completely isolated in these fields. Other than male-dominated career choices, some mundane activities are presumed to be “masculine,” such as pumping gas or driving and women are not expected to be good at them. In the following incident, a 20-year-old Latina was at a gas station when a male stranger assumed she needed help:

Yesterday around 5pm on my drive home, I had stopped to get gas. I got out of my car and looked at the machine confused because the numbers were scrapped off the gas buttons, I usually pump 87. Some older gentlemen maybe mid to early 30s came up to me and said, “Do you need help, darling? Pumping gas should be done by your boyfriend.” I politely told him no and that I could take care of it myself. (Latina, 20 years old)

She later mentions that she felt it was sexist in two ways: first, the assumption that she had or wanted a boyfriend, and that she was heterosexual. Second, that she was incapable of pumping gas on her own. In these cases, the male strangers acted in ways that reinforced the belief that men are superior physically, intellectually, and in basic tasks. The women were attempting to participate equally or show equal capability, and men disregarded them because of their gender—imposing stereotypes and prejudices. The male-sexist frame is deeply embedded in our institutions and impacts our everyday interactions. The “pro-male” and “anti-female” worldview is not exclusive to male tasks or male-dominated areas, because the premise is that men are superior *always*. Thus, even when the topic is on women’s issues, men still disregard women’s experiences and science to make their own conclusions.

MEN DISCREDITING WOMEN’S EXPERIENCES OF SEXISM

Women’s experiences are often invalidated by men, but even when there is sufficient evidence to prove that women’s experiences are not unique, but in fact, part of systemic sexism, some men will still deny it’s existence. One participant notes that a male classmate claimed that he had never witnessed any sexism in the university, but then proceeded to make sexist

comments. The 19-year-old Latina recalls:

I was sitting in my engineering class. Two male speakers had come in to give a presentation over sexism. We were given a questionnaire by the presenters to fill out. It included questions about whether or not you had seen/experienced sexism in general, in the university, in the college of engineering, and in our particular engineering class. One of my tablemates seemed very confused. He stated that he had never witnessed sexism at the university. He then went on to tell a story implying that female engineers are incompetent. He called the girls from one of his groups in a previous engineering class, “those chicks that didn't do anything.” He then went on to say how on one of the activities one of the girls asked to help, yet she was unable, and started crying within 10 minutes of beginning. He also went on to talk about another girl that had sat and cried through an entire exam. (Latina, 19 years old)

The male student dismisses the male speakers discussing sexism, because he has never witnessed it, and yet, he is a perpetrator of sexism in these engineering classes by labeling female engineers as incompetent. We can presume that the speakers might have given some data on its occurrence that the male student ignored, which is what happened in another incident described by an 18-year-old Latina during a mixed gender study group session:

After reading a chapter in a study group, we were instructed to summarize the reading and discuss our thoughts in words. This chapter was on gender inequality and sexism. All of the students were either 18 or 19 and it was a very racially diverse group. One male said he didn't believe that women were treated unequally in the workforce, even though there were statistics, bar graphs, numbers, personal statements, etc.; he still didn't want to understand. This angered everyone in the group, especially the women, because there was nothing that we could say to get him to understand that women are treated as lesser in many places. (Latina, 18 years old)

In both instances, it was male classmates that refused to believe sexism was happening regardless of the data published and the stories women told them. Both male classmates were under 21 years old, but participants also describe incidents in which older men exude the same behavior. While having a meal at a restaurant, a 21-year-old White woman overheard a ~30-year-old White man state that “poor women who had undesired pregnancies were too selfish and ignorant to avoid them.” He did not give any role to the men that participated in the impregnation process or consider that poor women typically do not have access to healthcare or birth control—

institutions controlled by majority men.

Men also interrupt women to “correct” them, even when they have less knowledge. In another case, a White woman was having a conversation with a woman who she describes “like her mom” about the sexism they have experienced and the rape cases that occur on campuses, in particular the Stanford rape case. The victim was unconscious and raped behind a dumpster until strangers intervened. The rapist was a top Stanford swimmer. While having this conversation, Steve, who is “like her dad” and his male friend (a stranger to her) interrupted stating that there really aren’t any victims when alcohol is involved. She describes the situation:

Steve's friend so conveniently ignored the fact, which he obviously knew from the context of the conversation, that the victim in the case was unconscious at the time. When I pushed that fact on him, he persisted in saying that alcohol and “gender” was more to blame and that men regret “drunk” sex with women all the time, but you don't see them “crying” rape or acting like a victim. (White, Female, older than 21 years old)

The participant gives Steve and his male friend statistics on sexual violence against women, but they rejected the facts. Instead, the men told her she was biased because she was a woman. She states:

By asserting their dominance in the conversation, these individuals quickly overpowered me in the conversation. And unless my viewpoint aligned with theirs, my opinion mattered very little, despite my education, because I was a “biased female.”

Despite providing facts, having an education, and talking about their own experiences, these women were dismissed by men who believed to be experts on women’s rights issues. They dominated the conversation and would not be swayed to see the other perspective. Eventually, the women just gave up and changed topics. In this particular scenario, we can see the male-sexist frame being played out in two ways. First, it is apparent through the manner in which the men describe the Stanford rape victim and the rapist. They side with the rapist by stating that it was just drunk sex and by victim-blaming the woman for drinking too much alcohol. There was

an assumption that she was asking for it and they denied or ignored her state of consciousness. Second, while downplaying the rape, they simultaneously disregard the women whom they interrupted. Despite their valid opinions, the men believe they are ‘biased’ because they are women. Not for a second do they consider their own opinions to be biased because they are men. The assumption is that they have superior knowledge because they are more objective than women. Historically, women have been seen as too emotional or hysterical to engage in fruitful discussions with men, and those that proved to be capable were either disregarded completely or dealt with violently (Mies 1986/1998; Morgan 1989/2001; Holland 2006; Federici 2004/2014; Feagin & Ducey 2017).

3.4 CONCLUSION

The male strangers in these micro-level interactions with women view women through the male-sexist frame, in which women are considered to be inferior. Their sexist attitudes, commentary, and behavior are representative of a larger system of oppression, or systemic sexism. They unjustly benefit from being at the top of the gender hierarchy and utilize that power to discriminate against women and reproduce notions of gender inequality. The macro-level sexism is embedded into our society’s institutions, in which men are still dominant (Feagin and Ducey 2017). Men, white men in particular, continue to remain at the top of the social hierarchy, in which they are in the highest positions of power enabling them to continue to reproduce systemic sexism at a macro-level, while also affecting micro-level interactions.

While the poor and people of color face systemic classism and racism, respectively, systemic sexism is unique. Individuals of different races and socio-economic statuses are typically segregated in housing, workplaces, healthcare, schools, and in social groups. However, women are integrated with men in all races, classes, and aspects of society. In social groups, such

as family and friends, or the workplace, women have to interact with the oppressors, men. Women face sexism in the home, and they may excuse the behavior because of their reliance and personal relationships with their families. However, by not countering these events---the silencing of women extends to beyond the home and into every day life. For women, there is no avoiding male strangers' sexist behavior and commentary.

In every situation, one of the main actors was a male stranger, which made all the settings frontstage. When studying racism, Picca & Feagin (2007) found that fewer blatantly racist remarks were made in racially diverse frontstage settings, than in backstage settings just among White family and friends. In studying sexism, however, we find that men do not censor their sexist commentary, regardless of who is in their presence. The foundation of each incident is the male-sexist frame, or the view that male supremacy and masculinity is better than the opposite, and we can see the four key points of systemic sexism in every category.

In the cases of women being catcalled, we see that women were the main targets from men, which is not only a reproduction of gender inequality, but also a reminder of the gender hierarchy. Only those in power (men) could publicly degrade others (women). When women experienced face-to-face objectification through conversation, it often led to being discriminated against whether at work, school, or church. The sexist commentaries were "anti-women" and viewed women as objects for men. Women were silenced, ignored, or dismissed when they tried to show equal capability, but were stereotyped as incapable by other men. In this realm, women were trying to break gender norms in male-dominated areas and perform "male" tasks. However, sexism is not exclusively experienced in male-dominated fields. Even in situations in which women were the main topic, men still disregarded women's opinions as "biased" even when they provided scientific evidence to support their arguments.

The data indicates that women are constantly receiving blatant and subtle connotations that women are inferior in some way, even when they do not seek the information. When women are “minding their own business,” they are objectified, dismissed and silenced, or not given the chance to show they are equally capable physically and intellectually. What women experience in male-dominated fields, all women experience in every day life. Regardless of whether women are on a run outside, at the grocery store, at work or in school, or even choosing a seat in a classroom, every day sexist interactions remind women they are living in a male-dominated society.

