The sexual harassment victim prototype paradox: understanding perceptions of sexual harassment and victim neglect

Bryn Bandt-Law

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Reading Committee:

Cheryl Kaiser, Chair

Kristina Olson

Sapna Cheryan

Ines Jurcevic

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Psychology

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Bryn Bandt-Law

University of Washington

Abstract

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Bryn Bandt-Law

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Cheryl Kaiser

Psychology

My collaborators and I propose that the women who disproportionately bear the brunt of sexual harassment are not the women who are typically represented as or imagined to be the targets of sexual harassment, facilitating their neglect. Across 25 studies, we show that various subsets of women who are disproportionately vulnerable to sexual violence, including sexual harassment (e.g., stereotypically masculine women (vs. more stereotypically feminine women), Black (vs. white) women, and transgender (vs. cisgender) women), are not culturally or mentally represented as sexual harassment and assault victims. They also are perceived to be unlikely victims of sexual harassment and are subject to neglect on various outcomes that are central to the legal, organizational, and interpersonal treatment of sexual harassment and assault. In part 1, studies demonstrate that people mentally represent sexual harassment victims as more gender prototypical women (e.g., more feminine). When a less (e.g., more feminine) vs. more (e.g.,

more masculine) gender prototypical woman was sexually harassed, the incident was less likely to be labeled as such and her claim was perceived as less credible. Additionally, the harassment was thought to cause her less harm and her harasser was given a more lenient punishment. In part 2, we demonstrate that Black (vs. white) women were underrepresented as victims/survivors of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, in Me Too news coverage and search engines. People also erroneously perceived Black (vs. white) women as less likely victims of sexual harassment, and Black (vs. white) women received less support when they publicly shared their stories of sexual harassment and assault during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism movement. In part 3, we extend the victim prototype to perceptions of transgender women and show that people (and especially people who deny the womanhood of transgender women) think that transgender women are far less likely victims of sexual harassment compared to cisgender women. Additionally, transgender women who experienced some forms of sexual harassment were perceived to be less credible than cisgender women, but equally harmed by it. A brief conclusion charts future directions for research on victim prototypes and neglect and potential interventions.

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The sexual harassment victim prototype paradox: understanding perceptions of sexual harassment and victim neglect

Populations who are more vulnerable to and harmed by sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence, including Black women, transgender women, and more stereotypically masculine women, are less likely to receive institutional and interpersonal attention and support when they experience harassment (e.g., Rossie et al., 2020; Spohn & Horney, 1993). Although psychologists have been studying sexual harassment for over three decades (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 1988), there remains a dearth of theory to explain when and why some women victims of harassment, especially those who bear the brunt of sexual harassment, are neglected relative to others. Much of the social science literature examines other aspects of sexual harassment, such as its prevalence, causes, and consequences (e.g., Cortina & Berdahl, 2008), and studies that do examine perceptions of harassment often do not incorporate intersectional perspectives and remain relatively disconnected rather than unified around a shared framework or approach (e.g., Brassell et al., 2020). Drawing from social psychological theories of prototypes (e.g., Rosch, 1973), discrimination attributions (Major et al., 2002) and critical theories of intersectional invisibility (e.g., Crenshaw, 1989; Purdie-Vaughns & Eichbach, 2018), across three papers my collaborators and I begin to test an integrative theoretical framework to examine whether the women who disproportionately bear the brunt of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence are not the women who are typically represented as or imagined to be the targets of sexual harassment, facilitating their neglect and potentially reinforcing their cultural and cognitive erasure.

Sexual harassment, as well as other forms of sexual violence, has historically, legally, and culturally been represented and framed through a singular gender lens, where women specifically are targeted because of their membership to their gender group. This single-axis approach is reflected in laws, policies, media, and feminist movements in the United States (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018). In addition to connecting experiences of sexual harassment to womanhood, these approaches center the experiences and understandings of sexual harassment from the perspective of a narrow subset women who do not hold additional marginalized identities (e.g., white, cisgender, heterosexual, affluent, abled, gender-conforming) (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Fitztgerald, 2021; Burke, 2017; Jordan et al., 2020).

People organize and represent social groups as prototypes—abstract, fuzzy sets of features that describe the idealized or exemplary member of a category, that are largely culturally determined. Because of the prominence of gender-only cultural representations of and understandings of sexual harassment, theorizing on prototypes (e.g., Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Vlasceanu & Amodio, 2022) and discrimination attributions (e.g., Major et al., 2002) predict that prototypes of sexual harassment victims may overlap with prototypes of women on within-category dimensions (e.g., more stereotypically feminine) and intersectional dimensions (e.g., white, cisgender). We use the language ‘victim’ when referring to the prototype of people who are sexually harassed, as this language is more closely associated with the sexually harassing event and injury caused (opposed to the language ‘survivor’ which is more closely associated with the process of recovery and healing from the event) (Hauckett & Saucier, 2015).

Importantly, non-prototypical group members are often subject to *invisibility* and *neglect* due to their perceived distance to the subordinate category (e.g., Purdie-Vaughn & Eichbach, 2008; Sesko & Biernat, 2010). Thus, I propose that the narrow victim prototype holds downstream consequences for less prototypical women who are harassed. Less prototypical women, such as more (vs. less) stereotypically masculine women, Black (vs. white) women, and transgender (vs. cisgender) women may experience myriad forms of neglect when sexually harassed, such as having their experiences not recognized or believed and receiving less support and justice (*see Figure 1*). This theorizing highlights a 'prototype paradox' with regards to sexual harassment, where the people who disproportionately bear the brunt of harassment (e.g., more stereotypically masculine women, Black women, transgender women (e.g., Cassino & Besen-Cassino, 2019)) are not the people who are imagined to be the targets of sexual harassment and responded to as such.

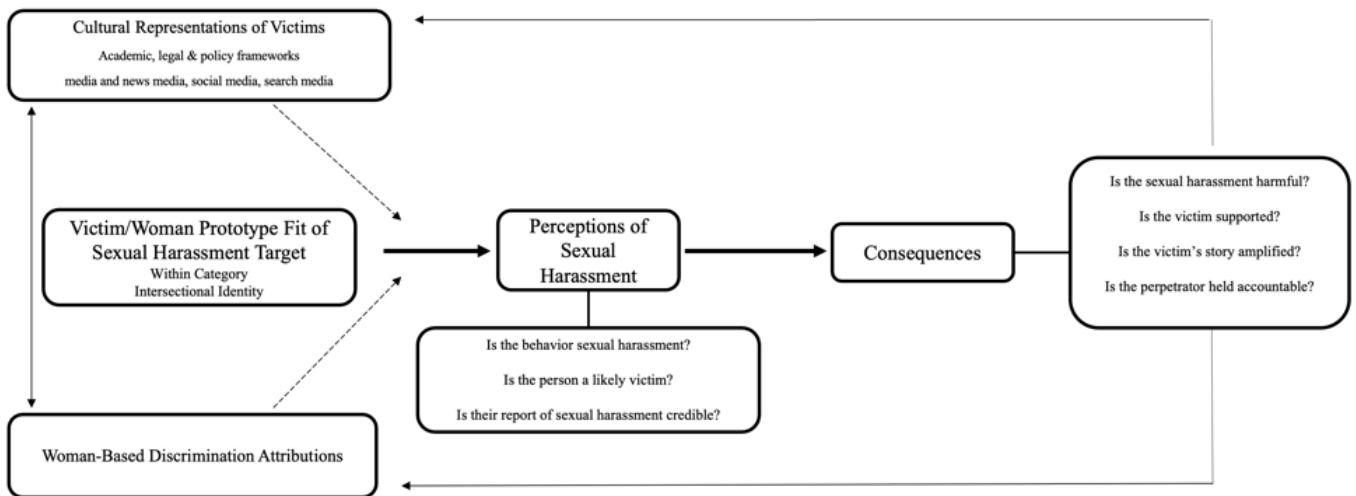

Figure 1.

In part 1 of this dissertation, my collaborators and I demonstrate that prototypes of victims overlap with prototypes of women on within-category attributes (e.g., femininity, attractiveness). People mentally represented sexual harassment victims as more gender prototypical women, as assessed through participant-generated drawings, face selection tasks, reverse correlation, and self-report measures. Additionally, when less (vs. more) gender prototypical women were sexually harassed, the incident was less likely to be labeled as such, participants perceived her claim of sexual harassment to be less credible, the harassment was thought to cause her less harm, and her harasser was given more lenient punishment.

In part 2, we demonstrate that, even though Me Too was originally founded in part to address the longstanding erasure and neglect of Black women and girls targeted by sexual violence, the experiences of Black women remain relatively invisible in cultural representations (news coverage, search media) of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, in the mainstream Me Too era. We also show that, as predicted by the victim prototype framework, people erroneously think that Black (vs. white) women are less likely victims of harassment, and Black (vs. white) women were subject to higher levels of neglect when they publicly shared their stories of sexual harassment and assault during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism movement. This potentially elevated white women's voices over the voices of Black women for whom Tarana Burke started the movement for in the first place.

In part 3, we extend the victim protype to perceptions of binary transgender women (women who were assigned male at birth) and show that people think that transgender women are far less likely victims of sexual harassment compared to cisgender women (women who were assigned

female at birth). Individuals who deny the womanhood of transgender women were especially likely to underestimate their vulnerability to sexual harassment. Additionally, trans women who experienced some forms of sexual harassment were perceived to be less credible than cis women, but equally harmed by it.

These manuscripts demonstrate that victim prototypes overlap with prototypes of women on both within category (e.g., more feminine) and intersectional dimensions (e.g., white, cisgender), even though less prototypical women on these dimensions experience more frequent and severe harassment. The most vulnerable victims'/survivors' relative invisibility may contribute to their individual and collective neglect when they share their experiences across myriad outcomes that are central to the interpersonal and institutional treatment of sexual violence and influence the psychological, physical, and economic well-being of survivors. Thus, narrow victim prototypes may impede the promise of civil rights laws and anti-harassment policies and adversely impact their recovery and healing, contributing to their marginalization and widening disparities in economics, health, safety, and justice.

Part 1: Narrow Prototypes and Neglected Victims: Understanding Perceptions of Sexual Harassment

Jin X. Goh [1]*, Bryn Bandt-Law [2]*, Nathan N. Cheek [3]*, Stacey Sinclair [3], & Cheryl R. Kaiser [2]

[1] Colby College

[2] University of Washington

[3] Princeton University

Word count: 13,000

*Shared first-authorship

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Narrow Prototypes and Neglected Victims: Understanding Perceptions of Sexual Harassment

Abstract

Sexual harassment is pervasive and has adverse effects on its victims, yet perceiving sexual harassment is wrought with ambiguity, making harassment difficult to identify and understand. Eleven pre-registered, multi-method experiments (total $N = 4{,}065$ participants) investigated the nature of perceiving sexual harassment by testing whether perceptions of sexual harassment and its impact are facilitated when harassing behaviors target those who fit with the prototype of women (e.g., those who have feminine features, interests, and characteristics) relative to those who fit less well with this prototype. Studies A1-A5 demonstrated that participants' mental representation of sexual harassment targets overlapped with the prototypes of women as assessed through participant-generated drawings, face selection tasks, reverse correlation, and self-report measures. In Studies B1-B4, participants were less likely to label incidents as sexual harassment when they targeted non-prototypical women compared to prototypical women. In Studies C1 and C2, participants perceived sexual harassment claims to be less credible and the harassment itself to be less psychologically harmful when the victims were non-prototypical women rather than prototypical women. This research offers theoretical and methodological advances to the study of sexual harassment through social cognition and prototypicality perspectives, and it has implications for harassment reporting and litigation as well as the realization of fundamental civil rights. For materials, data, and pre-registrations of all studies, see: https://osf.io/xehu9/ or Supplemental materials.

