The Divergent Effects of Diversity Ideologies for Race and Gender Relations

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ABSTRACT:

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Both practitioners and scholars have shown interest in initiatives that reduce bias and promote inclusion. Diversity ideologies—or beliefs and practices regarding how to approach group differences in diverse settings—have been studied as one set of strategies to promote racial equality, and argued to be effective for other intergroup relations, as well; however, little work has examined diversity ideologies in the context of gender, giving a limited understanding of their potential to improve gender relations. The present research compares the influence of two competing and commonly used ideologies—*awareness* and *blindness*—on race and gender relations. *Awareness* approaches recommend acknowledging and celebrating intergroup differences, whereas *blindness* approaches advocate for reducing and ignoring category membership. In contrast to research suggesting that *race awareness* is more effective at reducing racial bias than *race blindness*, I show that the opposite is true for gender. I theorize that awareness and blindness ideologies act upon unique *types* of race and gender differences in ways that preserve power for the dominant group, either exposing their opportunity-limiting nature (for race) or reifying their biological functionality (for gender). Using system justification theory, I show that diversity ideologies act upon distinct system-justifying rationales, where race awareness exposes differences in opportunities and experience, lessening denial of inequality, and thereby diminishing support for the status quo. In contrast, gender awareness highlights gender roles and their biological underpinnings, legitimizing gender differences in occupational segregation, and increasing support for the status quo (Studies 1–4). Additionally, I show that diversity ideologies have implications for unique forms of opportunity outcomes for women and

racial minorities. For race, by increasing recognition of societal inequities, awareness leads Whites to show more support for policies that combat systemic inequality (i.e., affirmative action). For gender, by increasing biological attributions, awareness makes men more likely to stereotype in ways that limit women's potential for success (Study 4). Finally, supporting my theory about the importance of the *types* of differences highlighted through awareness, I show that shifting the focus of differences toward external (opportunity, experience) ones leverages the benefits of awareness for both race and gender, providing a practical solution to improving race and gender equality (Studies 5–7). I conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for improving intergroup relations.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

For most Americans, there looms a tension between their country's ideological commitment to equality, and its reality, where women and racial minorities—amongst many other groups—are underrepresented in positions of power. Given the fundamental human needs to make sense of the world (Heider, 1958; Fiske & Taylor 1991) and to see society as fair, just, and legitimate (Jost, Kay, & Thorisdottir, 2009a; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; 2009), how does one rectify this disconnect? To make sense of why certain groups hold power over others, one must first draw upon the intergroup differences that exist and understand the role they play in creating and maintaining inequality. Thus, the types of differences between groups upon which we focus, the importance we place on them, and the ways in which we discuss them, carry power and potential both to legitimize inequality and, alternatively, to change it.

In this dissertation, I examine approaches to intergroup differences to understand their role in maintaining and disrupting intergroup inequality. Using diversity ideologies—or beliefs and practices regarding how to best approach group differences to foster intergroup inclusion—I contrast the effects of “blindness” and “awareness” ideologies for race and gender relations. *Awareness* ideologies recommend acknowledging and celebrating intergroup differences, whereas *blindness* ideologies advocate for reducing and ignoring category membership. I propose that the *types* of intergroup differences upon which we focus and the *purpose* for doing so differentially legitimize and disrupt the status quo, which carries consequences for racial minorities' and women's opportunities.

In Chapter 1, I hypothesize that race blindness and gender awareness differentially support the status quo (i.e., the “system”), where being blind to race differences but aware of

gender differences both serve to maintain power and privilege for the dominant group. I further argue that these divergent effects on system justification are due to the different *system-justifying rationales* used to make sense of race and gender inequality. For race, being *blind* to racial differences supports the system by *denying inequality* and ignoring the limited opportunities and devaluing treatments racial minorities face, whereas for gender, being *aware* of differences supports the status quo by attributing gender inequality to men and women's natural, functional, and *essential* differences in skills and abilities. Thus, I propose that awareness (for race) and blindness (for gender) differentially act upon the status quo, either lessening *denial of inequality* by exposing the limited opportunities racial minorities face or deemphasizing *essential* gender-role differences that support occupational segregation (Studies 1–3).

In Chapter 2, I outline the implications of awareness and blindness ideologies for different forms of intergroup inequality. For race, I show that awareness leads Whites to better recognize inequality, which in turn increases support for policies that support systemic change (i.e., affirmative action). For gender, I show that awareness exacerbates biological/essentialist beliefs and leads to more gender stereotyping; thus, by minimizing stereotypes that legitimize inequality, gender blindness carries the potential to increase women's opportunities in domains of power (Study 4).

After suggesting that it is the *types* of differences that drive the divergent effects of race and gender ideologies, in Chapter 3, I propose that shifting the types of differences upon which diversity ideologies intervene can produce similar outcomes for race and gender relations. By directing the types of differences out-group members focus on *away from internal sources*, and *toward external sources*, I argue that an awareness ideology can be utilized as an adaptive intervention for both race and gender relations. In both field and experimental settings, I

demonstrate the utility of this intervention for reducing system justification and increasing support for diversity policies (Studies 5–7). I conclude by suggesting that diversity science has overemphasized its focus on ideologies as a solution for intergroup bias and inclusion without addressing the underlying problem: the types of differences being highlighted and ignored and the purpose for doing so.

CHAPTER 2: THE SYSTEM-JUSTIFYING NATURE OF DIVERSITY IDEOLOGIES

Conceptualizing Ideologies

To understand the effects of diversity ideologies, it is important to first understand the basic structure and function of an ideology. Though many definitions of *ideology* exist (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009b; McLellan, 1986), common to most is the notion that ideologies are (1) sets of beliefs and values that (2) are shared amongst groups of individuals, (3) provide mental models to organize information, interpret stimuli, and make sense of one's social reality, and (4) offer prescriptions, specifying ways in which to organize environments to achieve proper structure and smooth functioning (Denzau & North, 2000; Erikson & Tedin, 2003; Jost et al., 2009b). Ideologies are both explicit and implicit, making assumptions about human nature, historical events, current realities, and future possibilities; and specifying ways to achieve social, economic, and political ideals (Jost et al., 2009b; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; 2009). Ideologies have both a discursive (socially constructed) superstructure, representing their *content*, as well as a functional (motivational) substructure, representing the psychological needs and *motives* of an individual (Jost et al., 2009). Thus, people adopt ideologies which contain content (beliefs, values) that align with their psychological motivations to make sense of and rationalize current societal arrangements (or advocate for their alternatives; Jost et al., 2009b; Kay & Jost, 2005).

Ideologies have been predominantly studied in the political sphere, examining the “left-right” divide (and their related subcomponents), and comparing and contrasting liberal ideologies (those which reject inequality and advocate for social change) to conservative ideologies (those which resist social change and accept inequality; Erikson & Tedin, 2003; Jost et al., 2009a; 2009b). Though similarly labeled as *ideologies*, diversity ideologies have been studied in a largely distinct and disconnected domain, rarely being discussed alongside the left-right divide.

Diversity ideologies represent a specific set of values, principles, and beliefs regarding how to interpret, understand, and approach group differences, and structure environments to best foster inclusion and harmony in diverse settings (Plaut, 2010; Rattan & Ambady, 2013; Sasaki & Vorauer, 2013). Most research examining diversity ideologies has contrasted two approaches: “blindness” and “awareness.” Across the literature, many different definitions have been used,¹ but for the purpose of this dissertation, I define *blindness* as an approach to intergroup differences aimed at achieving equality by reducing, eliminating, and ignoring category memberships, transmitting a common identity and focusing on similarities, rather than differences. On the other hand, I define *awareness* as an approach to intergroup differences aimed at achieving equality by acknowledging, recognizing, and emphasizing intergroup differences, validating meaningful identities, and understanding how these differences inform each group’s unique experience.

Unlike political ideologies, whereby one ideology has a clear preference for inequality, diversity ideologies are unique in that *both* blindness and awareness are ostensibly aimed at achieving equality and inclusion. Indeed, in the United States, diversity ideologies were developed as strategies to reduce prejudice against, promote justice for, and improve the social and economic climate for African Americans (Markus, Steele, & Steele, 2000; Ryan, Hunt, Weible, Peterson & Casas, 2007). Thus, educational, legal, and psychological research has predominantly focused on (Black-White) interracial relations (as do I). A colorblind (*race-blind*)

¹ Across the literature conceptualizations of blindness share a common intention of “de-emphasizing difference in favor of a common core” and awareness of “recognizing intergroup difference”; however, the meaning and purpose of de-emphasizing and emphasizing difference has been varied. Blindness approaches have been interpreted to mean assimilation (Plaut, Goren & Thomas, 2009), preference for homogeneity (Gündemir, Dovidio, Homan, & De Dreu, 2016), emphasis on individuality (Wolsko, Park, Judd & Wittenbrink, 2000), and value in meritocracy (Apfelbaum, Stevens, & Raegans, 2016). Similarly, awareness has been interpreted to mean celebration of difference (Wolsko et al., 2000), identity safety (Markus et al., 2000), segregation (Hahn, Benchevsky, Park & Judd., 2015), or inclusion of difference (Apfelbaum et al., 2016). Although such construct development has provided a nuanced understanding of diversity ideologies, they make for difficult comparison and result in mixed findings.

approach was intended to follow America's foundational commitment to equality and undermine "separate, but equal" racial segregation (Plaut, 2010; Wolsko et al., 2000), while a multicultural (*race-aware*) approach aimed to provide racial minorities with a true sense of their cultural heritage and recognize the challenges and experiences faced by those groups in a White-dominated power structure (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Markus et al., 2000). Thus, while awareness and blindness ideologies represent two contrasting approaches to intergroup differences, important to note is that they are both aimed toward a common good: intergroup equality (Wolsko et al., 2000; Sasaki & Vorauer, 2013; Rattan & Ambady, 2013; but see Hahn et al., 2015).²

Past work has shown that under the right circumstances, awareness of racial differences can increase Whites' engagement with, and inclusion of, racial minorities, showing promise for bias reduction and improved interracial relations (see Rattan & Ambady, 2013 and Sasaki & Vorauer, 2013 for review). Though studied on and developed for interracial relations, recommendations are often transposed onto other groups—namely women—where many espouse the merits of embracing gender differences and the unique perspectives, approaches, and opinions that men and women offer (Annis & Meron, 2014; Baron-Cohen, 2003; Krawcheck, 2017). However, little research has examined the effects of diversity ideologies on gender relations, making it unclear whether awareness is equally effective for women. Indeed, some work has shown that an awareness approach to gender relations exacerbates stereotyping (Martin, Phillips & Sasaki, 2018), undermines women's confidence (Martin & Phillips, 2017),

² The assumption that diversity ideologies are benevolent is important for the purpose of this dissertation. Unlike the positive effects found when race awareness is adopted by those with benevolent intentions and views, for those who hold strong dominance motivations, or conservative values, race awareness has been shown to represent a threat to group privilege and the social order (the status quo) and exacerbate prejudices toward minorities (Correll, Park, & Smith, 2008; Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2014).

and relates to certain biases that limit women's opportunities (Koenig & Richeson, 2010).

Given this disconnect between awareness ideologies for race and gender relations, it remains unclear whether the same diversity ideologies are equally effective for promoting race and gender equality. In my dissertation I address this question, examining: (1) which diversity ideologies support, rather than disrupt, the status quo, (2) whether system-justifying diversity ideologies are the same for race and gender, and (3) what their implications for race and gender equality are.

System Justification: Supporting and Disrupting the Status Quo

To understand how diversity ideologies might justify race and gender inequality, it is useful to understand how individuals justify inequality more broadly. System justification theory argues that people have a psychological need to see current economic, political, and societal arrangements (i.e., the "system") upon which they are dependent as fair, legitimate, and necessary (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost et al., 2009b; Jost & van der Toorn, 2012). Thus, individuals are motivated to defend, bolster, and justify existing social, economic, and political arrangements (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost et al., 2009a; 2009b; Jost & Hunyady, 2002). Such *system justification* serves a palliative function, and satisfies epistemic motives to reduce uncertainty, existential motives to manage threat, and relational motives to coordinate social relationships (Jost et al., 2009b; Jost & van der Toorn, 2012). Indeed, system-justifying tendencies are an adaptive and evolved psychological process of coping (especially when little can be done to change the system), and as such, system justification is endorsed by not only those in power, but those in lower-status positions as well (Jost & Hunyady, 2002; Kay & Zanna, 2009).

System justification revolves around support for the current system, which (at least in the context of the United States) is rife with inequality, unfairness, and oppression. Thus, it should

not be surprising that it is related to ideologies that support inequality and hierarchy, such as political conservatism, social dominance orientation, and right-wing authoritarianism (Huddy, 2004; Everett, 2013; Jost et al., 2009a; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; 2009). However, many people adopt system-justifying beliefs for benevolent reasons as well, such as their preference for ignorance, their desire to manage anxiety and feel control, or when the system is inevitable or inescapable (Jost et al., 2009a; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; Shepherd & Kay, 2012). To justify their need to see the world as fair, despite the injustices that exist, many individuals adopt beliefs, use rationales, and selectively interpret information that serves their psychological need to understand, predict, and often rationalize current societal arrangements (Jost et al., 2009a).

Ideologies as Motivated Cognition

With regards to race and gender, existing social arrangements and power structures are far from fair: women and racial minorities are vastly underrepresented in positions of power (Catalyst, 2016; *Fortune*, 2017). To rationalize the disconnect of this situation with many people's desire for equality, individuals can use a number of system-justifying means to satisfy the overarching goal of imbuing the system with legitimacy (Jost & Hunyady, 2002; 2009; Kay & Jost, 2003). Indeed, research has identified several distinct but related *system-justifying rationales*, which aid in justifying the status quo. While many rationales can be used to justify inequality, a number of related ideologies fall into two broad buckets: (1) rationales that deny systemic problems, placing the blame on the target of injustice and away from the system, such as the Protestant work ethic (Katz & Hass, 1988), endorsement of meritocracy (Son Hing et al., 2011), denial of system problems (Jost & Hunyady, 2002), and minimization of privilege (Phillips & Lowery, 2015); and (2) rationales that endorse and legitimize inequality, rationalizing inequality as the “natural order” of things, such as biological essentialism (Brescoll, Uhlman, &

Newman, 2013) and social role or complementarity stereotyping (Kay & Jost, 2003).³ Though Jost and Hunyady (2009) argue that these rationales share similar antecedents, psychological processes, and outcomes, it is important to note their differences, as both the context of and the motivated reasoning behind their use has distinct effects on individuals, groups, and systems.

In other words, people choose rationales that can legitimize the status quo in a way that fits their beliefs and values. Importantly, these rationales need not be universally applied to all elements of the system, as certain rationales better justify different forms of inequality. Thus, even within the same overarching political ideology, individuals adopt a number of different rationales to explain and justify the status quo (Jayaratne et al., 2006; Suhay & Jayaratne, 2013). For example, those with a politically conservative ideology similarly desire to rationalize their dominance and power over African Americans and homosexuals (Chambers, Schlenker & Collison, 2013); however, they do not use the same system-justifying rationales for both groups. To justify racial inequality, political conservatives are more likely to endorse biological attributions for racial differences to justify the “natural order” of Whites’ dominant position; however, for sexual inequality, political conservatives will reject biological attributions for homosexuality, as these beliefs imply that homosexuality is natural and should be accepted (Jayaratne et al., 2006; Suhay & Jayaratne, 2013). Thus, the same reasoning can be differentially applied to justify inequality based on one’s motivations. Though similar attributions can be made to justify gender and racial inequality, certain system-legitimizing strategies are more relevant and effective for rationalizing each, due to the unique structural dynamics of each group.

As I will argue, *denial or minimization of inequality* better serves to justify inequality for

³ I acknowledge that social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, and opposition to equality also serve as system-justifying rationales. For the purpose of this paper, I choose to focus on more benevolent ideologies that *rationalize* inequality, not explicitly *support* it.

race, while *biological and social role attributions* better serve to justify gender inequality. As a consequence, awareness (and blindness) ideologies have different effects on race and gender inequality, as they act upon distinct rationalizations for inequality, highlighting opportunity differences for race and biological differences for gender.

Rationales for the Status Quo: Multiple Means for System Justification

Rationalizing Racial Inequality through Denial of Inequality

System-justifying explanations that are effective in rationalizing racial inequality revolve around denying, ignoring, minimizing, or legitimizing inequality. For example, one rationale people use to explain racial inequality is a belief in *Protestant work ethic* (Katz & Hass, 1988; Jost & Hunyady, 2002). Protestant work ethic is one of America's core values and suggests that hard work pays off and any failure to achieve success is due to personal shortcomings and a lack of effort (Katz & Hass, 1988; Levy, West, Ramirez, & Karafantis, 2006). By assuming that all individuals have equal opportunity for success, one can rationalize inequality between Blacks and Whites by assuming any economic disparities must be due to Whites' better work ethic and Blacks' lack of motivation, rather than any structural or systemic problems (Katz & Hass, 1988; Levy et al., 2006).

Similarly, beliefs in meritocracy, which are policies and practices where wealth, jobs, and power are distributed based on merit (intelligence, effort; Son Hing et al., 2011), can also rationalize the inequality between Blacks and Whites (Jost & Hunyady, 2009). While meritocracy seems like the epitome of fairness, it provides an effective system-justifying rationale as it allows those in power to believe that their greater privilege is due to hard work and fairness, rather than any special, hidden advantages they may receive as a consequence of their race, class, or gender (Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Sullivan, 2003; Phillips & Lowery, 2015).

Finally, denial of inequality or privilege provides an effective system-justifying rationale (Jost & Hunyady, 2002; 2009). That is, individuals have a motivation to be “blind” to racial inequality, and studies show Whites often significantly underestimate the proportion of racial minorities who are incarcerated, poor, or uneducated (Kraus, Rucker & Richeson, 2017; Wolsko et al., 2000), and avoid information that suggests otherwise (Shepherd & Kay, 2012). By being willfully ignorant, individuals can justify the system by denying and ignoring problems with the current system, justifying the (inaccurate) belief that the system is fair and operates as it should (Kraus et al., 2017).

Altogether, this research suggests that ignoring, denying, and rationalizing inequality, and/or placing attribution and blame on Black people, serve as effective rationales for justifying the status quo. Though other system-justifying rationales, such as biological essentialism and social roles, could be (and have been) used to justify racial inequality (see Jayaratne et al., 2006), I argue these rationales are less effective (for those with benevolent intentions). Biological notions of race were historically used to promote racist ideologies, which dehumanized Blacks, by portraying them as less intelligent and evolved (Lott, 1999). Thus, most Americans hold the view that espousing biological views of racial differences is, if not inaccurate, at least politically incorrect (Suhay & Jayaratne, 2013). Further, endorsing social roles, which suggest certain groups are better suited to different roles, is a less effective rationale for racial inequality, as Blacks are more likely to occupy low-wage and unskilled occupations (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). Thus, arguing that Black people are better suited for jobs that require less skill, education, and pay dehumanizes Black people by imbuing them with less ability and intelligence compared to their White counterparts.

Rationalizing Gender Inequality through Biological, Gender Roles

As I have argued, rationales such as Protestant work ethic, meritocracy, and denial of inequality serve as effective system-justifying rationales for race inequality. Though these arguments can be, and are, used to rationalize gender inequality (see Swim et al., 1995), I argue that biological essentialism and social role arguments serve as more effective system-justifying rationales for gender inequality, due to different dynamics and structural relations between men and women. The biological essentialist/social role rationale proceeds as follows: Due to their *biological* interdependence, where men and women's different sex organs orient them in distinct reproductive roles, men and women have historically occupied different, yet complementary, *social* roles. Men's greater size and strength placed them in *work roles*, where their skills and abilities were better suited for providing economically; while women's childbearing ability placed them in *domestic roles*, where their skills and abilities were better suited for child-rearing (Eagly, 1987; 1997; 2013).

Due to the reality and acceptance of these biological gender differences, *biological essentialism* provides an effective system-justifying rationale for gender inequality, as it legitimizes the gender hierarchy, by portraying it as the "natural order." Biological essentialism is the belief that individuals have an underlying "essence" that is deeply rooted in biological underpinnings, with sharp boundaries that are unsusceptible to sociocultural shaping (Haslam, Rothschild, & Ernst, 2000; Bastian & Haslam, 2006). Thus, by arguing that women have biological roles (i.e., child-bearer, mother) that make them better suited for different roles and/or occupations, individuals can rationalize the status quo by seeing gender differences in domains of power as natural, functional, and inevitable. Indeed, past work has shown support for the utility of biological rationales for system justification, where gender essentialism relates to

system justification (Kray, Howland, Russell, & Jackman, 2017), and where, after system threat, individuals are more likely to endorse gender essentialism (Brescoll et al., 2013).

Further, endorsing gender/social roles—or the role-based division of labor between men and women—and imbuing women and men with complementary features similarly serves to rationalize the status quo. That is, when people believe that men and women possess different characteristics (men as agentic, women as communal), they often believe that men and women possess distinct skills, abilities, and dispositions that make men better suited for high-power leadership roles and women better suited for communal, caretaking roles (Eagly, 1997; 2013 Wood & Eagly, 2012). Thus, confronted with the reality that men are overrepresented in positions of power, endorsing gender/social roles allows individuals to believe that men are better suited for these positions, and therefore serves to rationalize the status quo. Indeed, past work has shown that such complementary gender stereotyping serves to increase system justification (Jost & Kay, 2005), and provides an effective means to rationalize the status quo (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990).

Although individuals can and often do use rationalizations that deny, ignore, and minimize gender inequality (Swim, Aiken, Hall & Hunter, 1995), I argue that these arguments are less effective than biological, social-role arguments. Due to men and women's complementarity and interdependence, most hold benevolent views of women, seeing them as dependent on and in need of protection by men (Glick & Fiske, 1996; 2001), not necessarily lazy, unmotivated, or deserving of economic despair (Hall et al., 2014). Supporting this assumption, past research has shown that activation of communal and benevolent stereotypes increased system justification, whereas activation of hostile (denial of inequality or victim-blaming) sexism did not (Jost & Kay, 2005).

Diversity Ideologies as System-Justifying

Though awareness ideologies have been argued to be effective for many different types of intergroup relations (Galinsky et al., 2015), I argue that individuals should have different preferences for blindness and awareness ideologies depending on the intergroup differences focused upon and their ability to rationalize inequality (i.e., the status quo). In this section, I outline which types of race and gender differences are affected by diversity ideologies and the role they play in system justification. I compare and contrast race and gender *awareness* ideologies on system justification (and outcomes) for ease of comparison and presentation, as well as demonstrate the *divergent* outcomes of using the *same* ideology to combat race and gender inequality.

Race-Blindness and Support for the Status Quo

I argue that race awareness serves as a system-disrupting ideology, while race blindness serves as a system-justifying one, allowing Whites to deny, ignore, and be “blind” to inequality. A race-blind approach posits that we should ignore category memberships because racial differences are superficial (surface-level) characteristics that *should not* affect opportunity in society (Markus et al., 2000). By focusing on fairness and equality in judgment and treatment, Blacks and Whites should have an equal chance for success (Knowles, Lowery, Hogan & Chow, 2009), which supports the system as fair, equitable, and just. However, the types of differences race blindness often disregards are not superficial or surface-level; they are important differences in histories, judgments, treatments, expectations, and circumstances that affect one’s reality and opportunities in many ways (Markus et al., 2000). Thus, deemphasizing racial differences serves to suppress and ignore differences in opportunities, judgments, and other factors that might shape Blacks’ ability to achieve success.