4. CATCALLING: A REPRODUCTION OF SYSTEMIC SEXISM

“When we are harassed on the street, we are already deeply embedded in a context of gendered oppression. Our subordination is both reflected and reinforced by the experience of being harassed, and we are vividly and powerfully reminded that ‘violence against women is systemic and structural’” (Copelon 1994; Tuerkheimer 1997:188)

Catcalling is a prevalent form of street harassment and a common occurrence in the everyday lives of women (Bowman 1993; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). The term “catcall” dates back to the mid-1600’s referring to an instrument or noisemaker that made a shrilling noise used by audience members to express discontent and disapproval in meetings or the theater (etymonline.com 2001-2018). At some unknown point in history, a “catcall” began to signify whistles, street remarks, vulgar comments, kissing noises, threats, etc. directed towards female strangers in public (Fairfield & Rudman 2008; O’Leary 2016; Gardner 1995; Chhun 2011). Catcallers tend to be men targeting women and their remarks are “frequently sexual in nature and comment evaluatively on a woman’s physical appearance” (Bowman 1993:523) while “defining her as a sexual object and forcing her to interact with him” (Leonardo 1981:52). Male-domination has been a useful concept, but lacks dimensions and components that are necessary in understanding the institutionalization and reproduction of sexism.

In this article, I contribute to existing research on catcalling by implementing a new theoretical framework, systemic sexism theory. Systemic sexism theory is distinct from the concept of male-domination because it details dimensions and components that maintains the reproduction of institutionalized sexism. Systemic sexism theory illustrates how sexist actions are embedded in every societal institution and thus, are reproduced in everyday interpersonal interactions with family, friends, and strangers in private and public places (Feagin & Ducey 2017). With the help of a unique data set, I extend the groundbreaking work of feminist scholars

who have detailed street harassment as representative of a larger structure of gender oppression and have shown the structural gender inequality in U.S. law (Kissling 1991; Bowman 1993; Davis 1994; Tuerkheimer 1997; Chhun 2011). I show how the male-sexist frame, a dominant subframe of systemic sexism theory, is reproduced within heterosexual male-to-female catcalling interactions. Through the male-sexist frame, a worldview that men are superior and women are inferior (Feagin and Ducey 2017), I focus on women's status as "open persons" (Goffman 1963). More specifically, I concentrate on the cognitive and emotional labor women experience before, during, and after a catcall as well as male-entitlement to women's bodies and the toxic masculinity perpetuated in catcalling. I ask: (1) How is the male-sexist frame utilized in these street harassment interactions? (2) Is catcalling more of a heterosexual dynamic as a form of discriminatory behavior towards women by men? (3) How do women react during the catcalling interaction? (4) What effects does catcalling have on women psychologically and behaviorally? (5) How do men perceive catcalling as bystanders/witnesses?

Catcalling and street harassment are micro-level representations of systemic sexism, interactions showing men are the dominant group² and women are the subordinate group (Kissling 1991; Bailey 2017; Brownmiller 2013 [1975]; West & Zimmerman 1987). Tuerkheimer (1997) argues that power over women in street harassment is dependent on women's sexual subordination. As the subordinate group, women are regarded as "open persons," or readily available to the public for interaction, and the language catcallers often use is similar to the language people use to admire children and pets (Gardner 1980; Goffman 1963;

² All men benefit to some degree from a sexist system, but heterosexual, white men are the main benefactors and hold the most power. Men of color and gay men do experience threat of violence in public, but mainly from other men and not women. However, all women are sexually vulnerable to all (presumed) heterosexual men.

Bastomski & Smith 2017). When adults use language such as “cutie” to a child or to a pet, it implies deference in which the adult is superior (Goffman 1963). Therefore, “addressing unacquainted women with a term of endearment [such as honey or baby]...represents a claim and enactment of power over women” (Bailey 2017: 369). Unlike same-sex catcalling or women catcalling men, the power dynamic in a heterosexual catcalling interaction is reliant on all parties understanding that women are being sexually subordinated consistent with their position on the gender hierarchy. Consequently, catcalling is a reproduction of institutionalized sexism (Kissling 1991; Tuerkheimer 1997).

Catcalling can also be nonverbal, which I term “silent catcalling,” by winking, leering, using gestures, as well as intonations of what seem like harmless comments (O’Leary 2016; Bailey 2017; Chhun 2011). For example, a stranger asking a woman as she passes by on the street, “How are *you* doing?” combined with sexually suggestive nonverbal behavior is a form of catcalling even though the question is a common greeting (Bailey 2017; Vera-Gray 2016). While women often deal with verbal and nonverbal catcalling silently, research suggests that they still feel unsafe (Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017; Fairchild & Rudman 2008). Most women do not respond to catcallers and ignore them (Escove 1998; Magley 2002; Fairchild & Rudman 2008; O’Leary 2016; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017), because they feel afraid that the catcaller will escalate to verbal or physical violence, which is often the case (Gardner 1980; Tuerkheimer 1997; Chhun 2011). Male catcallers, on the other hand, continue to harass women without any fear of legal or social repercussions (Davis 1994).

4.1 SYSTEMIC SEXISM THEORY

Historically, and in contemporary society, men have created and sustained the subordination of women through the institutionalization of what can be termed the *male-sexist*

frame (Feagin & Ducey 2017). While the frame includes sexist prejudices and stereotypes, it is more encompassing, because the frame also includes sexist images, narratives, emotions, and ideologies that generate and sustain an array of sexist actions (Feagin & Ducey 2107). This dominant male-sexist frame has a central pro-male/pro-masculinity (heterosexist) subframe and a strong anti-female/anti-femininity subframe (Feagin & Ducey 2017). Shaped and legitimated by this male-sexist frame, society's sex and gender roles are thus socially constructed (Jewell & Spears Brown 2013). The major roles defined as feminine are typically viewed as inferior compared with those defined as masculine (Brownmiller 2013 [1975]; West & Zimmerman 1987). While elite white men benefit the most from systemic sexism because it allows them to remain at the top of the gender hierarchy, all men benefit from this oppressive system to some degree (Feagin & Ducey 2017). Today, the gender hierarchy is maintained and reproduced by both the oppressor and the oppressed (Ridgeway & Correll 2006; Ridgeway 2011).

Unlike other systems of oppression, women are in constant contact with their oppressors, form intimate bonds with them, and have no safe space in everyday life where they do not have to interact with the dominant group. After centuries of living with and taking care of their oppressors, women began to adopt the male-sexist frame. For example, some women participate in perpetuating rape culture and victim-blaming by finding fault in women victims of sexual violence and helping men avoid accountability (Saunders, Scaturro, Guarino, & Kelly 2016; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). Narratives like "boys will be boys" suggest that boys are naturally prone to sex and violence (Escove 1998; Chhun 2011; Tuerkheimer 1997) and leaves the responsibility of safety to women (Saunders et al. 2016; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). Men and women place blame on victims by scrutinizing their choices as 'asking for it' (Davis 1994;

Chhun 2011), even though all women are vulnerable to sexual violence and harassment, regardless of their clothing and behavior (Chhun 2011; Thompson 1994).

In this systemically sexist society, the masculinity performance of catcalling women is considered normal male behavior (Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017; Jewell & Spears Brown 2013). Women's bodies are commonly sexualized and objectified in the dominant male frame and thus unwillingly on display for the male gaze (Fredrickson & Roberts 1997; Swim et al. 2001). The gender-power dynamic is maintained by socially normalizing the objectification of women and through other forms of sex discrimination (Bailey 2017; Feagin & Ducey 2017). Women feel the effect of their low status on the gender hierarchy, and have come to expect and tolerate street harassment as the norm. As a result, catcalling is a powerful example of the sexualized discrimination against women by men (Tuerheimer 1997; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). Systemic male-domination over women relies on the power to objectify women, but also for women to participate in self-objectification.

4.2 DIFFERENT REALITIES: MEN AS SUBJECTS AND WOMEN AS OBJECTS

Men and women live different realities. Women's fear of rape and other forms of sexual violence is a daily reminder that men are in the position of power and women are subjected to their power—a reality mirrored in a catcalling interaction. Since catcalling is socially acceptable and not illegal, men are conditioned to believe that they can continue to engage in this sexist behavior and don't ever have to experience women's perspectives as object (Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017; Davis 1994). In this power dynamic interaction, men do not only impose their power to objectify women's bodies, but also their power to make women see *themselves* as objects (Tuerkheimer 1997). As Sandra Bartky (1979) explains it, "I must be made to know that I am a 'nice piece of ass'; I must be made to see myself as they see me" (Bowman 1993: 538). As

“open persons,” women are subjected to the male gaze and are valued as objects for men’s sexual desires, thus are catcalled and dehumanized (Bailey 2017; Goffman 1963; Bastomski & Smith 2017). The simplest of comments catcallers make is a representation of male-dominance, in which he implies that because he is a man, he has the power to dissect and evaluate women’s body parts anytime and anywhere (Tuerkheimer 1997).