Sexual harassment is a widespread and urgent social problem with a broad range of harmful consequences, including decreased engagement with and impaired performance in work and school, worse mental and physical health outcomes, and increased economic instability (e.g., Fitzgerald, 1993; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018; Tenbrunsel, Rees, & Diekmann, 2019). In recognition of these consequences, the #MeToo movement has recently amplified the voices of victims, bringing international attention to the frequency, severity, and harm of sexual harassment while improving individual and institutional responses to allegations of misconduct. Yet, critics of Me Too have argued that it has largely centered on and benefitted only a narrow subset of women, bringing the most attention to victims who conform to cultural stereotypes of "prototypical" women—such as actresses in Hollywood—while neglecting the many victims who do not conform to this prototype (Burke, 2017). Moreover, sexual harassment remains underreported by both its victims and others in society, and this can cause victims to continue to encounter disbelief, dismissal, and obstacles to legal recourse (Bower, 2019; EEOC, 2017; 2018; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018).

The present investigation offers 11 studies that draw upon theoretical perspectives on prototypes to test whether women with less prototypically feminine physical and psychological features are less likely than more prototypical women to be represented as sexual harassment targets, and whether harassment targeting non-prototypical women is therefore more difficult to recognize, perceived as less credible, and discounted as less harmful. Because identifying sexual harassment and perceiving it to be problematic is critical to internal or legal resolution of harassment allegations, understanding the barriers to accurate perception is essential to the realization of legal civil rights for all victims.

Perceptions of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of gender-based discrimination that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission describes as unwelcome sexual conduct and advances that detrimentally affect job performance, employment status, or produce a hostile work environment (EEOC, 2017). Psychologists generally describe sexual harassment as comprising three factors: sexual coercion (quid pro quo harassment), unwanted sexual attention (sexual advances without quid pro quo components), and gender harassment (derogatory verbal and nonverbal behaviors that communicate hostile attitudes about gender, gender expression, and sexual orientation; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995; Gelfand, Fitgerald, & Drasgow, 1995). While anyone can experience sexual harassment, women and LGBTQIA+ populations are disproportionately targeted (Kabat-Farr & Cortina, 2014). Importantly, sexual harassment is not only, or even typically, about sexual desire. Rather, sexual harassment, including unwanted advances, often stems from hostility toward people, the desire to socially dominate people, or backlash against people who violate gender norms (Berdahl, 2007a; 2007b; Cortina & Berdahl, 2008; Leskinen, Rabelo, & Cortina, 2015; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Schultz, 1998).

Perceptions are central to realizing that sexual harassment has occurred and that claims are appropriate for adjudication, but these perceptions are wrought with difficulty because potentially harassing incidents might be dismissed as being welcomed by the target or stemming from some benign motive (Crocker & Major, 1989; Pickel & Gentry, 2017). Because sexual harassment is a form of gender-based discrimination, from a discrimination attribution perspective, perceiving sexual harassment likely involves *noticing a behavior* that might qualify as harassment and *linking that behavior to gender-based group membership* (Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002).

Once a potentially harassing behavior has been linked to gender-based group membership, it is important that the behavior be perceived as *harmful for the target*. Legal definitions of sexual harassment require that the potential victim experience either repeated harm over multiple instances or severe harm in one instance (EEOC, 2017). Moreover, perceived harm can shape judgments of credibility—victims who are perceived as more distressed are also perceived as more credible (Klippenstine & Schuller, 2012; Nitschke, McKimmie, Vanman, & Eric, 2019; Schuller, McKimmie, Masser, & Klippenstine, 2010). Perceived harm further plays an important role in punitive and legal judgments, such as shaping the level of punishment assigned to the perpetrator, as well as other judgments like the amount of compensation awarded to victims (EEOC, 2017; Vallano, 2013; van Doorn & Koster, 2019). In the present work, we investigate whether perceptions of sexual harassment—linking potentially harassing behavior to gender-based group membership and perceiving harassment as credible and harmful—are influenced by the prototypicality of targets of sexual harassment.

Prototypicality and Social Perception

People cognitively organize complex social groups and their members according to simpler overarching prototypes (Brewer, 1988; Cantor & Mischel, 1979; Rosch, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Prototypes embody a set of culturally and contextually determinant "fuzzy" attributes that can include physical appearance, behaviors, interests, traits, beliefs, and attitudes (Hogg, 1993; Rosch, 1978; Medin, 1989). These prototypes are abstract and diffuse, and are not defined by a check list of specific attributes (Fillmore, 1975). When people perceive and evaluate others, they therefore judge these individuals according to the degree to which they fit their group's higher-order prototypical representation (Brewer, 1988; Fiske, 1993; Hogg, 1993; Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000).

People evaluate others according to both category-based prototypes and within-category prototypes. Category-based approaches to prototypes assume that all members of a category fit similarly with the prototype and are equally likely targets of potential bias, whereas within-category approaches highlight how variation in fit with prototypes shapes how group members are perceived and treated. Although the former approaches have been widely explored in scholarship on perceiving discrimination (e.g., in studies showing that some categories of people—e.g., women—are perceived to experience more bias than other categories—e.g., men) (Inman & Baron, 1996; O'Brien, Kinias, & Major, 2008; Rodin, Price, Bryson, & Sanchez, 1990), the latter are increasingly recognized as important for understanding stereotype-based inferences and targets' experiences with bias. For example, women with more prototypically female faces, voices, and characteristics are judged by both men and women as less suitable for masculine-typed jobs (Ko, Judd, & Blair, 2006; Lammers, Gordijn, & Otten, 2009; Rudman, 1998). Likewise, individual differences in racially prototypic features, such as physical appearance, shape the extent to which racial minorities are stereotyped and subjected to bias (Blair, Judd, & Chapleau, 2004; Eberhardt, Davies, Purdie-Vaughns, & Johnson, 2006; Kaiser & Wilkins, 2010; Maddox, 2004; Wilkins, Chan, & Kaiser, 2011; Wilkins, Kaiser, & Rieck, 2010).

Prototypes are culturally transmitted and become collectively shared societal representations (Bailey, LaFrance, & Dovidio, 2019; Eagly & Kite, 1987; Glick & Fiske, 2001; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Turner et al., 1987). This process results in shared prototypes across groups; for example, both men and women share the same image of a prototypical woman (Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Accordingly, when women behave in non-prototypical manners or possess non-prototypical attributes, men and women are equally likely to punish these non-prototypical women (Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Gender Prototypicality and Perceptions of Sexual Harassment

Gender is a fundamental social category, with a strong prototype of who can embody the category of women (Brewer, 1988; Fiske, 2017). Prototypical women in modern Western societies are expected to have feminine features and to be interpersonally-orientated, caring, social, sympathetic, and nurturing (Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Helgeson, 1994; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). At the same time, women are generally perceived as incompetent and weak (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), though this stereotype may be changing to reflect a female advantage in competence (Eagly, Nater, Miller, Kaufmann, & Sczesny, 2019). Prototypical women are further expected to be attractive, gentle, and tender (Helgeson, 1994; Kite, Deaux, & Haines, 2008) and to engage in feminine activities or careers that are restricted to traditional gender roles (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

Non-prototypical women, in contrast, violate idealized societal expectations of women. Women who diverge from within-category prototypical representations tend to embody stereotypically male characteristics, physical features, and traits such as dominance and competence and engage in masculine activities or careers (Helgeson, 1994; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Due to their distance from the prototypical group image, non-prototypical women often receive backlash or are rendered invisible as their experiences are dismissed or uncredited (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Thomas, Dovidio, & West, 2014).

Drawing on the research showing that within-category prototypes can play a significant role in social perception, we suggest that gender prototypes are important to understanding perceptions of sexual harassment, both in terms of people's perceptions of potentially harassing behaviors and in terms of people's perceptions of harassment victims' credibility and distress. Accordingly, in the present research, we test five hypotheses about the role of prototypes in

perceptions of sexual harassment. First, because sexual harassment is inherently connected to gender-based group membership, and it has largely been historically, legally, and culturally represented and framed as targeting women because of their gender group (e.g., Major et al., 2002; Crenshaw, 1991; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018), we hypothesized that the mental representation of harassment targets overlaps substantially with the prototype of women. Specifically, sexual harassment targets should be envisioned as prototypical women, possessing feminine attributes and physical characteristics (*Hypothesis 1*).

Further, linking potentially harassing behavior to gender-based group membership is central to perceiving that sexual harassment has occurred (e.g., Major et al., 2002). Therefore, we anticipate that the same potentially harassing behavior will be less likely to be labelled as sexual harassment when it targets women who are less (vs. more) prototypical (*Hypothesis 2a*) because non-prototypicality should make it more difficult for participants to link behaviors with targets' gender-based group membership. The effect of target prototypicality may be particularly pronounced when behaviors are ambiguously harassing relative to unambiguously not harassing behaviors (*Hypothesis 2b*). Following this same line of reasoning about weaker connections between behaviors and gender-based group identity, we also expect that non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) women's sexual harassment claims will be perceived to be less credible (*Hypothesis 3*), that non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) women will be perceived to be less harmed by sexual harassment (*Hypothesis 4*), and that perpetrators of sexual harassment thus deserve less punishment when harassment targets a non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) woman (*Hypothesis 5*).

The Present Research

In a series of 11 studies, we explored whether people hold mental representations that link sexual harassment with prototypical womanhood, and whether this association makes it more difficult to label potentially sexually harassing behaviors as such, to believe the victim, and to perceive the harassment as harmful when it targets non-prototypical women. These studies adopt a within-category approach to prototypes because sexual harassment is most commonly experienced by women, and as such it is important to identify which subsets of women are likely to have their claims of sexual harassment overlooked or minimized.

Study Series A tested Hypothesis 1, and comprised five multi-method experiments examining people's mental representation of sexual harassment victims. Participants read descriptions of sexual harassment work incidents (or control non-harassment incidents) and their mental representation of the victim was captured via drawings, face perception tasks, noise-based reverse correlation, and impression ratings. Study Series B examined Hypotheses 2a and 2b—participants read about a prototypical or a non-prototypical woman who experienced the same potentially harassing work incidents and then drew inferences about whether the behavior was sexual harassment. Study Series C (Hypotheses 3-5) included two experiments testing the effects of prototypicality on dependent variables with direct legal implications in sexual harassment cases: perceived credibility, perceived psychological harm, and punishment assigned to perpetrators. See Table 1 for participant demographics and study characteristics across all 11 studies.

Together, these studies offer significant theoretical and methodological contributions to the literature on sexual harassment. First, our studies integrate social cognitive theoretical perspectives on prototypes with theory on perceptions of bias to understand mental representations of sexual harassment targets and the role of these representations in perceptions

of sexual harassment. Basic experimental work on this topic is sparse because most sexual harassment scholarship occurs in the field, typically with correlational, survey approaches (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). Second, our studies advance a within-category approach to the study of sexual harassment, which has significant potential to provide insight into why claims of harassment by some women are more likely to be believed and acted upon than others. Third, our studies vary in their methodological approaches, with over 4,000 total participants across a variety of sexual harassment contexts, and investigate perceptions with important implications for the reporting of harassment, as well as legal outcomes of such reports. Thus, our studies contribute both to theoretical understandings of perceptions of sexual harassment and to social justice efforts more broadly, given that perceptions of sexual harassment serve as the critical catalyst to remedying sexual harassment and realizing the protections offered by civil rights laws.