By ignoring such external differences that limit opportunity, individuals often rely on ethnocentric standards and stereotypes (e.g., lack of motivation and effort) to explain differences that exist between racial groups (Schofield, 1986). Since ignoring racial differences in opportunity and treatment rationalizes their dominant position in society, it is unsurprising that the preferred and prevailing ideology amongst Whites is a race-blind approach (Markus et al., 2000; Plaut 2002). In other words, race blindness seems to represent the status quo, serving a palliative function, by allowing Whites to justify the current social order and feel more comfortable with their privileged standing in society (Fryberg & Stephens, 2010). These arguments suggest that for race, the *types* of differences being suppressed through blindness (experiences, opportunity) and *purpose* for suppressing them (maintain current power structure) create a context where race blindness preserves oppression and degrades interracial relations. Thus, awareness should serve to expose opportunity-limiting differences and economic inequality and therefore lessen support for the status quo. In support for a race-aware approach, Markus, Steele, and Steele (2000) note,

The effort to achieve [the American commitment to opportunity] should acknowledge [ethnic] group differences in status and lived experiences... Based on a given group identity, one is exposed to a potentially limiting and devaluing concert of representations, historical narratives, possible judgments, treatments, interactions, expectations and affective reactions that affects one's social reality in many ways (p. 235).

These arguments suggest that race awareness is necessary to understand the unique challenges faced by minority groups, in order to provide, create, and adopt policies that address how these experiences affect their potential to succeed in a White-dominated power structure. Indeed, past work on race awareness has shown that majority group members who endorse, or are exposed to, race-aware beliefs are less likely to endorse system-justifying rationales, such as Protestant work ethic (Verkuyten & Brug, 2004) and anti-egalitarian attitudes (Wolsko et al.,

2006). Thus, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1a: *Endorsement of race awareness will be negatively related to system-justifying beliefs.*

Hypothesis 1b: *Endorsement of race awareness will be negatively related to denial of racial inequality.*

Hypothesis 1c: *Denial of inequality will mediate the relationship between race awareness and system justification, such that race awareness will lessen denial of inequality, which in turn, will lessen support for the status quo.*

Gender Awareness and Support for the Status Quo

I argue that gender awareness serves as a system-justifying ideology, as it allows men to endorse, rationalize, and embrace status and role-based differences between men and women. Proponents of a gender-aware approach argue that men and women differ in a number of important ways and by denying such differences we are both ignoring the critical barriers facing, and devaluing the characteristics we associate with, women (Annis & Merron, 2014; Krawcheck, 2017). However, the differences highlighted through awareness are often not opportunity or experience ones, but rather *dispositional* differences, based on biology and social roles, which connote a range of skill, ability, and personality differences (Martin & Phillips, 2017). For example, in advocating for being gender-aware, Baron Cohen (2003) notes,

The hope is that laying out what we understand about essential differences in the minds of men and women [through awareness] may lead to greater acceptance and respect of difference... people with the female brain make the most wonderful counselors, primary-school teachers, nurses... social workers, or personnel staff. People with the male brain make the most wonderful scientists, engineers... bankers, toolmakers, programmers, or even lawyers (p. 281, 287).

Baron-Cohen argues that both the “male brain” and “female brain” possess different, valuable functions—neither being better than the other and both necessary for a functional society; however, the former entails skills more suited for roles and occupations with power, prestige, and influence, whereas the latter is better suited for communal roles involving

caretaking and empathizing: valuable, but in lower-status occupations. Indeed, in the United States, this is the current reality, where men are overrepresented in positions of power (CEOs, politics), and women are more likely to be in communal roles (nursing, teaching; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Thus, gender awareness serves to justify the status quo, allowing men to rationalize the occupational segregation between men and women.

Further, these differences are thought to be driven by innate, biological sources and are therefore seen as functional and natural, being widely accepted and endorsed (Martin & Parker, 1995; Taylor & Gelman, 1991). This is problematic for reducing inequality as believing men's greater agency is due to innate, biological factors implies that these differences are inevitable and unlikely to change (Bem, 1993), confining men and women to different roles, and limiting women's opportunities. Indeed, biological attributions and social role endorsement have been linked to rationalization of inequality (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990) and endorsement of the status quo (Brescoll et al., 2013; Jost & Kay, 2005). Thus, it is unsurprising that the preferred ideology for gender tends to be awareness (Hahn et al., 2015; Koenig & Richeson, 2010). Attributing gender differences to natural causes allows individuals to endorse and reinforce the power structure, where men are overrepresented and women are underrepresented in positions of power and influence. Indeed, past work on gender awareness has shown that majority group members who endorse, or are exposed to, gender-aware beliefs are less likely to endorse system-justifying rationales, such as biological attributions for, and deterministic beliefs about, gender (Hahn et al., 2015; Martin & Phillips, 2017). Thus, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2a: *Endorsement of gender awareness will be positively related to system-justifying beliefs.*

Hypothesis 2b: *Endorsement of gender awareness will be positively related to biological essentialism.*

Hypothesis 2c: *Biological essentialism will mediate the relationship between gender awareness and system justification, such that gender awareness will increase biological essentialism, which in turn will increase support for the status quo.*

A notable point about both race and gender diversity ideologies is that they are often *devoid of content*. Rarely are the types of differences one should embrace or minimize through awareness and blindness embedded in the messages and manipulations. Thus, individuals are left to make their own attributions, which understandably are those that support their motivated desire to justify the status quo. As I will later argue, it is the ambiguity around these messages that causes these divergent effects, and by directing these messages *toward* external rationales, gender awareness has the same potential to recognize inequality and disrupt the status quo.

Overview of Studies

In four studies, I test the hypotheses that blindness and awareness approaches differentially support the status quo (or the “system”) for race and gender respectively, arguing that race awareness will be negatively and gender awareness positively related to system justification (Hypotheses 1a and 2a). In Study 1, I validate awareness scales (to be used throughout my remaining studies) and provide a preliminary test of my hypotheses. In Study 2, I replicate the divergent relationship between race and gender awareness endorsement on system justification, using two separate samples. In Study 3, I manipulate ideological beliefs and examine their effects on system-justifying rationales. For race, I operationalize the system-justifying rationale as “denial of inequality” and for gender, I operationalize the system-justifying rationale as “biological essentialism.” Using these rationales for inequality, I show that race awareness exposes inequality facing Black people (lessening denial of inequality), while gender awareness heightens biological attributions for difference (increasing essentialism; Hypotheses 1b and 2b), which in turn lessens and heightens system justification, respectively

(Hypotheses 1c and 2c).

Before presenting studies and results, several methodological choices are worth elaboration. First, although both minority and majority group members have been shown to support the status quo (Kay et al., 2009; Jost and Vandertoorn, 2012), much work has shown that racial minorities and women show different endorsement of, and react differently to, diversity ideologies (see Ryan et al., 2007; Verkuyten, 2005; Martin & Phillips, 2017). Thus, I solely examine out-group members (Whites for race, men for gender), to align with past research and findings. Second, my hypotheses rest on the assumption that participants internalize the ideology—not just that they are exposed to it. According to system justification, those who receive ideological messages that challenge their beliefs tend to anchor more strongly on them and show more support for the system (as it is under threat; Jost et al., 2009a; Brescoll et al., 2013). Thus, I examine participants who at least “somewhat” agreed with the ideology after reading the content of the manipulation. As both ideologies aim to achieve intergroup equality, many express ambivalence and uncertainty about which approach to endorse (MTV Bias Survey, 2014). Thus, diversity ideologies are less likely to evoke system threat (as the core value of “equality” is not being challenged), and much work has found that individuals are amenable to adoption of either (Rattan & Ambady, 2013; Sasaki & Vorauer, 2013).

Study 1: Scale Validation of an Awareness Measure

The purpose of Study 1 is threefold. The first goal is to develop and validate a scale that matches items for race and gender diversity ideologies, removing any potential confounds from the different scales used in past research, and therefore accurately comparing the endorsement of race and gender ideologies. Second, I would like to show that this scale has internal, convergent, and divergent validity, as well as relates to past measures in the expected way. Finally, I aim to

provide an initial test of the divergent relationship between awareness for race and gender and system justification (and their accompanying rationales). Examining Hypotheses 1 and 2, I believe that race and gender ideologies justify and legitimize the system in different ways: while for race, awareness exposes the unique (often negative) experiences and opportunities facing Blacks (thereby reducing system justification), for gender, awareness legitimizes and solidifies assumptions of essential, skill-based differences between men and women (thereby increasing system justification).

For sufficient power, in my initial study, I used a sensitivity power analysis, choosing 100 participants per cell as this can detect an effect size of a minimum of ($r = .25$ at $1-\beta = .80$, $\alpha = .05$; Fritz, Morris, & Richler, 2012). From the results of Study 1, a power analysis ($1-\beta = .80$, $\alpha = .05$, $r = .31$) determined 30 participants were needed per cell for the remainder of the studies; however, I felt this was not conservative enough, and to ensure adequate power, each subsequent design sought at least 40 participants per study cell.

Participants and Procedure

One hundred and eighty-six out-group participants (Whites in race, and men in gender, conditions) took part in a study on “Attitudes and Opinions.” Four participants were removed for failing a manipulation check asking which group they were asked questions about. In the race condition, the final sample consisted of eighty-one White participants (47% men; $M_{\text{age}} = 38.22$, $SD = 12.00$; $M_{\text{workexp}} = 16.14$, $SD = 7.91$, 51% with a bachelor’s degree or more education). In the gender condition, the final sample consisted of 91 men (71% White; $M_{\text{age}} = 35.43$, $SD = 11.85$; $M_{\text{workexp}} = 14.29$, $SD = 8.49$, 48% with a bachelor’s degree or more education).

Independent Variable: Awareness

To examine an individual’s awareness endorsement, I collected all the items I could find

in published literature on race and gender ideologies (Hahn et al., 2015; Knowles et al., 2009; Koenig & Richeson, 2010; Martin & Phillips, 2017; Wolsko et al., 2006). Items chosen for my final scale needed to pass three criteria: 1) they needed to apply to both race and gender (i.e., items that only applied to race/gender issues were excluded); 2) they needed to be benevolent (i.e., items that were negatively valenced were excluded); 3) they needed to be devoid of *types* of differences (i.e., items that directed attention toward culture or skills were excluded). After narrowing down relevant items, ten items were selected, five measuring *awareness* endorsement and five measuring *blindness* endorsement. Example items for *awareness* include: “Differences between [racial groups] [men and women] should be acknowledged and celebrated” and “[There are many differences between racial groups] [Men and women have many differences] that are important to acknowledge and embrace.” Example items for *blindness* include: “Focusing on differences between [racial groups] [men and women] undermines social cooperation and progress” and “It is important to pay attention to the individual characteristics that make a person unique rather than their [ethnic or racial background] [gender].” See Appendix A for full scale.

System Justification

To measure system justification, I used the eight-item scale from Kay and Jost (2003). This scale measures the extent to which individuals believe that the current state of society is just, fair, and operates as it should. Participants rated their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .88$). An example item includes, “In general, the American political system operates as it should.” See Appendix A for full scale.

Related Variables

I collected a number of scales used in past work on racial and gender ideologies to establish convergent and divergent validity. To support my predictions, I collected measures that

capture relevant system-justifying rationales: (1) denial of inequality measures, such as: opportunity attributions, minimization of inequality, and Protestant work ethic (Katz & Hass, 1988; Mazzocco, Cooper, & Flint, 2012; Verkuyten & Brug, 2004), as well as essential, role-based rationales, such as biological attributions, biological essentialism, role-based stereotypes, and benevolent prejudice (Coleman & Hong, 2008; Diekmann & Eagly, 2000; Glick & Fiske, 2001). See Appendix A for all items used.

(2) Denial of inequality. To capture participant's denial of inequality, I used four scales from past work: attributions for intergroup differences (Martin & Parker, 1995), modern prejudice (Swim et al., 1995), symbolic prejudice (Sears, 1988), and Protestant work ethic (Katz & Hass, 1988). To measure opportunity attributions for differences, I used the *Opportunity Attribution Item* (from Martin & Parker, 1995), asking, "When [Black and White people] [men and women] differ in some way, how likely is it that the difference is due to *opportunity* (i.e., the kinds of opportunities each group has had [access and exposure to resources])" on a scale from 1 = *not at all likely* to 7 = *very likely*. Modern prejudice was measured using Swim et al.'s (1995) eight-item scale, with items such as, "Discrimination against [Black people] [women] is no longer a problem in the U.S." (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = .94$). The eight-item *Symbolic Prejudice Scale* (Sears, 1988) was presented only in the race condition, as it is specific to prejudice affecting Blacks (e.g., "Generations of slavery have created conditions that make it difficult for Black people to work their way out of the lower class (reversed)"). Items were transformed to a four-point scale, where higher scores represent greater symbolic prejudice ($\alpha = .93$). Finally, *Protestant Work Ethic* (PWE) was measured with Katz and Hass's (1988) eleven-item scale, with items such as, "Most people who don't succeed in life are just lazy" (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = .84$).

(3) Biological, social roles.

To capture biological, role-based rationales, I used four scales from past work: biological attributions for intergroup differences (Martin & Parker, 1995), biological essentialism (Coleman & Hong (2008), social role stereotypes (Diekmann & Eagly, 2000), and benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

To measure *biological* attributions for difference, I used the *Biological Attribution Item* (from Martin & Parker, 1995), asking, “When [Black and White people] [men and women] differ in some way, how likely is it that the difference is due to *biology*: biological factors (hormones, chromosomes, etc.)?” on a scale from 1 = *not at all likely* to 7 = *very likely*. For *Biological Essentialism*, I used a measure adapted from Coleman and Hong (2008), asking eight questions such as, “When [racial groups] [men and women] differ in some way, it is likely that the difference is due to biological factors.” (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = .80$).

For *stereotyping*, I captured relevant gender role (Diekmann & Eagly, 2000) and race (Wolsko et al., 2000) stereotypes in the gender and race conditions, respectively. For *gender*, I used agency (independent, assertive, aggressive, competitive, analytic, leader-like; $\alpha = .82$) and communality (sympathetic, gentle, kind, warm, nurturing, sensitive; $\alpha = .87$) stereotypes. For race, I used positive (religious, athletic, rhythmic, spiritual, musical; $\alpha = .70$), and negative (aggressive, poor, uneducated, violent, threatening; $\alpha = .80$) cultural stereotypes, on a scale from 1 = *much more characteristic of men [Whites]* to 5 = *much more characteristic of women [Blacks]* (counterbalanced). For gender, agency stereotypes were reversed and combined with communality ($\alpha = .87$), and for race, positive and negative stereotypes were combined ($\alpha = .71$), such that higher scores represent more traditional gender and race stereotyping.

Finally, in the gender conditions, I captured *benevolent sexism*, a form of sexism which

imbues women with positive, communal qualities (but undermines agency, seeing them as dependent on men), using the *Ambivalent Sexism Inventory* (ASI; Rollero, Glick & Tartaglia, 2012). An example item includes, “Women should be cherished and protected by men” ($a = .87$). I included the other subcomponent of the ASI scale measuring hostile sexism (antagonistic beliefs about women’s desire to control; $a = .92$). An example item includes, “Women exaggerate problems they have at work.” In line with hypotheses, and past work (e.g., Koenig & Richeson, 2010), I expected gender awareness to relate to benevolent, but not hostile sexism.

Results

Awareness Measure

My awareness measure was reliable overall ($a = .78$) and both within the race ($a = .76$) and gender ($a = .80$) conditions. Subjecting the items to a principal components factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation (Conway & Huffcutt, 2003) yielded two factors with eigenvalues greater than one (3.49 and 2.78), representing awareness and blindness items and capturing 34.93% and 27.79% of the variance respectively (all loadings $> .60$). Note these findings are almost identical when separating by race (eigenvalues: 3.55 and 2.93; all loadings $> .52$) and gender (eigenvalues: 3.73 and 2.52; all loadings $> .47$).

In line with past research on ideologies (see Koenig & Richeson, 2010; Martin & Phillips, 2017; Ryan et al., 2007), I measured awareness using one scale, reversing the blindness items such that the measure ranged from 1 = *more blind* to 7 = *more aware*. This is appropriate because although the factor analysis revealed two distinct factors, they are negatively related ($r = -.11$), and combining allows for simplified presentation (results do not differ using each scale separately). Further, past work on ideologies has shown both theoretically and empirically that awareness/blindness can represent a single construct (Koenig & Richeson, 2010; Martin &

Phillips, 2017). Thus, for the sake of simplicity and in keeping with past research I use a single scale throughout the paper, which captures the extent to which individuals endorse a blind versus aware ideology. The mean for this scale did not differ between the race ($M = 4.31$; $SD = 0.94$; *range*: 1.50 – 6.70) and gender ($M = 4.36$; $SD = 0.90$; *range*: 1.30 – 6.70 conditions, $F(1, 170) = .16, p = .69, \eta_p^2 = .001$.

Relationships Between Variables

Since I hypothesize that this awareness measure will relate to distinct forms of bias for racial minorities and women, I analyze the relationships between variables within each condition.

Race. As expected, I find a significant relationship between race awareness endorsement and system justification, $r = -.45, p < .001$, suggesting that those who endorsed race awareness were less likely to endorse system-justifying beliefs (Hypothesis 1a). Further, in line with predictions (Hypothesis 1b), the more participants endorsed race awareness, the more likely they were to attribute racial differences to opportunity ($r = .24, p = .034$) and the less likely they were to endorse modern forms of prejudice, which deny limited opportunities and discrimination facing Black people ($r_{\text{modern}} = -.44, p < .001$; $r_{\text{symbolic}} = -.35, p < .001$; $r_{\text{PWE}} = -.22, p = .049$). In line with my predictions, race awareness did not relate to biological attributions for difference ($r = .15, p = .17$) or racial essentialism ($r = .07, p = .52$). While awareness did not relate to overall racial stereotyping ($r = .11, p = .34$), it did relate to positive ($r = .25, p = .023$) but not negative ($r = -.06, p = .58$) stereotyping. See Table 1.

Gender. In line with my hypotheses, gender awareness was positively related to system justification ($r = .31, p = .003$), suggesting that gender awareness is a system-justifying ideology (Hypothesis 2a). Supporting hypothesis 2b, gender awareness was positively related to biological attributions ($r = .52, p < .001$), gender essentialism ($r = .62, p < .001$), gender stereotyping

($r_{\text{overall}} = .38, p < .001$; $r_{\text{agency}} = .38, p < .001$; $r_{\text{communal}} = .30, p = .003$), and benevolent sexism ($r = .39, p < .001$). Counter to hypotheses, gender awareness was also related to hostile sexism ($r = .41, p < .001$), a finding which I elaborate upon in the discussion. Further, while gender awareness was not related to opportunity attributions for difference ($r_{\text{opp}} = -.19, p = .07$), it was positively related to denial of inequality ($r_{\text{modern}} = .49, p < .001$; $r_{\text{PWE}} = .43, p < .001$); my argument rests on the notion that gender awareness is more strongly related to biological, essential system-justifying rationales, not that it does not relate to the denial of inequality overall (indeed, biological essentialism can be used to deny inequality). In line with this hypothesis, effects are stronger for biological rationales (r 's $> .60$) compared to denial of inequality (r 's $> .40$). See Table 2.

Mediation

I next sought to examine how essentialism and modern prejudice differentially provide rationale to justify the status quo (Hypothesis 1c and 2c). That is, my argument rests on the assumption that awareness for race forces Whites to acknowledge the different circumstances facing Blacks, diminishing denial of discrimination. In contrast, awareness for gender justifies the status quo, as it allows men to “embrace” the natural, biological differences between men and women, enabling them to justify inequality. Thus, I should find that participants’ lesser endorsement of modern prejudice mediates the relationship between race awareness and system justification, while participants’ greater endorsement of biological essentialism mediates the relationship between gender awareness and system justification.

To test this assumption, I ran two moderated mediations using PROCESS Model 8 (Hayes, 2013; 2015 Preacher & Hayes, 2008; 2004). I use an indirect effect of the highest-order product term to infer whether the moderation is mediated (Hayes, 2013). This statistic tests

whether the indirect effect of the independent variable (awareness endorsement) on the dependent variable (system justification) through the mediators (denial of inequality, biological essentialism) is moderated by social category (race versus gender). I predicted that I would find divergent effects of awareness on system justification through different mechanisms. For race, participants should use denial of inequality as a system-justifying mechanism. For gender, participants should use biological essentialism as a system-justifying mechanism.

For denial of inequality as a system-legitimizing ideology, I find a significant highest order interaction, *indirect effect* = .58, *SE* = .15, *CI*₉₅ = .31, .89, where denial of inequality provided a system-legitimizing ideology in both the race, *indirect effect* = -.28, *SE* = .10, *CI*₉₅ = -.48, .10, and gender, *indirect effect* = .30, *SE* = .08, *CI*₉₅ = .15, .47, conditions (although in different directions). See Model 1a. For essentialism, as expected, I find a significant highest order interaction, *indirect effect* = .16, *SE* = .09, *CI*₉₅ = .01, .36, for the divergent effects of awareness endorsement on system justification through essentialism as a function of social category. That is, for gender, the relationship between awareness and system justification was significantly mediated by essentialist beliefs about gender differences, *indirect effect* = .18, *SE* = .09, *CI*₉₅ = .01, .35. However, for race, essentialist beliefs did not provide for a significant mechanism to justify inequality, *indirect effect* = .02, *SE* = .04, *CI*₉₅ = -.06, .11. See Figure 1.

Discussion Study 1

Study 1 validated a scale to measure awareness endorsement where the same items apply to *both* race and gender ideologies (the first scale to my knowledge to do so). Further, in examining the relationship between awareness and other scales to provide convergent and divergent validity, I simultaneously supported my initial hypotheses about the divergent

relationships between race and gender awareness and system justification, and its accompanying rationales (Hypotheses 1a-b and 2a-b).

For race, I find that those who more strongly endorse race awareness are also *less* likely to endorse system-justifying beliefs. Further, the relationship of race awareness to other variables helps shed insight into *why* awareness may be a system-disrupting ideology, whereby those who endorse race awareness are more likely to see racial differences as due to opportunity, and therefore recognize inequality (or deny inequality less). Indeed, denial of inequality provides a rationale for system justification, significantly mediating the relationship between awareness and system justification (Hypothesis 1c). Further, I show the *specific* relationship between race awareness and denial of inequality, where awareness specifically related to denial of inequality but not other system-justifying rationales such as biological essentialism.

For gender, I find the opposite pattern for awareness and system justification, whereby those who more strongly endorse gender awareness are *more* likely to endorse system-justifying beliefs. The relationship between gender awareness biological/essential attributions for difference helps explain *why* this relationship exists. That is, those who endorse gender awareness are also more likely to attribute gender differences to biological factors, which provides a system-justifying rationale (Hypothesis 2c). Indeed, I find essentialism provides a rationale for system justification, significantly mediating the relationship between gender awareness and system justification.

While confirming several hypotheses of interest, I also found several notable effects. First, while denial of inequality provided a parsimonious rationale for race awareness in explaining the relationship between awareness and system justification, I find that both biological essentialism and denial of inequality provided a system-justifying rationale for gender,

such that those who supported gender awareness were also more likely to deny inequality. However, in line with hypotheses, I find that gender awareness more strongly related to biological essentialism ($r = .62$) compared to modern forms of prejudice (r 's $> .42$). One explanation for this finding is that essentialism provides a rationale to deny inequality (i.e., those who believe gender differences are due to natural, functional, and biological factors should also be more likely to think gender inequality does not exist).

Further, as I have argued, diversity ideologies are *benevolent*, suggesting that they should not relate to hostile sexism. However, I find that gender awareness was positively related to hostile sexism. As Glick and Fiske (1997) note, benevolent and hostile sexism are often related ($r = .50$ [on average], but only $r = .18$ in this study), as both serve to justify patriarchy and traditional gender roles (Glick & Fiske, 1997; Glick et al., 2001). Thus, as an individual difference, gender awareness may relate to hostile sexism, but it is unclear whether manipulating ideological endorsement affects these attitudes. Indeed, one weakness with this study is that I did not examine hostile prejudices toward racial minorities. Thus, in the next experimental study (Study 3), I include a measure of hostile prejudices toward both women and racial minorities.