In an anti-female/anti-femininity society, the physical female body is synonymous with objectification and sexualization because it represents the expectations of womanhood and femininity (Jewell & Spears Brown 2013; Swim et al. 2001). In its normalization, women begin to evaluate themselves through the male gaze (Fredrickson & Roberts 1997; Tuerkheimer 1997). While some research indicates that women may be empowered or enjoy being catcalled (Grossman 2008; Fairchild 2010), others state that this is a false form of empowerment (Liss, Erchull, & Ramsey 2011; Fisher et al. 2017). When women are catcalled, it is a form of approval indicating they are meeting society’s gendered expectations of femininity as objects for men’s sexual desires (Gardner 1995; Saunders et al. 2016; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). Liss et al. (2011) found that women’s enjoyment of sexualization was linked to negative body image indicating that women’s positive response to catcalling was superficial (Fisher et al. 2017; Moradi, Dirks, & Matteson 2005; Syzmanski & Feltman 2014). In general, research on street harassment indicates that most women would rather not be catcalled at all for fear of possibility of rape (MacMillan et al. 2000).

Women who have been catcalled have stressors that may lead to poor mental health outcomes such as feelings of helplessness, powerlessness, and internalized oppression (Szymanski & Feltman 2014; Magley 2002). When women are forced to see themselves as object, it may result in blaming themselves for any negative unwanted attention they

experience—an internalized victim-blaming (Fairchild & Rudman 2008; Saunders et al. 2016; Chhun 2011). Male harassers have an array of discriminating and intimidating strategies towards women, leaving women to try to avoid catcalling confrontations, deal with the fear and threat of violence, and cope with the negative experiences (MacMillan et al. 2000; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017).

4.3 NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON WOMEN’S LIVES: COGNITIVE AND EMOTIONAL LABOR

Previous research indicates that women considered catcalling to be on a continuum with rape, including “verbal rape” as well as the potential to be raped (MacMillan et al. 2000; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017; Gardner 1995). Thus, every catcalling encounter is seen as potentially dangerous, even when the possibility of rape is low (Bowman 1993; Davis 1994; Thompson 1994; Vera-Gray 2016). The fear women experience requires intense emotional and cognitive labor before, during, and after a catcall. The term “emotional labor” was first introduced by Hochschild (1983:7) referring to “the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display” in the context of a work environment. Specifically, she examined the way flight attendants managed their emotions with their fellow employees, employers, and customers. Later, Evans (2013) applied emotional labor to a broader concept, in which it is not limited to a work environment, but is a daily plight for people of color in white spaces. Those of lower status social identities are in constant awareness of their interactions with others in higher status social identities, and have to manage their emotional labor in these contexts as well (Szymanski & Henrichs-Beck 2014; Evans 2013). Emotional labor often overlaps with cognitive labor, or “the amount of time and energy expended...that involves both thinking through and

conceptualizing negative interactions as well as developing a satisfactory way to respond” (Evans 2013: 89).

Applied to catcalling and the discrimination of women, cognitive and emotional labor refer to women’s daily awareness of their lower status and sexual vulnerability while navigating sexist society (Kearl 2009; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). For example, women know they can be targets of sexual violence and discrimination, and must be vigilant as a means of survival and coping—examples of cognitive labor (MacMillan et al. 2000; Livingston 2015; Kissling 1991). However, there is also an overlap with emotional labor, because in these situations, there is fear and paranoia (Fairchild & Rudman 2008). Research shows that these experiences not only affect women emotionally and mentally, but also physically. Women report experiencing nausea, dizziness, trouble breathing, and muscle tension (Tran 2015; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). To avoid such confrontations, women will change their routines and behaviors (Williams 2018; Fisher, Lindner, & Ferguson 2017; Hickman & Muehlenhard 1997; Krahe 2005; Warr 1985).

According to Runner’s World survey, 54% of women said they worried about getting physically assaulted while running, so they engaged in numerous tactics to protect themselves such as: bringing their cell phones with them (73%), running during daylight (60%), frequently changing their running routes (52%), and/or telling others where they would be (Hamilton 2017). Women are hyperaware of their lack of safety and when they are being harassed, they will think of strategies that will best protect them (Stanko 1985; Kearl 2009; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017; Bastomski & Smith 2017). Afterwards, women often wonder what they could have done differently to avoid the situation even though they are not to blame (Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). The normalization of catcalling and internalized victim-blaming help maintain toxic masculinity and male-entitlement to women’s bodies.

4.4 MALE-ENTITLEMENT, MALE-BONDING, AND TOXIC MASCULINITY

The premise that women's bodies are solely for the male gaze comes from a larger system of male-entitlement and gendered power structures (O'Leary 2016; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). A broader lesson in this power dynamic is that women defending themselves may make them more susceptible to danger and sexual violence, so they stay silent (Escove 1998; Fairchild & Rudman 2008; Syzmanski & Feltman 2014). The possibility of others defending them on their behalf is also low. Most of the time, witnesses, both men and women, do not intercept creating a bystander effect (Darley & Latané 1968). When masculinity is the equivalent of power, men compete with other men by displaying masculinity through actions, such as catcalling in classic predatory pack fashion (Berdahl 2007; Benard & Schlaffer 1984). Previous research finds that some men would not engage in catcalling behavior when they were by themselves, but participated when they were with a group of men as a "male-bonding" experience (Chhun 2011; Bowman 1993; Benard & Schlaffer 1984). The male-bonding catcalling is a reflection of a broader gender-power dynamic, in which men are supposed to be assertive and women passive (Swim et al. 2001; Jewell & Spears Brown 2013; Logan 2015). In Benard and Schlaffer's (1984) study, men believed that their catcalling remarks were intended as compliments and harmless, even though street harassment negatively affects women.

Catcalling is more than an invasion of women's physical privacy, it is a form of social control (Livingston 2015; Kissling 1991; Bastomski & Smith 2017). Women's constant fear of being catcalled creates an environment of sexual terrorism, or "a system by which males frighten and, through fear, control and dominate females" (Kissling 1991:456). Women are in perpetual awareness of their sexual vulnerability every day, and it affects their daily routines. These masculinity performances serve as social control by physically limiting women's movements as

well as a form of cognitive control, in which women recognize the possibilities of their sexual victimization and replay scenarios of that reality.

4.5 DATA AND METHODS

Data: Over the course of two years, I collected journal entries in which men and women reported sexism in everyday life. The resulting data set large and unique. In addition, the data collection procedures differ from previous research (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson 2001; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017; Bailey 2017) on catcalling in a couple of ways. First, I controlled for time by giving participants six weeks to complete the study in order to acquire their most recent sexist experiences. Second, I did not specifically ask participants to recall “catcalling” or “street harassment” experiences nor did I provide any examples so as to not prime participants (Swim et al. 2001; Farmer & Smock Jordan 2017). Instead, participants were instructed to recount any incidents they observed, witnessed, or experienced that they believed to be an example of sexism. As a result, my data set has over 1,000 accounts detailing not only catcalling and street harassment but also different types of sexism.

Method: I used a combination of constructivist grounded theory and extended case methodology to analyze the data. Constructivist grounded theory is used to understand how meaning and action impact each other in various contexts (Charmaz 2017). A crucial aspect of the data analysis was the contextual and demographic features of each account. I started with a broad research question and more specific research questions emerged throughout the analysis. Consistent with extended case method, I also utilized the data to build on an emerging theory, systemic sexism theory. The extended case method utilizes ethnography to connect the ‘micro’ to the ‘macro’ and applies historical context, both past and present, to anticipate the future (Burawoy 1998). The methodology was mirrored after Picca & Feagin’s (2007) study on racism.

Recruitment and Sample: The study was conducted using undergraduate students (ages 18 to over 21) from two large universities, one in the Southwest and one in the Midwest. Both universities are similar in that they are public and comparable in size. I wanted to collect data from two different regions to compare whether or not experiences varied regionally. In the southwestern university, researchers received permission from instructors to recruit volunteers to be added to the Sociology research participation system; in the midwestern university, participants were already registered in a Communication research participation system. In order to increase diversity, the target classes at both universities were those required by the universities because of the higher representation of different majors to increase diversity. I limited participation to those who fully identified as Black, Latino/a, or White. Participants were asked to write 14 journal entries over the course of six weeks on anything they perceived to be sexism. To avoid priming, I did not define sexism but rather left it broad and open-ended. Participants were asked to describe the context of the situation including their role (i.e. were they observing or participating?), the demographic information of the other actors present, and how these actors were related to the participants (i.e. friend? mother? stranger?). The journals consist of detailed accounts of daily events that participants perceived as forms of sexism. After all of the journal entries were submitted, participants received an online Amazon gift card.

Analysis: At the time of writing this paper, I had collected 837 entries and there were roughly 45 entries regarding catcalling or street harassment. After receiving the journal entries, I analyzed them using Dedoose, a qualitative website that enabled coding themes and helped to reveal patterns³.