All studies were pre-registered, and all materials and data are openly available through the Open Science Framework: https://osf.io/xehu9/ All studies met at least 80% power for a medium effect size (see Appendix A for sample size justification and power analyses for each study).

Table 1

Participant Demographic Information and Study Characteristics

Study	Sample	Design	Total *N*	Women %	*M* age	white %	Black %	Asian %	Latino %	Native %	Other %
A1	Student	2 between	155	59.4	19.25	13.5	1.9	76.8	5.2	0.0	2.6
A2	MTurk	2 between	401	47.6	37.57	77.1	9.5	6.7	3.2	0.7	2.7
A3	Student	2 between	303	63.4	19.15	29.0	5.9	50.5	6.6	0.0	7.9
A4	MTurk	2 between	283	42.4	35.51	70.3	9.9	8.8	5.3	1.1	4.6
A5	MTurk	2 within	141	44.7	35.29	79.4	10.6	3.5	3.5	0.0	2.8
B1	MTurk	2 between	329	43.8	35.98	75.7	9.1	8.5	4.6	0.6	1.5
B2	MTurk	2 x 2 between	545	45.7	36.99	78.7	7.3	5.1	6.8	0.4	1.7
B3	MTurk	2 x 2 between	562	45.7	37.14	76.3	9.4	5.9	5.3	0.9	2.0
B4	Student	2 x 2 between	484	59.5	18.92	36.8	6.0	52.1	10.1	1.7	5.9
C1	MTurk	2 within	272	50.0	35.88	70.6	11.4	8.1	6.6	0.7	2.6
C2	MTurk	2 between	590	49.3	39.13	73.7	8.5	7.5	5.6	0.7	4.1

Note. Percentage for racial demographics could exceed 100% because participants were allowed to select more than one race.

Series A: Mental Representations of Sexual Harassment Targets

Experiments A1-A5 explore the overlap between sexual harassment targets and prototypes of women. Participants in these studies read about women who experienced sexual harassment or who experienced negative or neutral non-sexually harassing events. Participants then provided assessments of the extent to which these women fit with the prototype of women.

We varied the types of sexual harassment across these studies in order to generalize to sexual harassment comprising unwanted sexual attention and gender harassment. Harassment contexts included inappropriate physical contact (Studies A1 and A2), unwanted romantic interest (Study A3), and exposure to crude, pornographic content (Study A4). Study A5 did not describe the precise nature of the sexual harassment (see Appendix B for all stimuli).

To probe participants' mental representation of sexual harassment targets, we used a rich variety of measures (e.g., drawings, face perception tasks) alongside impression ratings. Hypothesis 1 predicted that participants would mentally represent a target of sexual harassment as a more prototypical woman than someone who did not experience sexual harassment. As such, participants in the sexual harassment condition (compared to the control condition) should draw a more prototypical woman, select faces with more feminine features to represent the victim, and subjectively rate the target as more prototypical. We first present the methods and procedures for each of the five Series A studies and then present the overall results through internal meta-analysis; all meta-analyses herein used fixed-effect approach (Goh, Hall, & Rosenthal, 2016).[1] Results from each individual study in Series A are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

[1] We also measured secondary trait impressions in these five studies (e.g., attractiveness, warmth, and competence). Although prototypes are generally abstract and encompass a "fuzzy" set of traits and features (Hogg, 1993; Medin, 1989; Rosch, 1978), we included well-studied attributes that comprise the prototypes of woman. These self-report measures serve as further tests for Hypothesis 1. These secondary prototypicality measures were meta-analyzed and they are

Given that prototypes are widely shared within society, we did not expect to find an interaction between experimental conditions and participant gender across all studies. We report participant gender results after the meta-analyses.

Study A1 Methods

Participants generated their own representations of sexual harassment targets by drawing a woman who was (or was not) sexually harassed. These drawings were then independently coded with respect to their fit with prototypes of women. This was further supplemented by participants' own ratings of the prototypicality of the woman they read about.

Procedure. Participants (*N* = 155 students; see Table 1) read about a woman named Sara whose boss either groped her (sexual harassment condition) or bumped into her (control condition). Both incidents involved a male supervisor inflicting a negative action onto Sara.

Afterwards, the experimenter gave participants drawing materials (i.e., a piece of paper, a box of colored pencils, and an eraser) and instructed them to spend seven minutes drawing Sara. Participants then completed measures assessing the extent to which Sara was a prototypical woman, reported their demographic information, and were debriefed.

Drawing. To code gender prototypicality in participants' drawings, three trained research assistants blind to the experimental condition rated the prototypicality of the drawings using four items: (1) Sara has a lot in common with other women; (2) Sara is similar to other women; (3) Sara is feminine; and (4) Sara is masculine (reverse). Coders rated each drawing using the four items on 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). These items were adapted from Leach et al. (2008) and Ma, Seate, and Joyce (2017). We then averaged the prototypicality scores

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provided as supplementary analyses on OSF: https://osf.io/q9xrt/ and in the supplemental materials.

for each coder. Inter-item reliability for each coder was good (αs for coder 1 = .96, coder 2 = .92, coder 3 = .89). We averaged the scores across coders (α = .77); therefore, each drawing received an averaged score, with higher scores indicating greater prototypicality.

Prototypicality ratings. Participants also completed a gender prototypicality rating of Sara. These were the same four items rated by the independent coders, with the addition of a fifth item: Sara looks like a typical woman (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). We averaged the five items to form one prototypicality rating (Cronbach's α = .68).

Study A2 Methods

Study A2 used a different dependent measure of prototypicality. Participants saw photos of six women who were digitally morphed to be more masculine or feminine, and they selected one out of these six photos that best represented the woman they read about.

Procedure. Participants (N = 401 Mechanical Turk (MTurk) workers) read either the sexual harassment or control scenario from Study A1. Afterwards, participants completed ratings of the targets as in Study A1; prototypicality was rated using the same four items that were used by the coders in Study A1 (α = .77). Participants then saw an array of six female faces. They picked one photo that they perceived to best resemble the woman in the scenario. Finally, participants reported their demographic information and were debriefed.

Photo selection task. Photos were taken from a database of manipulated facial images (DeBruine & Jones, 2017). The database contains 20 female faces; each original photo has a version that was digitally transformed to be more feminine as well as one that was transformed to be more masculine. We randomly selected six unique faces: three feminized photos and three masculinized photos (we counter-balanced the feminized or masculinized version of each face), and all six faces were presented on a single screen simultaneously. Participants selected a single

face from this screen to best represent the target. This task was presented last to avoid influencing participants' self-report ratings of the target.

Study A3 Methods

The third study generalized the type of sexual harassment beyond inappropriate physical contact by instead manipulating unwanted romantic interest. We also used a different measure of prototypicality that was adapted from Fraccaro et al. (2010) and Jones et al. (2007).

Procedure. Participants (*N* = 303 students) read a description of a female student named Jennifer whose supervisor showed unwanted romantic interest in her (sexual harassment condition) or asked her to work on meaningless tasks (control condition). Afterwards, participants completed ratings used in prior studies (prototypicality rating $\alpha = .68$). Participants then completed a modified photo selection.

Photo selection task. Participants saw 20 trials of photos taken from the same face database in Study A2 (Fraccaro et al., 2010; Jones et al., 2007). In each trial, participants saw two faces: one face that had been morphed to be more feminine and the same face that had been morphed to be more masculine. Participants selected which of the two faces best resembled Jennifer, and they completed 20 trials of this forced-choice task. Prototypicality score was the sum of the trials in which participants selected feminized faces over masculinized faces (possible range = 0 to 20; $\alpha = .85$). This task was presented last to avoid influencing self-report ratings.

Study A4 Methods

Study A4 built on our previous studies by focusing on gender harassment rather than harassment driven by unwanted sexual (Studies A1 and A2) or romantic (Study A3) intention.

Procedure. Participants (*N* = 283 MTurk workers) read about a woman named Brenda whose manager showed her a picture of a penis as a crude joke (sexual harassment) or a picture

of the new company logo (control). Participants then completed the same ratings as previous studies (prototypicality α = .72) and the same photo selection task as Study A3 (α = .88).

Study A5 Method

We used noise-based reverse correlation to examine whether people mentally represent sexual harassment victims as prototypical women. Reverse correlation is a perceptual task that generates visualizations of people's mental images (Brown-Iannuzzo, Dotsch, Cooley, & Payne, 2017; Dotsch & Todorov, 2012; Gunderson & Kunst, 2018; Imhoff & Dotsch, 2013; Imhoff, Woelki, Hanke, & Dotsch, 2013). This study was conducted in two phases: the image-generation phase and the image-rating phase. In the image-generation phase, participants completed a reverse-correlation task, which allowed us to generate visualizations of their mental images of sexual harassment victims and non-sexual harassment victims. In the image-rating phase, a new sample of participants rated the prototypicality of the generated images.

Image generation phase procedure. To generate the mental representation of a sexual harassment victim and non-sexual harassment victim, we used the average gray scale image of white women from the Karolinska Face Database as the base image (Gunderson & Kunst, 2018; Lundqvist et al., 1998) (see Fig. 1 top panel), onto which random noise-patterns were superimposed to create 1000 variants of the image (R package rcicr 0.3.4.1; Dotsch, 2016). The noise consisted of truncated 2-cycle sinusoid patches with random contrasts. Participants (N = 165 MTurk workers) completed 500 trials of the reverse-correlation task. On each trial, two images were presented side by side. One image in each pair had a random noise pattern superimposed on the base face, and the other image had the inverse noise pattern superimposed on the base face. Participants were instructed to select the face that looks most like a sexual harassment victim for each pair of images. The pairs of images were presented in a random

order. The mental representations were then created by superimposing the average noise-pattern of the selected images (sexual harassment victim) and average noise-pattern of the unselected images (anti-sexual harassment victim) on the base image (R package rcicr 0.3.4.1; Dotsch, 2016). The resulting average images are displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Base Image and Participant-Generated Composite Images in Reverse Correlation Task

Image-rating phase procedure. To quantify the properties of the generated images, a separate group of participants (*N* = 141 MTurk workers) rated the prototypicality of the sexual harassment victim image and anti-sexual harassment victim image. Participants were told that they would be shown four "fuzzy" pictures of people and were asked to make a series of impression ratings. Participants viewed both the sexual harassment victim and the non-sexual harassment victim images from reverse correlation. Participants also rated two filler images of white men so that the comparison between sexual harassment victim and anti-sexual harassment

victim images would be less salient to participants. The images were presented in randomized order. Participants rated all images on the same prototypicality items from the previous studies (sexual harassment victim $\alpha = .83$, anti-sexual harassment victim $\alpha = .84$).

Meta-Analytic Results of Series A

We present the Study Series A results meta-analytically; meta-analyses were conducted using the metafor R package (Viechtbauer, 2010). The sexual harassment manipulation in Studies A1-A4 was assessed with a single-item measuring the likelihood that sexual harassment occurred (1 = extremely unlikely; 7 = extremely likely). The meta-analysis of the manipulation check showed a strong effect, confirming that the manipulations were effective across studies, *Hedges' g* = 1.83, $Z = 25.44$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [1.69, 1.97].