Study 2a: Effects of Race *or* Gender Awareness on System Justification using MBAs

The goal of Study 2a was to replicate Study 1 with a different sample. To do so, I embedded either the race or gender awareness scale as well as the system justification measure, in a class survey given to 557 MBA students in their first week of business school at a large, private, East Coast university. I restricted the sample to out-group members (Whites in the race condition; men in the gender condition) who at least “somewhat” identified with American culture. The final sample consisted of 126 Whites in the race condition (66% men; $M_{\text{age}} = 27.81$; $SD = 2.31$; $M_{\text{WorkExp}} = 4.66$; $SD = 2.21$; 41% with managerial experience); 124 men in the gender

condition (58% White, 5% Black, 23% Asian; 8% Hispanic; 6% Other; $M_{\text{age}} = 27.85$; $SD = 2.09$; $M_{\text{WorkExp}} = 4.54$; $SD = 2.11$; 43% with managerial experience).

During their first week of class, participants were sent a link with questions regarding class material. Embedded in the survey was either the 10-item race awareness ($\alpha = .76$) or 10-item gender awareness ($\alpha = .72$) scale. All participants received the system justification scale ($\alpha_{\text{race}} = .78$; $\alpha_{\text{gender}} = .73$). All measures were endorsed on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Results

Since there was only one dependent variable being measured, I used a hierarchical linear regression to analyze the results, with condition (race versus gender) and awareness endorsement entered into the first step, and their interaction entered in the second step. There were no significant effects of condition, $b = .09$, $SE = .12$, $t(247) = .74$, $p = .46$, and awareness endorsement, $b = -.05$, $SE = .08$, $t(247) = -.60$, $p = .55$. However, as expected there was a significant interaction between the two, $b = -.45$, $SE = .15$, $t(246) = -3.03$, $p = .003$. In the race condition, there was a significant negative effect of race awareness on system justification, $b = -.25$, $SE = .10$, $t(246) = -2.49$, $p = .01$, suggesting again, that race awareness is a system-disrupting ideology. In contrast, in the gender condition, gender awareness was marginally positively related to system justification, $b = .20$, $SE = .11$, $t(246) = 1.83$, $p = .068$. See Figure 2a.

Study 2b: Effects of Race *and* Gender Awareness on System Justification using MBAs

In Study 2a, I find support for Hypotheses 1a and 2a, by replicating the divergent effects of race and gender awareness ideologies on system justification using a real-world sample. In Study 2b, I aim to replicate the effects of Studies 1 and 2a, showing the divergent relationships

between race awareness and gender awareness on system justification, and extend these findings by giving participants both the race awareness and gender awareness scale to examine their relationship to one another, as well as whether each differentially relates to system justification.

Similar to Study 2a, (a non-overlapping sample of) MBA participants took a survey during their first week of class. Two hundred and six participants were sent a link with questions regarding class material. Embedded in the survey were both the race ($\alpha = .60$) and gender ($\alpha = .61$) awareness scale.⁴ All participants received the system justification scale ($\alpha = .78$). All measures were endorsed on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Since participants filled out *both* race and gender awareness scales, I restricted analysis to only White, male, American participants. The final sample consisted of 55 participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 28.20$, $SD = 2.78$; $M_{\text{WorkExp}} = 4.94$, $SD = 3.06$). As expected, I find that participants' endorsement of race awareness is significantly negatively related to system justification ($r = -.32$, $p = .019$) and gender awareness is marginally positively related to system justification ($r = .26$, $p = .059$), again suggesting that while awareness for race represents a system-disrupting ideology, awareness for gender seems to represent a system-legitimizing one. See Figure 2b. Further, gender awareness and race awareness did not significantly relate to one another ($r = .16$, $p = .25$), suggesting that endorsements of these ideologies are distinct.

Discussion

The purpose of Study 2 was to confirm and corroborate the findings of Study 1, and examine whether these findings would extend to a different (non-MTurk) sample, notably MBA students in a business school. Further, I again find support for Hypotheses 1a and 2a, by finding that race awareness is related to greater, while gender awareness is related to less, system

⁴ Note: Due to the lengthy nature of including both scales, only sixteen items were presented (making each scale eight items, rather than ten). Excluded items are noted in Appendix A.

justification. Further, in Study 2b, I extended these findings and demonstrate that endorsements of race and gender ideologies are distinct—that is, participants do not necessarily endorse awareness ideologies overall, and that endorsing an awareness ideology for race does not necessitate endorsing an awareness ideology for gender. In the next study, I test my hypotheses experimentally, examining whether these beliefs are able to be manipulated, as well as testing participants' baseline ideological beliefs, levels of system justification, and endorsement of system-justifying rationales.

Study 3: Manipulating Ideologies and Examining Effects on System Justification and Rationales

The purpose of Study 3 is to examine whether these ideologies can be manipulated and replicate findings from the previous studies, showing that race and gender awareness have divergent effects on system justification, where being aware of racial differences exposes inequality (diminishes denial of inequality) and being aware of gender differences exacerbates essential attributions for differences, both of which differentially serve to justify the status quo. Further, I include a control condition to examine the baselines for race and gender ideological endorsement, system justification, and endorsement of rationales, to understand whether awareness or blindness represents the status quo for race and gender, respectively.

Participants and Procedures

This study used a 2 (social category: race vs. gender) x 3 (ideology: aware vs. blind vs. control) design. Three hundred and sixty-five out-group participants (Whites in race condition; men in gender condition) from Amazon's Mechanical Turk took part in what was ostensibly a two-part study on 1) "Reflecting on Current Issues in Society" and 2) "Attitudes and Evaluations." Thirty participants (8%) were excluded from analysis for disagreeing with the premise of the ideology they were given (and therefore, rejecting the ideology). As previously

mentioned, my hypotheses rest on the assumption that participants internalize the ideology—not just that they are exposed to it. Further, fourteen participants were removed for failing a manipulation check (asking which social category and ideology they were asked to reflect upon). This left a remaining sample of 174 White participants in the race condition (36% men; $M_{\text{age}} = 38.54$; $SD = 11.80$) and 135 men in the gender condition (73% White; $M_{\text{age}} = 35.78$; $SD = 10.62$).

Following the procedure by Wolsko et al. (2000), participants in all conditions were told that we were interested in views of current issues in society and that “before the exercise we would like you to reflect on the current state of [race] [gender] relations in the United States.” In the ideological manipulation conditions, participants were given primes, adapted from Wolsko et al. (2000), which indicated that the ideology they received was aimed toward achieving equality. Specifically, participants were told that, “sociologists, psychologists, economists, and political scientists all agree that interethnic issues are a number-one concern for the United States” and “have been working to understand how to approach [race] [gender] differences to create a more harmonious society.” In the awareness conditions, they read statements such as:

We should acknowledge and embrace differences between [ethnic groups] [men and women]... each [group] [gender] brings different perspectives to life... and can contribute in their own unique way. Recognizing this diversity would help build a sense of harmony and complementarity among the [various ethnic groups] [sexes]. Each group has its own talents, as well as its own problems, and by acknowledging both these strengths and weaknesses, we validate the identity of each group and we recognize its existence and its importance to the social fabric. We can allow [each group] [both men and women] to utilize their assets, to be aware of its own particular problems or difficulties, and overall to live up to their potential. Thus, social scientists argue that understanding the differences among [ethnic groups] [men and women] is an essential component of long-term social harmony and functioning in the U.S.A.

In the blindness conditions, participants read statements, such as:

Social scientists note that it is extremely important to heed our creed in the Declaration of Independence that “all men (and women) are created equal.” We must remember that we are all first and foremost human beings, and second, we are all citizens of the United States. In order to make the U.S. as and successful as possible, we must think of

ourselves as individuals and American citizens. Pretending that [ethnic groups] [men and women] approach life in fundamentally different ways is counter-productive. [Racial groups] [Men and women] have much more in common than people believe and if we can recognize our “sameness” we will be able to work together on difficult and important problems within our society, such as technological growth and economic development. Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, to appreciate that at our core, we really are all the same.

Participants listed and selected a number of reasons these strategies could be successful.

In the control condition, after being asked to reflect on race or gender relations, participants were told to move on to the next part of the study. Participants then moved to “Part Two,” and were asked about their attitudes and evaluations on either race or gender measures. See Appendix B for methods.

Dependent Variables⁵

Manipulation check. Participants filled out the ten-item awareness measure used in Studies 1 and 2, rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .83$).

System justification. Participants filled out the system justification measure from Studies 1 and 2 (Kay & Jost, 2003) on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .90$).

System-justifying rationales.

⁵ I collected measures of hostile (and benevolent) prejudice toward women, using the same scales as in Study 1 ($a_{\text{host}} = .90$ $a_{\text{ben}} = .90$), as well as hostile attitudes toward subordinate groups overall, via the four-item *Social Dominance Orientation* scale (SDO; $\alpha = .83$; Pratto et al., 2013), which is a measure of hostile prejudice toward out-groups (i.e., a preference toward inequality and domination over lower status groups). An example item includes, “superior groups should dominate inferior groups” (1 = *strongly disagree* – 7 = *strongly agree*). I find no difference between conditions in endorsement of hostile ($p = .28$) or benevolent ($p = .50$) sexism, with no significant contrasts between conditions (p 's > .20). Further, I find a main effect whereby those in the race conditions endorsed SDO less, overall, $F(2, 259) = 14.14, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .052$, compared to those in the gender condition ($M_{\text{race}} = 2.04, SD = 1.33; M_{\text{gender}} = 2.61, SD = 1.26$); however, there was no effect of ideology ($p = .37$), no interaction ($p = .22$), and no significant contrasts between ideology on SDO, within race and gender conditions (p 's > .09). See Tables 3—4 and discussion.

*Denial of inequality.*⁶ Participants completed the modern prejudice measure from Study 1 (Swim et al., 1995; $\alpha = .89$)⁷ as well as the [White] [male] privilege scale (Swim & Miller, 1999; $\alpha = .86$). An example item for the privilege scale includes, “I do not feel that [White people] [men] have any benefits or privileges due to their [race] [sex].” While modern prejudice and White/male privilege were conceptualized as distinct attitudinal measures, they related highly (r 's $> .82$ and loaded on a single factor [*eigenvalue* = 7.87; 61.30% of variance]) and thus, privilege items were reversed (denial of privilege) and combined into a single measure of overall *denial of inequality* for ease of presentation ($\alpha = .94$).

Biological essentialism. Participants filled out the biological essentialism measure from Study 1 (Coleman & Hong, 2008) rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .86$).

Results

Analysis Strategy and Expected Results

Results are analyzed using a 2 (social category: race vs. gender) x 3 (ideology: aware vs. blind vs. control) ANOVA. Aside from the manipulation check, where I predicted a main effect (i.e., awareness increases, and blindness decreases, race *and* gender awareness ideological endorsement), I expected to find significant 2 (social category) x 3 (ideology) interactions on the dependent variables of interest. Specifically, I hypothesized that *awareness* (compared to blindness) would decrease system justification and denial of inequality for race, but in contrast,

⁶ I also captured symbolic prejudice in the race condition (Sears, 1988; $\alpha = .90$) and find a significant effect of ideology, $F(2, 145) = 4.52, p = .013, \eta_p^2 = .059$. Those in the awareness condition ($M = 1.83, SD = .54$) endorsed symbolic prejudice significantly less than those in the blindness ($M = 2.22, SD = .73; p = .006$) and control ($M = 2.13, SD = .70; p = .022$) conditions. The control and blind conditions did not differ from one another ($p = .48$), suggesting that awareness diminishes symbolic prejudice.

⁷ Note: due to a programming error, this scale was measured on a 5-point scale in the gender condition, and a 7-point scale in the race condition; thus, it was re-scaled and standardized within condition to create an accurate comparison.

awareness (compared to blindness) would increase system justification and biological essentialism for gender. Further, since I argue race blindness and gender awareness are system-justifying ideologies, I hypothesized that the control condition would be more in line with blindness in the race condition, and awareness in the gender condition. See Table 3 for correlations between variables.

Manipulation Check

I find no significant effect of social category ($p = .94$), but as expected, I find a significant effect of condition on awareness endorsement, $F(2, 259) = 17.04, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .12$, and no significant interaction ($p = .43$), suggesting that the manipulation changed participants' ideological endorsement of awareness. Across both race and gender conditions, individuals endorsed the awareness scale significantly more in the awareness condition ($M = 4.79, SD = .97$) compared to the blindness condition ($M = 3.91, SD = 1.04$), $t(259) = 5.85, d = .88, p < .001$. Notably, the control condition ($M = 4.40, SD = .91$) fell between (and significantly differed from both) the awareness, $t(259) = 2.69, d = -.41, p = .008$, and blindness, $t(259) = -3.40, d = -.50, p < .001$, conditions. See Table 4 for comparisons across social category conditions.

System Justification

I find no significant effect of social category ($p = .74$) or ideology ($p = .84$), but as expected, I find a significant 2 (social category) x 3 (ideology) interaction on system justification, $F(2, 259) = 7.35, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .054$. Supporting Hypothesis 1a, in the race conditions, those who were exposed to the awareness message ($M = 3.41, SD = 1.39$) endorsed system justification significantly less than those in the blindness ($M = 4.10, SD = 1.22$) condition, $t(259) = -2.45, d = -.53, p = .015$. The control condition ($M = 3.62, SD = 1.24$) did not differ from the aware ($p = .42$), and marginally differed from the blind $t(259) = -1.79, d = -.39, p$

= .074, conditions. Supporting Hypothesis 2a, in the gender conditions, I find the reverse pattern, where those exposed to the gender-aware message endorsed system justification significantly more ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 1.39$) than those exposed to the gender-blind message ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 1.47$), $t(259) = 2.96$, $d = .64$, $p = .003$. The control condition again fell between the two ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.36$), not differing from the aware condition ($p = .20$), and marginally differing from the blind condition, $t(259) = 1.76$, $d = .38$, $p = .08$. See Table 4 and Figure 3a.

System-Justifying Rationales

Denial of inequality. I find no significant effect of social category ($p = .77$) or ideology ($p = .997$) on denial of inequality; however, as expected, I find a significant social category x ideology interaction, $F(2, 259) = 7.02$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .051$. In the race condition, as expected, I find that those who were exposed to the awareness message exhibited less denial of inequality ($M = -.28$, $SD = .82$) than those exposed to the blind message ($M = .28$, $SD = 1.16$), $t(259) = -2.76$, $d = -.56$, $p = .006$ (supporting Hypothesis 1b). The control condition fell in the middle ($M = .05$, $SD = .97$), marginally differing from the awareness condition, $t(259) = -1.68$, $d = -.37$, $p = .093$, but not the blind condition ($p = .21$). In the gender conditions, I again see the reverse pattern, whereby those exposed to the awareness message exhibited more denial of inequality ($M = .29$, $SD = 1.05$) than those exposed to the blind message ($M = -.29$, $SD = 1.01$), $t(259) = 2.54$, $d = .56$, $p = .01$. Again, the control condition ($M = -.06$, $SD = .88$) did not significantly differ from the aware ($p = .11$), or blind ($p = .31$), conditions. See Table 4 and Figure 3b.

Biological essentialism. I find a significant effect of social category on biological essentialism, $F(1, 259) = 53.27$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .17$. Corroborating my assumptions about the essential nature of gender differences, I find that participants endorsed biological essentialism significantly more in the gender conditions ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 1.08$) compared to the race

conditions ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.23$). I find no significant effect of ideology ($p = .77$), but as expected, I find a significant social category x ideology interaction, $F(2, 259) = 5.71$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .042$. In the race condition, participants endorsed essentialism marginally less in the race-aware ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.27$) compared to the race-blind ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.33$) condition, $t(259) = -1.86$, $d = -.38$, $p = .06$. The control condition fell between the two ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.11$), not significantly differing from either the aware ($p = .20$) or the blind ($p = .49$) conditions. In contrast, for gender, I find the opposite pattern, where those exposed to the aware message ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 1.10$) endorsed gender essentialism significantly more than those exposed to the blind message ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.12$), $t(259) = 2.69$, $d = .68$, $p = .008$ (supporting Hypothesis 2b). Again, the control condition fell between the two ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.01$), not significantly differing from the aware ($p = .35$), and marginally differing from the blindness condition, $t(259) = 1.81$, $d = .47$, $p = .07$. See Table 4 and Figure 3c.

Moderated Mediation

I next sought to examine how denial of inequality and essentialism differentially serve as rationales to justify the status quo. That is, my argument rests on the assumption that awareness for race disrupts the status quo as it forces Whites to acknowledge the different circumstances facing Blacks, diminishing denial of discrimination. In contrast, for gender, awareness justifies the status quo, as it allows men to “embrace” the natural, biological differences between men and women, thus enabling them to justify inequality. To test this assumption, I again ran two moderated mediations using PROCESS model 8 (Hayes, 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2008), using an indirect effect of the highest-order product term to infer whether the moderation is mediated (Hayes, 2013). I predicted that I would find divergent effects of awareness on system justification for race and gender, through different mechanisms. For race, there should be a

significant indirect effect of awareness on system justification through denial of inequality, whereas for gender, there should be a significant indirect effect of awareness on system justification through biological essentialism.

Supporting Hypothesis 1c, for the moderated mediation through denial of inequality, I find significant highest order interaction, *indirect effect* = $-.78$, $SE = .25$, $CI_{95} = -1.30, -.31$, such that there was a significant indirect effect at both the value of race, *indirect effect* = $.38$, $SE = .16$, $CI_{95} = .09, .72$, and the value of gender, *indirect effect* = $-.40$, $SE = .18$, $CI_{95} = -.76, -.07$. Again, these indirect effects were in opposite directions, and are consistent with Study 1, where denial of inequality provides a system-justifying rationale for both race and gender; for race, awareness leads to *less* denial of inequality, while for gender awareness leads to *more* denial of inequality. See Figure 4a. For the moderated mediation through biological essentialism, I again find a significant highest order interaction, *indirect effect* = $-.44$, $SE = .18$, $CI_{95} = -.85, -.14$. In line with Hypothesis 2c, at the value of race, there was no significant indirect effect, *indirect effect* = $.19$, $SE = .12$, $CI_{95} = -.001, .45$; however, at the value of gender, there was a significant indirect effect of awareness on system justification through essentialism, *indirect effect* = $-.25$, $SE = .11$, $CI_{95} = -.49, -.07$. See Figure 4b. This suggests that while denial of inequality provides a system-justifying rationale for both race and gender awareness (though in different directions), biological essentialism was unique to gender, whereby awareness increased essentialist attributions and increased system justification for gender.

Discussion

In Study 3, I manipulate awareness and blindness ideologies, implementing the same paradigm used in the vast majority of research on race ideologies (see Wolsko et al., 2000; 2006; Gutiérrez & Unzueta, Richeson & Nussbaum, 2000; Vorauer, Gagnon & Sasaki, 2009; Sasaki &

Vorauer, 2013) to examine their effect on system justification for race and gender, as well as system-justifying rationales (denial of inequality for race, biological essentialism for gender). Indeed, I replicate past theory for race, whereby compared to blindness, race awareness seems to lessen denial of inequality and system justification. Adding to this literature, I show for the first time the opposite effect for gender, whereby the exact same ideological message that decreases system justification for race increased system justification for gender through a unique rationale: biological essentialism. As with Study 1, I show that while denial of inequality provides a system-justifying rationale for both race and gender, biological essentialism was unique to gender, whereby those exposed to awareness were more likely to endorse biological essentialism, which accounted for significant variance in system justification. Further, I show that exposure to these manipulations did not affect hostile prejudices, supporting the notion that they are benevolent ideologies.

Though I support my main predictions, there are several notable effects. For one, the control condition—which I hypothesize will be more in line with blindness for race and awareness for gender (as both ideologies support their respective status quo)—in most cases, fell in the middle of the two ideological manipulations. This may be due to the control prompt, whereby I had participants take a moment to reflect on “current race/gender issues in society.” In retrospect, having participants reflect on issues would most likely evoke awareness, perhaps confounding the control condition. I rectify this in the next study by having a neutral control condition (devoid of any race or gender content). Despite these non-significant differences, the control conditions were directionally more in line with race blindness and gender awareness on hypothesized variables (denial of inequality for race, essentialism for gender); thus, I meta-analyze these effects at the end to examine comparisons across studies. Further, in this study, I

did not find support for gender ideologies affecting benevolent sexism, a role-based form of sexism shown to be related to system justification. It is unclear why the manipulations did not affect this form of sexism directly; however, unlike biological essentialism, which serves as a system-justifying rationale, manipulating awareness may not affect gender prejudices (explicit forms of sexism), but rather gender biases (role-based associations).

Importantly, this study demonstrated that ideologies can be manipulated, have divergent effects on unique system-justifying motives, and differently support the status quo. In the next chapter, I examine the consequences of these ideologies on outcomes that have the potential to mitigate, and perhaps nullify, inequality. For both race and gender, I focus on outcomes related to the system-justifying rationales being affected, both shown to increase racial minorities' and women's representation in positions of power: affirmative action policies and stereotyping.

CHAPTER 3: THE CONSEQUENCES OF DIVERSITY IDEOLOGIES FOR RACE AND GENDER EQUALITY

In Chapter 1, I showed that compared to their ideological counterparts, race awareness disrupts, and gender awareness promotes, system justification. Support for the status quo inevitably has consequences for race and gender outcomes (i.e., “opportunity outcomes”). Since the United States is not structured in a way that is fair or equitable, to create better social systems that support race and gender equality, it is important to change, evolve, and progress toward updated policies; however, system justification hinders this process, creates acquiescence, and stagnates progress (Kay & Zanna, 2009; Jost et al., 2009a). Indeed, system justification has been shown to limit racial minorities’ and women’s opportunities in a variety of ways (see Jost et al., 2009a and Jost, Banaji & Nosek, 2004). Thus, by changing dominant groups’ endorsement of system-justifying rationales, and system justification overall, it may be possible to affect and improve outcomes aimed at achieving equality.

In this chapter, I focus on this question, and examine how awareness and blindness ideologies affect opportunity outcomes that promote versus hinder race and gender equality. I focus on *opportunity outcomes* especially likely to be affected by the system-justifying rationales found in Chapter 1 (denial of inequality and biological essentialism). For race, ignoring systemic inequality, believing that success is solely an outcome of hard-work, and denying advantages and privileges, should lead people to resist policies aimed at structural changes that benefit racial minorities (i.e., affirmative action). In this chapter, I examine affirmative action as an outcome of interest for race, as this has been shown to be one of the most effective structural interventions to increase representation, success, and outcomes for racial minorities (Crosby, Iyer & Sincharoen, 2006; Kalev, Dobbin & Kelley, 2006). For gender, endorsing the natural, functional, and biological aspects of gender should lead to legitimization and endorsement of social roles (i.e.,

gender stereotyping). I examine endorsement of agency and communality stereotyping, as these gender stereotypes (where agency overlaps with leadership characteristics) have been shown to be strongly affected by biological essentialism, and argued to be the primary factor in the underrepresentation of women in domains of power (Heilman, 2001).

Reducing Racial Inequality Through Affirmative Action

I argue that since race blindness denies inequality and supports the status quo, it should lead people to avoid implementing policies and practices that change systems to benefit racial minorities, namely affirmative action.

The Importance of Affirmative Action for Achieving Racial Equality

Affirmative action is the devotion of resources toward policies, practices, and programs that produce changes in organizational structures in attempts to increase the representation of underrepresented groups (Chambers, Clydesdale, Kidder, & Lempert, 2005; Parker, Baltes & Christiansen, 1997). Affirmative action can take several forms such as setting hiring and promotion goals, implementing recruiting efforts, and tracking personnel decisions (Cox, 1993; Crosby et al, 2006). Affirmative action plays an important role in reducing racial inequalities (Crosby et al., 2006; Kalev et al., 2006) and, compared to other efforts to increase representation (e.g., diversity training, mentoring programs), is one of the most effective strategies in reducing such disparities (Leonard, 1990; Kalev et al., 2006). Many have argued that affirmative action is necessary to assure the diversity of student bodies and workforces (Miller 1997), with some going as far to say that universities cannot achieve ethnic diversity without it (Kane 2003). For example, in some years, affirmative action has doubled the number of Black applicants to elite colleges (Chambers et al., 2005) and, over the past 30 years, has increased the number of Black male employees at 708 public sector organizations (Kalev et al., 2006). Further, affirmative

action benefits African American communities overall. For example, ethnic minority alumni of these programs were more likely to engage in civic engagement, provide services to inner cities, serve poor communities, and inspire other underrepresented youth (Lempert, Chambers, & Adams, 2000; Sinkford & Valachovic, 2003; Fryer et al., 2001).