³ I did initial coding through the line-by-line process and gave each entry a broad code such as “discrimination of women by men” among others. I then analyzed the data within the parent code “discrimination of women by men” to create a child code through focused coding. Researchers

4.6 RESULTS

SYSTEMIC SEXISM: CATCALLING AS A HETEROSEXUAL POWER DYNAMIC

Anyone can be a catcaller and be catcalled, but not all interactions are equally threatening. In the US, masculinity and male power operates under a heterosexist system in which those engaging in “female/feminine” roles have been subjugated and seen as inferior historically—this includes men who engage in homosexual activity regardless of their gender performance. The male-sexist frame is inherently heterosexist, so a (known) gay man catcalling a woman is not going to elicit the same fear response as it would if she were catcalled by a presumed straight man. These next two entries are examples of how objectification, sexual subordination, and fear are applicable only to females targeted by straight male perpetrators. A White woman describes how she never cared when she was catcalled by her gay male manager but was bothered when it was from her straight male coworkers:

I would like to talk about my experience working at a steakhouse/bar. I had a very good relationship with my [gay] manager, a white man in his late 20's who happened to be quite flamboyant. Although, he continuously told me that I was only hired for my looks and whistled at me as I walked across the restaurant. I didn't mind it from him, but when other managers agreed, it made me a bit uncomfortable. I also would have to walk into the kitchen sometimes and the kitchen staff made me very uncomfortable. They would howl and woof at me like dogs and would do so until I looked at them. The staff was Hispanic, mostly males. I enjoyed that job and I liked my gay manager, but I chose to leave because the rest of the employees made me uncomfortable (the kitchen staff, other male managers, and older male servers). I think as they became more comfortable with me and saw the way that my gay manager acted towards me, they thought I would be okay with them treating me like that too. (White, female (no age))

utilize focused coding to identify codes that are dominant, which in this case was “catcalling.” The majority of participants used that specific word to describe their experience, but in some cases, participants described the event without naming it “catcalling.” The narratives coded as “catcalling” were then reduced to more focused coding, such as the race of the actors present, the location, time of day, “silent catcalling,” and “fear” among others. Lastly, I used theoretical coding to connect the patterns of the accounts into a theoretical framework

In this instance, the woman specifies that she left a job that she loved because she was catcalled and objectified by her straight male coworkers who might have thought they had a free pass because her gay male manager would catcall her. This is an important example, because it shows how she did not fear sexual violence from her gay male manager, who is not sexually interested in women. Even though her gay male manager performed heterosexist masculinity, he might have done it in humorous manner to poke fun of that dynamic. He knew that he could get away with that because she would not have felt threatened or sexually subordinated by him. However, that power dynamic and threat of sexual violence is very real from her other male coworkers.

Similarly, when women catcall men, despite it being a heterosexual context, the power dynamic remains the same: men are the dominant group and women are the subordinate group. A White man describes a situation in which he was catcalled by women in a car:

Yesterday, around 3:00 in the afternoon I was walking back to my house after a quick run to the gas station for an energy drink. I often walk to the gas station as my neighborhood backs up to the establishment, which makes it an easy 3-minute walk. I was walking along the sidewalk when a small sports car with 2 college girls drive by, at which point the passenger leaned out of her window and yelled, "Wooo! Nice Ass!" I looked up from my phone just in time to see the girl ducking back into the car. I just laughed to myself and walked home. Earlier this week I had been talking about catcalling with girlfriend and I noted that women almost never cat call towards men. (White, male, older than 21 years old)

It is rare for women to engage in catcalling, especially towards a man, but it is usually done in comedic fashion. In this scenario, the roles are reversed. The man was targeted, and yet his response is nothing like that of the women who described their catcalling experiences. Like most men who recall a rare catcalling moment, he just laughed it off and did not take any defensive precautions. Men are not physically threatened and do not fear being sexually assaulted by women catcallers in the same way women that women feel physically threatened and fear sexual assault when harassed by heterosexual males. Because there is no extensive history of women

subordinating and objectifying men through violent means or in an institutionalized manner, there is no reverse sexism. Men cannot experience institutionalized sexism. The gender-power dynamic in a role-reversal catcalling situation is not the same, nor is it the same for same-sex catcalling.

DIFFERENT REALITIES: MEN AS PASSIVE BYSTANDERS AND WOMEN AS OPEN PERSONS

In the data collected, women were catcalled at any point during a 24-hour day regardless of what they were wearing and what they were doing. Most of these women expressed these experiences as the norm, whereas the men that witnessed these events were shocked. Their distinctive reactions are a reflection of the different realities women and men experience daily. Women are active objects and open persons; men are not. Not only do most men *not* feel the threat of sexual violence on a daily basis, they also have the option to be passive bystanders. Men may not be aware of the frequency of catcalling or the negative effects it has on women. Analysis of the 45 data entries indicates that men *do* have opportunities to intervene, but they usually do not even though the catcallers were strangers. None of the male participants stated why they did not intervene.

An 18-year-old Latino man describes a situation he witnessed:

I woke up early to check the mail. When I walked outside, I heard a bunch of men whistling and yelling some inappropriate things, so naturally, I went to go look. When I walk toward what they were yelling at, all I could see was a woman jogging away with her headphones in. I wasn't really sure what all the commotion was about, so I started walking back to the mailboxes when I heard a man yell, "That was the finest piece I've seen in awhile." It instantly hit me. The men were talking about the woman who was going for a morning run. (Latino, male, 18 years old)

This participant didn't think about his safety when he woke up early to check the mail, but more than likely the female jogger did. From his entry, it is difficult to know if the woman knew she was being catcalled. However, prior to running, women joggers strategize their runs to maximize their safety prior to running and tend to be hyperaware of their surroundings (Hamilton 2017). There is an obvious male-bonding and masculinity performance going on among the group of men, who were so obnoxious the participant went to check what was going on and realized the runner was being catcalled. The catcallers felt entitled not only to her body but also to other women's bodies, since one of them gives an indication that he has been objectifying and "rating" women. The belief that she was an open person ready for judgment rather than a woman just getting some exercise is evidence of the power dynamic in which men are dominant. In the next scenario, a male participant describes feeling uncomfortable at witnessing a server being sexually harassed:

I was eating lunch at a wings restaurant and I noticed that my server, a white female about 20 years old, was constantly being hit on by a table near mine. I saw that she was showing a lot of discomfort. They still kept catcalling her and drawing her attention. My friend, a white male, pointed this out to me first, and he said it made him feel uncomfortable. I asked the server what was going on as she passed by, and she said, "Nothing, just getting hit on," and she walked away. She seemed totally fine. We left a nice tip and left without saying anything else, but it made me feel uncomfortable the way that she was being itemized. It felt sexist to me. (White, male, 19 years old)

The female server's job requires that she be pleasant and helpful. She is doubly disadvantaged in that she has inferior status—both as a server to her customers and as a woman to a group of men. While this status differential has become normalized to her, she is probably experiencing cognitive and emotional labor from this incident but doesn't want to show it to a patron. The participant also seems to be experiencing cognitive and emotional labor through his sudden awareness of the situation and his reaction to it. He and his friend left her a "nice tip" because they felt bad for her. The scenario is an example of how men and women live separate realities in

which one is used to being objectified, and the other only witnesses it every so often as a passive bystander. The male observer noted that both he and his friend were uncomfortable that she was “itemized,” i.e. sexually objectified. However, neither of them addressed the catcallers directly or spoke to the manager, which would’ve allowed them to avoid confrontation with the catcallers. The interaction mirrors the reality that women are usually left with this burden.

In all the 45 scenarios that I analyzed, only once did a man intervene. The men mostly remain passive bystanders and find the catcalling encounter humorous, disapprove quietly, or express shock at the event. The man that did intervene did so when he personally witnessed his girlfriend being sexually assaulted at a bar and became angry. He noticed his girlfriend received the male gaze from three men, and one of them slapped her butt while the other two watched. As is expected of dominant masculinity, he and his male friends went into “protective” mode and began a brawl with the harassers before being interrupted by the doorman. While some may view this as an example of “benevolent sexism” in which his actions are chivalrous, it may also be perceived as men using their power to shut down other men abusing it. However, he could have reacted that way because the victim was his girlfriend and may not have reacted the same had it been any other woman. It is difficult to know whether his behavior was out of possessiveness or just anger at the sexual assault. Like the previous participant, he is shocked that it happened and in disbelief that these are common occurrences at the bar, but he notes that his girlfriend was not as emotionally distraught since it wasn’t her first experience. Indeed, being groped at a bar is a common and normalized experience for many women as it is deemed as harmless and as expected masculine behavior.

In the cases above, men describe scenarios in which they witness women being objectified or catcalled by a group of men and it becomes an eye-opening experience for them.

These situations are not things that they have to deal with, but women do on a daily basis in all aspects of their lives whether it is at a bar, at their workplace, or on campus. These are examples that women and men live different realities and that men have the privilege to never experience or become aware of women's realities. Men can go about their days without the threat of sexual violence and have the option to be passive bystanders when they do witness catcalling. Women, however, are always experiencing fear of sexual violence and needing to come up with strategies of survival, as they are extremely aware of their vulnerability.