For our main analyses, we first meta-analyzed the results of subjective, global prototypicality ratings of the targets (measured in all five studies). Confirming Hypothesis 1, participants perceived targets of harassment as more prototypical than those who did not experience harassment, $g = 0.68$, $Z = 12.90$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.58, 0.79]. Results of each individual study were all significant in the predicted direction and are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Perceived Prototypicality Ratings in Studies A1-A5

	Harassment		Control			
Studies	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t* (*df*)	*d*
A1	5.10	0.68	4.87	0.72	2.04 (153)*	0.33
A2	5.40	0.81	5.07	0.81	3.99 (399)***	0.40
A3	4.84	0.67	4.16	0.72	8.60 (301)***	0.99
A4	5.33	0.87	4.99	0.81	3.34 (281)***	0.40
A5	5.41	1.07	3.74	1.28	14.07 (140)***	1.18

Note. Studies A1-A4 were between-subject design and Study A5 was within-design.

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

For our drawing and photo-selection tasks, we meta-analyzed results from Studies A1, A3, and A4 because they used continuous variables (A2 used a Chi-Square design and A5 only used subjective rating presented above). Confirming Hypothesis 1, participants drew more prototypical women and selected more feminized photos to represent targets of sexual harassment than non-harassed targets, g = 0.36, Z = 4.87, p < .001, 95% CI [0.22, 0.51]. Individual studies were all significant in the predicted direction (see Table 3). As for Study A2, a 2 (sexual harassment vs. control condition) x 2 (selected a masculinized or feminized photo) Chi-Square test showed a predicted significant difference in the overall frequency from expected values, χ^2 = 8.20, p = .004, ϕ = .14. Participants in the sexual harassment condition (78.50%) were more likely to select a feminized photo over a masculinized photo compared to those in the control condition (65.67%).

Table 3

Perceived Prototypicality Based on Drawings (A1) and Photo Selections (A3 and A4)

	Harassment		Control			
Studies	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t* (*df*)	*d*
A1	5.28	1.08	4.77	1.21	2.75 (153)**	0.44
A3	15.01	4.01	13.53	4.72	2.95 (292.71)**	0.34
A4	14.75	4.66	13.06	5.18	2.89 (281)**	0.34

Note. Study A1 drawings were rated on 7-point scale, with higher scores meaning more prototypical; A3-A4 photo selection task could range from 0-20, with higher score indicating greater preference for more prototypical faces.

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

Using a variety of measures to capture mental representations, we found robust evidence that there is an overlap between representation of sexual harassment targets and the prototypes of women. Participants consistently perceived sexual harassment targets as more prototypical of women than non-harassed targets.

Series A: Gender as Moderator

Because participants' gender could potentially moderate the effects observed in these studies (for a meta-analysis of gender differences in perceptions of sexual harassment targets see Rotundo, Nguyen, & Sackett, 2001), we pre-registered gender as a potential moderator in our secondary analysis. In all five studies, participant gender did not moderate the experimental conditions (sexual harassment vs non-harassment contexts) for the prototypicality rating, Fs < 1.11, ps > .293, η_p^2s < .006. This was also the case for the corresponding drawing/photo selection

measures that used continuous variables (Study A1, A3, and A4) that allowed for factorial ANOVAs, Fs < 0.137, ps > .712, η_p^2s < .001. Although our null hypothesis significance testing approach cannot technically provide evidence of a lack of gender difference, these results suggest that both men and women perceive sexual harassment targets to be prototypical women. This finding aligns with research that demonstrates gender does not moderate cultural representations and prototypes (Bailey et al., 2019), and suggests that both men and women are influenced by the prototype of women and the prototype of sexual harassment victims.

Series A Discussion

Five experiments provided converging evidence that people mentally represent sexual harassment targets as prototypical women. This was consistent across a variety of manifestations of sexual harassment, including unwanted sexual attention, advances, and gender harassment. This effect was observed amongst a diverse array of dependent measures, including participants' spontaneous physical drawings, selections of subtly morphed photos, and subjective ratings. Further, participant gender did not moderate these effects, suggesting that the prototype of sexual harassment targets is shared broadly in society.

In the next series of studies, we examined the potential consequences of mentally representing targets of sexual harassment as prototypes of women. Specifically, we examined whether people would have greater difficulty perceiving the same harassing incident as harassment when it was directed at women who deviate from (vs. fit) prototypes of women. In addition, we explored whether this labeling difficulty would be moderated by the type of incident, hypothesizing that prototypicality might have a greater influence on labeling judgments when behaviors were potentially harassing than when behaviors were more clearly benign.

Series B: Prototypicality and Identifying Sexual Harassment

Studies B1-B4 built on the A-Series studies by examining whether narrow prototypes of women make it more difficult to label harassment when it targets women who deviate from (vs. fit with) this prototype. These studies test whether the same sexually harassing behaviors will be less likely to be labelled as harassment when they target non-prototypical relative to prototypical women (*Hypothesis 2a*). We did not expect participant gender to moderate this effect.

We also included a test of moderation as a function of the ambiguity of sexually harassing behaviors. Research on discrimination attribution suggests that moderators, such as target prototypicality, have greater influence on perceptions of bias in contexts in which discrimination is ambiguous (Major et al., 2002). In contrast, moderators will have little influence on perceptions of bias when discrimination is unambiguous, such as when it is clearly present or absent. Therefore, in Studies B2-B4, we explored whether target prototypicality (the moderator) would have a larger effect when the context was potentially harassing (ambiguous) vs. clearly non-harassing (unambiguous). Specifically, we predicted that participants who read about ambiguous potential harassment would find it more difficult to label potentially harassing behaviors as such when it targeted a non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) woman, whereas those who read about clearly absent sexual harassment would show a weaker prototypicality effect (*Hypothesis 2b*).

Due to methodological similarities across all four B series studies, we report the specific procedures and methods for each study and then reported the meta-analytic effects. We report

participant gender results after detailing the meta-analytic test of Hypotheses 2a and 2b. See Table 4 for results from each individual Series B study.[2]

Participants read about (Study B1) or saw a photo of (Studies B2-B4) a non-prototypical or prototypical woman who experienced an ambiguous work incident that could potentially be construed as sexual harassment. Afterward, they rated their perception of how likely it was that the behavior was sexual harassment. In the latter three studies, we also varied the type of behavior participants read about: participants either read about an ambiguous work incident that could be harassment or an incident that was intended to be unambiguously non-harassing. In the B-series studies, we focused on behaviors that fall under the unwanted sexual behavior category. See Appendix B for full descriptions of the manipulations.

To ensure the effectiveness of our prototypicality manipulations in Series B, we used the four prototypicality items from Series A as our manipulation check in Series B. Because we manipulated harassment context in Series B, the perceived prototypicality ratings used as manipulation checks further allowed us to conduct an exploratory test of whether harassment context influences perceptions of women's prototypicality. If this is the case, it would further support that labeling a woman as a victim of sexual harassment shifts perceptions of her prototypicality (Hypothesis 1).

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[2] In Series B, we included measures of secondary impression ratings that capture more specific components of the woman prototype (warmth, competence, attractiveness, and thinness). These measures allow us to determine if certain inferences from the manipulation were more or less responsible for the effects of the fuzzy prototype. Study B1 additionally included ratings of age and SES, but these showed the weakest correlations with prototypicality and were dropped for Studies B2- B4 to conserve time (see Table 2). We report and discuss analyses using these ratings as covariates at the end of Series B. We also controlled for secondary impression ratings (e.g., attractiveness, warmth) in all the analyses and they are on OSF: https://osf.io/q9xrt/

Study B1 Method

Study B1 examined whether it is more difficult to label potentially sexually harassing behaviors as such when they are targeted at non-prototypical women relative to prototypical women. Participants read about a woman with prototypical or non-prototypical female characteristics who experienced an ambiguous harassing work incident.

Procedure. Participants (*N* = 329 MTurk workers) read a description of a woman named Jessica who either embodied prototypical female attributes (e.g., art teacher with stereotypically feminine personality traits and interests) or non-prototypical attributes (e.g., physical education teacher with stereotypically masculine personality traits and interests). We adopted an approach of broad prototypic features including personality, cognitive, and physical traits (Diekman & Eagly, 2000). We pilot tested the prototypical and non-prototypical descriptors to ensure that they differed only in the broad prototypical impression ratings, and ensured that the prototypical and non-prototypical descriptions did not differ in specific secondary impressions such as attractiveness.[3] Participants learned that Jessica's principal complemented her appearance and inquired as to whether she was still dating her boyfriend. The boyfriend was mentioned in order to avoid confounding presumed sexual orientation with prototypicality. Afterwards, participants rated the likelihood that Jessica was sexually harassed and then completed impression ratings.

Likelihood of sexual harassment. Participants rated their perception of sexual harassment with three items ($\alpha = .83$; 1 = extremely unlikely; 7 = extremely likely): 1. "In your opinion, how likely was it that the principal sexually harassed Jessica"; 2. "In your opinion, how

[3] Attractiveness was strongly associated with perception of prototypicality and harassment targets (see https://osf.io/q9xrt/), so we piloted the vignettes in Study B1 to ensure they did not differ on this. In Study B1, non-prototypical target ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.18$) and prototypical target ($M = 5.44$, $SD = 1.21$) did not differ on attractiveness, $t(327) = 1.41$, $p = .159$.

likely was it that the principal showed inappropriate sexual interest in Jessica"; 3. "In your opinion, how likely was it that the principal was simply being friendly toward Jessica (reverse)".

Study B2 Method

Study B1 included only a description of ambiguous behavior that had the potential to be sexual harassment, leaving open the question of victim prototypicality's effect in situations with behaviors that do not obviously have the potential to be harassing. A more precise test of our hypotheses about the importance of linking potentially harassing behaviors to victims' gender-based group identity would involve testing whether gender prototypicality matters more strongly when sexual harassment has potentially occurred, relative to when it has unambiguously not occurred. Theories of discrimination attributions (Major et al., 2002) would predict that we should see a stronger effect of prototypicality for labeling of ambiguous, potentially harassing behaviors than for labeling of unambiguously benign behaviors. Moreover, from a civil rights perspective, judgments about sexual harassment are made in the context of plausible harassment, and not in the clear absence of harassment, as these latter cases are especially likely to drop out of the legal system (Nielsen & Nelson, 2005). Accordingly, Study B2 provides a more specific test of whether this same pattern occurs only when sexual harassment is more plausible.

Additionally, Study B2 further tests the generality of the prototypicality construct by manipulating it with photos rather than trait descriptions. Participants saw either a face that was subtly morphed to be more feminine (in the prototypical condition) or more masculine (in the non-prototypical condition). This was a 2 (Work Incident: harassment or control) x 2 (Prototypicality: prototypical or non-prototypical face) design. We predicted a main effect of prototypicality qualified by a work incident x prototypicality interaction. In the harassment condition, we expected that participants would rate the target as more likely to have experienced

sexual harassment when she was depicted as prototypical compared to non-prototypical. In the control condition, we expected that participants would not rate non-prototypical vs. prototypical depiction differently (or that the effect would be attenuated).

Procedure. Participants (N = 545 MTurk workers) read about a woman named Jane who consulted her supervisor on a problem she was facing. Jane was depicted with either one of three feminized faces (prototypical condition) or one of three masculinized faces (non-prototypical condition). Participants read that the supervisor put his hand on Jane's waist (harassment condition) or in his pocket (control condition). Afterwards, participants rated the likelihood that Jane was sexually harassed.

Likelihood of sexual harassment. The perceived likelihood of sexual harassment was assessed with three items (α = .95; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree): 1. "In my opinion, Jane experienced sexual harassment from her supervisor"; 2. "In my opinion, Jane's supervisor treated her inappropriately because of her gender"; and 3. "In my opinion, Jane's supervisor made a sexual advance toward her."