System-Justifying Rationales Used to Oppose Affirmative Action

It is clear affirmative action is an important variable in reducing racial inequality; however, many are opposed to these policies (Thernstrom & Thernstrom 1997, Zuriff, 2004). Past work suggests that those who reject these policies do so for several reasons and using *system-justifying rationales* to support their opposition. For one, opponents see this policy as being unfair, and violating the value of *meritocracy*, basing selection decisions on demographic characteristics at the expense of ability and achievement (Thernstrom & Thernstrom 1997, Zuriff 2004). Others choose to *deny discrimination*, believing these policies are unnecessary because African Americans already have an equal opportunity for success. Indeed, even very liberal people (who are predisposed to acknowledge discrimination) are unable to detect (and therefore deny) discrimination when they encounter injustices (Crosby et al., 2006). Additionally, dominant groups often choose to *deny their privilege*, as they wish to preserve the illusion of having legitimately earned their outcomes and fail to acknowledge the structural advantages they have received (Pelham & Hetts, 2001). Indeed, when exposed to their privilege, Whites anchor on their hardships, denying any special, or unearned, opportunities they are afforded on the basis of their skin color (Branscombe, 1998; Phillips & Lowery, 2015).

System Justification and Resistance toward Affirmative Action

As Crosby and colleagues (2006) argue, denial of race discrimination allows individuals to justify the status quo (system-justify), see the world as fair, and is therefore used as a

mechanism to reject affirmative action. That is, by supporting ideals of meritocracy, ignoring discrimination, and denying their privilege, Whites can feel comfortable with the current status quo, endorsing the current way society is structured (Crosby et al., 2006). Indeed, past work has found that those who endorse greater system-justifying beliefs are also less likely to support affirmative action (Jost & Thompson, 2000; Federico & Sidanius, 2000). Since I have shown that race blindness is likely to lead to denial of inequality and system justification, it is likely it will also lead to more resistance toward affirmative action.

Race Blindness and Resistance toward Affirmative Action

Past work has demonstrated that race blindness serves as an ideology that allows Whites to ignore inequality and resist affirmative action, especially amongst those low in prejudice (with benevolent attitudes toward Blacks; Murrell, Dietz-Uhler, Dovidio, Gaertner & Drout, 1994; Mazzocco et al., 2011; Wolsko et al., 2006). For example, Mazzocco and colleagues (2011) found that high-prejudice Whites resisted affirmative action no matter which ideology they were exposed to, but for low-prejudice Whites, race blindness fulfilled a desire to hold beliefs consistent with current racial realities, and led them to resist affirmative action policies. Similarly, Wolsko and colleagues (2006) found that Whites who endorsed race awareness were more likely to support affirmative action policies and recognize factors that affected racial minorities' opportunities in society. In line with these findings, I argue that race awareness will lead to more support for affirmative action, as it allows Whites to recognize inequality (therefore problems with the system), encouraging them to take action to rectify it.

Hypothesis 3a: *Endorsement of race awareness will be positively related to support for affirmative action.*

Hypothesis 3b: *Denial of inequality will mediate the relationship between race awareness and endorsement of affirmative action, such that race awareness will lessen denial of inequality, which in turn, will increase support for affirmative action policies.*

Reducing Gender Inequality through Stereotype Reduction

The Importance of Stereotype Reduction for Gender Equality

I argue that since gender awareness exacerbates natural, biological attributions for gender differences, it should lead people to endorse gender stereotypes, which limit women's opportunities by associating men (not women) with qualities necessary for leadership potential and success. *Stereotypes* are cognitive structures that associate entities with one another, often groups of people with certain characteristics; *stereotyping* is the application of these characteristics onto certain groups (Devine, 1989; Fiske, 1998). Stereotypes can be both positive and negative as well as conscious and unconscious (Dovidio, Kawakami & Gaertner, 2000). Specific to gender, traditional stereotypes for men and women are complementary, and stem from different historically grounded social roles (i.e., gender roles; Eagly, 1987; 1997; 2013), where men took on tasks involving agency (e.g., hunting, defending) and women took on tasks involving communality (e.g., gathering, child-rearing). These roles created divergent stereotypes about men and women: men are seen as more agentic (e.g., assertive) and strategic (e.g., logical) and women are seen as more communal (e.g., warm) and empathetic (Eagly, 1997).

Such gender stereotypes, which associate men with agency and women with communality, are detrimental to women's career outcomes, even being called the primary cause of women's underrepresentation in domains of power (Heilman, 2001; p., 657). Although both agency and communality stereotypes are valued, agency is in line with qualities valued in and expected of leaders (i.e., assertiveness, independence), whereas communality is often not (i.e., gentleness, sensitivity; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001). Since agency overlaps with the male social role but not the female social role, it creates the expectation that men will be more likely to possess valued skills required for occupational success (Eagly & Karau, 2002) creating

a “lack of fit” for women in many workplace contexts (Heilman, 1983; 2001).

Not only are women perceived as ‘lacking fit’ for leadership positions, but they are evaluated less favorably when they enact leadership behaviors (Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Decades of research have shown that lack of fit between women and leadership causes the devaluation of performance, denial of credit, and interpersonal exclusion (Heilman, 2001; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs & Tamkins, 2004; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). For example, the perceived “lack-of-fit” between female stereotypes and managerial requirements is related to lower performance ratings of women compared to men (Lyness & Heilman, 2006). Other research has found that women get less credit than men for performance, due to perceived incongruence between women and agency stereotypes (e.g., competence, leadership qualities; Heilman & Haynes, 2005). Finally, those who endorse gender stereotypes are more likely to penalize women who enact agentic behavior, being less likely to like, hire, and promote women, and more likely to sabotage, ostracize, and undermine agentic women (Heilman et al., 2004; Rudman & Phelan, 2008).

System-Justifying Rationales for Endorsing Gender Stereotypes

Due to the biological foundations of these gender stereotypes, where men’s greater strength made them suited for agentic roles, while women’s child-bearing ability made them suited for communal ones (Eagly, 1997; Wood & Eagly, 2012), these role-based stereotypes are seen as natural, being accepted, salient, and explicitly endorsed (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Wood & Eagly, 2012). Indeed, biological essentialism is a large driver of stereotype endorsement (Brescoll et al., 2013; Levy et al., 1998; Dweck, Chui & Hong, 1995). Those who believe traits are shaped by biological sources exaggerate differences between groups (Rothbart & Taylor, 1992), endorse stereotypes more strongly (Levy et al., 1998), display greater prejudice

toward out-groups (Keller, 2005), and allot greater penalty for stereotype violators (Dweck et al., 1995). Specific to gender, biological attributions have been linked to greater gender stereotyping (Brescoll & LaFrance, 2004), prejudice against women (Keller, 2005), and preference for male leaders (Hoyt & Burnette, 2013). This is problematic for reducing inequality as believing men's greater agency is due to innate, biological factors implies that these differences are inevitable facts that are unlikely to change (Bem, 1993), confining men and women to different roles and limiting women's opportunities in masculine domains. Thus, attributing gender differences to natural causes allows individuals to endorse and reinforce the power structure, where men are overrepresented and women are underrepresented in positions of power and influence (Brescoll et al., 2013).

System Justification and Endorsement of Gender Stereotypes

Past work (and Chapter 1 in this dissertation) has shown that gender essentialism is a system-justifying ideology (Brescoll et al., 2013; Kray et al., 2017; Hoffman & Hurst, 1990). For example, people who endorse gender essentialism also endorse system justification, by seeing the gender hierarchy as legitimate, unchangeable, and stable (Kray et al., 2017). Further, under system threat, individuals are more likely to endorse biological attributions for difference, to reduce uncertainty, anxiety, and reaffirm the status quo (Brescoll et al., 2013). Similarly, when the system is seen as inevitable and stable, individuals are more likely to attribute gender inequality as due to genuine differences between the sexes, rather than societal unfairness (Laurin, Shepherd & Kay, 2010). Reciprocally, those who endorse social role stereotype are also more likely to rationalize inequality between men and women (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990). Further, political conservatives (those resistant to equality and change) are more likely to endorse gender essentialism (Brescoll & LaFrance, 2004; Keller, 2005). Since I have shown that gender

awareness is likely to lead to biological essentialism and system justification, it is likely gender awareness will also lead to more gender stereotyping.

Gender Awareness and Endorsement of Gender Stereotypes

Related to awareness ideologies, recent research has shown that gender awareness serves as an ideology that reifies and rationalizes gender stereotypes. For example, Martin and colleagues find that men who endorse, or are exposed to, gender awareness exhibit more gender stereotyping, specifically on stereotypes involving agency and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) dimensions (Martin & Phillips, 2018; Martin et al., 2018). Further, when men were exposed to a gender-aware ideology they exhibited more gender-bias, being less likely to hire an agentic female candidate and less likely to desire friendships with female peers. In Additionally, men who endorsed gender awareness were also more likely to exhibit backlash (social and economic penalties) against a dominant female leader, as well as dominate an interaction, being less open and receptive to ideas (Martin et al., 2018). Other work has shown that gender awareness led men to believe a female target was less qualified for STEM fields, giving her lower ratings on her potential success (Martin & Phillips, 2018). Finally, gender awareness relates to expectations for women to conform to feminine behaviors at work (Hahn et al., 2015). Together, this research suggests that gender awareness has consequences for men's views of women, as well women's opportunities. Thus, I hypothesize that gender awareness will lead to more gender stereotyping, especially on agentic (leadership) dimensions, as awareness rationalizes gender differences as being natural, biological, and inevitable (the status quo).

Hypothesis 4a: *Endorsement of gender awareness will be positively related to gender stereotyping.*

Hypothesis 4b: *Biological essentialism will mediate the relationship between gender awareness and endorsement of gender stereotypes, such that gender awareness will lead to more biological essentialism, which in turn will increase gender stereotyping.*

Study 4: The Effects of Awareness and Blindness on Opportunity Outcomes

In Studies 1 and 3, I demonstrated that for race, the types of differences being suppressed through race blindness are based on opportunity and the purpose for doing so is to maintain (deny) inequality. In Study 4, I aim to show that awareness should expose the different opportunities Blacks are afforded (through less denial of inequality), which should increase Whites' propensity to support policies aimed at creating a more egalitarian society (i.e., affirmative action). In contrast, for gender, I demonstrated that the types of differences individuals embrace through awareness are biological, natural, and essential differences, and the purpose of embracing such differences is to legitimize gender role occupational segregation (and therefore the gender hierarchy). Thus, I aim to show that gender awareness should reinforce and reify gender stereotypes in workplace capabilities (agency, occupational success) and legitimize their inexorable nature through greater biological attributions. For both race and gender, I examine how awareness differentially acts on unique system-justifying rationales (denial of inequality and essentialism) and affects different opportunity outcomes (attitudes toward affirmative action and stereotyping).

To test these hypotheses, four hundred and twenty-six White male MTurk participants (non-overlapping with Study 3) were recruited to complete a two-part study on "Evaluating Press Releases" and "Attitudes and Opinions." This paradigm was taken from past work (Martin & Phillips, 2017; Martin & Phillips, 2018), where participants were told that the study was interested in 1) evaluating their interest in academic research and 2) examining attitudes and opinions. A total of fifty participants were excluded from analysis, again, 45 participants who rejected the ideological message (10%), and five participants who failed a manipulation check, asking what social category they were asked to answer questions about. The final sample

consisted of 376 White men ($M_{\text{age}} = 37.76$; $SD = 12.46$; $M_{\text{work}} = 16.0$; $SD = 7.77$; 58% had a bachelor's degree or more education).

In the first part of the study, participants were given a list of eight possible press releases that they could receive and then were asked to evaluate an article (with content from the Wolsko, 2000, and Study 3 prompts) that either espoused the merits of an awareness versus blindness approach for achieving either race versus gender equality (from Malicke, 2013, and Martin & Phillips, 2017), or a control article discussing the utility of “big data,” which was used in both the race and gender conditions (see Appendix C for all articles). Thus, this study used a 2 (social category: race vs. gender) x 3 (ideology: aware vs. blind vs. control) between-subjects design. After reading the article, participants answered questions about their interest in the research and the quality of the press release. Participants then moved on to Part 2 of the study, where they answered questions about their attitudes and opinions about either race or gender, filling out scales related to system justification, biological essentialism, denial of inequality, stereotypes, and attitudes toward affirmative action. After answering these questions, participants were debriefed, thanked, and paid.

Dependent Variables

Manipulation check. Participants filled out the awareness measure used in Studies 1–3, rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .82$).

System justification. Participants completed the system justification measure used in the studies thus far (Kay & Jost, 2003) on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .91$).

System-justifying rationales.

*Denial of inequality.*⁸ Participants completed the denial of inequality scale (denial of discrimination/privilege) used in Study 3 (Swim et al., 1995; Swim & Miller, 1999 $\alpha = .94$), rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Biological essentialism. Participants filled out the biological essentialism measure used in the studies thus far (Coleman & Hong, 2008), rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .84$).

Opportunity outcomes.

Attitudes toward affirmative action. I examine attitudes toward affirmative action using six items from Jost and Thompson (2000) and Murrell et al. (1994), on a scale from 1 = *strongly agree* to 7 = *strongly disagree* ($\alpha = .88$). An example includes, “Because of past discrimination, [Black people] [women] should be given preference in hiring and promotion.” See Appendix A for all items used.

Stereotypes. As with Study 1, I examine *different* stereotypes in the race and gender conditions, whereby I analyze stereotypes surrounding agency and communality in the gender conditions and stereotypes involving positive and negative cultural associations in the race conditions. Although *all* stereotypes were presented in both race and gender conditions, the reliability of cultural stereotypes was not acceptable in the gender conditions ($\alpha = -.12$; for example, religious and athletic are more characteristic of Blacks; whereas, religious is more characteristic of women and athletic is more characteristic of men). Further, the reliability of the gender stereotypes was not acceptable in the race condition ($\alpha = .25$; i.e., warm is seen as more

⁸ Again, I included the symbolic prejudice scale (Sears, 1988; $\alpha = .82$) and find the same pattern, $F(2, 196) = 5.14$, $p = .007$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$, whereby those in the aware condition ($M = 2.15$, $SD = .57$) endorsed symbolic prejudice marginally ($p = .068$), and significantly ($p = .002$), less than those in the blind ($M = 2.36$, $SD = .63$) and control ($M = 2.49$, $SD = .64$) conditions, respectively. Again, the control did not differ from the blind condition ($p = .19$) suggesting that the baseline for symbolic prejudice is more in line with race-blind than race-aware.

characteristic of women, and leader-like is seen as more characteristic of men; whereas both warm and leader-like are seen as more characteristic of Whites).

Gender stereotypes. For gender stereotypes, I presented ten stereotypes: six masculine (independent, competitive, leader-like, dominant, competitive, analytic; $\alpha = .70$) and four feminine (sympathetic, warm, gentle, kind; $\alpha = .87$) on a scale from 1 = *much more characteristic of women* to 5 = *much more characteristic of men* (poles counterbalanced; Diekmann & Eagly, 2000). Feminine stereotypes were reversed, such that higher scores represent more traditional stereotyping ($\alpha = .84$).

Cultural stereotypes. For race cultural stereotypes, I presented six stereotypes, three positive (religious, athletic, rhythmic; $\alpha = .64$) and three negative (uneducated, poor, threatening; $\alpha = .76$). Stereotypes were measured on a scale from 1 = *much more characteristic of Whites* to 5 = *much more characteristic of Blacks* (poles counterbalanced). Cultural stereotypes are scored such that higher scores represent more traditional stereotyping ($\alpha = .75$).

Results

Analysis Strategy and Expected Results

As with Study 3, I analyze results using a 2 (social category: race vs. gender) x 3 (ideology: aware vs. blind vs. control) ANOVA. Aside from the manipulation check, where I expected a main effect of ideological condition, I expected to find significant 2 (social category) x 3 (ideology) interactions on the dependent variables of interest. Further, again, since I argue that blindness and awareness are system-justifying ideologies for race and gender respectively, I expect the control condition to be more in line with blindness in the race condition and awareness in the gender condition. See Table 5 for correlations between variables within each condition.

Manipulation Check

Unlike Study 3, in this study, I find a significant effect of social category, $F(1, 370) = 8.23, p = .004, \eta_p^2 = .022$, where overall, individuals endorsed awareness less in the race condition ($M = 4.15, SD = .94$) compared to the gender condition ($M = 4.41, SD = 1.00$). As expected, I find a main effect of ideology, $F(2, 370) = 47.03, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .20$, and no significant interaction ($p = .98$). That is, across both the race and gender conditions, those in the awareness condition ($M = 4.83, SD = .88$) endorsed an awareness ideology significantly more than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.75, SD = .94$), $t(370) = 9.70, d = 1.19, p < .001$. Notably, the control condition ($M = 4.26, SD = .80$) fell between (and significantly differed from both) the awareness, $t(370) = -5.23, d = -.68, p < .001$, and the blindness, $t(370) = 4.77, d = .58, p < .001$, conditions, suggesting that the awareness manipulation brought participants up from the baseline, whereas the blindness condition brought people down from the baseline. See Table 6 for comparisons across social category conditions.

System Justification

I find no significant effect of social category ($p = .62$) or ideology ($p = .44$) on system justification; however, supporting Hypotheses 1-2a, I find a significant 2 (social category) x 3 (ideology) interaction, $F(2, 370) = 5.06, p = .007, \eta_p^2 = .027$. In the race condition, those who were exposed to the awareness message ($M = 3.56, SD = 1.33$) endorsed system justification significantly less than those in the blindness ($M = 4.07, SD = 1.37$) condition, $t(1, 370) = -2.15, d = -.38, p = .032$, and the control condition ($M = 4.14, SD = 1.36$), $t(1, 370) = -2.53, d = -.43, p = .012$. The control condition did not differ from the race-blind condition ($p = .77$), suggesting that the baseline was more similar to race-blind than race-aware. In the gender condition, I find the reverse pattern, where those exposed to the gender-aware message endorsed system justification

significantly more ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.34$) than those exposed to the gender-blind message ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.26$), $t(1, 370) = 2.14$, $d = .41$, $p = .033$. The control condition fell between the two ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.27$), differing from neither the aware ($p = .37$) nor the blind condition ($p = .20$). See Table 6 and Figure 5a.

System-Justifying Rationales

Denial of inequality. There was no significant effect of social category ($p = .45$), or ideological condition ($p = .17$) on denial of inequality. However, there was a significant social category x ideology condition interaction, $F(2, 370) = 7.66$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .040$. Supporting Hypothesis 1b, for race, those in the awareness condition ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.32$) endorsed denial of inequality significantly less than those in the blind ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.44$), $t(370) = -2.59$, $d = -.45$, $p = .01$, and control ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 1.44$), $t(370) = -3.81$, $d = -.63$, $p < .001$, conditions. There was no difference between the blind and control conditions ($p = .26$), suggesting that the baseline for denial of inequality is more in line with race-blind. In contrast, gender ideologies did not act as strongly on denial of inequality, where there were no significant contrasts (p 's $> .19$) between conditions ($M_{\text{aware}} = 3.79$, $SD = 1.30$; $M_{\text{blind}} = 3.47$, $SD = 1.12$; $M_{\text{control}} = 3.54$, $SD = 1.30$). See Table 6 and Figure 5b.

Essentialism. I find a significant effect of social category, $F(1, 370) = 35.77$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .088$, on biological essentialism. In line with my hypotheses about gender being more essentialized than race, participants endorsed gender essentialism ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.15$) more than race essentialism ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.14$). Although there was a significant main effect of ideology ($p = .006$), this main effect was qualified by a marginal interaction, $F(2, 370) = 2.40$, $p = .092$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$. That is, there were no significant differences in endorsement of essentialism in the race condition between aware ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.23$), blind, ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.01$), and

control ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.16$) conditions (all p 's $> .13$). In contrast, and supporting Hypothesis 2b, in the gender conditions, those in the awareness condition ($M = 4.70$, $SD = .96$) endorsed gender essentialism significantly more than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.18$), $t(370) = 3.53$, $d = .69$, $p < .001$. The control condition fell in the middle ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.18$), where participants endorsed gender essentialism marginally less than those in the awareness condition, $t(370) = -1.85$, $d = -.35$, $p = .065$, and marginally more than those in the blindness condition, $t(370) = 1.75$, $d = .31$, $p = .081$. See Table 6 and Figure 5c.

Opportunity Outcomes

Attitudes toward affirmative action. For attitudes toward affirmative action, I find no significant effect of social category ($p = .25$) or ideological condition ($p = .076$). As expected I find a significant interaction, $F(2, 370) = 3.86$, $p = .022$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$. Supporting Hypothesis 3a, in the race condition, those in the awareness condition endorsed more positive attitudes toward affirmative action ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.37$) than those in the blind condition ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(370) = 2.45$, $d = .42$, $p = .015$, and control ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.39$), $t(370) = 3.54$, $d = .59$, $p < .001$. The control and blind did not differ from one another ($p = .32$), again suggesting that baseline attitudes toward affirmative action are more in line with race blindness than race awareness. In the gender conditions, there were no significant differences between conditions (p 's $> .45$; $M_{\text{aware}} = 3.50$, $SD = 1.32$, $M_{\text{blind}} = 3.69$, $SD = 1.18$, $M_{\text{control}} = 3.55$, $SD = 1.30$). See Table 6 and Figure 5d.

Stereotyping

Gender. For gender stereotypes, supporting Hypothesis 4a, I find a significant interaction between ideological conditions, $F(2, 174) = 3.14$, $p = .046$, $\eta_p^2 = .034$, such that those in the gender-blind condition, ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .45$), endorsed gender stereotypes significantly less,

$t(174) = -2.26, d = -.45, p = .025$, than those in the gender-aware ($M = 3.61, SD = .44$), or control condition ($M = 3.59, SD = .48$), $t(174) = -2.08, d = -.39, p = .039$. The control and aware conditions did not differ from one another ($p = .82$), suggesting that blindness induced people to stereotype less. These effects were particularly driven by agency (masculine) stereotyping, $F(2, 174) = 4.16, p = .017, \eta_p^2 = .046$, whereby individuals in the blind condition, ($M = 3.31, SD = .39$), endorsed agency stereotypes significantly less than those in the aware ($M = 3.50, SD = .37$), $t(174) = -2.40, d = -.50, p = .018$, and control, ($M = 3.51, SD = .48$), $t(174) = -2.59, d = .46, p = .01$. Again, the control and aware conditions did not differ from one another ($p = .89$). There were no differences between endorsement of feminine stereotypes ($p = .25$), and no significant differences between conditions ($M_{\text{blind}} = 3.57, SD = .66$; $M_{\text{aware}} = 3.77, SD = .71$; $M_{\text{control}} = 3.71, SD = .64$; p 's $> .10$).

Race. For cultural stereotypes, I find no significant differences for *overall*, $F(2, 196) = 1.84, p = .16, \eta_p^2 = .018$, *positive*, $F(2, 196) = .94, p = .39, \eta_p^2 = .009$, or *negative*, $F(2, 196) = 1.92, p = .15, \eta_p^2 = .019$, stereotyping by condition, with no significant contrasts between blind and aware conditions (p 's $> .47$), or conditions overall (p 's $> .06$). See Table 6 for means and contrasts.

Moderated Mediations

I again sought to examine how essentialism and modern prejudice differentially provide rationale to justify the status quo, examining Hypotheses 1c and 2c. I again ran two moderated mediations using PROCESS Model 8 (Hayes, 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2008), use an indirect effect of the highest order product term to infer whether the moderation is mediated, and predicted that I would find divergent effects of awareness on system justification, through different mechanisms. For race, participants should use denial of inequality as a system-

justifying mechanism; whereas for gender, participants should use biological essentialism as a system-justifying mechanism.