COGNITIVE & EMOTIONAL LABOR: FEAR OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND STRATEGIES OF SURVIVAL

Many women expressed the fear of having to walk alone, especially at night. They describe intense awareness of their environment and the tactics they use to minimize the risk of violence to survive a potential attack. In the entries, women explicitly described their fear indicating the emotional labor they felt in that moment and also how they utilized cognitive labor to assess the danger of their surroundings or manage a potential threat. Women will use previous catcalling experiences to gauge how to address their current harassment, and they store these experiences and use them to strategize for future occurrences. A 20-year-old White woman states:

I was walking alone from campus to my car around 9:30 PM. I had just taken a final exam, and parked in the neighborhood behind the campus bars, where the streets are lit, but not well. Two white men (strangers) in their mid-twenties slowly drove past me, and loudly honked their horn. They laughed when I jumped, leaned out the window, whistled and said, "Hey baby!" then sped off. At the time, I was very shocked and feared for my safety. I am still afraid to walk anywhere by myself at night after this incident. (White, female, 20 years old)

The cognitive labor she experiences is evident before the incident (ie. she is hyperaware of the safety-level of the environment), during the incident (ie. she fears for her safety, as most women would), and after the incident (ie. she continues to feel afraid of walking by herself at night). She

was walking alone at night—a scenario many women fear as potentially getting attacked or abducted. Notice that through her cognitive labor in all three stages, there is also a strong sense of emotional labor—she is afraid of a potential threat. Her catcallers were performing masculinity and male-bonding at her expense as they laughed. In general, women were aware of their surroundings and often used tactics of avoidance to minimize the threat of violence.

It is common for women to carry pepper spray, grip their keys to use as a weapon, or pretend to talk on the phone when they feel threatened. For example, a woman described leaving her friend's dorm past midnight to walk to the parking garage. She wanted to ask someone to accompany her because she was afraid, but decided not to bother anyone. Along the way, she is catcalled and harassed by a group of men in a truck. She strategizes her route and states:

I have never felt so scared/attacked in my entire life...I started running across the street as they let out another stream of insults...for the rest of trip, I held my pepper spray in my hands and was acutely aware of the danger of a small statured, young girl walking alone by herself at night. (White, female, 19 years old)

Additionally, women will often pretend to be on the phone when they are in situations that make them feel unsafe. In the next entry, not only are the catcallers performing masculinity and male-bonding, but they are intoxicated, which made her feel even more threatened. She states:

I went to a party, leaving late at night to walk back to my dorm. It was cold, so I was wearing jeans, boots, and a hoodie. Several intoxicated males started to follow me. It was dark, so I couldn't tell what race they were, but they had general American accents and were definitely students. They attempted to call out to me, laughing and joking around, but I pulled out my phone and pretended to talk to someone. I was telling this imaginary person that "several creeps are following me," which warded the guys away... My clothes did not display me as slutty or wanting attention from them, but they had a predatory nature. This predatory nature is sexist in the sense that some men think women can be taken advantage of, especially when alone. (White, female, 18 years old)

Instead of directly confronting them, which is dangerous, the 18-year-old White woman pretended to talk to someone on the phone, but was actually indirectly speaking to the men who

were following her. She said “several creeps are following me,” so that the men would know that she was aware of what they were doing and that there would be a witness should they escalate to assault. To men, this male-bonding behavior is fun, but to women, the behavior is threatening and predatory-like. She alludes that their “predatory” behavior might be understandable if she were wearing something “slutty,” but indicates that she was not, which is an example of her adoption of the male-sexist frame. She internalizes the anti-female/femininity subframe and inadvertently reproduces the “boys will be boys” narrative. Nevertheless, she had to utilize cognitive labor and create an “imaginary witness” to feel less alone and protected from these street harassers as many women do.

A 20-year-old Latina woman describes wanting to walk to a nearby drugstore to get a snack as a means of exercise—something most men wouldn’t think twice about, but unlike most men, she recognizes that she will need to be on alert even though it is a safe area. She describes her experience:

I live fairly close to a drug store and wanted a snack. I decided to get a little workout instead of driving, so I thought it would be a good idea to walk. It was around 2-3 pm on a Saturday. I debated taking one of my dogs, but decided against it, so I went alone. My neighborhood isn’t unsafe at all, most of the way I was taking would be through the neighborhood streets, but the drug store was along an intersection of two very busy roads. I went on my way without much fuss, until out of the corner of my eye, I noticed a car that had passed me earlier was behind me again, driving slower this time. It was a dark blue Toyota Camry, a newer model. As the car passed me, I realized I needed to make eye contact with the driver, so they knew I had seen them. The windows were heavily tinted so I couldn’t quite see who was driving. It scared me, but I wanted to make sure that the person that was driving knew I was aware of their presence. I even pretended to talk on the phone, so that they would think I was letting someone know of their behavior. They drove by me slowly, and sped away once they were about 40 feet away. I decided to go back home; I was too afraid to have them come back. (Latina, female, 20 years old)

She utilizes cognitive labor to assess the threat and create a tactic for survival by attempting to make eye contact with the driver as well as pretending to talk on the phone to an “imaginary witness” so that they would think she was letting someone know the details of their vehicle. We

can feel her emotional labor of fear. Note the difference between her experience and the man's reaction to being catcalled by a group of women in an earlier entry. While these are similar circumstances, the male participant thought the catcalling was funny and didn't feel threatened. On a typical day, women experience intense cognitive labor through their awareness of their surroundings and the possibility of becoming a victim to sexual violence. They plan their days accordingly, often limiting their freedom and choices—a different reality compared what that of most men. Women prepare to leave evidence or have a witness because these situations force them to not only think about what could happen to them but also that they may never be found. In her case, the possibility of victimization is so high that she decided to forget the snack and go back home, because she was afraid they would come back for her.

Women often have to choose “lazy” options to avoid these threats, such as taking the elevator instead of a lone staircase, parking next to an exit in a garage or as close to a store as possible to avoid walking across parking lots alone, or as is in the case above, driving short distances rather than walking them. The emotional labor of fear reproduces the notion that women should not walk alone day or night. Women's fear of sexual violence is necessary in order for women to remain object and for men to be subject.

*MALE-ENTITLEMENT OF WOMEN'S BODIES, MALE-BONDING, AND TOXIC
MASCULINITY*

Sometimes, men engage in silent catcalling where they stare at women in a sexualizing manner. This can be just as threatening as verbal forms of catcalling. A 20-year-old Black woman driving on the highway describes her experience. The nonverbal behavior of her catcaller made her feel unsafe despite being in a moving vehicle:

I was driving, and when a truck went to pass me, I made eye contact in passing with the two, 30-ish year old men inside. They proceeded to slow down after they passed me so I would catch up and pass them, and then they would speed up and pass me again, each time staring in my window at me like I am an animal at the zoo. Finally, 25 minutes later, I got to my exit and escaped their creepy gaze. They probably didn't realize how uncomfortable they made me feel nor did they care. As much as I love being objectified, I'd really like to be able to drive my car without being leered at like some meat. (Black, female, 20 years old)

Their actions could have indicated an example of gendered racism had the men been white, but she doesn't specify their race. Nevertheless, the men forced her to see herself as they saw her.

The power men have is not just in objectifying women but also in making women objectify themselves—they force women to see themselves through the male gaze. She expresses fear and utilizes metaphoric language to convey her emotional labor. She feels like she is the prey as they leered at her “like some meat,” and finally, she “escaped their creepy gaze.” Her comments indicate the reality that women can't do regular daily activities, such as driving a car on a highway, without the possibility of being objectified or threatened. In this sense, the male-sexist frame is a manifestation of emotional social control, in which women may limit their activities for fear of being sexually harassed or assaulted.

Men expect women to want their attention and respond positively. When women ignore them or actively turn down their advances, male aggression can escalate to assault. For example, a 20-year-old White woman describes a night in which she experienced aggressive catcalling:

My roommate and I (both 20, Caucasian and female) decided to go get some food one night, and stopped at a local pub. The pub was connected to a bar as well. We parked our car, and then started walking to the building when a group of young men (all Caucasian in their early 20's) smoking by their cars started trying to talk to us. They called us things like “baby girl” and “honey.” They whistled at us and begged us to come over. We continued to walk and ignore the group. When they realized they were being ignored, their comments turned aggressive. We weren't sure if they were drunk or not, but they started yelling at us, because we were ignoring them. We just kept walking, but it was obvious we were being targeted because we were young girls. I wasn't super shocked that this would happen, because catcalling is so common nowadays. (White, female 20 years old)

This group of men try to get their attention by using gendered deference language not only objectifying them, but also reinforcing their right to impose their male gaze and act on it.

Women's status as open persons reproduces the power dynamic; men use the same adjectives that are used for pets and children to catcall adult women. The men felt entitled and expected the women to walk over to them, and when they didn't, the men were offended at being ignored and began yelling aggressive comments. Although the men's actions were threatening, she describes the experience as normalized behavior for both men as perpetrators and women as targets.