Study B3 Methods & Procedure

Study B3 (N = 562 MTurk workers) conceptually replicated B2 using a different harassment context. The procedures were identical to Study B2 with the exception that the sexual harassment manipulation involved the supervisor placing his arm around Jane's shoulder (harassment) or placing his hand in his pocket (control). We used the same three items as Study B2 to assess likelihood of sexual harassment (α = .93; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

Study B4 Methods & Procedure

Study B4 used the composite images from the reverse correlation method in Study A5. This manipulation has the benefit of being more overt than the morphed face manipulation of prototypicality in Studies B2 and B3.

Participants (*N* = 484 students) were randomly assigned to read about a teacher named Anna whose principal inquired about her dating life (harassment condition) or preparedness for a conference presentation (control condition). The description was paired with either a prototypical or non-prototypical face generated from reverse correlation (see Fig. 1). Afterwards, participants rated the likelihood that Anna was sexually harassed.

Likelihood of sexual harassment. Three items measured perceived likelihood of sexual harassment (α = .90; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree): 1. "In my opinion, Anna experienced sexual harassment from the principal;" 2. "In my opinion, the principal showed inappropriately sexual interest in Anna;" and 3. "In my opinion, the principal did not sexually harass Anna (reverse)."

Primary Meta-Analytic Results of Series B

A meta-analysis of our prototypicality manipulation checks (αs = .75-.77) reveals that we successfully manipulated prototypicality across studies: $g = 0.42$, $Z = 9.11$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.33, 0.51].

We first examined the meta-analytic main effect of prototypical vs. non-prototypical conditions across Studies B1-B4 on perceptions of harassment (collapsing across control vs. harassment context). This yielded a significant effect, $g = 0.17$, $Z = 3.70$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.08, 0.26]. Supporting Hypothesis 2a, a prototypical target was generally seen as more likely to experience harassment than a non-prototypical target, even though they experienced the same exact incident. The evidence in the individual studies was modest and mixed, with Studies B1

and B2 producing the significant effect, B3 producing no effect, and B4 producing a marginal effect (see Table 4). Somewhat surprisingly, we did not observe any interactions between prototypicality manipulation and harassment (vs. unambiguous) contexts in the individual studies (Studies B2-B4). However, attenuating interactions like the one we expected require high statistical power, which an individual study may lack (for simulations and explication, see Blake & Gangestad, 2020; Giner-Sorolla, 2018; Simonsohn, 2014). To gain the statistical power necessary to more accurately test the interaction between victim prototypicality and behavior ambiguity, we meta-analyzed the interactions by converting the interaction term into Cohen's *d* for each study (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001).[4] Looking meta-analytically across studies, the interaction between prototypicality and harassment conditions was small and significant, $d = 0.10$, $Z = 2.05$, $p = .040$, 95% CI [0.00, 0.20].

To decompose the interaction, we conducted separate meta-analyses for the harassment condition from Studies B1-B4 and for the control condition in Studies B2-B4 (B1 did not have a control condition). See Table 5 for the descriptive statistics in each study. Consistent with Hypothesis 2b, participants perceived prototypical targets as more likely to have experienced sexual harassment than non-prototypical targets when these targets experienced potentially harassing work incidents, $g = 0.26$, $Z = 4.27$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.14, 0.37]. When targets experienced non-harassing events (in the control condition), participants did not significantly perceive prototypical targets as experiencing more sexual harassment than non-prototypical targets, $g = 0.12$, $Z = 1.69$, $p = .091$, 95% CI [-0.02, 0.26], as would be expected from theories of discrimination attributions.

[4] Conversion was conducted using this website:
https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/escalc/html/EffectSizeCalculator-SMD30.php

Table 4

Perceived Harassment Likelihood as a Function of Prototypicality and Harassment Context in Studies B1-B4

	Prototypicality Main Effect			Harassment Main Effect			
	Prototypical	Non-prototypical		Harassed	Control		Interaction
Studies	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*t* or *F* (*df*)	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*F* (*df*)	*F* (*df*)
B1	4.39 (1.51)	3.62 (1.55)	4.57 (327)***	-	-	-	-
B2	3.83 (1.98)	3.54 (1.89)	6.32 (1, 541)*	5.02 (1.36)	2.41 (1.50)	455.54 (1, 541)***	0.71 (1, 541)
B3	3.05 (1.58)	2.97 (1.67)	0.29 (1, 558)	3.53 (1.56)	2.48 (1.52)	65.12 (1, 558)***	0.01 (1, 558)
B4	3.15 (1.45)	2.98 (1.48)	2.91 (1, 480)$^{+}$	3.84 (1.31)	2.27 (1.17)	194.00 (1, 480)***	0.12 (1, 480)

Note. Study B1 did not have a non-harassment control condition and was compared using independent *t*-test.

$^{+}p < .10$. $*p < .05$. $**p < .01$. $***p < .001$.

Table 5

Perceived Harassment between Prototypical and Non-Prototypical Targets by Harassment Context in Studies B1-B4

	Harassed Condition		Control Condition	
	Prototypical	Non-prototypical	Prototypical	Non-prototypical
Studies	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)
B1	4.39 (1.51)	3.62 (1.55)	-	-
B2	5.22 (1.30)	4.81 (1.39)	2.51 (1.57)	2.30 (1.43)
B3	3.57 (1.54)	3.49 (1.59)	2.51 (1.44)	2.45 (1.59)
B4	3.92 (1.25)	3.77 (1.37)	2.39 (1.22)	2.16 (1.11)

Exploratory Meta-Analysis of Study Series B: Perceived Prototypicality

Within the individual studies, we observed an unexpected but significant effect of harassment context manipulation on the perceived prototypicality of faces in Studies B2 and B4 (but not B3; B1 did not manipulate harassment context). Therefore, we conducted an exploratory meta-analysis to examine this pattern of effects further. Across Studies B2-B4, we meta-analyzed the effect of manipulated harassment context vs. control context on perceived prototypicality of the targets, with higher scores indicating that targets experiencing harassment are perceived as more prototypical than the non-victims. There was a small significant effect, $g = 0.19$ $Z = 3.80$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.09, 0.29]. This unexpected but interesting effect demonstrates the power of labels in shaping social perception (Eberhardt, Dasgupta, & Banaszynski, 2003), and it provides

a strong test of our theory and Hypothesis 1, such that the same faces could be perceived as more prototypical when labelled as experiencing (vs. not experiencing) sexual harassment.

Series B: Gender as Moderator

In all four studies, participant gender did not interact with the prototypicality conditions (prototypical vs. non-prototypical) and context (harassment vs. control) for the perceived harassment likelihood, Fs < 2.79, ps > .095, η_p^2s < .005. This, again, suggests that prototypes are culturally transmitted, such that men and women hold a similar prototypical image of a sexual harassment target.

Series B Discussion

Across the B-series studies, we investigated whether a potential consequence of holding a narrow mental representation of sexual harassment victims as prototypical women is that people are less likely to think that sexual harassment has occurred when it targets non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) women. We theorize that perceiving a potentially harassing behavior as sexual harassment requires connecting the behavior to the prototypical group representation of women (Major et al., 2002). As such, when targets of harassment deviate from the image of prototypical women, people may have greater difficulty associating the targets with harassment and are therefore less likely to perceive that non-prototypical targets have experienced harassment. Meta-analytic evidence supported this theory and demonstrated a significant small effect that is consistent with Hypothesis 2a, such that participants were less likely to attribute an ambiguous work incident to sexual harassment when it targets non-prototypical women relative to prototypical women, despite the fact that both prototypical and non-prototypical targets experienced the same exact incident. Further supporting Hypothesis 1, our manipulation check and meta-analysis further showed that simply labelling the same face as a victim of harassment

shifts participants' perception of its prototypicality. In essence, when participants believed a target was harassed, they are more likely to see the target as prototypical (Eberhardt et al., 2003).

Unexpectedly, interaction terms between prototypicality and harassment contexts were not significant in each individual study, though this is likely due at least in part to a lack of statistical power needed to detect attenuating interactions (Blake & Gangestad, 2020; Giner-Sorolla, 2018; Simonsohn, 2014). Our meta-analysis of the interaction between victim prototypicality and behavior ambiguity suggested a small but significant interaction in line with Hypothesis 2b. When a behavior was potentially harassing, the effect of victim prototypicality was more reliable than when a behavior was unambiguously non-harassing. Indeed, in the latter condition, there was only a weak, marginal effect of prototypicality. Thus, although it may be that prototypical women (vs. non-prototypical women) are perceived as more likely to experience harassment across different behavioral contexts, prototypicality is likely to matter more when the behavior is ambiguously harassing—identifying it as harassing requires linking the behavior to gender-based group membership (Major et al., 2002). Future research can further explore the role of behavioral contexts for the effects of prototypicality; for example, people may have a lower threshold for what constitutes harassment when it targets prototypical women compared to non-prototypical women, which could lead people to label a wider range of behaviors as harassment when interactions include prototypical women.

Series B provides support for the notion that the association between sexual harassment and prototypical women can make people less likely to think sexual harassment has occurred when it targets women who fall outside of that prototypical representation.[5] Individuals were less

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[5] We ran a separate series of four studies that examined effect of prototypicality in evaluating gender-harassing contexts (e.g., exposure to crude sexual jokes or contents). These are presented

likely to label ambiguous behavior as sexual harassment when it targeted non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) women. Determining whether behavior constitutes harassment is critical to catalyzing myriad psychological and social processes that increase the likelihood that harassing behavior is reported, perpetrators are held accountable, and victims receive a measure of redress. Importantly, however, even when harassing behavior can be identified as such, there is a general tendency in our broader culture and legal system to reflexively discount the credibility of the victim and her account. Doubting the veracity of sexual harassment claims poses an enormous barrier to victims' ability to receive protection and justice (Epstein & Goodman, 2018; Tuerkheimer, 2017). Indeed, in legal and punitive contexts involving sexual harassment, perceptions of the victim's credibility and the level of psychological harm experienced typically increase the likelihood that the allegation is taken seriously, and that verdicts, liability, and damage determinations favor the victim (Epstein & Goodman, 2018; Vallano, 2013). In the next series, we examined if the association between sexual harassment and prototypical women also disadvantages non-prototypical women when they make sexual harassment claims by biasing perceptions of the credibility of their claims. We also tested how victim prototypicality influences additional outcomes that have clear implications in legal and punitive contexts: the perceived psychological harm of harassment and the punishment assigned to the perpetrator.

Series C: Prototypes and the Impact of Sexual Harassment

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as Series D in OSF Supplement: https://osf.io/mc94e/ and in supplemental materials. Contrary to Series B, the meta-analytic effect size showed negligible, non-significant differences between the prototypical and non-prototypical conditions, $g = 0.07$, $Z = 1.33$, $p = .184$, 95% CI [-0.03, 0.17]. This suggests that when women are victimized by gender harassment (Supplement Series D) that is not on the surface sexually or romantically driven (Series B), their prototypicality does not influence perceived harassment.

In Series C, we examined whether non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) women's sexual harassment claims are perceived to be less *credible*, as well as whether sexual harassment of non-prototypical women is less likely to be recognized as *harmful.* Furthermore, we examined whether people are less *punitive* towards perpetrators when sexual harassment targets non-prototypical women compared to prototypical women. B-series provided preliminary evidence consistent with our theorizing that, because people have greater difficulty associating non-prototypical women with sexual harassment, they are less likely to think that sexual harassment has occurred when it targets non-prototypical women. If this is the case, then in addition to influencing whether individuals label ambiguous behavior as harassment, target prototypicality should also affect the perceived credibility of sexual harassment claims. If people have a narrowed representation of who is sexually harassed, the victim should be perceived to be less credible when she falls outside of that prototypical representation (Hypothesis 3).