Supporting Hypothesis 1c, for the moderated mediation through denial of inequality, I find a significant highest order interaction, *indirect effect* = -.40, *SE* = .16, *CI*₉₅ = -.74, -.12, whereby at the value of *race*, there is a significant indirect effect of awareness on system justification through denial of inequality, *indirect effect* = .27, *SE* = .11, *CI*₉₅ = .06, .51, but no indirect effect at the value of *gender*, *indirect effect* = -.14, *SE* = .10, *CI*₉₅ = -.35, .05. Further, supporting Hypothesis 2c, for the moderated mediation through essentialism, I again find a significant highest order interaction, *indirect effect* = -.16, *SE* = .10, *CI*₉₅ = -.40, -.004, whereby at the value of *race*, there was no significant indirect effect through essentialism, *indirect effect* = -.04, *SE* = .06, *CI*₉₅ = -.17, .07, but in line with my hypotheses, at the value of *gender*, I find a significant indirect effect of awareness on system justification through essentialism, *indirect effect* = -.21, *SE* = .09, *CI*₉₅ = -.41, -.06.⁹

Further, to test hypothesis 3b and 4b, I examined how awareness promotes (or reduces) system-justifying rationales, which in turn affects opportunity outcomes, both of which are unique to race and gender. For the moderated mediation, examining the indirect effect of awareness (IV) on support of affirmative action (DV), through denial of inequality (Med), as a function of social category (Mod), I find a significant highest order interaction, *indirect effect* = .59, *SE* = .22, *CI*₉₅ = .18, 1.05, whereby there at the value of *race*, there is a significant indirect effect of awareness on support for affirmative action through denial of inequality, *indirect effect*

⁹ I also examined the serial relationships between awareness → system-justifying rationale → system justification → opportunity outcomes, using PROCESS Model 6 (5000 bootstraps; Preacher & Hayes, 2008). For both race (awareness → modern prejudice → system justification → affirmative action) and gender (awareness → essentialism → system justification → stereotyping), neither model was significant (race: *indirect effect* = .02, *SE* = .03, *CI*₉₅ = -.02, .09; gender: *indirect effect* = .01, *SE* = .01, *CI*₉₅ = -.001, .04). However, this was likely because the direct mediation of denial of inequality on affirmative action for race, and essentialism on stereotyping for gender, provided better model fits.

= -.39, $SE = .16$, $CI_{95} = -.70, -.08$, but no indirect effect at the value of *gender*, *indirect effect* = .20, $SE = .14$, $CI_{95} = -.07, .49$. See Figure 6a. In contrast, for the moderated mediation examining the indirect effect of awareness (IV) on stereotyping (DV), through essentialism (Med), as a function of social category (Mod), I find a significant highest-order interaction, *indirect effect* = -.05, $SE = .03$, $CI_{95} = -.11, -.002$, whereby I find at the value of *gender*, there is a significant indirect effect between awareness on stereotyping through essentialism, *indirect effect* = -.05, $SE = .09$, $CI_{95} = -.22, .12$, but no indirect effect at the value of *race*, *indirect effect* = -.07, $SE = .03$, $CI_{95} = -.12, -.02$. See Figure 6b. These results support my hypotheses (3b and 4b) that for race, awareness leads to less denial of inequality, which produces more support for affirmative action; whereas for gender, awareness led to more essentialism and produced more gender stereotyping.

Discussion

In Study 4, I replicate the findings from my previous studies, whereby I show that for race, an awareness ideology decreases denial of inequality (a system-justifying rationale) and subsequently leads to less support for the status quo (system justification). In contrast, for gender, awareness increases biological attributions for gender differences, thereby increasing support for the status quo. Further, I show the importance of these rationales and endorsement of system justification, whereby awareness and blindness ideologies have implications for opportunity outcomes that affect race and female representation in positions of power: attitudes toward affirmative action and stereotyping, respectively. That is, awareness ideologies for race increase out-group participants' support for policies that disrupt the status quo and provide solutions to inequality (Crosby et al., 2006). In contrast, awareness ideologies heightened traditional gender stereotyping, which has been shown to be one of the greatest barriers to women's representation in positions of power (Heilman, 2001). Further, in line with theory, the

effect of gender awareness is particularly consequential for agency stereotyping, which is more problematic, as these are the qualities that overlap with leadership and most important for women's success in occupational domains (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Rectifying issues with my control conditions from the previous study, I find that the baseline for most effects are consistent with my ideology status quo argument, whereby for race the control condition was more similar to the blind condition (system justification, denial of inequality, attitudes toward affirmative action), and for gender the control condition was more similar to the awareness condition (essentialism, stereotyping). I meta-analyze these effects after Study 7 to glean more information about movement from the control condition across studies.

Further, I find a parsimonious system-justifying rationale for racial ideologies, whereby race ideologies specifically act upon denial of inequality and not essentialism. In this study, I find an exclusive explanation for gender ideologies as well, where unlike Studies 1 and 3, gender ideologies did not act on denial of inequality. This is consistent with my arguments: assuming gender differences are natural and essential can heighten denial of inequality, but that gender essentialism provides a *stronger* system-justifying rationale for gender awareness.

Finally, in this study, by affecting opportunity outcomes that significantly affect racial minorities' and women's potential for success, I show the potential of awareness and blindness ideologies to intervene on race and gender inequality, providing a practical solution to achieving greater equity for racial minorities and women. Further, I show the importance and power potential of media messages on individual's beliefs about, and support for, the status quo, as well as outcomes geared toward maintaining or disrupting inequality (affirmative action, stereotyping). My manipulations were ostensibly media releases about how to achieve equality and affected participants' race and gender beliefs, showing the importance for mass media to use

caution in espousing or supporting one ideology over the other. Indeed, much popular press and mass media argue both for and against either ideology (Eagly, 1995; Krawcheck, 2017). This study shows the importance of being discerning around espousing ideologies to the mass public.

CHAPTER 4: SHIFTING ATTRIBUTIONS TO LEVERAGE AWARENESS

In this next chapter, I propose that shifting the types of differences upon which diversity ideologies intervene can produce similar outcomes for race and gender relations. By directing the types of differences out-group members focus on *away from internal sources*, and *toward external sources*, I argue that an awareness ideology can be utilized as an adaptive intervention for both race and gender relations.

In the past four studies, I have suggested that it is not diversity ideologies themselves that have negative consequences for race and gender equality, but rather it is the types of differences upon which they act. Since diversity ideologies are often devoid of any content—not necessarily suggesting *which* differences we be aware of or blind to—I argue that shifting the types of differences being focused on toward external, experiential, and systemic differences should render awareness an effective strategy for both race and gender. That is, since the types of differences individuals naturally focus on for gender are system-justifying differences in biology and social roles, focusing diversity ideologies on the types of differences that render awareness an effective ideology for race (opportunity, experiential) should not only lessen denial of inequality and increase support for affirmative action (outcomes associated with acknowledging external factors), but lessen essential, biological beliefs about gender (thereby reducing gender stereotyping).

As noted, biological essentialism leads to a host of detrimental consequences for women as well as many other social groups (Brescoll et al., 2013; Dweck et al., 1995; Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). This is especially problematic for gender inequality, as gender is the most essentialized category (Prentice & Miller, 2006) and people often make greater biological attributions for gender differences than opportunity attributions (Martin & Parker, 1995). Past

work has found that when no external attribution is given, many people anchor on internal factors to explain behavior (Ross, 1977; Hamilton, 1998). Thus, it not surprising that when told to be “aware” of gender differences, through gender awareness, individuals anchor on biological explanations for difference.

However, there is potential for these views to be shifted. Much past work has shown that subtle differences in framing, labels, attributions, and rationales can have a significant effect on the way individuals interpret information (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981; Kahneman & Tversky, 1984; Levin & Gaeth, 1988; Hall, Phillips & Townsend, 2015). Thus, anchoring individuals on external, experiential, and opportunity differences, rather than biological, essential differences may have the potential to redirect attributions for gender differences, and therefore leverage the potential benefits of gender awareness.

Indeed, past work has found that the messages and information used to explain the source of intergroup differences have important consequences for intergroup relations. For example, using ostensible newspaper articles, Williams and Eberhardt (2008) found that participants were more likely to desire cross-race friendships when reading about the sociocultural factors for racial differences compared to biological ones (Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). Further, after reading fictitious articles about traits being malleable (incremental), compared to fixed (entity), participants were less likely to stereotype out-group members (Levy et al., 1998). Using the same articles, Tadmor and her colleagues (2013) showed that those who read incremental articles not only endorsed race essentialism less than those who read entity articles, but also endorsed race essentialism less than those who were given no message at all. That is, giving participants messages about traits being malleable reduced their essentialist beliefs from their baseline levels. Similarly, Brescoll and LaFrance (2004) found that when participants read ostensible newspaper

articles about biological gender differences, they endorsed gender essentialism to the same extent as those who read no article at all (i.e., a control condition). However, by exposing participants to sociocultural explanations for differences, participants were significantly less likely to endorse gender essentialism.

Thus, it seems clear that though biological and essentialized beliefs about women are internalized, they are clearly capable of being changed. In the last four studies, I have shown that gender awareness affects participants' endorsement of biological essentialism, suggesting the types of differences gender ideologies act upon are biological ones. However, promoting awareness of opportunity and experiential gender differences—the ones being evoked for race—should produce similar effects to those of race, not only increasing recognition of systemic inequality and support for affirmative action policies (as found in the race conditions), but also reducing biological essentialism and stereotyping. Thus, in the next two studies, I provide a manipulation (“experience awareness”) redirecting the focus of awareness toward external differences.

Supporting my theory, I expect that in the race conditions, since the types of differences are already focused on external attributions, there should be *no differences* between a *race awareness* and *experience awareness* manipulation. In the gender conditions, since I argue that *gender awareness* highlights internal (biological) gender differences, I expect *experience awareness* manipulations to have *opposite effects*. That is, redirecting undirected awareness *away from internal* differences and *toward external* factors, via *experience awareness* should lessen system justification and subsequent rationales and outcomes and have similar effects to gender blindness.

Importantly, the rationales and outcomes affected by the experience awareness manipulations are likely to be related to external factors, such as denial of inequality and affirmative action. That is, making participants aware of external differences, whether for race or gender, should lead them to recognize external factors for inequality (lessen denial of inequality) and be motivated to support actions to rectify systemic problems (affirmative action). Though I also believe externally directed awareness will redirect differences away from internal factors (and thereby reduce biological essentialism and stereotyping), I believe this message will act more strongly on external rationales and outcomes.

Hypothesis 5a: *Compared to endorsement of a race-blind approach, endorsement of a race-aware and race- “experience aware” approach will be negatively related to system justification, denial of inequality, and opposition toward affirmative action.*

Hypothesis 5b: *Compared to endorsement of a gender-aware approach, endorsement of a gender-blind and gender- “experience aware” approach will be negatively related to system justification, denial of inequality, and opposition toward affirmative action.*

Study 5: Experience Awareness in an Organizational Setting

In this study, I provide a preliminary test of my hypothesis that by directing the *types* of differences toward experiential ones, awareness has the potential to leverage positive benefits for both racial minorities and women. Supporting Hypotheses 5a and 5b I believed that when framed around differences in experiences, opportunities, and treatment, awareness (compared to blindness) ideologies would reduce system justification for both race and gender. To test this hypothesis, I partnered with an educational institution that was conducting a survey during its “Diversity and Inclusion” week.

The context of this study was a large, private business school on the East Coast. The survey went out to the entire school and 1,137 students took part (approximately 80% of the students). To be consistent with the previous studies, I restricted the sample to United States

citizens and out-group members (Whites in the race condition and men in the gender condition). This left a remaining sample of 435 individuals. The race condition consisted of 231 Whites (136 men, 91 women, 4 unidentified), with a mean age of 28.64 ($SD = 2.81$). The gender condition consisted of 204 men (137 Whites, 37 Asian, 10 Black, 7 Hispanic, and 13 Other Race), with a mean age of 27.76 ($SD = 3.14$). Participants were put in one of two experimental conditions, being asked about their views on either race or gender.

Awareness of Experience Framing

To ensure participants directed attention toward differences in issues, experiences, and obstacles facing underrepresented groups, the survey included multiple messages directing attention toward these types of differences. For example, in the introduction participants were told that the survey aims to gather information to “address key *issues* facing students and determine actionable plans to improve and evolve students’ *experience*.” The email sent to students noted that the goal of the survey was to “understand and improve the different student *experiences*, with the goal of ensuring that *all* students can thrive academically, socially, and in their career pursuits” and told that topics of interest include “*harassment, socioeconomic issues, privilege, amongst others*.” These were meant to direct attention to the different experiences and issues facing women and racial minorities that affect their ability to achieve success in organizational environments. See Appendix D for excerpt.

Independent Variable: Awareness Endorsement

To measure awareness, I gave participants the following prompt: “We are interested in your thoughts about the best ways to improve [race/ethnic] [gender] diversity at [our institution]. On one hand, [this institution] could focus on building *common identity* as MBAs that *transcends* [race] [gender]. Events and discussions could *focus on the many similarities* that bind us

together to make [our institution] more inclusive. On the other hand, [our institution] could focus on *emphasizing race [gender] differences* and highlight the unique perspectives these differences bring to the community. Events and discussions could *focus on differences* to make [this institution] more inclusive.” Participants were then asked, “to what extent do you think each strategy is more effective than the other” on a scale from 1 = *focusing on common identity is much more effective* – 7 = *focusing on different identities is much more effective*. Further, I asked participants which strategy they believed was more effective (binary variable). Results are consistent across both measures, but given the variance in beliefs, I analyze data using the scale measure.

Notably, supporting the notion that individuals often do not know the best ways to approach diversity, there was equal endorsement of awareness and blindness strategies, where neither scale was different from the midpoint in both the race, ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 1.64$), $t(230) = -.12$, $p = .90$, and gender, ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.69$), $t(203) = -1.37$, $p = .17$, conditions. Further, individuals endorsed awareness and blindness ideologies equally across conditions, $F(1, 433) = .87$, $p = .35$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. Finally, these results are replicated when using a binary variable, where 51% of individuals endorsed awareness, over blindness, in both the race and the gender conditions.

Dependent Variables

System justification. To measure system justification, I adapted questions from the system justification measure to capture the extent to which participants were satisfied with the current state of diversity at their institution. Notably, both women and racial minorities are underrepresented at this institution with women representing 39% (versus 51% of national population), and racial minorities representing 32% (versus 41% of national population; U.S.

Census Bureau, 2017) of the institution's population. Thus, believing that the institution is "diverse" and being "satisfied with diversity" should represent beliefs supporting the status quo regarding the current demographic representation of the institution. To capture these beliefs, participants were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: "[this institution] needs to be more diverse (reversed)," "[this institution] has a diverse student body," "I am satisfied with diversity at [this institution]," on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .80$).

Results

I find no effect of social category condition ($p = .16$), but as expected I find a significant effect of awareness on system justification, $B = -.16$, $SE = .034$, $t(432) = -4.76$, $p < .001$, whereby the more people endorsed awareness, the less they endorsed system justification. There was no significant interaction ($p = .58$), whereby this effect occurred in both the race, $B = -.14$, $SE = .048$, $t(431) = -3.03$, $p = .003$, and the gender, $B = -.18$, $SE = .049$, $t(431) = -3.71$, $p < .001$, conditions. Further, these effects hold controlling for other demographic variables, such as gender (in race condition), race (in gender condition), age, political ideology, relationship status, tenure at school, and sexuality. See Table 7.

Discussion

In this study, I find that by framing awareness around experiential differences, the beneficial effects of awareness ideologies occur for both race and gender. That is, I find that both race and gender "experiential" awareness decreases support for the status quo. By testing this framing in an institutional setting, I provide evidence that reframing gender awareness around experience may lead to beneficial effects for diversity and inclusion. However, there were several limitations of this study. Due to the context of the study, I could not compare to an

awareness or blindness control condition, nor could I examine system-justifying rationales and opportunity outcomes. Thus, in the next two studies, I examine the effects of experience awareness on system justification, system-justifying rationales, and opportunity outcomes.

Study 6: Directing Differences toward External Sources

In this study, I test the hypothesis that the types of differences participants are made “aware of” explain the divergent effects of awareness on system justification, system-justifying rationales, and opportunity outcomes for race and gender. That is, since I argue that the types of differences participants are naturally made “aware of” through racial ideologies are already external ones, in the race conditions, directing participants to be aware of external differences should not differentially affect endorsement of system justification. On the other hand, since the types of differences participants are “aware of” through gender ideologies are internal, shifting the focus toward awareness of external differences should create similar outcomes to race awareness and lessen endorsement of system justification.

In this study, I use the same paradigm as in Study 4, whereby 469 White male participants from Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (non-overlapping with previous studies) were invited to take part in a study on “Reading and Comprehension” and “Attitudes and Perceptions.” However, in this study, along with the awareness and blindness messages used thus far, I added an experience awareness condition whereby the participants were told to focus on “external” differences for race and gender (differences in experiences, opportunities, and treatment). See Appendix E for all articles. Thus, I used a 2 (social category: race vs. gender) x 3 (ideology: awareness vs. blindness vs. experience awareness) design. The prompts for the awareness and blindness manipulations were the same as those used in Study 5, and in the *experience aware* condition, participants read statements such as:

We will be in a better position to advance as a society if we embrace that [racial groups] [men and women] have important *differences in terms of their life experiences and opportunities*. Each group has its own *obstacles and experiences* that differentially affect their lives, and by acknowledging these differences, we validate the identity of each group...There are indisputable differences between [ethnic groups] [men and women] and recognizing these differences *in terms of their life experiences, opportunities, and obstacles* can benefit both groups.

Ninety-six (20%) of participants were excluded from analysis for disagreeing with the premise of the ideology they were given (and therefore, rejecting the ideology)¹⁰. Further, 16 participants were removed for failing a manipulation check (asking which social category and ideology their article was about). This left a remaining sample of 357 White male participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 36.76$, $SD = 11.95$; $M_{\text{work}} = 15.20$, $SD = 8.05$, 54% with bachelor's degree or more education). Again, participants were recruited for what was ostensibly a two-part study on 1) "Evaluating Press Releases" and 2) "Attitudes and "Evaluations." In the first part of the study, participants were given a list of eight possible press releases that they could receive and then asked to evaluate an article espousing the merits of an awareness versus blindness versus experience awareness approach, for achieving race versus gender equality. They then moved on to the second part of the study, where they were asked to answer questions about their attitudes and opinions, completing scales related to system justification, system-justifying rationales (denial of inequality and biological essentialism), and opportunity outcomes (attitudes toward affirmative action and stereotypes). After answering these questions, participants were debriefed, thanked, and paid.

Dependent Variables

Manipulation check. Participants filled out the awareness measure, rating their

¹⁰ The number who rejected the article in this study is higher than previous studies; however, effects are consistent (and stronger) when solely using those who "strongly disagreed" with the ideological message (7%). Since I decided to use "strongly disagree" and "disagree" as exclusion a priori, I continue to use this exclusion criterion in this study.

endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($a = .82$).

System justification. Participants completed the system justification measure (Kay & Jost, 2003) on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($a = .89$).

System-justifying rationales.

Denial of inequality. Participants filled out the denial of discrimination/privilege measure, rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($a = .95$).

Biological essentialism. Participants completed the biological essentialism measure, rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($a = .84$).

Opportunity outcomes.

Attitudes toward affirmative action. I used the same items as in Study 4, where participants rated their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly agree* to 7 = *strongly disagree* ($a = .88$).

Stereotypes. I use the same stereotypes as in Study 4 for gender (agency [$a = .81$], communality [$a = .89$], and overall [$a = .89$]); and race (positive cultural [$a = .61$], negative cultural [$a = .65$], and overall [$a = .71$]). Again, I only analyze gender stereotypes in the gender conditions and cultural stereotypes in the race conditions.

Results

Analysis Strategy

I use a 2 (social category: race vs. gender) x 3 (ideology: aware vs. blind vs. experience-aware) interaction. I expect to replicate past effects in both the race and gender conditions, such that awareness (compared to blindness) will lead to less system justification, endorsement of system-justifying rationales in the race conditions, but more endorsement of system justification

and system-justifying rationales in the gender conditions. Further, I examine my hypotheses, and show that the *types of differences* affect system justification and subsequent outcomes, by comparing these effects to experience awareness. Since, for race, I argue that the types of differences being highlighted through awareness are already experiential, I hypothesize that compared to *blindness*, both *awareness* and *experience awareness* will lead to less system justification and endorsement of system-justifying rationales; whereas in the gender conditions, since I argue the types of differences being highlighted through *awareness* are internal, redirecting these differences toward external differences, through *experience awareness*, should lead to less system justification and endorsement of system-justifying rationales, and have similar outcomes as gender blindness. See Table 8 for correlations between variables within race and gender conditions. Means and contrasts for each condition can be found in Table 9.

Manipulation Check

I find no significant effect of social category ($p = .07$), and as expected, a significant effect of ideology, $F(2, 351) = 66.41, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .27$, such that overall, those in the blind condition ($M = 3.72, SD = .94$) endorsed an awareness ideology less than those in the aware ($M = 4.81, SD = .87$), $t(351) = 10.48, d = 1.20, p < .001$, and experience-aware ($M = 4.71, SD = .71$), $t(487) = 9.46, d = 1.19, p < .001$, conditions. The aware and experience-aware conditions did not significantly differ from one another ($p = .29$), suggesting that the experience-aware manipulation had its intended effect and led participants to endorse an “awareness” ideology. There was also a significant social category x ideology interaction, $F(2, 351) = 8.59, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .052$, whereby the differences in awareness endorsement between ideological conditions was less polarized in the race conditions ($M_{\text{aware}} = 4.58, SD = .79; M_{\text{blind}} = 3.87, SD = .79; M_{\text{exp}} = 4.55, SD = .55$) compared to the gender conditions ($M_{\text{aware}} = 5.08, SD = .88; M_{\text{blind}} = 3.53, SD =$

1.07; $M_{\text{exp}} = 4.88$, $SD = .83$). See Table 9 for contrasts. Notably, this finding may suggest that the ideological manipulation had a stronger effect in the gender, compared to the race conditions.

System Justification.

I find no main effects of social category ($p = .29$) or ideology ($p = .61$); however, I find the expected social category x ideology interaction, $F(2, 351) = 4.47$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .025$. In the race conditions, comparing the awareness and blindness conditions, I find directional support in the race condition, whereby those in the awareness condition endorsed system justification ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.33$) directionally (though not significantly) less than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.33$), $t(351) = -1.60$, $d = -.28$, $p = .11$. The experience awareness condition fell between the two undirected conditions, not significantly differing from the aware ($p = .42$) or blind ($p = .43$) conditions. In the gender condition, I replicate previous findings, whereby those in the awareness condition ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.50$) endorsed system justification *more* than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.40$), $t(351) = 2.47$, $d = .36$, $p = .01$. Furthermore, in line with my hypotheses, those in the experience awareness condition endorsed system justification less than those in the aware condition ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.29$), $t(351) = -2.05$, $d = -.37$, $p = .041$. See Figure 7a.

System-Justifying Rationales

Denial of inequality. I find no main effects of social category ($p = .61$) or ideology ($p = .88$), but as expected, I find a significant social category x ideology interaction, $F(2, 351) = 3.37$, $p = .035$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$. For race, those in the awareness condition directionally endorsed denial of inequality less than those in the blindness condition ($M_{\text{aware}} = 3.05$, $SD = 1.39$; $M_{\text{blind}} = 3.41$, $SD = 1.63$), $t(351) = -1.45$, $d = -.24$, $p = .15$. Those in the experience awareness condition ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 1.46$) did not differ from either the aware ($p = .22$) or blind ($p = .81$) conditions. In contrast,

in the gender conditions, those in the awareness ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.30$) condition endorsed denial of inequality more than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(351) = 1.94$, $d = .42$, $p = .05$. Further, in line with the hypotheses, those in the experience awareness condition ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.46$), endorsed denial of inequality marginally less than those in the aware, $t(351) = -1.67$, $d = -.33$, $p = .097$, but no differently from those in the blind ($p = .75$) condition. See Figure 7b.