Similarly, a 21-year-old White woman refers to a catcalling experience as a "generic instance" in which she and her friends ignored a group of guys, and the men began to use gendered insults, or as she states, "pretty much the usual obscenities when a male doesn't get their way." Men will often repair their masculinity by name-calling the women who ignored their advances.

When men feel entitled to women's bodies, the male gaze can escalate to unwanted touching, even if the touching is not sexually explicit. A 21-year-old Latina woman is walking with her boyfriend on campus and witnesses men annoying a group of women who were advertising their sorority's function. The men are joking around and using language that while in itself was not sexually explicit was stated in a manner that *is* sexually explicit. They jokingly question the women, "are we allowed to join in on your activities?" The basic question insinuates that they wanted to be in a sexual situation in which they had a lot of women to themselves. One of the men goes from verbal to physical and pulls lightly on one of the women's ponytails without her permission. The participant notes that the woman was not okay with the man touching her. When a 20-year-old Latina woman confronted a man who sexually assaulted her at a bar, for example, he laughed it off:

I was at a campus bar and was out on the dance floor with one of my best friends, Brad, when a male who was a complete stranger (Caucasian around the age of 22) slapped my bottom. I turned back in confusion, as this strange man tries to dance with me. I said, “Excuse me, but do not touch me,” as I backed away from him. The guy follows me across the dance floor, and yells at me calling me “sweetheart” and “honey.” He told me that I should be used to it, and that I am a “sweetheart woman,” and should not worry about it. I could not believe his statement, and told him that he was “a real asshole.” I walked away towards my friend Brad, and as I looked behind, I could see the man laughing and talking to his friends about the incident he thought was a joke. (Latina, female, 20 years old)

The White man feels entitled to not only notice her body, but to touch her body in public without her consent and expects her to be okay with his actions. He reinforces the male-sexist frame by classifying his behavior as normal and reminding her of his entitlement and her objectification—something he claims she should be used to. When she tells him he is a “real asshole,” the male-sexist frame is only further reinforced among his friends who laugh and joke about it with him afterwards. His display of masculinity and form of gendered racism is intended to let her know that she is just an object to him because she is a woman and he is a man. He also performs masculinity for his friends as a form of male-bonding. When she told him not to touch her and called him an asshole, he was not fazed nor did he consider he did something wrong. Instead, he *follows* her after he sexually assaulted her.

Women are again seen as open persons, and it is evident that he does not see her as an equal with rights to her own body. Rather than respecting her and apologizing for groping her, he gaslights her, continues to follow her across the dance floor while using gendered deference language, and then laughs with his male friends about it. Even though the Latina woman confronted him twice, she still walked away disempowered since he thought her reaction was funny and didn’t take her seriously. The pro-male/pro-masculinity and anti-female/anti-femininity framework is reproduced even when she confronts it, because despite her resistance, he isn’t deterred. She recognizes her helplessness as object even when she attempts to solidify

her position as subject. The normalization of catcalling is facilitated through these experiences, as well as through the acceptance of toxic masculinity and the lack of repercussions for men.

The majority of the data suggests that catcalling happens most often in groups of men. Through catcalling, a group of men can perform masculinity amongst their peers and bond over the shared power of objectifying women. Through various outlets, including catcalling, men perform their masculinity and compete amongst their male peers. Often, the performance and the competition is a form of “male-bonding.” Women were catcalled even when they were with friends, a boyfriend, or a male friend. In these incidents, it seems that the male-bonding performance is intensified. A 19-year-old White woman was walking with a physically intimidating male friend and yet *many* cars passed them and catcalled her in front of him. In these situations, the men in the vehicles are performing masculinity as power not just for objectifying a woman, but also possibly for degrading her in front of a possible boyfriend without an altercation. They get to objectify someone else’s “girl” and get away with it. It is possible that when men catcall a woman when she is with another man, they may get a double-boost of masculinity because the assumption is that the woman is with the man and that the man will fight for his “girl” given the chance.

The men tend to think of the situation as a humorous game, not realizing or caring about the negative effects it has on women. This male-bonding behavior is a reproduction of the male-sexist frame. Women resist the power dynamic during micro-level interactions—often without success. However, sometimes their experiences can create awareness among men.

WOMEN’S RESISTANCE AND COUNTERFRAMING

It can be dangerous for women to resist a catcaller, and when women do, it is often ineffective. However, there are other ways that women can resist the male-sexist frame, such as

by sharing their experiences with other women to create a collective movement, like the #metoo movement, or by bringing awareness to men. The latter is especially difficult when men are unaware there is a problem or refuse to accept women's experiences as valid. Most men benefit from the male-sexist frame and would have to actively disengage from the dominant worldview that it is natural for men to objectify and sexualize women. It takes skills that are typically regarded as feminine, such as listening and being compassionate to others, to understand the daily dangers of being a woman. It exerts a lot of emotional energy for women to help men recognize that women and men live different everyday realities. In this next entry, a 19-year-old White woman wants to prove to her male friends how often she gets catcalled, so she initiated a social experiment as is described by an 18-year-old White man:

Over the summer, I went with a few friends of mine, my best friend Eric (19 year old white male), David (20 year old white male), and Abigail (19 year old white female) who is a very attractive blond girl, to an outdoor mall. We walked 15 odd feet behind her, because she wanted to prove how often she got catcalled. Over the course of about half an hour, she was catcalled 4 times by people walking and driving by. When we walked with her however, it happened far less often. Over this time, no one was threatening to her and no one approached her. She was wearing a short dress, which probably increased the amount of catcalling that was going on, however it probably would've happened regardless. (White, male, 18 years old)

His “very attractive, blond” friend, Abigail, was catcalled more often when he and his guy friends walked fifteen feet behind her, but he still indicates that she was catcalled even with their presence as “it happened far less often.” Although he does state that she was never threatened or approached, it would be interesting to know if *she* would also state that she didn't feel threatened. His automatic response is within the male-sexist frame—he engages in victim-blaming for a split second when he speculates that her dress attire, “a short dress,” was a factor in being catcalled, but then actively disengages as he later states, “it probably would have happened regardless.” Abigail counterframed the male-sexist frame by visually showing them her daily

reality—the prevalence of her subjection to the anti-female/anti-femininity subframe by male strangers in public. She brought the common experience of street harassment to their attention, and the narrator seems to have learned something from the social experiment. Men don't realize the harm catcalling does to women, as well as its prevalence in women's lives, or if they do—they don't seem to care, because they unjustly benefit from systemic sexism.

4.7 CONCLUSION

By using the journal methodology to collect data, I was able to explore the different responses to catcalling from men and women at two regionally distinct universities. Using universities were historically white institutions.

The physical and social structure of society severely limits the mobility of minorities such as people of color, women, and those of lower socio-economic status. This limitation of mobility, which is largely maintained by fear of violence, has been a foundational aspect to systemic inequality created by those in power. In this case, the gendering of space has allowed men and women to live different realities. While it may appear that men and women are doing the same daily activities, such as jogging, waiting tables, or shopping, women exert cognitive labor in efforts to minimize the risk of victimization in ways that men do not have to think about. The knowledge of being objectified, vulnerable, and having lower status to men requires women to strategically manage not their daily activities and routines as well as their emotions. The data showed that women of all racial backgrounds are aware of their presentation and have to alter their behavior—a sort of defensive physical labor—when interacting in the presence of men. The data indicated that these micro-level interactions between men and women are representative of

social gendered structures, or systemic sexism. The fear women experience suggests that it is more than bias, prejudices, and stereotypes, but rather the worldview that women are inferior.

Catcalling is a reproduction of the male-sexist frame, in which female and femininity are synonymous with objectification. Women are seen as “open persons” that are readily available for interaction with men. Men engage in deferent language to force women to respond to them, and when women ignore them, they often engage in more aggressive verbal behavior. The pro-male/pro-masculinity subframe is enacted as men exert their power to objectify women based on their appearance as well as display their power and masculinity to other men by objectifying a woman. Catcalling serves as a type of male-bonding and masculine competition dependent on sexualizing women, which is why men are more likely to engage in catcalling when they are in a group of men. Women may also reproduce the male-sexist frame by participating in the “boys will be boys” and “men are predatory” narrative that almost excuses men’s behavior. They may also engage in internalized victim-blaming for being sexually harassed or catcalled based on their clothing, for being out too late, or walking alone. However, both the literature and the data showed that women tend to ignore their catcallers and will strategize the situation to maximize their safety by pretending to be on the phone, walking with a friend, or making their catcallers aware of their presence. Nevertheless, these experiences intensify their fear of victimization, cause paranoia, and make them change their behavior and routines.