We also examined whether an additional consequence of the association between harassment and prototypical women is that it makes it less likely that sexual harassment will be recognized as harmful and problematic when it targets women who deviate (vs. fit with) the narrow prototype. To do so, we tested whether people perceive instances of sexual harassment as less psychologically harmful (Hypothesis 4) and recommend more lenient punishment for perpetrators when harassment targets a non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) victim (Hypothesis 5). As before, we do not expect participant gender to moderate these effects.

Participants saw photos of (Study C1) or read about (Study C2) a non-prototypical and/or prototypical woman who has made a sexual harassment claim against a coworker. Participants then judged the credibility of her claim, evaluated how psychologically harmed the woman

would be, and rated the extent to which the perpetrator should be punished if she was sexually harassed.

Study C1 Method

Procedure. Participants (N = 272 MTurk workers) were told that they would be shown four "fuzzy" pictures of people and asked to make a series of impression ratings. Participants viewed both the Study A5 prototypical woman (the reverse-correlation generated sexual harassment victim) and the non-prototypical woman (the reverse-correlation generated non-sexual harassment victim; see Fig. 1), as well as two filler images of men. These images were presented in randomized order.

Participants were told that the people depicted made a sexual harassment claim against a coworker. They then rated how much they believed and how confident they were that each person was sexually harassed by their coworker on a 7-point scale, with higher numbers indicating greater belief and confidence. These two items were averaged to create a composite 'credibility' score (prototypical woman $\alpha = .83$, non-prototypical woman $\alpha = .84$).

Next, participants rated how psychologically harmed (upset, distressed, traumatized) each person would be if they were sexually harassed by her coworker on a 7-point scale, with higher numbers indicating stronger emotional reactions. The three items were averaged to create a 'psychological harm' composite (prototypical woman $\alpha = .93$, non-prototypical woman $\alpha = .94$).

Participants were then told that company policy has a 9-tiered system of punishment severity that is used to determine appropriate punishment when sexual harassment occurs within the company. They were then asked, "if an investigation concludes that this woman [man] was sexually harassed by her [his] coworker, how should the coworker be punished?" on a 1 (*Level 1: informal warning*) to 9 (*Level 9: termination*) scale.

Finally, as a manipulation check, participants completed the same prototypicality items from the previous studies (prototypical woman α = .81, non-prototypical woman α = .85).

Study C1 Results

Confirming our prototypicality manipulation, participants rated the prototypical woman as appearing significantly more prototypical (*M* = 5.71, *SD* = .95) than the non-prototypical woman (*M* = 4.66, *SD* = 1.26), *t*(271) = 13.95, $p < .001$, $d_z = 0.85$, 95% CI [0.71, 0.98].

Primary analyses. Confirming Hypotheses 3-5, participants rated the non-prototypical woman as being significantly less credible (*M* = 4.24, *SD* = 1.47) than the prototypical woman (*M* = 4.92, *SD* = 1.31), *t*(271) = 8.45, $p < .001$, $d_z = 0.51$, 95% CI [0.39, 0.64]. Participants also rated the non-prototypical woman as being significantly less psychologically harmed by sexual harassment (*M* = 5.49, *SD* = 1.37) than the prototypical woman (*M* = 5.76, *SD* = 1.12), *t*(271) = 4.04, $p < .001$, $d_z = 0.25$, 95% CI [0.12, 0.37]. Similarly, people gave more lenient punishment recommendations for the perpetrator when the target was the non-prototypical woman (*M* = 6.53, *SD* = 2.63) compared to the prototypical woman, (*M* = 6.74, *SD* = 2.51), *t*(271) = 3.00, *p* = .003, $d_z = 0.18$, 95% CI [0.06, 0.30].

Gender as a moderator. Participant gender did not moderate the effect on perceived credibility, *F*(1, 269) = .11, *p* = .743, $\eta_p^2 = .00$, 90% CI [0.00, 0.01], psychological harm *F*(1, 269) = .95, *p* = .330, $\eta_p^2 = .00$, 90% CI [0.00, 0.02], or punishment, *F* (1, 269) = 3.83, *p* = .058, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, 90% CI [0.00, 0.05].[6]

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[6] The interaction was marginally significant on punishment. We conducted simple effect tests but interpretation should be drawn cautiously: women gave significantly more lenient punishment recommendations when harassment targeted the non-prototypical victim (*M* = 6.35, *SD* = 2.73) vs. prototypical victim (*M* = 6.68, *SD* = 2.50; *F* (1, 269) = 12.09, *p* = .001, $\eta_p^2 = .04$). There was no significant difference for men evaluating prototypical victim (*M* = 6.81, *SD* = 2.54) compared to non-prototypical victim (*M* = 6.73, *SD* = 2.53), *F* (1, 269) = .601, *p* = .439, $\eta_p^2 = .00$.

Study C2 Method

Participants evaluated a woman with prototypical (i.e., art teacher with stereotypically feminine personality traits and interests) or non-prototypical (i.e., physical education teacher with stereotypically masculine personality traits and interests) female characteristics who claimed to have experienced sexual harassment at work. All other measures remained the same as in Study C1.

Procedure. Participants (N = 590 MTurk workers) read about a woman named Jessica who was either described with prototypical characteristics or non-prototypical characteristics. Afterwards, participants completed the same credibility (α = .91), psychological harm (α = .92), punishment, and prototypicality ratings (α = .88) as in Study C1.

Study C2 Results

Confirming our manipulation, participants rated the prototypical woman as appearing significantly more prototypical (M = 5.89, SD = .79) than the non-prototypical woman (M = 3.93, SD = 1.25), $t(588) = 23.01$, $p < .001$, d = 1.90, 95% CI [1.71, 2.10].

Primary analyses. Confirming our hypotheses, participants perceived the non-prototypical woman as significantly less credible (M = 4.84, SD = 1.53) than the prototypical woman (M = 5.14, SD = 1.28), $t(588) = 2.59$, p = .010, d = 0.22, 95% CI [0.05, 0.38]. Participants also perceived the non-prototypical woman as significantly less psychologically harmed by sexual harassment (M = 5.46, SD = 1.35) than the prototypical woman (M = 5.94, SD = 1.08), $t(588) = 4.72$, $p < .001$, d = 0.39, 95% CI [0.23, 0.55].

Contrary to our hypothesis, people did not recommend more lenient punishment for the perpetrator when the target was non-prototypical (M = 6.37, SD = 2.63) compared to prototypical, (M = 6.44, SD = 2.59), $t(588) = 0.32$, p = .752, d = 0.03, 95% CI [-0.14, 0.19].

Gender as a moderator. As in study C1, participant gender did not moderate the effect of prototypicality on perceived credibility, $F(1, 588) = 1.33$, $p = .249$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$, 90% CI [0.00, 0.01], psychological harm, $F(1, 588) = .41$, $p = .525$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$, 90% CI [0.00, 0.01], or punishment, $F(1, 588) = .18$, $p = .671$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$, 90% CI [0.00, 0.01].

Study Series C Discussion

People have a narrow representation of who is sexually harassed (Series A), and they are less likely to think that sexual harassment targets women who fall outside of that prototypical representation (Series B). Consequently, prototypicality could affect the perceived credibility of sexual harassment claims and the perceived psychological harm caused by harassment. Two studies found that non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) women were perceived to be less credible and less harmed by harassment, which suggests that the sexual harassment-prototypical woman association could have severe downstream consequences for non-prototypical women in legal and punitive contexts.

Victim credibility is central to the treatment of sexual harassment allegations that occur internally or through legal action, and discrediting victims is a robust obstacle to victims' efforts to obtain safety and justice (Epstein & Goodman, 2018; Tuerkheimer, 2017). Even when a claim is deemed credible, the sexually harassing behavior must be considered sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile work environment for it to violate Title VII (EEOC, 2017). A critical factor that can influence these determinations is whether the conduct was patently offensive and caused the victim psychological harm.

In addition to informing whether the behavior violates Title VII, perceptions of psychological harm is oftentimes central to how people evaluate perpetrators and consider liability and damage determinations for the victim (Vallano, 2013; van Doorn & Koster, 2019).

Indeed, we found some evidence that people may assign less severe punishments to perpetrators against non-prototypical victims, though more research is needed to better understand why we found this effect in Study C1 but not Study C2. Nonetheless, the fact that participants in Study C1 assigned a less severe punishment to a perpetrator of harassment in a within-subjects design, where the behavior experienced by both victims is clearly identical, is striking, and underlines the importance of further examining the role of prototypicality in downstream judgments about sexual harassment.

General Discussion

Despite the pervasiveness of and considerable harm caused by sexual harassment, countless women are denied protection, fairness, and justice, and are made vulnerable to further victimization and harm under the U.S. legal system. While Me Too has recalibrated cultural awareness and responsiveness to sexual harassment, it seems the movement has largely amplified, credited, and addressed the voices and needs of a narrow subset of victims (Burke, 2017; Leung & Williams, 2019). Indeed, there are still myriad barriers to enforcement of sexual harassment law for many women who are victimized. Sexual harassment remains underreported by both its targets and witnesses, and credibility discounting is endemic. Even when women are believed, the harm caused by the harassment (which is critical to the legal treatment of sexual harassment under Title VII) is often minimized, allowing perpetrators to avoid being held accountable (Leung & Williams, 2019). The present investigation aimed to understand perceptions of sexual harassment and how such narrow perceptions can bias key legal determinants of harassment and inhibit the realization of civil rights for all women.

Drawing from perspectives on prototypes and perceptions of discrimination, we proposed that gender prototypes can fundamentally shape perceptions of sexual harassment. We theorized

that, because sexual harassment is inherently connected to gender-based group membership, people mentally represent sexual harassment victims as prototypical women. Further, perceiving a behavior as sexual harassment requires connecting the harassing behavior to the target's gender-group membership, such that sexual harassment becomes more difficult to recognize (both in terms of labeling sexual harassment and perceiving sexual harassment claims to be credible) when targets deviate from the prototype of women (Major et al., 2002). Additionally, when there is evidence that sexual harassment occurred, features of non-prototypicality may lead individuals to minimize the severity of non-prototypical women's experiences.

We tested the effect of gender prototypes on these perceptions of sexual harassment across 11 highly-powered experiments that included over 4,000 participants and integrated a variety of measures such as physical drawings, face perception tasks, and survey ratings. Because sexual harassment is defined in relation to gender-based group membership, in the Series A studies we examined whether people's mental representation of sexual harassment targets overlapped with the prototype of women (Hypothesis 1). Across an unconstrained drawing task (Study A1), photo selection tasks with transformed images (Studies A2-A4), and reverse correlation methods (Study A5), we consistently found that women who experienced sexual harassment were mentally represented as more gender prototypical than women who did not experience harassment. Studies A1-A5 thus supported Hypothesis 1, though the link between prototypicality and sexual harassment was perhaps most strongly observed in the exploratory meta-analysis in the B-Series studies showing that the exact same faces were perceived as more prototypical when labelled with experiences of sexual harassment rather than other control, non-harassing behaviors.