Essentialism. For essentialism, I find a significant main effect across social category, $F(1, 351) = 12.99$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .036$, whereby people endorsed gender essentialism ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 1.36$) significantly more than race essentialism ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.15$). There was also a main effect of social category ($p = .04$); however, this effect was qualified by the expected social category x ideology interaction, $F(2, 351) = 4.23$, $p = .015$, $\eta_p^2 = .024$. Replicating past results, within the race condition, manipulating ideologies did not affect endorsement of race essentialism ($M_{\text{aware}} = 3.61$, $SD = 1.18$; $M_{\text{blind}} = 3.66$, $SD = 1.11$; $M_{\text{experience}} = 3.62$, $SD = 1.15$; all p 's $> .80$). Within the gender conditions, those in the awareness condition ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 1.23$) endorsed gender essentialism significantly more than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.39$), $t(351) = 3.71$, $d = .67$, $p < .001$. The experience awareness condition fell between the two, whereby those in the experience-aware condition ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.34$) endorsed gender essentialism marginally less, $t(351) = -1.72$, $d = -.31$, $p = .086$, than those in the awareness condition, but significantly more than those in the blindness condition, $t(351) = 2.04$, $d = .35$, $p = .04$. See Figure 7c.

Opportunity Outcomes

Attitudes toward affirmative action. I do not find a significant main effect of social category ($p = .42$) or ideology condition ($p = .59$). However, I find a marginal social category x

ideology interaction, $F(2, 351) = 2.62, p = .074, \eta_p^2 = .015$. In the race conditions, I do not find a significant effect of ideology on attitudes toward affirmative action ($M_{\text{aware}} = 3.76, SD = 1.57$; $M_{\text{blind}} = 3.43, SD = 1.50$; $M_{\text{experience}} = 3.65, SD = 1.45$; all p 's $> .20$). In contrast, in the gender conditions, those in the awareness condition ($M = 3.39, SD = 1.50$) supported affirmative action marginally less than those in the blindness ($M = 3.91, SD = 1.35$), $t(351) = -1.80, d = -.34, p = .072$, and experience awareness ($M = 3.91, SD = 1.53$) $t(351) = -1.83, d = -.36, p = .068$, conditions. The blindness and experience awareness conditions did not differ from one another ($p = .99$). See Figure 7d.

Stereotyping.

Race. I find a marginal main effect across social categories, $F(2, 190) = 2.50, p = .085, \eta_p^2 = .026$, such that those in the awareness condition ($M = 3.64, SD = .41$) stereotyped more than those in the blindness ($M = 3.46, SD = .46$) condition, $t(190) = 2.23, d = .43, p = .027$. The experience awareness condition ($M = 3.55, SD = .52$) did not differ from either the aware or the blind conditions (p 's $> .25$).

Gender. I find a significant main effect across social categories, $F(2, 161) = 6.08, p = .003, \eta_p^2 = .07$, such that those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.58, SD = .60$) stereotyped less than both the awareness ($M = 3.88, SD = .56$), $t(161) = -2.86, d = -.52, p = .005$, and experience awareness ($M = 3.91, SD = .49$), $t(161) = -3.19, d = -.60, p = .002$, conditions. The awareness and experience awareness condition did not differ from one another ($p = .76$), suggesting that compared to blindness, experience awareness is not effective at stereotype reduction. See Figure 7e.

Discussion

Study 5 extended the findings of the past four studies, whereby I attempted to redirect the

types of differences being focused on through awareness and blindness. For race, I did not find strong effects of ideological condition overall. Thus, while my prediction that race awareness and experience awareness would not differ from one another was technically supported, these effects did not differ from race blindness, and therefore were not comparatively effective in reducing endorsement of system justification or system-justifying rationales. However, I find support for Hypothesis 5b, whereby compared to gender-awareness, experience awareness leads to less system justification, endorsement of system-justifying rationales, and more support for affirmative action for gender.

While this study provides some preliminary support for redirecting differences, it does so with several limitations. For one, contrasts between conditions were often weak, and oftentimes not significant. The large standard deviations muting effect sizes may suggest an important moderator within this study. Further, a larger number of individuals were excluded due to disagreement and disbelief of these messages. Past research has suggested that many race and gender beliefs and biases are malleable and can be shaped by news and media stories within a given day and time (Das, Bushman, Bezemer, Kerkhof & Vermeulen, 2009; Ramasubramanian, 2007). It is unclear whether an external event made race/gender beliefs more/less salient; however, this may be the case, given the robustness of these effects across studies (see meta-analysis) and past research which has found similar effects for race on system justification, denial of inequality, and affirmative action (see Mazzocco et al., 2011; Knowles et al., 2009; Wolsko et al., 2006). Further, it is notable that the extent to which individuals endorsed the awareness measure (the manipulation check) differed significantly across conditions (see Table 9); thus, the extent to which the manipulation affected awareness endorsement may have had an effect on outcomes of interest.

Additionally, while my prediction that experience awareness would affect external outcomes (denial of inequality and affirmative action) was supported, it did not diminish stereotyping. This is problematic, as stereotyping is a large factor preventing many groups, but especially women, from reaching positions of power (Heilman, 2001). Thus, though redirecting differences toward external sources may aid in developing policies that increase representation of women (such as affirmative action) it may not reduce stereotyping of women and thus, the efficacy of this intervention is unclear.

Finally, while I found that directing attributions toward external sources was an effective intervention on a number of outcomes, gender blindness remained an equally, if not more, effective intervention on all outcomes (including stereotyping). Thus, while directing awareness toward external sources may provide an effective intervention for both race and gender inequality, it seems muting internal differences remains a more effective intervention for gender inequality. Future research should examine the combination of minimizing internal differences, while emphasizing external differences, to leverage the power of these ideologies.

Study 7: Experience Awareness on Gender Outcomes

Study 7 sought to replicate the effects of Study 6, specifically focusing on gender. In the last study, I found some support for my hypotheses that experience awareness may have the potential to aid in mitigating system justification and related outcomes for gender (though not necessarily race). Given the focus on providing an intervention that mitigates the negative effects of gender awareness in the last study, I focus on the potential of experience awareness for gender to examine its potential for leveraging the benefits for gender inequality.

In this study, I use the same paradigm as Study 6, whereby 282 male participants from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (non-overlapping with previous studies) were invited to take part in

a study on “Reading and Comprehension” and “Attitudes and Perceptions.” Six participants were removed for failing a manipulation check, and 69 (24%) for disagreeing with the premise of the ideology. The final sample consisted of 207 men (78% White, 8% Asian, 5% Black, 6% Hispanic, 3% Other), with an average age of 37.69 ($SD = 12.33$). Fifty-seven percent of the sample had a bachelor’s degree or more education, with on average 15.56 years of work experience ($SD = 8.12$).

Again, participants were recruited for what was ostensibly a two-part study on 1) “Evaluating Press Releases” and 2) “Attitudes and “Evaluations.” In the first part of the study, participants were given a list of eight possible press releases that they could receive and then asked to evaluate an article espousing the merits of an awareness versus blindness versus experience awareness approach. They then moved on to the second part of the study, where they were asked to answer questions about their attitudes and opinions, filling out scales related to system justification, system-justifying rationales (denial of inequality and biological essentialism), and opportunity outcomes (attitudes toward affirmative action and stereotypes). After answering these questions, participants were debriefed, thanked, and paid.

Dependent Variables

Manipulation check. Participants filled out the awareness measure, rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .87$).

System justification. Participants completed the system justification measure (Kay & Jost, 2003) on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .91$).

System-justifying rationales.

Denial of inequality. Participants filled out the denial of discrimination/privilege measure rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .91$)

Biological essentialism. Participants completed the biological essentialism measure, rating their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha = .87$).

Opportunity outcomes.

Attitudes toward affirmative action. I use the same items as in Study 4, where participants rated their endorsement on a scale from 1 = *strongly agree* to 7 = *strongly disagree* ($\alpha = .90$).

Stereotypes. I use the same stereotypes as in all studies thus far for gender (agency [$\alpha = .78$], communality [$\alpha = .81$], and overall [$\alpha = .85$]).

Results

Manipulation Check

There was a significant effect of the manipulation on awareness endorsement, $F(2, 204) = 26.93, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .21$, such that those in the blindness condition endorsed an awareness ideology less ($M = 3.79, SD = 1.03$) than both those in the awareness condition ($M = 4.85, SD = .90$), $t(204) = -6.26, d = -1.11, p < .001$, and those in the experience awareness condition ($M = 4.88, SD = 1.03$), $t(204) = -6.51, d = -1.17, p < .001$. There were no differences between the awareness and the experience awareness conditions ($p = .88$), suggesting that the experience awareness manipulation had its intended effect and led participants to endorse an “awareness” ideology. Correlations between variables can be found in Table 10.

System Justification

Counter to hypotheses, I find no effect of condition on system justification, $F(2, 204) = .04, p = .96, \eta_p^2 < .001$, such that there were no significant differences between conditions ($M_{\text{aware}} = 3.89, SD = 1.46$; $M_{\text{blind}} = 3.89, SD = 1.40$; $M_{\text{exp}} = 3.83, SD = 1.31$), with no significant contrasts between conditions (p 's $> .80$).

System-Justifying Rationales

Denial of inequality. I find a significant effect on denial of inequality, $F(2, 204) = 3.68$, $p = .027$, $\eta_p^2 = .035$. Consistent with past studies, I find those in the awareness condition ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 1.24$) endorsed denial of inequality more than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.33$), $t(204) = 2.05$, $d = .43$, $p = .01$. In line with hypotheses, those in the experience awareness condition ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.25$) endorsed denial of inequality less than those in the awareness condition, $t(204) = -2.16$, $d = -.37$, $p = .03$, but not differently from those in the blindness condition ($p = .69$).

Biological essentialism. I find a significant effect on biological essentialism, $F(2, 204) = 5.71$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .053$. Consistent with past studies, I find those in the awareness condition ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.01$) endorsed biological essentialism more than those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.33$), $t(204) = 3.36$, $d = .43$, $p < .001$. In line with hypotheses, those in the experience awareness condition ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 1.27$) endorsed denial of inequality less than those in the awareness condition, $t(204) = -1.97$, $d = -.36$, $p = .05$, but not differently from those in the blindness condition ($p = .18$).

Opportunity Outcomes

Attitudes toward affirmative action. I find a significant effect on attitudes toward affirmative action, $F(2, 204) = 3.74$, $p = .025$, $\eta_p^2 = .035$. Consistent with past studies, I find those in the awareness condition ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 1.41$) were less supportive of affirmative action policies, compared to those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.55$), $t(204) = -2.45$, $d = -.42$, $p = .015$. In line with hypotheses, those in the experience awareness condition ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.44$) endorsed denial of inequality less than those in the awareness condition, $t(204) = -2.29$, $d = -.39$, $p = .023$, but not differently from those in the blindness condition ($p = .83$).

Stereotypes. I find a significant effect on stereotyping, $F(2, 204) = 3.27, p = .040, \eta_p^2 = .031$. Consistent with past studies, I find those in the awareness condition ($M = 3.71, SD = .49$) were more likely to endorse gender stereotypes, compared to those in the blindness condition ($M = 3.50, SD = .49$), $t(204) = 2.48, d = .43, p = .01$. In line with results found in Study 6, those in the experience awareness condition ($M = 3.65, SD = .51$) were marginally more likely to stereotype than those in the blindness condition, $t(204) = 1.80, d = .30, p = .07$, and endorsed stereotypes similarly to those in the awareness condition ($p = .47$).

Mediations

Though there was no direct effect of the ideological conditions on system justification, recall that my argument predicts the effects of system justification to operate through system-justifying rationales; and thus, non-significant paths do not preclude testing for an indirect effect (Hayes, 2009; Rucker, Preacher, Tormala & Petty, 2011). To examine the effects of mediation with a three-level categorical variable, I computed two dummy variables that when both entered represent all three levels. Specifically, using PROCESS Model 4 (with 5,000 bootstraps) I entered the two critical dummy variables (1 = experience-aware, 0 = aware, 0 = blind), with a control dummy (1 = blind, 0 = experience-aware, 0 = aware), which tested for the presence of the indirect effect between the *experience aware* and *aware* conditions through denial of inequality. Indeed, relative to gender awareness, both experience awareness (*indirect effect* = $-.27, SE = .13, CI_{95} = -.53, -.02$) and gender blindness (*indirect effect* = $-.32, SE = .13, CI_{95} = -.59, -.06$) lessened denial of inequality, which decreased support for the status quo. The same pattern occurred through essentialism, whereby, relative to gender awareness, both experience awareness (*indirect effect* = $-.18, SE = .10, CI_{95} = -.39, -.01$) and gender blindness (*indirect effect* = $-.32, SE = .11, CI_{95} = -.56, -.12$) decreased system justification through essentialism.

After testing indirect effects on system justification, I also examined whether experience awareness would affect opportunity outcomes through system-justifying rationales. As with Study 4, I examined whether ideology condition effects on attitudes toward affirmative action could be explained by denial of inequality, as a system-justifying rationale. Indeed, I find that the effects of experience awareness (*indirect effect* = .34, *SE* = .16, *CI*₉₅ = .04, .67) and gender blindness (*indirect effect* = .42, *SE* = .17, *CI*₉₅ = .09, .76) on support for affirmative action operate through denial of inequality.

I also examined whether gender essentialism would provide an indirect pathway between ideological conditions and gender stereotyping. As with Study 4, I find that the reduced stereotyping that follows gender blindness can be explained by gender essentialism (*indirect effect* = .42, *SE* = .17, *CI*₉₅ = .09, .76). Further while I do not find that experience awareness directly reduces stereotyping (compared to gender awareness), the mediated path through essentialism provides an indirect effect (*indirect effect* = -.04, *SE* = .02, *CI*₉₅ = -.08, -.002). In other words, experience awareness reduces essentialist beliefs, which in turn reduced gender stereotyping.

Discussion

Study 7 showed that, for women, experience awareness provides the potential to leverage an awareness ideology to achieve similar benefits to gender blindness, lessening system-justifying rationales, and increasing support for affirmative action. While this study provides some support for redirecting differences, I find that there was no main effect on system justification between conditions. My argument is premised on the assumption that it is through system-justifying rationales that diversity ideologies differentially affect the status quo; thus, by finding system justification affected through these mechanisms I support my hypothesis, and as I

demonstrate next through a meta-analysis, despite this null result, the effect of gender ideologies on system justification appears to be robust (see meta-analysis below). However, it remains unclear why system justification was unaffected by the experimental manipulations. Further, for stereotyping, I again find that experience awareness was more similar to gender awareness, suggesting the potential for experience awareness to exacerbate stereotyping. Nonetheless, in this study I find an indirect effect, such that experience awareness reduced gender essentialism, which in turn reduced gender stereotyping. Thus, it is clear more research is needed to understand the implications of experience awareness on outcomes that affect women.

Meta-Analysis

Given the apparent heterogeneity in the effect size across awareness and system justification (and accompanying rationales), I conducted an internal meta-analysis of studies that directly compared and contrasted race and gender awareness (versus blindness) on system justification, denial of inequality, and essentialism, following the procedures outlined in Rosenthal (1991), for combining and comparing effect sizes. See Figure 8 for plots.

Awareness Ideologies on System Justification

Race. For race awareness, I find a robust negative relationship between race awareness and system justification, such that those who endorse or are primed with awareness (compared to blindness) are less likely to justify the status quo ($r = -.25, p < .001$). Further, comparing both awareness and blindness to control conditions, I find the baseline level of system justification does not differ from race blindness ($r = .07, p = .25$), but is significantly reduced through race awareness ($r = -.15, p = .02$).

Gender. Similarly, I find a robust positive relationship between gender awareness and system justification ($r = .19, p < .001$), such that those who endorse or are primed with gender

awareness are *more* likely to support system justification. Further, I find the control conditions are more in line with gender awareness, where system justification endorsement does not differ from gender-aware conditions ($r = .10, p = .13$), but is significantly less endorsed in the gender-blind conditions ($r = -.15, p = .03$). This result seems to suggest that race blindness and gender awareness represent the status quo, as they are system-justifying rationales.

Awareness Ideologies on Rationales for Inequality

Race. I find consistent support that race awareness relates to less denial of inequality ($r = -.25, p < .001$). Consistent with arguments for race blindness as the baseline I find no differences in denial of inequality between blind and control ($r = -.01, p = .99$), but significantly less endorsement in the aware conditions ($r = -.25, p < .001$). Further, I find no effect of race awareness on essentialism ($r = -.02, p = .60$).

Gender. I find a robust positive effect of gender awareness on denial of inequality ($r = .26, p < .001$), such that compared to blindness, gender awareness related to more denial of inequality; however, neither gender awareness ($r = .14, p = .06$) nor blindness ($r = .08, p = .32$) significantly deviated from the control. Further, I find a significant positive effect of gender awareness on essentialism ($r = .40, p < .001$), where the gender awareness condition led to *greater* essentialist beliefs ($r = .15, p = .03$) while gender blindness led to *lesser* essentialist beliefs ($r = -.19, p < .008$). Thus, while gender awareness may represent the status quo (as noted above), it seems that awareness increases essentialism, while blindness decreases it from the baseline. Further, though gender awareness related to both denial of inequality and essentialism rationales, consistent with my argument, the effect of essentialism was much more pronounced, corroborating my argument that essentialism represents a stronger system-justifying rationale.

Discussion

This meta-analysis offered support that across studies, race and gender awareness had divergent effects on system justification and affected unique system-justifying rationales. For race, awareness negatively related to system justification and denial of inequality (but not essentialism), supporting the notion that race awareness exposes inequality and lessens justification for the status quo. In contrast, for gender, awareness positively related to system justification as well as denial of inequality and essentialism. Supporting my hypotheses, awareness represents a system-justifying rationale that increases biological notions of gender (thereby allowing individuals to deny inequality) and supports the status quo.

CHAPTER 5: GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present research proposed, tested, and demonstrated that the same approaches to diversity—either being aware of or blind to differences—had divergent effects on certain forms of race and gender inequality. I argued the types of differences being embraced versus suppressed through race and gender awareness differentially supported the status quo, creating different baselines upon which ideologies intervene. That is, both being blind to racial (opportunity) and aware of gender (role) differences serve to legitimize inequality, maintain power for the dominant group, and justify the current status quo. For race, awareness promotes equality by exposing the opportunity-limiting differences facing Blacks, lessening denial of inequality, decreasing support for the status quo, and increasing support for affirmative action policies. In contrast, for gender, awareness hinders equality by embracing biological, social-role differences, which legitimizes the gender-hierarchy by seeing men as more capable of leadership and success.

In Chapter 1, I provided an initial test of this hypothesis, both validating and measuring (Study 1 – 2), as well as manipulating (Study 3) race and gender diversity ideologies, and examining their divergent relationship to system justification. In line with hypotheses, I find that race awareness is negatively related to system justification, suggesting it is a system-disrupting ideology; whereas gender awareness is positively related to system justification, suggesting it is a system-justifying ideology. Further, I give insight into *why* race and gender awareness ideologies have divergent effects on system justification, demonstrating their relationships to distinct system-justifying *rationales*. I show that race blindness serves as a system-justifying ideology, as it allows Whites to *deny inequality* between racial groups; thus, race awareness exposes racial inequality, thereby lessening support for the status quo. In contrast, gender awareness acts on a

unique system-justifying rationale—gender essentialism—thereby allowing individuals to embrace the status quo by seeing men and women’s differences as biological, natural, and unchangeable, thus legitimizing the status quo.

In Chapter 2, I showed the downstream consequences of these awareness ideologies for outcomes that affect racial minorities’ and women’s opportunities (*opportunity outcomes*). In Study 4, I experimentally manipulate awareness and blindness and show the consequences of diversity ideologies for outcomes that affect racial minority and female representation in positions of power: attitudes toward affirmative action and stereotyping, respectively. I show that race awareness increases Whites’ support for policies that disrupt the status quo and provide solutions to inequality (i.e., affirmative action). In contrast, awareness ideologies heightened traditional gender stereotyping. Further, I show that these effects are distinctly driven by the system-justifying rationales race and gender awareness ideologies act upon. For race, awareness decreases *denial of inequality*, thereby increasing support for affirmative action: a policy that address inequity between Blacks and Whites. For gender, awareness increases *biological essentialism*, which heightens gender stereotyping and associates men with leadership.

In Chapter 3, I provide an intervention that *directs differences toward experience*, to provide a holistic intervention for race and gender as well as support my theory that race and gender awareness act upon unique types of differences (external versus internal), which differentially support the status quo and cause their divergent effects. First, I examine this in an institutional setting, showing that when awareness is directed toward experiences (opportunity, experience, issues, treatment), endorsement of both race and gender awareness relates to less system justification (Study 5). Next, I examine the consequences of experience awareness, examining the effects of this approach for system justification, system-justifying rationales, and

opportunity outcomes for women and minorities. While I do not find strong support for experience awareness for race (which I expected to differ from blind but have similar effect to the aware condition) in Study 6, for gender, I find that compared to awareness, experience awareness lessened endorsement of system-justifying rationales (denial of inequality, essentialism), which had implications for system justification and opportunity outcomes (Study 6—7). Thus, by directing which *types* of differences awareness acts upon, I provide an intervention that renders awareness similarly effective for both race and gender (see Study 5).

By meta-analyzing these results, I show the consistent, robust, and divergent effects of race and gender awareness on system justification and system-justifying rationales. I demonstrate that race awareness solely acts upon a *denial of inequality* system-justifying rationale, leading Whites to be more cognizant of inequality, and does not act upon essentialist beliefs.

Additionally, I show that while gender awareness also acts upon a denial of inequality rationale, gender essentialism shows a stronger relationship, offering a more effective rationalization.

Finally, I show for race, blindness represents the status quo, showing no differences compared to the baseline (control), whereas awareness decreases system justification and denial of inequality, corroborating my argument that race awareness is a system-disrupting ideology. In contrast, I show that for gender, awareness represents the status quo, showing no differences compared to the baseline (control), whereas blindness decreases system justification and gender essentialism.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

By showing the divergent effects of awareness ideologies for race and gender relations, I contribute to multiple theories, showing how and why the same diversity approach that works for one group can backfire when applied to another, and caution against holistic approaches to diversity.

Diversity ideologies. I add to the literature on diversity in several ways, offering a unified theory of why and how diversity ideologies help or hinder intergroup relations, questioning their holistic applicability to race and gender relations, and providing a unified solution toward bettering both race and gender relations.

First, although research has shown that ideologies can have benefits for interracial relations, here I present a unified demonstration of *why* race awareness seems to improve intergroup dynamics. By showing the theoretical foundations (testing system justification and system-justifying rationales) and moving toward opportunity outcomes (affirmative action and stereotyping), I demonstrate the processes through which these effects can take place and the unique implications they have for Blacks and women.

I further add to this literature by directly comparing how these ideologies act upon race and gender inequality, measuring the same outcomes, but showing the unique effects for both groups. Importantly, I distinguish between the types of differences affected by ideologies for race and gender. I show that for Blacks (and not women), the types of differences being exposed through awareness are opportunity-limiting stereotypes. For women (and not Blacks), the differences being suppressed through blindness are stereotypical gender-roles. As such, awareness exposes the opportunity-limiting nature of racial differences, but reifies the biological functionality of gender differences. By demonstrating that diversity ideologies act upon unique types of differences for race and gender, I provide insight into how to design diversity approaches that are effective for multiple groups. This work suggests that directing *which* differences to highlight or suppress through awareness and blindness may lead to more effective interventions for addressing inequality.

Adding to the burgeoning intersectionality literature, I show that holistic approaches to

diversity have the potential to backfire. In the past, much research has examined effects of diversity, bias, and evaluation using a broad array of social identities and group affiliations to triangulate support for an argument (i.e., political affiliation, gender, perceptual style, race, shirt color). Although in-group and out-group biases can often transfer across social categories (any in- versus out-group will produce similar effects), here I argue that there are times and contexts in which it is necessary to examine social categories independently. In this case, endorsement of awareness versus blindness can have profoundly different effects for race and gender, and applying research from one social category (race) to another (gender) seems to have harmful consequences. This is especially important, as many assume that awareness is adaptive for multiple social groups; though well-intentioned, it seems as though for gender, awareness heightens stereotypes about men being better suited for occupational success, rendering blindness (or externally directed awareness) a better strategy.