Men may not be aware of its prevalence and/or understand the way catcalling negatively affects women. Some of the data suggest that it does bother men, but they don’t specify exactly why they don’t intervene; it may be to preserve their masculinity and thus perpetuate the male-sexist frame. The power lies within a heterosexual power dynamic wherein men are the dominant group and women are viewed as sexually subordinate objects. The threat and fear of violence and

victimization is not the same when men are targeted and women are the catcallers or when women are catcalled by known gay men. This is one reason why catcalling is almost exclusively a male-to-female interaction and a common form of discrimination of women by men. There are many reasons why women receive little to no justice in being catcalled, but the most important is that misogyny has yet to be labeled as a credible hate crime because it is deeply embedded in our everyday life.

Catcalling and sexual harassment are micro-level interactions reflecting a larger system of oppression—systemic sexism. The fear of sexual violence severely limits the mobility of women and their bodies reduced to sexual objects ensures that women who experience sexual violence are blamed and ultimately silenced. The #metoo movement confronts systemic sexism by validating women's experiences and bringing awareness to the pervasive sexual harassment, catcalling, and assault women experience (Langone 2018; metoomvmt.org n.d.). For example, one woman writes the catcalls women report in colorful chalk on frequented sidewalks (Vagianos 2017), and while most women will not find any of the catcalls shocking, some men who aren't as aware of its prevalence and its harm to women might. Hopefully, the awareness will encourage men to become active rather than passive bystanders during these encounters. Only after men and women begin to understand how they reproduce systemic sexism in interpersonal interactions with friends, family, and strangers, will we be able to actively dismantle the system that subjugates women and reproduces toxic masculinity.

5. CONCLUSION

Systemic sexism is reflected in interpersonal interactions with strangers, friends, family and partners. The theoretical differences between systemic sexism and the other subsystems of the elite-white-male dominance system are evident in the data. The four main differences: gender integration, oldest prejudice, women participating, and the male-sexist frame embedded in our everyday language contribute to men and women refraining from filtering sexist behavior and comments. Regardless of whether these men were known to the women or complete strangers, they had no fear of negative repercussions. For women, there is no avoiding male strangers' sexist behavior and commentary—including catcalling. The fear of sexual violence severely limits the mobility of women and their bodies reduced to sexual objects ensures that women who experience sexual violence are blamed and ultimately silenced.

The data showed that no space was safe for women to just *be* without being bombarded with messages of whom they should be and what they should tolerate. Women's worth was constantly being questioned through these interactions. How can women feel safe in environments where they constantly overhear men degrading and objectifying women's bodies? How can women succeed academically when male professors and classmates treat them differently under the assumption that women aren't as intelligent as men? Or female academic advisors, mothers, and female friends frequently placing motherhood above their individual desires to pursue a career as well as imposing feminine standards of beauty? In these situations, women weren't physically harmed or sexually assaulted, but the anti-female/anti-femininity subframe message remains the same within these verbal interactions. For centuries, women have been subjugated through physical punishment and torture, but it was the beliefs of their inferior

status that enabled their physical harm as acceptable. Words that spread these beliefs through interactions are dangerous. Though women have made some strides of progress in all of these institutions, our interactions with each other continue to mirror what powerful men have dictated us to believe for hundreds of years. Systemic sexism has unique theoretical differences, but is simultaneously mundane in the way we express it. Nevertheless, by understanding how system sexism operates within our micro-level interactions, we can begin to dismantle it and achieve true equality.

REFERENCES

- Abramson, Kate. 2014. "Turning Up the Lights on Gaslighting." *Philosophical Perspectives* 28(1): 1-30.
- Allen, Christopher T., Suzanne C. Swan, and Chitra Raghavan. 2009. "Gender Symmetry, Sexism, and Intimate Partner Violence." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(11): 1816-1834.
- Anderson, Kristin J., Melinda Kanner, and Nisreen Elsayegh. 2009. "Are Feminists Man Haters? Feminists' and Nonfeminists' Attitudes Toward Men." *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 33(2): 216-224.
- ATLAS.ti. 2002-2016. *Scientific Software Development*. GmbH
- Bailey, Benjamin. 2017. "Greetings and Compliments or Street Harassment? Competing Evaluations of Street Remarks in a Recorded Collection." *Discourse & Society*, 28(4): 353-373. doi: 10.1177/0957926517702979
- Bartky, Sandra Lee. 1979. "On Psychological Oppression." in *Philosophy and Women* edited by Sharon Bishop & Marjorie Weinzig. Belmont: California.
- Bastomski, Sara, & Philip Smith. 2017. "Gender, Fear, and Public Places: How Negative Encounters with Strangers Harm Women." *Sex Roles*, 76:73-88.
- Benard, Cheryl and Edit Schlaffer. 1984. "The Man in the Street: Why He Harasses." in *Feminist Frameworks: Alternative Theoretical Accounts of the Relations Between Women and Men* 2nd edition edited by Alison M. Jagger and Paula S. Rothenberg.
- Benokraitis, Nijole V., and Joe R. Feagin. 1995. *Modern Sexism: Blatant, Subtle, and Covert Discrimination*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

- Berdahl, J. 2007. "Harassment Based on Sex: Protecting Social Status in the Context of Gender Hierarchy." *Academy of Management Review*, 32: 641-658.
doi:10.5465/AMR.2007.24351879
- Bowman, Cynthia Grant. 1993. "Street harassment and the Informal Ghettoization of Women." *Harvard Law Review*, 106(3): 517–580.
- Brownmiller, S. 2013 [1975]. *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Burawoy, Micheal. 1998. "The Extended Case Method." *Sociological Theory*, 16(1): 4-33.
- Caudwell, Jayne. 2017. "Everyday Sexisms: Exploring the Scales of Misogyny in Sport." In *Sport and Discrimination* edited by Daniel Kilvington and John Price. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2017. "The Power of Constructivist Grounded Theory for Critical Inquiry." *Qualitative Inquiry*, 23(1): 34-45.
- Chhun, Bunkosal. 2011. "Catcalls: Protected Speech or Fighting Words." *Thomas Jefferson Law Review*, 33: 273-295.
- Cohen, Philip N., and Matt L. Huffman. 2003. "Individuals Jobs and Labor Markets: The Devaluation of Women's Work." *American Sociological Review* 68(3): 443-463.
- Copelon, Rhonda. 1994. "Recognizing the Egregious in the Everyday: Domestic Violence as Torture." *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, 25: 291-367.
- Correll, Shelley J., Stephen Bernard, and In Paik. 2007. "Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology* 112(5):1297-1338.
- Cotter, David A., JoAnn DeFiore, Joan M. Hermsen, Brenda Marsteller Kowalewski and Reeve Vanneman. 1997. "All Women Benefit: The Macro-Level Effect of Occupational

- Integration on Gender Earnings Equality.” *American Sociological Review* 62(5): 714-734.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams. 1989. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics.” *University of Chicago legal Forum* 1989: 139-167.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams. 1991. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241-1299.
- Darley, J.M. and B. Latané. 1968. “Bystander Intervention in Emergencies: Diffusion of Responsibility.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 8: 377-383.
- Davis, Deirdre. E. 1994. “The Harm That Has No Name: Street Harassment, Embodiment, and African American Women.” *UCLA Women’s Law Journal*, 4(2): 133-178.
- Dedoose. 2014-2017. SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC.
- Escove, A. W. 1998. “A Diminishing of Self: Women’s Experiences of Unwanted Sexual Attention.” *Healthcare for Women International*, 19: 181-192.
- Etymonline.com. 2001-2018. Online Etymology Dictionary. Retrieved January 4, 2018 (<https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=catcall>).
- Evans, Louwanda. 2013. *Cabin Pressure: African American Pilots, Flight Attendants, and Emotional Labor*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Fairchild, Kimberly and Laurie A. Rudman. 2008. “Everyday Stranger Harassment and Women’s Objectification.” *Social Justice Research*, 21: 338-357.
- Fairchild, Kimberley. 2010. “Context Effects on Women’s Perceptions of Stranger Harassment.” *Sexuality and Culture: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly*, 14: 191-216.
- Farmer, Olivia, and Sara Smock Jordan. 2017. “Experiences of Women Coping with Catcalling

- Experiences in NYC: A Pilot Study.” *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 29(4): 205-225. doi: 10.1080/08952833.2017.1373577
- Feagin, Joe R. and Clairece Booher Feagin. 1986. *Discrimination American Style: Institutional Racism and Sexism*. 2Nd ed. Malabar, FL: R.E. Krieger Pub Co.
- Feagin, Joe R. 2013. *The White Racial Frame: Centuries of Racial Framing and Counter-Framing*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Feagin, Joe, and Kimberley Ducey. 2017. *Elite White Men Ruling: Who, What, When, Where, and How*. New York: Routledge.
- Federici, Silvia. 2004/2014. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York, NY: Autonomedia.
- Fisher, Sophie, Danielle Lindner, and Christopher J. Ferguson. 2017. “The Effects of Exposure to Catcalling on Women’s State Self-Objectification and Body Image.” *Current Psychology*, doi: 10.1007/s12144-017-9697-2.
- Fredrickson, B.L., and R.A. Roberts. 1997. Objectification theory: Toward Understanding Women’s Lived Experiences and Mental Health Risks.” *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21: 173-206.
- Friedan, Betty. 1963. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Norton.
- Gardner, Carol Brooks. 1980. “Passing By: Street remarks, address rights, and the urban female.” *Sociological Inquiry*, 50(3-4): 328-356.
- Gardner, Carol Brooks. 1995. *Passing By: Gender and Public Harassment*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