Because recognizing sexual harassment requires noticing a potentially harassing behavior and linking it to gender-based group membership (Major et al., 2002), we tested the hypothesis that people would be less likely to label a potentially harassing behavior as harassment when the victim was non-prototypical rather than prototypical. Across four studies in B-Series, we manipulated prototypicality through textual descriptions that controlled for attractiveness or through face images, while sampling a variety of different sexually harassing scenarios that included unwanted romantic interest and inappropriate physical touch. Meta-analyses of the four studies revealed that participants were less likely to label potentially harassing behaviors as such when victims were non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) women. Moreover, the effect of prototypicality on labeling was moderated by behavior ambiguity, such that prototypicality had a slightly greater effect on participants' judgments when behaviors were ambiguously harassing than when behaviors were unlikely to constitute harassment.

In Series C, we predicted and found that a claim was deemed less credible and sexual harassment was perceived to be less psychologically harmful when it targeted non-prototypical women. Participants in Study C1 recommended less severe punishment for the perpetrator of harassment against a non-prototypical woman, but this effect did not emerge in Study C2. Thus, non-prototypicality not only impedes the identification of sexual harassment (Studies B1-B4), but also creates further barriers after harassment claims are made. Our results suggest that non-prototypical women's claims are less likely to be believed, and even when believed, non-prototypical women will face additional barriers to legal redress due to biased perceptions of harm and potential leniency in punishment recommendations for the perpetrators (though this effect was less robust across Series C).

Theoretical and Applied Implications

The present research provides several contributions to the social psychological literature on gender and sexual harassment. First, although psychologists have been studying sexual harassment for over three decades (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 1988), there remains a dearth of theory to explain when and why some victims of harassment are neglected relative to others. Much of the social science literature examines other aspects of sexual harassment, such as its prevalence, causes, and consequences (e.g., Cortina & Berdahl, 2008; O'Leary-Kelly, Bowes-Sperry, Bates, & Lean, 2009), while studies that do examine perceptions of harassment remain relatively disconnected rather than unified around a shared framework or approach. Some early work reported that participants believed that women who wear more cosmetics and are more attractive face greater risk of harassment (Golden, Johnson, & Lopez, 2001; Madera, Podratz, King, & Hebl, 2007; Sieter & Dunn, 2000; Workman & Johnson, 1991), but these studies have largely remained independent from each other and typically explicate the potential effects of specific victim characteristics on a limited range of judgments. Further, experimental work is particularly lacking as most sexual harassment research has relied on correlational approaches (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018)

We have advanced an integrative theoretical framework for studying perceptions of sexual harassment, which not only unifies previously disconnected findings but also generates clear predictions for how narrow mental representations of victims can lead to the neglect of non-prototypical victims in legal and punitive contexts. By connecting perceptions of harassment to prototype theories (Medin, 1989; Rosch, 1978) and theories of discrimination attribution (Major et al., 2002), our framework explains and demonstrates how deviation from the prototype of a sexual harassment victim (a gender-prototypical woman) can influence labelling of sexual harassment (Series B) and perceived credibility and harm of victims (Series C).

Our framework also highlights the importance of considering within-category variation in social perception and provides insights into potential gender differences in harassment perceptions. First, the present research joins the literature on the importance of within-category variation in prototypicality (e.g., Blair et al., 2004; Eberhardt et al., 2006; Kaiser & Wilkins, 2010; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004), underlining that social perception is shaped not only by broad categorizations between different social groups (e.g., do people think women are more affected by sexual harassment than men), but also by variation in within-category features (e.g., do people think feminine women are more affected by sexual harassment than those who are less feminine). With respect to the sexual harassment literature, this approach expands beyond studying how perceptions of victims and perpetrators differ based on between-category differences in gender (e.g., Castillo, Muscarella, & Szuchman, 2011; Madera et al., 2007) or race (Cortina & Berdahl, 2008), resulting in a more nuanced theoretical perspective. But importantly, our framework allows integration of both within and between-group variations in prototypicality. According to our framework, between-group variation in victim prototypicality should also shape perceptions of and judgments about sexual harassment.

The harassment literature has also focused on gender *differences* in perceptions of harassment (Rotundo et al., 2001), but our perspective reveals contexts in which one would not necessarily expect perceiver gender to moderate perceptions. Namely, because gender prototypes are socially propagated and shared (Bailey et al., 2019; Turner et al., 1987), women and men will often share and be equally influenced by prototypes of women and of sexual harassment victims (as we found across our studies). This dovetails with literature on how both men and women perpetuate the status quo and similarly punish individuals who deviate from their group-prototype (Jost et al., 2004; Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Our prototype perspective also bridges research on perceptions of harassment with research on actual experiences of harassment in the workplace. Specifically, we showed that people believe prototypical women are more likely to experience harassment, whereas applied research consistently shows that *less* prototypical women are at greater risk of harassment (e.g., Berdahl, 2007a, 2007b). This bias emerges, we propose, because understandings of sexual harassment are related to beliefs about gender-based group membership, resulting in a flawed and consequential overlap between social prototypes of women and of harassment victims. Indeed, our data are consistent with the proposal that reasoning about group-based membership is an important aspect of sexual harassment perception, though future research can more directly test the specific mechanism of gender group categorization.

From a more applied perspective, our results fit with and bolster critiques of the Me Too movement as centering on a narrow subset of prototypical women (e.g., attractive, white, affluent women; Burke, 2017). Future research should examine whether cultural shifts in perceptions of the credibility and suffering of harassment victims catalyzed by the Me Too movement only favor prototypical women. If this is the case, countless women will continue to be silenced and left without protection, fair treatment, or recourse (Epstein & Goodman, 2018; Tuerkheimer, 2017). When credibility discounting occurs, the majority of accusations are dropped and do not reach an investigative body or jury (Epstein, 2020; Tuerkheimer, 2017). Therefore, this inclination to discount the credibility of non-prototypical women, especially when the majority of women fall outside of narrow prototypical representations, could lead to unjust and discriminatory treatment. In addition to barring many women from accessing legal protection, credibility discounts further perpetuate harms related to psychological well-being and can leave

women vulnerable to revictimization and retaliatory treatment, creating a formidable obstacle to women's safety and healing (Epstein, 2020).

Importantly, our results also suggest that even when non-prototypical women overcome this barrier, are perceived as credible, and reach an investigative body or jury, non-prototypicality can then bias perceptions of the harm victims have endured. Evaluations of the psychological harm caused by harassment is the critical component of legal responses to victims under Title VII (EEOC, 2017). To meet the legal definition of sexual harassment and bring forth an actionable claim, the plaintiff (harassment victim) must demonstrate that the conduct caused repeated harm over multiple instances or severe harm in one instance (EEOC, 2017). Further, determinations of harm are critical to judgements of whether employers and harassers are liable for compensatory or punitive damages and the extent to which the harasser should be punished (EEOC, 2017; Vallano, 2013). Therefore, biased assessments of the psychological harm experienced by non-prototypical women who are sexually harassed has the potential to meaningfully disrupt non-prototypical women's ability to receive protection and justice under the law. Taken together, if women's non-prototypicality biases perceptions of both credibility and harm, as our results suggest, it could prevent non-prototypical women who are sexually harassed from receiving the civil rights protections afforded to them.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our studies explored prototypicality using within-categorical traits, characteristics, and attributes that varied within women. We did not explore between-categorical variation among women, such as race, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Black women are perceived as less gender prototypical than white women (Crenshaw, 1992; Lei, Leshin, & Rhodes, 2020; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Sesko & Biernat, 2010; Thomas et al., 2014) and people may thus

more readily recognize sexual harassment when it targets white (vs. Black) women, in addition to perceiving Black women as less credible and less harmed by sexual harassment. The redeployment of Tarana Burke's initial movement by white, feminine women, as well as the exclusion of women of color from the mainstream movement, is consistent with this possibility (Burke, 2017).

The current studies conceptualize prototypicality as a reflection of distance from group membership, and we argue that this mechanism drives the downstream effects on credibility and harm. However, because group prototypes are "fuzzy" and can encompass physical appearance and various behaviors and traits (Hogg, 1993; Medin, 1989; Rosch, 1978), there could be numerous and potentially overlapping specific aspects of prototypes of women that facilitate the disbelief and devaluation of non-prototypical women's experiences to different degrees. For example, physical attractiveness, an important feature of prototypical women, may heavily influence credibility and harm determinations. In terms of credibility, attractive (vs. unattractive) women who are sexually harassed are more believable victims (Madera et al., 2007). Further, from a legal perspective, determinations of harm in sexual harassment cases are heavily dependent on perceptions that the harassing behavior is *unwanted* (EEOC, 2017), and people may think sexual conduct is not unwelcomed by (and therefore not harmful and perhaps even flattering to) unattractive women (Giuffrida, 2019). Indeed, our initial evidence showed that impressions of warmth and attractiveness are particularly relevant to impressions of prototypicality (see Supplementary Analyses on OSF: https://osf.io/xehu9/ and in Supplemental materials). We note that even when using manipulations of prototypicality that controlled for attractiveness (Studies B1 and C2), we still found prototypicality affecting perceptions of credibility and harm. Future research should examine how these specific components of

prototypicality lead individuals to minimize the credibility and severity of sexual harassment when it targets non-prototypical women.

Additionally, the current studies did not examine whether people's mental representations of a harassment victim are partially informed by the perception that sexual harassment stems from sexual intent. Perceiving sexual harassment as being driven by sexual interest in the target may contribute to dismissive reactions to non-prototypical sexual harassment victims. Yet, when participants in Study A4 read about a victim who was shown a crude image (i.e., harassment reflecting derogation or control rather than sexual interest), they still perceived the victim to be more like a prototypical woman than the non-victim. This finding suggests that our results are not solely driven by beliefs about sexual interest. Future research should explore the extent to which beliefs about sexual harassment and sexual intent contribute to people's perceptions of who is victimized, who is believed, and who is harmed by sexual harassment.

In Study A5, the images generated from noise-based reverse correlation may have slightly inflated the magnitude of the prototypicality effect. The generated victim image and anti-victim image were created by superimposing the average noise-pattern of the images that were selected as resembling a sexual harassment victim and the average noise-pattern of the unselected images onto the base image, respectively. The anti-victim image does represent the opposite social category of a sexual harassment victim (a non-sexual harassment victim), but because the anti-victim image is the exact inverse of the victim image, the differences in prototypicality between the images may be larger than if we had compared the victim image with an image that was generated by asking participants to select the woman who does *not* resemble a sexual harassment victim. To examine this possibility, we ran an additional reverse correlation task (N=165) using this question and generated people's mental representations of a non-sexual

harassment victim. We then had a separate sample of participants (*N* = 109) rate the prototypicality of the victim image from A5 and the new image of a non-sexual harassment victim. The prototypicality difference was slightly smaller (*d* = 1.04) compared to the effect found in A5 (*d* = 1.19), but was still large (see supplemental material for generated image and analyses). This suggests that the effect size in A5 was somewhat larger than if we had used a more conservative method, which may have somewhat inflated the Series A meta-analytic effect (though not to such an extent that the effect would otherwise be nonsignificant or trivially small).

Further, in A5 we did not randomly generate a control image of a woman for comparison, so our results can only speak to the relative difference in prototypicality of a sexual harassment victim and anti-sexual harassment victim. Therefore, it is unclear whether the difference in prototypicality in the generated images is due to heightened prototypicality of people's mental representation of a sexual harassment victim, decreased prototypicality of people's mental representation of a non-sexual harassment victim, or a combination. Importantly, because harassment victims are actually *more* likely to have characteristics of non-prototypical women (Berdahl, 2007), this relative difference in prototypicality still demonstrates a theoretically and practically meaningful bias in perceptions of who is victimized by sexual harassment.