Finally, I suggest that though much work on diversity ideologies has focused on the antecedents and consequences of awareness and blindness ideologies, this emphasis is misguided. Rather than placing an overreliance on diversity ideologies as solutions, I suggest that it is necessary to understand the types of differences they emphasize versus suppress and the purpose for doing so. Both awareness and blindness have the potential—and have been shown—to backfire for intergroup relations (see Sasaki & Vorauer, 2013 and Rattan & Ambady, 2013 for review). Many scholars have shown great interest in this disconnect and hypothesized a number of moderators (Apfelbaum et al., 2016; Verkuyten & Brug, 2004; Sasaki & Vorauer, 2013). I argue that this disconnect is driven by the types of differences highlighted or downplayed through awareness and blindness, respectively, and their role in system justification. That is, awareness carries both the potential to highlight inequality and increase support for systemic

solutions to inequality, but also the potential to highlight social roles (and therefore the “natural order”), exacerbating stereotypes and legitimizing inequality. Similarly, blindness carries both the potential to minimize and ignore inequality, decreasing support for systemic solutions, but also the potential to be adaptive and suppress social-role stereotypes, creating more egalitarian views of groups. By focusing on the types of differences we need to highlight and downplay, I argue there is potential to leverage *both* awareness and blindness to increase intergroup equality.

Bias disruption. This research adds to the work on bias disruption for racial minorities and women, and offers multiple strategies to combat bias against both groups. For race, many individuals deny inequality and oppose affirmative action. Here, I demonstrate that race awareness carries the potential to increase cognizance around racial inequality and increase support for system-disrupting policies, with the potential to increase racial equality. Further, for gender, stereotypes are powerful, pervasive, and oftentimes pernicious, affecting a host of outcomes for women at work. Here I demonstrate that gender blindness carries the potential to decrease essentialist attributions for gender, and role-based stereotyping, with the potential to increase gender equality. Thus, the current work offers a simple debiasing strategy: simply encouraging individuals to be aware of racial differences and deemphasizing the salience of gender. These strategies are simple yet effective, and move beyond traditional, heavy-handed interventions that focus on bettering intergroup relations through contact (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000), training (Devine, Forscher, Austin & Cox 2012), and repeated reinforcement (Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton & Tropp, 2008). It seems that adopting a race-aware and gender-blind approach to differences may be an effective way to increase policy support, decrease biases, and ameliorate inequality.

Further, methodologically, I add to the measurement and intervention of diversity

ideologies. First, I created a validated scale that can be used to measure support of diversity ideologies for both race and gender, contributing to the measurement of these ideologies. Second, I created article manipulations, which can be used to manipulate individuals' support for diversity ideologies. As Sasaki and Vorauer (2013) note, most interventions rely on the Wolsko et al. (2000) primes, and suggest less heavy-handed interventions would be useful. Here, I heeded this call, adding manipulations to our social psychological tools to manipulate ideologies. Finally, I add to the work on holistic diversity interventions by showing that by shifting the content of differences being focused on for race and gender ideologies, awareness can have the same beneficial effects for both race and gender relations. That is, by increasing individuals' focus on the opportunity, experiential, and treatment differences between Blacks and Whites *and* men and women, in both cases, awareness has the potential to reduce system justification and denial of inequality and increase support for affirmative action. Thus, I add a novel, yet simple intervention to our arsenal of strategies: *experience awareness*, which may provide an effective strategy that can be used across organizations to address both race and gender inequality (see Study 5).

Limitations and Future Directions

While this research found support for both the potential and perils of awareness (and blindness) ideologies, it did so with several limitations.

First, many studies examined individuals' cognition, examining their endorsement of system justification, system-justifying rationales, and biases. However, more research is needed to understand whether these diversity ideologies have effects on actual *behavior*, as individuals' engagement in such behavior is necessary for them to have any implications. However, much research has shown the behavioral correlates of system justification (see Jost et al., 2009b),

offering hope that these interventions can and will help.

Second, these studies specifically focused on out-group members (Whites and men), and thus future research is necessary to understand how racial minorities and women react to ideological interventions. Indeed, past work has shown that racial minorities differ in their endorsement of, and reaction to, diversity ideologies (Ryan et al., 2007; Verkuyten, 2005), and thus it is important to examine outcomes for both groups, such as their self-perceptions and behavior. Further, I solely examined dominant groups' reactions to subordinate groups. Future research is needed to examine how these ideologies affect Whites' and men's self-perception and behavior toward other members of their respective in-groups. Finally, in examining racial ideologies, I focus on Black-White relations, as these remain contentious, complex, and anxiety-laden (Markus et al., 2000; Ryan et al., 2007), and also to speak to past research on diversity ideologies, which predominantly examine these relations. However, it is important to understand the effects of race ideologies for *all* racial groups in the United States and beyond. In some contexts, where stereotypes are positive and readily embraced, awareness can exacerbate stereotypes (Gutiérrez & Unzueta, 2010) and increase representational concerns (Apfelbaum et al., 2016). Thus, examining the effects of diversity ideologies for other groups remains a fruitful area for future research.

Third, neither gender nor race are monolithic categories. I examined overall attitudes toward Blacks and women; however, much past research has shown that the most salient categories of those social groups are Black men and White women (see Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). However, there is both confusion and contradiction of simultaneously being aware of *and* blind to difference for an individual who holds multiple subordinate categories (i.e., Black women). Thus, it is important—if not imperative—to understand the implications of

ideologies for *all* individuals whom they might affect. Specifically, the implications of these ideologies for Black women is unclear, and future research is needed to examine how these approaches to difference affect intersectional categories, who are just as (and sometimes more) affected by the discrimination these approaches seek to overcome.

With regards to the utility of my experience awareness intervention, I did not find that this strategy worked above and beyond gender blindness; indeed, stereotyping (a primary opportunity outcome of interest) remained unaffected by this intervention. Further, awareness interventions—both undirected and externally directed—at times heightened participants’ endorsement of positive, cultural, racial stereotypes. Though acknowledging positive stereotypes can sometimes be adaptive in recognizing the unique cultures and identities different groups may experience (Devine & Elliot, 1995), they can also insidiously create a “minority spotlight” or “positive stereotype threat” effect (Zou & Cheryan, 2015), leading to negative consequences. Though experience awareness may highlight the different experiences, obstacles, and opportunities of women, increasing support for policy changes, it may not be effective in reducing the stereotypes that can hinder both women’s and racial minorities’ opportunities; thus, more work on interventions that both increase awareness of external (opportunity, experiential) differences, but blind individuals to internal (biological, stereotypical) differences is needed.

CONCLUSION

Given that many groups, organizations, and nations endorse holistic approaches to diversity, advocating for the recognition and acceptance of differences, it is important to understand the unintended consequences of this approach. It seems as though this approach is not equally effective for all groups, and that, especially for women, it may unintentionally exacerbate prejudice. Not only is it important to understand the effectiveness of diversity ideologies, but it is

equally—if not more—important to understand the types of differences being discussed and the purpose for doing so. By recognizing differences in experience, and blinding differences in social roles, diversity science can leverage both awareness and blindness ideologies as a solution for disrupting the status quo and mitigating intergroup bias and promoting inclusion.

Table 1: Correlation Table Between Race Awareness and Related Variables in Study 1

		Race											
		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Awareness	4.31	0.94										
2	System Justification	3.92	1.39	-.45***									
3	Opportunity Attributions	4.60	1.90	.24*	-.38***								
4	Modern Prejudice	3.52	1.65	-.44***	.63***	-.71***							
5	Symbolic Racism	2.66	0.76	-.35**	.53***	-.67***	.88***						
6	Protestant Work Ethic	4.42	1.13	-.22*	.48***	-.26*	.54***	.53***					
7	Biological Attributions	2.86	1.89	.15	.13	-.12	.25*	.35**	.29*				
8	Essentialism	3.83	1.12	.07	.10	-.27*	.34**	.41***	.17	.53***			
9	Stereotyping (All)	3.41	0.42	.11	.24*	-.18	.33***	.39***	.26*	.17	.23*		
10	Positive Stereotyping	3.38	0.51	.25*	-.06	.06	-.11	-.13	-.001	-.07	-0.13	.67***	
11	Negative Stereotyping	3.44	0.63	-.06	.37**	-.29**	.54***	.64***	.35**	.28*	.41***	.79***	.08

N = 81 * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table 2: Correlation Table Between Gender Awareness and Related Variables in Study 1

		Gender												
		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Awareness	4.36	0.90											
2	System Justification	4.07	1.17	.31**										
3	Biological Attribution	4.58	1.92	.52***	.38***									
4	Essentialism	4.34	1.13	.65***	.39***	.49***								
5	Stereotyping (All)	3.72	0.55	.38***	.09	.36**	.30**							
6	Agency Stereotyping	3.63	0.59	.37***	.03	.34**	.35**	.89***						
7	Communal Stereotyping	3.81	0.63	.30**	.14	.31**	.20†	.91***	.62***					
8	Benevolent Sexism	3.23	1.23	.39***	.29**	.31**	.17	.24*	.10	.32**				
9	Opportunity Attribution	4.49	1.80	-.19†	-.20†	-.13	-.32**	.08	.09	.06	.03			
10	Modern Prejudice	3.84	1.55	.49***	.42***	.49***	.65***	.17	.24*	.08	.01	-.44***		
11	Protestant Work Ethic	4.39	0.86	.43***	.37***	.29**	.43***	.25*	.22*	.23*	.41***	-.16	.36**	
12	Hostile Sexism	3.01	1.36	.41***	.12	.56***	.48***	.29**	.32**	.20†	.18†	-.23*	.64***	.34**

N = 91; † $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table 3: Correlations Between Variables in Study 3

	Race		Gender		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	M	SD	M	SD								
1. Condition (Blind vs. Aware)	1.45	0.50	1.44	0.50	-	-.44***	-.31**	-.27*	-.32***	-.18	-.16	-.08
2. Awareness	4.40	0.96	4.41	1.10	-.37***	-	.21*	.38***	.58***	.11	.23*	.14
3. System Justification	3.68	1.31	3.80	1.44	.24*	-.40***	-	.41***	.27**	.35***	.15	.19*
4. Denial of Inequality (z-score)	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	.27*	-.59***	.60***	-	.58***	.48***	.60***	.16†
5. Biological Essentialism	3.19	1.23	4.29	1.08	.21*	-.28**	.37***	.53***	-	.33***	.47***	.39***
6. Social Dominance	2.04	1.13	2.61	1.26	.07	-.36***	.40***	.55***	.36***	-	.54***	.15
7. [Symbolic] [Hostile] Prejudice	2.05	0.68	2.57	1.06	.32**	-.53***	-.54***	.86***	.61***	.49***	-	.35***
8. Benevolent Sexism	-	-	2.85	1.07	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note: Correlations for race and gender conditions below and above diagonal, respectively. #7 represents symbolic prejudice in the race conditions and hostile prejudice in the gender conditions † < .10 * p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001.

Table 4: Contrasts Between Social Category and Ideology Conditions in Study 3

Social Category	Ideology	Awareness		System Justification		Essentialism		Denial of Inequality		SDO		Hostile Sexism		Benevolent Sexism	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Race	Aware	4.73 _{a,d}	0.89	3.41 _a	1.39	2.96 _a	1.27	-.28 _a	0.84	1.87 _a	.97				
	Blind	4.02 _b	0.97	4.10 _b	1.22	3.46 _b	1.33	.28 _b	1.17	2.03 _a	1.17				
	Control	4.36 _c	0.93	3.62 _{a,c}	1.24	3.21 _{a,b}	1.11	.05 _{a,b}	0.95	2.20 _a	1.24				
Gender	Aware	4.85 _a	1.08	4.20 _b	1.39	4.58 _d	1.10	.20 _c	1.02	2.78 _b	1.20	2.64 _a	.98	2.99 _a	1.11
	Blind	3.78 _b	1.12	3.28 _a	1.47	3.86 _{b,e}	1.02	-.27 _d	1.02	2.32 _{a,b}	1.33	2.33 _a	1.01	2.83 _a	1.00
	Control	4.46 _{c,d}	0.88	3.82 _{a,b,c}	1.36	4.34 _{d,e}	1.01	-.04 _{c,d}	0.92	2.67 _b	1.27	2.70 _a	1.16	2.72 _a	1.09

Subscripts that differ represent significant differences below p < .055.

*Note: Modern prejudice is z-scored within condition and cannot be compared across race and gender.

Table 5: Correlation Table in Study 4

	Race		Gender		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	M	SD	M	SD									
1. Condition (Blind v. Aware)	1.51	0.50	1.50	0.50	-	-.51***	-.20*	-.13	-.33***	.08	-.21*	-.24**	-.15
2. Awareness	4.15	0.94	4.41	1.00	-.53***	-	.25**	.29***	.52***	-.34***	.27***	.20**	.27***
3. System Justification	3.94	1.37	3.85	1.30	.19*	-.03	-	.38***	.22**	-.19*	.09	.14 [†]	.01
4. Denial of Inequality	3.52	1.44	3.60	1.24	.22*	-.03	.44***	-	.56***	-.66***	.10	.18*	.01
5. Biological Essentialism	3.64	1.14	4.33	1.15	-.07	.18**	.19**	.39***	-	-.63***	.32***	.32***	.25**
6. Attitudes toward AA	3.40	1.44	3.58	1.27	-.21*	.07	-.28***	-.69***	-.32***	-	-.19*	-.20**	-.14 [†]
7. Stereotyping	3.51	0.53	3.54	0.46	-.06	.02	.08	.21**	.15*	-.25**	-	.88***	.89***
8. Pos. [Agency] Stereotyping	3.49	0.65	3.44	0.43	-.07	-.01	.05	.10	-.02	-.16*	.85***	-	.58***
9. Neg. [Comm.] Stereotyping	3.52	0.62	3.68	0.67	-.04	.04	.09	.25***	.23**	-.27**	.82***	.40***	-

Note: Correlations for race and gender conditions below and above diagonal, respectively. [†] $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table 6: Contrasts Between Social Category and Ideology Conditions in Study 4

Social Category	Ideology	Awareness		System Justification		Essentialism		Denial of Inequality		Stereotypes*		Attitude toward AA	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Race	Aware	4.70 _a	0.82	3.56 _a	1.33	3.64 _a	1.23	3.00 _a	1.32	3.49 _a	0.49	3.89 _a	1.37
	Blind	3.63 _b	0.88	4.07 _b	1.37	3.48 _a	1.01	3.62 _b	1.44	3.42 _a	0.58	3.30 _{b,c}	1.46
	Control	4.14 _c	0.81	4.14 _b	1.36	3.77 _a	1.16	3.87 _b	1.44	3.59 _a	0.51	3.07 _c	1.39
Gender	Aware	4.98 _a	0.92	4.10 _b	1.34	4.70 _b	0.96	3.79 _b	1.30	3.61 _b	0.44	3.50 _{a,b,c}	1.32
	Blind	3.87 _b	0.98	3.57 _a	1.26	3.96 _c	1.18	3.47 _b	1.12	3.41 _c	0.45	3.69 _{a,b}	1.18
	Control	4.30 _c	0.77	3.88 _{a,b}	1.27	4.32 _{b,c}	1.18	3.54 _b	1.30	3.59 _b	0.48	3.55 _{a,b}	1.30

Columns that share different subscripts are significant at $p < .055$.

*Stereotypes represent cultural stereotypes within race, and gender stereotypes within gender, conditions and are not compared across social categories.

Table 7: Awareness Endorsement on System Justification in Study 5

Gender			Race		
	Model 1	Model 2		Model 1	Model 2
Gender Awareness	-0.18 (.05)***	-0.14 (0.51)**	Race Awareness	-0.14 (.05)**	-.10 (.04)*
White		0.28 (0.19)	Male		.41 (.15)**
Age		-0.04 (0.04)	Age		-.03 (.03)
Sexuality		0.37 (0.33)	Sexuality		.52 (.31)†
Relationship Status		0.31 (0.17)†	Relationship Status		-.19 (.15)
Political Ideology		0.20 (0.07)**	Political Ideology		-.24 (.05)***
Tenure at School		-0.33 (0.17)†	Tenure at School		-.29 (.15)*
_cons		6.55 (1.16)***	_cons		7.26 (1.05)***
<i>R</i> ²		0.15	<i>R</i> ²		0.24
<i>N</i>		202	<i>N</i>		226

† $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

White coded such that 1 = White; 0 = Non-White

Male coded such that 1 = Male; 0 = Female

Sexuality coded such that 1 = Straight; 0 = Other

Relationship status coded such that 1 = In Relationship; 0 = Single

Political Ideology coded such that 1 = very liberal - 7 = very conservative

Tenure at School coded such that 0 = less than 1 year; 1 = 1 year or more

Table 8: Correlation Table for Study 6

		Race		Gender		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		M	SD	M	SD									
1.	Condition (Blind v. Aware)	1.50	0.50	1.51	0.50	-	-	-	.63***	.21*	.21*	.32***	-.18 [†]	.26**
2.	Condition (Aware v. E-Aware)	1.50	0.50	1.51	0.50	-	-	-	-.12	-.18 [†]	-.16 [†]	-.16	.17 [†]	.03
3.	Condition (Blind v. E-Aware)	1.50	0.50	1.52	0.50	-	-	-	.58***	.04	.03	.18 [†]	-.001	.30**
4.	Awareness	4.34	0.79	4.52	1.15	.41***	-.02	.45***	-	.26***	.25**	.58***	-.24**	.36***
5.	System Justification	3.80	1.24	3.65	1.42	-.14	.08	-.08	-.22**	-	.37***	.32***	-.18*	-.001
6.	Denial of Inequality	3.27	1.50	3.19	1.37	-.12	.11	-.02	-.22**	.59***	-	.47***	-.69***	-.20**
7.	Biological Essentialism	3.63	1.15	4.11	1.36	-.03	.01	-.02	.08	.30***	.46***	-	-.50***	.23**
8.	Attitudes towards AA	3.61	1.51	3.74	1.48	.11	-.04	.08	.23**	-.38***	-.66***	-.38***	-	-.02
9.	Stereotyping	3.55	0.47	3.79	0.57	.21*	-.10	.09	.10	.02	.02	.11	-.21**	-

Note: Correlations for race and gender conditions below and above diagonal, respectively. [†] < .10 * p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001.

Table 9: Contrasts between Social Category and Ideology Conditions in Study 6

Ideology	Awareness		System Justification		Denial of Inequality		Essentialism		Affirmative Action		Stereotyping	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Race												
Aware	4.58 _a	0.79	3.61 _{a,c}	1.33	3.05 _a	1.39	3.61 _a	1.18	3.76 _{a,b,c}	1.57	3.65 _a	0.42
Blind	3.87 _b	0.79	3.98 _{a,b}	1.33	3.41 _{a,b}	1.62	3.66 _{a,c}	1.11	3.42 _a	1.50	3.46 _b	0.46
Experience	4.55 _a	0.55	3.80 _{a,b,c}	1.03	3.35 _{a,b}	1.46	3.62 _{a,c}	1.15	3.65 _{a,b,c}	1.45	3.56 _{a,b}	0.52
Gender												
Aware	5.08 _c	0.88	4.03 _b	1.50	3.52 _b	1.30	4.53 _b	1.23	3.39 _{a,b}	1.50	3.88 _a	0.56
Blind	3.53 _d	1.07	3.40 _c	1.4	2.98 _a	1.29	3.65 _c	1.39	3.91 _c	1.35	3.58 _b	0.60
Expereince	4.88 _c	0.83	3.20 _c	1.29	3.07 _a	1.46	4.13 _d	1.34	3.91 _c	1.53	3.91 _a	0.49

Columns that share different subscripts are significant at p < .10

*Stereotypes represent cultural stereotypes within race, and gender stereotypes within gender, and not compared across social categories.

Table 10: Correlation Table for Study 7

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	M	SD								
1. Condition (Blind vs. Aware)	1.51	0.50	-							
2. Condition (Aware vs. E-Aware)	1.52	0.50	-	-						
3. Condition (Blind vs. E-Aware)	1.53	0.50	-	-	-					
4. Awareness	4.52	1.11	.49***	.01	.47***	-				
5. System Justification	3.87	1.38	-.001	-.02	-.02	.13 [†]	-			
6. Denial of Inequality	3.32	1.29	.21*	.18*	.03	.27***	.52***	-		
7. Biological Essentialism	4.18	1.24	.29**	-.17*	.12	.52***	.38***	.52***	-	
8. Attitudes towards AA	3.76	1.49	-.21*	.20*	-.02	-.36***	-.34***	-.67***	-.55***	-
9. Stereotyping	3.62	0.50	.21*	-.06	.15+	.38***	.06	.003	.27***	-.26***

[†] < .10 * p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001.

Figure 1: Mediation Models for Study 1

Model 1a: Awareness on System Justification through Denial of Inequality as a Function of Social Category

Conditional indirect effects of awareness on system justification at value of moderators:

Race: *indirect effect* = $-.24$, $SE = .09$, $CI_{95} = -.42, -.07$

Gender: *indirect effect* = $.25$, $SE = .06$, $CI_{95} = .14, .36$

Indirect effect of highest order interaction: $.49$, $SE = .11$; $CI_{95} = .27, .72$

Model 1b: Awareness on System Justification through Essentialism as a Function of Social Category

Conditional indirect effects of awareness on system justification at value of moderators:

Race: *indirect effect* = $.04$, $SE = .04$, $CI_{95} = -.04, .12$

Gender: *indirect effect* = $.25$, $SE = .06$, $CI_{95} = .14, .38$

Indirect effect of highest order interaction: $.21$, $SE = .07$; $CI_{95} = .10, .36$

Figure 2: Scatterplots of Race and Gender Awareness on System Justification in Study 2

A) Sample 1: Between Subjects

B) Sample 2: Within Subjects

Figure 3: Graphs for Race and Gender Ideologies on (A) System Justification, (B) Denial of Inequality, and (C) Essentialism in Study 3

(A) System Justification

(B) Denial of Inequality

(C) Essentialism

Figure 4: Mediation Models for Study 3

Model 2a: Ideology on System Justification through Denial of Inequality as a Function of Social Category

Conditional indirect effects of awareness on system justification at value of moderators:

Race: *indirect effect* = .38, *SE* = .16, *CI*₉₅ = .09, .71

Gender: *indirect effect* = -.40, *SE* = .17, *CI*₉₅ = -.76, -.08

Indirect effect of highest order interaction: -.78, *SE* = .25; *CI*₉₅ = -1.30, -.33

Model 2b: Ideology on System Justification through Essentialism as a Function of Social Category

Conditional indirect effects of awareness on system justification at value of moderators:

Race: *indirect effect* = .19, *SE* = .12, *CI*₉₅ = -.001, .45

Gender: *indirect effect* = -.25, *SE* = .11, *CI*₉₅ = -.40, -.07

Indirect effect of highest order interaction: -.44, *SE* = .18; *CI*₉₅ = -.86, -.14

Figure 5: Graphs for Ideologies on (A) System Justification, (B) Denial of Inequality (C) Essentialism, (D) Attitudes toward Affirmative Action, and (E) Stereotyping in Study 4

(A) System Justification:

(B) Denial of Inequality

(C) Essentialism

(D) Support for Affirmative Action

(E) Stereotyping

Figure 6: Mediation Models for Study 4

Model 3a: Ideology on Attitudes toward Affirmative Action through Denial of Inequality as a Function of Social Category

Conditional indirect effects of awareness on system justification at value of moderators:

Race: *indirect effect* = $-.39$, $SE = .16$, $CI_{95} = -.71, -.09$

Gender: *indirect effect* = $.20$, $SE = .15$, $CI_{95} = -.08, .50$

Indirect effect of highest order interaction: $.59$, $SE = .22$; $CI_{95} = .17, 1.04$

Model 3b: Ideology on Stereotyping through Essentialism as a Function of Social Category

Conditional indirect effects of awareness on system justification at value of moderators:

Race: *indirect effect* = $-.01$, $SE = .02$, $CI_{95} = -.06, .02$

Gender: *indirect effect* = $-.07$, $SE = .03$, $CI_{95} = -.13, -.02$

Indirect effect of highest order interaction: $-.05$, $SE = .03$, $CI_{95} = -.12, -.003$

Figure 7: Graphs for Ideologies on (A) System Justification, (B) Denial of Inequality (C) Essentialism, (D) Support for Affirmative Action and (E) Stereotyping in Study 6

(A) System Justification:

(B) Denial of Inequality

(C) Essentialism

(D) Support for Affirmative Action

(E) Stereotyping

Figure 8: Forrest Plots for Effects Across Studies

7a: System Justification

Race

Gender

7b: Denial of Inequality

Race

Gender

7b: Essentialism

Race

Gender

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Appendix A: Scales used across Studies

Awareness:

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1=*strongly disagree* - 7=*strongly agree*)

1. We need to recognize and celebrate the cultural differences between men and women in order to create an equal society.
2. The differences between [men and women] [racial groups] should be acknowledged and celebrated.
3. It is easier for [men and women] [racial groups] to get along if they simply acknowledge they approach things differently.
4. [Men and women have many differences] [there are many differences between racial groups] that are important to acknowledge and embrace.
5. We must appreciate the unique characteristics of [men and women] [different racial groups] in order to have a cooperative society.
6. Talking about differences between [men and women] [racial groups] causes unnecessary tension.*
7. We should try not to notice [or think about when an individual is male or female] [or focus on someone's race].*
8. There is no reason to categorize individuals based on their [gender] [race].*
9. It is important to pay attention to the individual characteristics that make a person unique rather than their [gender] [ethnic or racial background].*
10. Focusing on differences between [men and women] [racial groups] undermines social cooperation and progress.*

*Indicates blindness items (reversed).