- Goffman, Erving. 1963. *Behavior in public places: Notes on the social organization of gatherings*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Grossman, Anna Jane. 2008. "Catcalling: Creepy or a Compliment?" CNN.COM Retrieved April 12, 2018 (www.cnn.com/2008/LIVING/personal/05/14/lw.catcalls/index.html).
- Hamilton, Michelle. 2017. "Running While Female." *Runner's World*. Retrieved September 13, 2018 (<https://www.runnersworld.com/training/a18848270/running-while-female/>).
- Hickman, S.E., and C.L. Muehlenhard. 1997. "College Women's Fears and Precautionary Behaviors relating to Acquaintance Rape and Stranger Rape." *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21, 527-547.
- Hochschild, Arlie R. 1983. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hochschild, Arlie. 1989/2003/2012. *The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution of the Home*. New York, NY: Penguin Group Publishing.
- Holland, Jack. 2006. *Misogyny: The World's Oldest Prejudice*. London, UK: Constable and Robinson, Ltd.
- Hudson, Valerie M., Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett. 2012. *Sex and World Peace*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Jewell, Jennifer A., & Christia Spears Brown. 2013. "Sexting, Catcalls, and Butt Slaps: How Gender Stereotypes and Perceived Group Norms Predict Sexualized Behavior." *Sex Roles*, 69: 594-604.
- Kearl, Holly. 2009. "Always on Guard: Women and Street harassment" *American Association of University Women*, 103(1): 18-20.
- Kissling, Elizabeth Arveda. 1991. "Street harassment: The Language of Sexual Terrorism."

- Discourse & Society*, 2(4): 451–460.
- Krahe, B. 2005. “Cognitive Coping with the Threat of Rape: Vigilance and Cognitive Avoidance.” *Journal of Personality*, 73: 609-643.
- Kristof, Nicholas D., and Sheryl WuDunn. 2009. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Langone, Alix. 2018. “#MeToo and Time’s Up Founders Explain the Difference Between the 2 Movements—and How They’re Alike.” Time.com. Retrieved September 22, 2018 (<http://time.com/5189945/whats-the-difference-between-the-metoo-and-times-up-movements/>).
- Lerner, Gerda. 1986. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Leonardo, Micaela Di. 1981. “Political Economy of Street Harassment.” *AEGIS: Magazine on Ending Violence Against Women*, Summer: 51-57. Retrieved March 8, 2018 (<http://www.stopstreetharassment.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/PoliticalEconomyofStHarassment.pdf>).
- Levanon, Asaf, Paula England, and Paul Allison. 2009. “Occupational Feminization and Pay: Assessing Causal Dynamics Using 1950-2000 U.S. Census Data.” *Social Forces* 88(2): 865-892.
- Liss, Miriam, Mindy J. Erchull, and Laura R. Ramsey. 2011. “Empowering or Oppressing? Development and Exploration of the Enjoyment of Sexualization Scale.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37(1): 55-68.
- Livingston, B.A. 2015. “Hollaback! International Street Harassment Survey Project.” Retrieved August 28, 2018 (<http://www.ihollaback.org/cornell-international-survey-on-street-harassment/>).

- Logan, Laura S. 2015. "Street Harassment: Current and Promising Avenues for Researchers and Activists." *Sociology Compass*, 9(3): 196-211.
- MacKinnon, Catharine A. 2005. *Women's Lives, Men's Laws*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- MacMillan, R., A. Nierobisz, and S. Welsh. 2000. "Experiencing the Streets: Harassment and Perceptions of Safety Among Women." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 37: 306-322.
- Magley, V.J. 2002. "Coping with Sexual Harassment: Reconceptualizing Women's Resistance." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83: 930-946.
- Mies, Maria. 1986/1998. *Patriarchy & Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*. New York, NY: Zed Books Ltd.
- MeTooMvmt.org. n.d. "me too." Retrieved September 22, 2018 (<https://metoomvmt.org/>).
- Moradi, B., D. Dirks, and A.V. Matteson. 2005. "Roles of sexual Objectification Experiences and Internalization of standards of Beauty in Eating Disorder Symptomology: A Test and Extension of Objectification Theory." *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52: 420-428.
- Morgan, Robin. 1989/2001. *The Demon Lover: The Roots of Terrorism*. United States: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. (1989) & Washington Square Press (2001).
- O'Leary, C. 2016. "Catcalling as a 'double-edged sword': Midwestern Women, Their Experiences, and the Implications of Men's Catcalling Behaviors." (Unpublished Thesis). Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois.
- Picca, Leslie Houts, and Joe R. Feagin. 2007. *Two-Faced Racism: Whites in the Backstage and Frontstage*. New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Rashotte Slattery, Lisa, and Murray Webster Jr. 2005. "Gender Status Beliefs." *Social Science*

Research 34:618-633.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. and Shelley J. Correll. 2006. "Consensus and the Creation of Status Beliefs." *Social Forces*, 85(1):431-453.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2011. *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*. Oxford University Press.

Ronai, Carol Rambo, Barbara A. Zsembik, and Joe R. Feagin. 1997. *Everyday Sexism in the Third Millennium*. New York: Routledge Press.

Rudman, Laurie A. and Julie E. Phelan. 2007. "Sex Differences, Sexism, and Sex: The Social Psychology of Gender From Past to Present." *Social Psychology of Gender* 24: 19-45.

Saunders, B.A., C. Scaturro, C. Guarino, and E. Kelly. 2016. "Contending with Catcalling: The Role of System-Justifying Beliefs and Ambivalent Sexism in Predicting Women's Coping Experiences with (and Men's Attributions for) Stranger Harassment." *Current Psychology*, 36(2): 324-338.

Sell, Jane, and Kathy J. Kuipers. 2009. "A Structural Social Psychological View of Gender Differences in Cooperation." *Sex Roles* 61:317-324.

Stanko, Elizabeth A. 1985. *Intimate Intrusions: Women's Experience of Male Violence*. London, UK: Routledge.

Stone, Pamela. 2008. *Opting out? Why women really quit careers and head home*. California: University of California Press.

Swim, J.K., L.L. Hyers, L.L. Cohen, and M.J. Ferguson. 2001. "Everyday Sexism: Evidence for its incidence, nature, and psychological impact from three daily diary studies." *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(1): 31-53.

Szymanski, Dawn M., and C. Henrichs-Beck. 2014. "Exploring Sexual Minority Women's

- Experiences of External and Internalized Heterosexism and Sexism and their Links to Coping and Distress.” *Sex Roles*, 70: 28-42.
- Szymanski, Dawn. M. and Chandra E. Feltman. 2014. “Experiencing and Coping with Sexually Objectifying Treatment: Internalization and Resilience.” *Sex Roles*, 71: 159-170.
- Thompson, D.M. 1994. “Woman in the Street: Reclaiming the Public Space from Sexual Harassment.” *The Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*, 6(2) 313-348.
- Tran, M. 2015. “Combatting Gender Privilege and Recognizing a Woman’s Right to Privacy in Public Spaces: Arguments to Criminalize Catcalling and Creepshots.” *Hastings Women’s Law Journal*, 26: 185-206.
- Tuerkheimer, Deborah. 1997. “Street Harassment as Sexual Subordination: The Phenomenology of Gender-specific Harm.” *Wisconsin Women’s Law Journal*, 12: 1–33.
- Vagianos, Alanna. January 12 2017. “These are the explicit things men say to women on the street.” The Huffington Post retrieved January 4, 2018 (http://www.huffingtonpost.com.mx/entry/street-harassment-project_us_5a21967ae4b0a02abe90f451).
- Vera-Gray, F. 2016. “Men’s Stranger Intrusions: Rethinking Street Harassment.” *International Forum*, 58: 9–17.
- Warr, M. 1985. “Fear of Rape Among Urban Women.” *Social Problems*, 32: 238-252.
- Webster Jr., Murray, and Lisa Slattery Rashotte. 2009. “Fixed Roles and Situated Actions.” *Sex Roles* 61:325-337.
- West, C. and D.H. Zimmerman. 1987. “Doing Gender.” *Gender & Society*, 1(2): 125-151.
- Williams, David. 2018. “A Startling Number of Women Say they’ve Been Harassed While Running.” CNN Retrieved September 13, 2018

(<https://www.cnn.com/2018/08/23/us/women-runners-tibbetts-harassment-trnd/index.html>).

Young, Iris Marion. 1990. *Throwing like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory*. Indiana University Press.