Note: Items 4 and 9 were not used in Study 2b

System Justification (Kay & Jost, 2003)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1=*strongly disagree* - 7=*strongly agree*)

1. In general, you find society to be fair.
2. In general, the American political system operates as it should.
3. American society needs to be radically restructured.*
4. The United States is the best country in the world to live in.
5. Most policies serve the greater good.
6. Everyone has a fair shot at wealth and happiness.
7. Our society is getting worse every year.*
8. Society is set up so that people usually get what they deserve.

*Indicates reversed items

Denial of Inequality

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1 = *strongly disagree* - 7 = *strongly agree*)

A. *Modern Prejudice* (Swim, Aiken, Hall & Hunter, 1995)

1. Discrimination against [Blacks] [women] is no longer a problem in the United States.
2. [Black people] [Women] often miss out on good jobs due to [racial] [sexual] discrimination.*
3. It is rare to see [a black person] [women] treated in a sexist manner on television.
4. On average, people in our society treat [all people equally, regardless of their racial background] [husbands and wives] equally.
5. Society has reached the point where [all racial groups] [women and men] have equal opportunities for achievement.
6. It is easy to understand the anger of [Black people] [women's groups] in America.*
7. It is easy to understand why [Black people] [women's groups] are still concerned about societal limitations of [their] [women's] opportunities.*
8. Over the past few years, the government and news media have been showing more concern about the treatment of [Black people] [women] than is warranted by [their] [women's] actual experiences

B. *(Denial of) Privilege* (Swim & Miller, 1999)

1. [Whites people] [Men] have certain advantages that [minorities] [women] do not have in this society.*
2. [Their status as White people] [Men's status] grants them unearned privileges in today's society.*
3. I feel that [White skin] [being a male] in the United States opens many doors for [Whites] [men] during their everyday lives.*
4. I do not feel that [White people] [men] have any benefits or privileges due to their [race] [sex].
5. [Being White] [Men's gender] is not an asset to [White people] [them] in their everyday life.

*Indicates reversed item

Essentialism (Coleman & Hong, 2008)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1 = *strongly disagree* - 7 = *strongly agree*)

1. To a large extent, a person's gender [race] biologically determines his or her abilities and traits.
2. It is hard if not impossible to change the innate dispositions of a person's gender [race]
3. When men and women [racial groups] differ in some way, it is likely that the difference is due to biological factors.
4. Gender [race] is more directly linked to biology than to the way a person is socialized.
5. If social situations change, the characteristics we attribute to gender [race] categories will change as well.*
6. The properties of gender [race] are constructed totally for economic, political, and social reasons*
7. Gender [race] is a result of "nurture" ["culture"] more than "nature"*
8. A person's gender [race] has more to do with a person's social environment than with an individual's disposition*

*Indicates socio-constructionist items (reversed)

Attitudes towards Affirmative Action (Jost & Thompson, 2000; and Murrell et al., 1994),

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1 = *strongly disagree* - 7 = *strongly agree*)

1. Affirmative Action in education gives an opportunity to qualified [Blacks people] [women] who might not have had a chance without it.
2. Affirmative action for [black people] [women] may force employers to hire unqualified people.*
3. Affirmative Action in the workplace for [Blacks people] [women] helps make sure that the U.S. work force and economy remain competitive
4. Because of past discrimination, [Black people] [women] should be given preference in hiring and promotion.
5. Employers, colleges, or social organizations should consider whether an applicant is [Black] [a woman] when making selection decision.
6. To compensate for past discrimination, employers, colleges, or social organizations, should make an extra effort to hire a greater number of [Black] [female] applicants.

*Indicates reversed item

Stereotyping (Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000)

Below is a list of traits. Please indicate the extent to which you think that IN GENERAL each trait is characteristic of the AVERAGE [White or Black person] [man or woman]

- 1 = *much more characteristic of Whites/men* - 5 = *much more characteristic of Blacks/women*

Gender:

- **Masculine:** (1) independent (2) competitive; (3) dominant (4) analytic (5) leader (6) assertive
- **Feminine:** (1) sympathetic (2) kind (3) warm (4) gentle (5) nurturing* (6) sensitive*
- **Total Gender:** *Mean:* Masculine Stereotypes and Feminine Stereotypes (reversed)

Race:

- **Cultural Positive:** (1) athletic (2) rhythmic (3) religious (4) good at dancing* (5) spiritual*
- **Cultural Negative:** (1) poor (2) uneducated (3) threatening (4) aggressive* (5) violent*
- **Total Cultural:** *Mean:* Cultural Positive Stereotypes and Negative Cultural Stereotypes

*Only used in Study 1

Other Scales (used in Study 1, 3 and 4):

Protestant Work Ethic (Study 1) (Katz & Hass, 1998)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1 = *strongly disagree* - 7 = *strongly agree*)

1. Most people spend too much time in unprofitable amusements.
2. Our society would have fewer problems if people had less leisure time.
3. Money acquired easily is usually spent unwisely.
4. Most people who don't succeed in life are just plain lazy.
5. Anyone who is willing and able to work hard has a good chance of succeeding.
6. People who fail at a job have usually not tried hard enough.
7. Life would have very little meaning if we never had to suffer.
8. The person who can approach an unpleasant task with enthusiasm is the person who gets ahead
9. If people work hard enough they are likely to make a good life for themselves
10. I feel uneasy when there is little work for me to do.
11. A distaste for hard work usually reflects a weakness of character.

Social Dominance Orientation (4-item; Study 3) (Pratto et al., 2013)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements (1 = *strongly disagree* - 7 = *strongly agree*)

1. In setting priorities, we must consider all groups.*
2. We should not push for group equality.
3. Group equality should be our ideal.*
4. Superior groups should dominate inferior groups.

*Indicates reversed item

Symbolic Prejudice (reversed/rescaled according to scoring system; Study 1, 3, 4) (Sears, 1998)

1. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve (1 = *strongly disagree* – 4 = *strongly agree*)
2. It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites (1 = *strongly disagree* – 4 = *strongly agree*)
3. Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same (1 = *strongly disagree* – 4 = *strongly agree*)
4. Some say that Black leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel like they haven't pushed fast enough. What do you think? (1.33 = *going to slowly*; 2.66 = *moving at right speed*; 4 = *moving too fast*)
5. How much of the racial tension that exists in the U.S. today do you think Blacks are responsible for creating? (1 = *not much at all* – 4 = *all of it*)
6. How much discrimination against Blacks do you feel there is in the U.S. today, limiting their chances to get ahead (1 = *a lot* – 4 = *none at all*)
7. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class (1 = *strongly disagree* – 4 = *strongly agree*)*
8. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve (1 = *strongly disagree* – 4 = *strongly agree*)*

*Indicates reversed item

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Studies 1 and 3) (Rollero, Glick & Tartaglia, 2012)

Below is a series of statements concerning men and women and their relationships in contemporary society. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree.

- 1 = disagree strongly – 6 = agree strongly

Benevolent Sexism

- Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.
- Women should be cherished and protected by men.
- Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.
- Men are incomplete without women.
- Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility
- Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well-being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.

Hostile Sexism:

- Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.
- Women exaggerate problems they have at work.
- Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.
- When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.
- Many women get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.
- Feminists are making unreasonable demands of men.

Appendix B: Reflections used in Study 3

In the first part of our study, we would like you to reflect on racial issues in society. Social scientists have been working to understand how to best approach racial differences to create a more harmonious society. On the next page, you will read about one of the ways social scientists recommend approaching race relations in the United States.

Race Awareness:

Sociologists, psychologists, economists, and political scientists all agree that interethnic issues are a #1 concern for the United States. We are in the unique position of having many different cultural groups living within our borders. This could potentially be a great asset. Different cultural groups bring different perspectives to life, providing a richness in food, dress, music, art, styles of interaction, and problem solving strategies. Each ethnic group within the United States can contribute in its own unique way. Recognizing this diversity would help build a sense of harmony and complementarity among the various ethnic groups. Each group has its own talents, as well as its own problems, and by acknowledging both these strengths and weaknesses, we validate the identity of each group and we recognize its existence and its importance to the social fabric. We can allow each group to utilize its assets, to be aware of its own particular problems or difficulties, and overall to live up to its potential. Thus, social scientists argue that understanding the differences among ethnic groups is an essential component of long-term social harmony and functioning in the U.S.A.

Race Blindness

Sociologists, psychologists, economists, and political scientists all agree that interethnic issues are a #1 concern for the United States. At the present time, we are experiencing a great deal of conflict among various ethnic groups. Social scientists note that it is extremely important to heed our creed in the Declaration of Independence that "all men (and women) are created equal." That is, in order to overcome interethnic conflict and fighting, we must remember that we are all first and foremost human beings, and second, we are all citizens of the United States. In order to make the U.S. as strong and successful as possible, we must think of ourselves not as a collection of independent factions, but instead as parts of a larger whole. We must look beyond skin color and understand the person within, to see each person as an individual who is part of the larger group, "Americans." Currently, we are spending a great many resources on conflict between ethnic groups. If we can recognize our "sameness" we will be able to re-channel those resources to work on difficult and important other problems within our society such technological growth and economic development. Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, to appreciate that at our core, we really are all the same.

Race Control:

Before beginning this exercise, we would like you to reflect on the current state of race-relations in the U.S. We have found that it helps to first reflect on some issues relevant to race interactions prior to completing the questionnaire in order to make your views more accessible. Please take a couple of seconds to think about your views about the current state of race-relations in the United States, whether good or bad.

Gender Awareness:

Sociologists, psychologists, economists, and political scientists all agree that gender inequality issues are a #1 concern for the United States. At present, there is more tension between men and women. In order to achieve equality, we must acknowledge and embrace the differences between men and women. Men and women bring different perspectives to life, providing a richness in perspectives, dress, styles of interaction, and problem solving strategies. Both men and women can contribute to society in their own unique way. Recognizing these differences would help build a sense of harmony and complementarity among the sexes. Both genders have their own talents, as well as their own problems, and by acknowledging both these strengths and weaknesses, we validate the identity of women and men and we recognize their contribution to the social fabric and functioning of society. We can allow both women and men to utilize their assets, to be aware of their own particular problems or difficulties, and overall to live up to their potential. Thus, social scientists argue that understanding the differences among men and women is an essential component of long-term social harmony and functioning in the U.S.A.

Gender Blindness

Sociologists, psychologists, economists, and political scientists all agree that gender inequality issues are a #1 concern for the United States. At present, there is more tension between men and women. Social scientists note that it is extremely important to heed our creed in the Declaration of Independence that “all men and women are created equal. We must remember that we are all first and foremost human beings, and second, we are all citizens of the United States. In order to make the U.S. as and successful as possible, we must think of ourselves not as men or women, but instead as individuals and American citizens. Pretending that men and women approach life in fundamentally different ways is counter productive, and focusing on similarities would lead men and women to more cooperation, both in the workplace, at home and in their relationships. Men and women have much more in common than people believe and if we can recognize our “sameness” we will be able to work together on difficult and important problems within our society, such as technological growth and economic development. Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, to appreciate that at our core, men and women really are all the same.

Gender Control:

Before beginning this exercise, we would like you to reflect on the current state of gender relations in the U.S. We have found that it helps to first reflect on some issues relevant to gender interactions prior to completing the questionnaire in order to make your views more accessible. Please take a couple of seconds to think about your views about the current state of gender-relations in the United States, whether good or bad.

Appendix C: Awareness and Blindness Articles used in Study 4, 6 and 7

Race Awareness

Embracing Differences is Key to Equality, New Research Suggests

Research from many disciplines, from sociology, psychology, economics, and political science – all agree that interethnic issues are a growing concern for the U.S. and note that, to achieve equality, it is important to embrace our differences, rather than denying them. According to this perspective, we will be in a better position to advance as a society if we embrace that different cultural groups bring different backgrounds to life, providing richness in viewpoints, styles of interaction, experiences, and problem solving strategies. Each ethnic group within the U.S. can contribute in its own unique way. Recognizing this diversity would help build a sense of harmony and complementarity among the various ethnic groups. Each group has its own talents, as well as its own problems, and by acknowledging both these strengths and weaknesses, we validate the identity of each group.

New research suggests that modern American society would be better off if people would recognize that different ethnic groups have their own strengths and weaknesses, experiences, and issues. Acknowledging this diversity would help build a sense of harmony, consciousness, and complementarity among ethnic groups. In a recent interview, professor James North noted “while there is great variety within each ethnic group,” he says, “there are indisputable differences between them — recognizing these creates a better understanding of each group.”

“The notion of ‘race’ is important to recognize,” notes Mary Fine a second author on the paper. Fine points out that these differences could be due to a variety of reasons, from experience, to biology to culture, to socialization. According to Fine, where the differences come from is unimportant. “Regardless, the differences exist and to deny that is simply like sticking our heads in the sand.”

Fine believes that ethnic groups would be more successful and satisfied with their lives and interact more cooperatively if they embraced the idea that there are differences that are important to acknowledge. According to Fine, “understanding and utilizing our differences would not only contribute to a more cooperative and efficient workplace, but could also help interpersonal relationships between different ethnic groups.” Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, and to appreciate that at our core, we really are all different.

Race Blindness:

Minimizing Differences is Key to Equality, New Research Suggests

Research from many disciplines, from sociology, psychology, economics, and political science – all agree that interethnic issues are a growing concern for the U.S. and note that, to achieve equality, it is important to heed our creed in the Declaration of Independence that "all men (and women) are created equal." According to this perspective, we will be in a better position to advance as a society if we remember that we are all, first and foremost human beings, and second, American citizens. Instead of thinking that we are all different because of our ethnic backgrounds, we should instead see each person as an individual.

New research suggests that modern American society would be better off if people would recognize that different ethnic groups are much more similar than they are different. Acknowledging this similarity would help build a sense of harmony and unity among different ethnic groups. In a recent interview, professor James North noted, "that is really the story here – The most striking thing about different ethnic groups is how much they have in common. There is simply so much overlap between different groups. The most important thing is to pay attention to the characteristics that make a person a unique individual rather than focusing on his or her ethnicity".

"The notion of 'race' is really just a historical artifact. Human groups are much more alike than they are different", notes Mary Fine, a second author on the paper. Similarities may be due to the largely identical biological make-up that all humans share or they may be shaped and molded through our culture. According to Fine, where the similarities come from is unimportant. "Pretending ethnic groups are fundamentally different is counterproductive to society," says Fine.

Fine believes that ethnic groups would be more successful, satisfied with their lives, and interact more cooperatively, if they embraced the idea that they both approach situations and problems in much the same way. According to Fine, "understanding and focusing upon individual differences, not group differences, would not only contribute to a more cooperative and creative workplace, but could also help interpersonal relationships between different ethnic groups." Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, and to appreciate that at our core, we really are all the same.

Gender Awareness

Embracing Differences is Key to Equality, New Research Suggests

Research from many disciplines, from sociology, psychology, economics, and political science – all agree that gender issues are a growing concern for the U.S. and social scientists note that to achieve equality it is important to embrace our differences, rather than denying them. According to this perspective, we will be in a better position to advance as a society if we embrace that men and women bring different perspectives to life, providing a richness in viewpoints, styles of interaction, experiences, and problem solving strategies. Each gender can contribute in its own unique way. Recognizing this diversity would help build a sense of harmony and complementarity among men and women. Men and women have their own talents, as well as their own problems, and by acknowledging both these strengths and weaknesses, we validate the identity of each gender.

New research suggests that modern American society would be better off if people would recognize that men and women have their own strengths and weaknesses, experiences and issues. Acknowledging this diversity would help build a sense of harmony, consciousness, and complementarity among men and women. In a recent interview, professor James North noted “while there is great variety within men and within group women,” he says, “there are indisputable differences—recognizing these differences creates a better understanding of men and women”.

“The notion of ‘gender’ is important to recognize,” says Mary Fine a second author on the paper. Fine points out that these differences could be due to a variety of reasons, from culture, to biology, to experience, to socialization. According to Fine, where the differences come from is unimportant. “Regardless, the differences exist and to deny that is simply like sticking our heads in the sand.”

Fine believes that men and women would be more successful and satisfied with their lives and interact more cooperatively if they embraced the idea that there are differences that are important to acknowledge. According to Fine, “understanding and utilizing our differences would not only contribute to a more cooperative and efficient workplace, but could also help interpersonal relationships between men and women.” Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, and to appreciate that at our core, we really are all different.

Gender Blindness

Minimizing Differences is Key to Equality, New Research Suggests

Research from many disciplines, from sociology, psychology, economics, and political science – all agree that gender issues are a growing concern for the U.S. and social scientists note that, to achieve equality, it is important to heed our creed in the Declaration of Independence that "all men and women are created equal." According to this perspective, we will be in a better position to advance as a society if we remember that we are all, first and foremost human beings, and second, American citizens. Instead of thinking that we are all different because of our gender, we should instead see each person as an individual.

New research suggests that modern American society would be better off if people would recognize that women and men are much more similar than they are different. Acknowledging this similarity would help build a sense of harmony and unity among men and women. In a recent interview, professor, James North noted, "that is really the story here – the most striking thing about men and women is how much they have in common. There is simply so much overlap between the two groups. The most important thing is to pay attention to the characteristics that make a person a unique individual rather than focusing on his or her gender."

The notion of 'gender' is really just a historical artifact," notes Mary Fine, a second author on the paper. "Men and women are much more alike than they are different." Fine points out that these similarities may be due to the largely identical biological make-up that all humans share, or they may be shaped and molded through our culture. According to Fine, where the similarities come from is unimportant. "Pretending men and women are fundamentally different is counterproductive to society," says Fine.

Fine believes that men and women would be more successful, more satisfied with their lives, and interact more cooperatively both in the workplace and at home if people embraced the idea that the genders typically approach situations and problems in much the same way. According to Fine, 'understanding and focusing upon individual differences, not group differences, would not only contribute to a more cooperative and creative workplace, but could also help in interpersonal relationships between men and women.' Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, and to appreciate that at our core, we really are all the same.

Control

Big Data Is the Future, New Research Suggests

Research from many disciplines, from sociology, finance, economics, and behavioral science – all agree that big data is a growing source of information field for decision and policy-making. These scientists note that it is important to use this data to our advantage for the U.S. to remain a strong and growing economy, as it allows us to capture important and diverse information from millions of people. According to this perspective, we will be in a better position to advance as a society if we can leverage data from healthcare, to advertising, to safety, to understand human behavior and decision-making.

Big data allows us to understand both the similar and different perspectives that people bring to life, providing an understanding of the ways in which people differ and agree on a number of viewpoints and perspectives. Though such data includes millions of data-points, it allows each individual to contribute to policies, research, and decision making in their own way. Though there each individual is represented, there are overwhelming similarities and overarching patterns between many people online. This could help bring an understanding of the opinions amongst people that would contribute to policies and decisions that affect us all.

New research shows in a number of simulations that collecting data from millions of blog and Facebook posts, comments on news articles, and discussions on forums, we can match census data survey on opinions and beliefs. In a recent interview, professor James North noted “while traditional ways of making inferences have been useful for understanding human behavior, big data provides a new opportunity for decision making – especially in areas where people are reluctant to express opinions candidly.” He says, “there are indisputable benefits to collecting data using traditional methods, like census data and opinion surveys — but recognizing the potential accuracy of big-data collection can help supplement these methods to provide new ways of decision-making.”

“These notions are important to recognize,” says Mary Fine a second author on the paper. Fine points out that this data matched surveyed opinions almost exactly and took far less time to collect than traditional methods. According to Fine, ignoring the potential utility of big data in policy-making is counterproductive to society and is simply like “sticking our heads in the sand.” According to Fine, “Many other economies have already adopted this approach, so understanding the potential of this information would not only contribute to a more efficient society but it could help inform policy decisions that affect everyone, such as political and healthcare policies.” She encourages us to see the larger picture, and to appreciate that big data is the future for decision-making.

Appendix D: Email Excerpt

Subject: [Institution] Reflects Survey. Make your voice heard!

The [Institution] Reflects Survey measures diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in our community.

[Institution] Reflects seeks to promote diversity, equity and inclusion within the Business School community. We strive to continuously understand and improve the *student experience* at [our institution] with the goal of *ensuring that all students can thrive academically, socially, and in their career pursuits, both while at [the institution] and after graduation.*

This is the only student-to-student, no-frills survey that's focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion here at [our institution]. Results will be used to address key issues, and determine actionable plans to improve and evolve the *student experience*.

Join us for several events focused on *diversity and inclusion* in our community. We will discuss topics such as *sexual harassment, socioeconomic status, white privilege*, and more!

Appendix E: Experience Awareness Articles used in Studies 6 and 7

Race Experience Awareness

Embracing Differences is Key to Equality, New Research Suggests

Research from many disciplines, from sociology, psychology, economics, and political science – all agree that interethnic issues are a growing concern for the U.S. and note, that to achieve equality, it is important to embrace our differences, rather than denying them. According to this perspective, we will be in a better position to advance as a society if we embrace that different cultural groups have important differences in terms of their life-experiences and opportunities. Recognizing this diversity would help build a sense of harmony and complementarity among the various ethnic groups. Each group has its own obstacles and experiences that differentially affect their lives, and by acknowledging these differences, we validate the identity of each group.

New research suggests that modern American society would be better off if people would recognize that ethnic groups differ in a number of respects. In a recent interview, professor, James North noted, “While there is great variety within ethnic groups,” he says, “there are indisputable differences—recognizing these differences in terms of their life experiences, opportunities, and obstacles, can benefit both groups. The ways in which people are treated and their opportunities play an important role in their lives. In terms of these experiences, there are differences that are important to recognize.” In fact, a recent PEW survey measured self-reported life-circumstances and experiences between ethnic groups and found statistically significant differences between them. “These differences are important to recognize as they affect important outcomes, such as quality of life and economic potential. By acknowledging these differences, we create a better understanding of each racial group, recognizing their needs and validating their identities,” said North.

“The notion of ‘race’ is important to recognize” says Mary Fine, a second author on the paper. Fine points out that differences are likely affected by many factors, but the different experiences and treatment each group faces should not be ignored; however, more research is needed to better understand the source and consequences of these differences. She notes that, “the differences exist and to deny that is simply like sticking our heads in the sand.”

Fine believes that ethnic groups would be more successful and satisfied with their lives and interact more cooperatively if they embraced the idea that there are differences that are important to acknowledge. According to Fine, “understanding and utilizing our differences would not only contribute to a more cooperative and efficient workplace, but could also help interpersonal relationships between different ethnic groups.” Thus, social scientists encourage us to see the larger picture, and to appreciate that at our core, we really are all different.

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