Additionally, the evidence for the expected interaction between prototypicality and harassment context in Series B was weaker than expected. Although we had powered our studies to meet 80% power for a medium effect size, the interaction was only significant in the meta-analysis with a small effect size. The expected interaction may be too small to be detected with our sample size (Blake & Gangestad, 2020), or our manipulations may not have been strong enough. People may also simply have a lower threshold for what is considered sexual harassment for prototypical women, particularly when mixed-gender intergroup dynamics are made salient

as in our studies. As a result, participants may perceive behaviors to be more potentially harassing for prototypical woman relative to non-prototypical women even when those behaviors appear relatively benign. Although Series B did not find strong evidence of an interaction between prototypicality and behavior ambiguity, there was robust evidence that sexual harassment is less likely to be labeled as such when a woman is non-prototypical (vs. prototypical). Further the results of Series C demonstrate that a victim's prototypicality can bias perceptions of outcomes that are critical to the legal interpretation and response to sexual harassment under Title IX.

Finally, future research should also attempt to generalize our findings beyond the specific designs, participant samples, and stimuli used in the present investigation. For example, we relied heavily on vignettes. Although they allowed us to carefully control our experimental manipulations, they may differ from how people often witness sexual harassment in the workplace. There was also a lack of stimulus sampling in Series C. While we varied stimuli across studies and used stimulus sampling across Series A and B, the Studies C1 and C2 had a stimulus sample size of one. To examine whether these results can generalize across multiple stimuli, future designs should manipulate gender prototypicality with multiple photos that vary between participants and treat stimuli as a random factor. Our samples were also limited to American undergraduate or MTurk participants, but there may be cultural differences in perceptions of sexual harassment (e.g., Merkin, 2008; Tang, Yik, Cheung, Choi, & Au 1995), or effects of age group (e.g., Loredo, Reid, & Deaux, 1995) or political ideology (e.g., Kunst, Bailey, Prendergast, & Gundersen, 2018; van der Linden & Panagopoulos, 2019) that can moderate our findings in meaningful ways. Additionally, prototypes are socially-determined and

context-dependent, and societies or generations that do not share the same prototype of women as those in our samples would likely require other forms of prototypicality manipulations.

Conclusion

Sexual harassment is a systemic and pervasive problem that causes considerable psychological, physical, and economic harm to its targets (for reviews see Pryor & Fitzgerald, 2003, Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). Accordingly, it is important to identify factors that can shape people's perception of and judgments about sexual harassment victims. Because people associate sexual harassment victims with gender prototypical women, sexual harassment can go unrecognized, women may not be believed, and harassment may not be considered harmful when victims deviate from the prototypical image of women. Given that non-prototypical women are disproportionately targeted by sexual harassment (Berdahl, 2007a; 2007b; Shultz, 1998), it is especially concerning that their experiences are less likely to be labelled as harassment and more likely to be discredited and minimized. When the perception of sexual harassment relies on victims' resemblance to narrow prototypes of women, many women will experience difficulty attaining civil rights protections offered under the law. Understanding the misperceptions we hold about victims of sexual harassment is crucial in recognizing the barriers to legal rights and bringing about successful resolutions for all women targeted by sexual harassment.

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The invisibility & neglect of Black women survivors during the mainstream Me Too movement

Bryn Bandt-Law [1]*, Nathan N. Cheek [2]*, Stacey Sinclair [3]

[1] University of Washington

[2] Purdue University

[3] Princeton University

Word count: 7331

*Shared first-authorship

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Abstract

Black women experience sexual violence more frequently and severely than white women, yet their experiences are more likely to be ignored and neglected (e.g., Onwuachi-Willig, 2018; Crenshaw 1989). In the present research, we investigate how the experiences of Black women in particular remain invisible and receive less support relative to white women in the United States, even as the mainstream Me Too movement has raised awareness of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of gender-based violence. Across six multi-method studies, we show that Black (vs. white) women were underrepresented as survivors/victims in news coverage of the Me Too movement (*New York Times)* and search media (e.g., Google, Bing, Adobestock). Additionally, we show that people erroneously perceived Black (vs. white) women to be less likely victims of workplace sexual violence and Black women were subject to large scale neglect during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism Movement on Twitter. These findings suggest that the longstanding erasure and neglect of Black women as survivors/victims of sexual violence in the United States compared to white women extends into the Me Too era.

Black women experience sexual violence more frequently and severely than white women and have been at the forefront of social and legal challenges to sexual violence in the U.S, yet their experiences are more likely to be ignored and neglected (e.g., Onwuachi-Willig, 2018; Crenshaw 1989). Indeed, it was largely because of the longstanding inattention to gender-based violence targeting Black women that Tarana Burke founded the Me Too movement in 2006 to bring more attention and care to marginalized survivors (Burke, 2022; Cooney, 2017). The sudden, widespread attention brought to the movement by the viral Twitter hashtag #MeToo in October 2017 had the potential to elevate a formerly smaller-scale project that centers and supports Black women survivors to the national stage. While the movement did bring forth positive change (e.g., legal changes such as the Speak Out Act), in the months and years that followed, critics have argued that, rather than helping *all* survivors, the recent direction of the Me Too movement has centered and supported white women—especially those with other privileged identities and characteristics (e.g., higher incomes)—while rendering experiences of Black women, other Women of Color, and members of other marginalized communities largely invisible (e.g., Boyd & McEwan, 2022; Burke, 2017; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018). In the present research, we investigate how the experiences of Black women in particular remain invisible and receive less support relative to white women, even as the mainstream Me Too movement has raised awareness of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of gender-based violence.

Neglect of Black women who experience sexual violence

Black women are targeted by sexual harassment and assault more often than white women (e.g., Cassino & Besen-Cassino, 2019; Epstein, Blake, & González, 2017; Rossie et al., 2020;

Rospenda, Richman, & Shannon, 2009), and they have higher levels of psychological distress and post-traumatic stress disorder following sexual harassment and assault (Sigurvinsdottir & Ullman, 2016; Buchanan and Ormerod, 2002; Buchanan, Settles, & Woods, 2008). Despite their increased vulnerability to sexual violence and its harms, Black women's reports of harassment and violence are more likely to be met with disregard or disbelief, Black women are more likely to be blamed, their perpetrators are less likely to be convicted, and their legal complaints are less likely to be addressed (Dupuis & Clay, 2013; Epstein, Blake, & González, 2017; George & Martinez, 2002; Katz et al., 2017; de Leon & Rosette, 2022; Spohn & Horney, 1993; Coker et al., 2015; West, 2014). Further, Black women's experiences are not adequately reflected in harassment and violence policy and legal frameworks, are often overlooked in scholarship, and were pushed to the margins of feminist movements that centered the experiences and needs of white women when fighting for change (e.g., Buchanan & Ormerod, 2002; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018; Crenshaw, 1992; Brassel et al., 2020). It was in the context of this longstanding invisibility, inequality and gendered racism that the Me Too movement strove to elevate the voices of Black women and girl survivors to build solidarity and help them find safety and healing (Burke, 2022).

There is relatively little quantitative research examining inequality in representations of Black women survivors of sexual violence compared to white women (Brassel et al., 2020). The existing literature largely focuses on instances when Black women who experience sexual violence *are* represented and made visible (e.g., stereotypical portrayals; Rosenthal & Lobel, 2016; West, 2006; Donavan & Williams, 2002), whereas we are interested in examining how

Black women have been made invisible relative to white women in the Me Too era (Purdie-Vaughns & Eichbach; Crenshaw, 1991; Fryberg & Eason, 2017).

Intersectional invisibility and victim/survivor representation and neglect

Social psychological theories of prototypes and critical theories of intersectional invisibility provide a framework to understand the neglect of Black women in collective representations of and responses to sexual harassment victims/survivors during the Me Too movement. People organize and represent social groups as prototypes—abstract, fuzzy sets of features that describe the idealized or exemplary member of a category (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Medin, 1989; Rosch, 1973). Prototypes of social groups are largely culturally determined and informed by perceptually salient instances of a category in people's environment (Rosch, 1978; Fiske & Taylor, 1991. As such, cultural representations of social groups and cognitive prototypes of social groups often mutually constitute, mirror, and reinforce one another (Vlasceanu & Amodio, 2022; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Schug et al., 2015; Hamedani & Markus, 2004). Non-prototypical group members are often made relatively invisible in both cultural representations and in individuals' mental representations of social groups (Fryberg & Eason, 2017; Schug et al., 2015).

Sexual violence, including sexual harassment and sexual assault, has historically been framed and represented through a singular gender lens, where women are targeted because of their membership to their gender group. Because of this, cultural and mental representations of those targeted by sexual violence largely overlap with prototypes of women (Crenshaw, 1991; Goh et al., 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022). Black women often experience intersectional invisibility, where

they are rendered relatively culturally invisible and are viewed as less prototypical of the social category "woman" compared to white women due to their racial group membership (Goff et al., 2008; Johnson et al., 2012; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Schug et al., 2015; Sesko & Biernat, 2010). This has in part led Black (vs. white) women in the U.S. to experience a relative historical and cultural invisibility as victims/survivors of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual violence. Indeed, U.S. laws, policies, and feminist movements largely reflect the experiences and understanding of sexual violence from the perspective of white women and exclude and marginalize Black women and other Women of Color (e.g., Crenshaw, 1989; Crenshaw, 1991; Burke, 2017; Black Women's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Sexual Violence, 2016). We first propose that this longstanding pattern of erasure of Black women as victims/survivors still exists today in the #MeToo era, such that Black women are underrepresented (and white women are overrepresented) in our public knowledge and representations of sexual violence, including our internet search engines and news media.

Our public knowledge and representations of social groups are pervasive and potent channels by which people's cognitive concepts of categories are created and maintained. Therefore, if Black women victims/survivors have been made relatively invisible – and white women made hyper-visible – in our cultural representations, this pattern of biased representation is likely also reflected in individuals' prototypes of victims of sexual violence. We use the language 'victim' as opposed to survivor when referring to the prototype, as this language is more closely associated with the violent event and injury caused as opposed to the process of recovery and healing from the event (Hauckett & Saucier, 2015). Additionally, because victim prototypes overlap with prototypes of women, Black women's lower prototypicality as women should mean they are also

seen as less prototypical victims (Kaiser et al., 2022). Thus, we next propose that people will perceive white women to be more prototypical victims than Black women and will therefore mistakenly think that white (vs. Black) women are more likely victims of sexual violence.

Research suggests that people's victim prototypes can influence how people perceive and respond to sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence. Less (vs. more) prototypical victims encounter greater neglect – they are less likely to be recognized as victims, be believed, taken seriously, and supported, and encounter more interpersonal and institutional barriers to care and justice (Goh et al., 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022). Thus, if prototypical victims are white women, non-prototypical victims, specifically Black women, may have been subject to higher levels of neglect when they publicly shared their stories of sexual harassment and assault during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism movement, potentially elevating white women's voices over the voices of Black women for whom Tarana Burke primarily started the movement in the first place.

The Present Research

In the present studies, we first test whether cultural representations, such as online search media and Me Too news coverage, underrepresent Black women and overrepresent white women as victims of sexual violence *(H1*, studies 1-3*)*. In studies 1 and 2, we specifically examined patterns of representation of sexual harassment, a particularly pervasive form of sexual violence that includes sexual assault and ranges in severity and presentation (e.g., verbal harassment, physical assault) (Gelfand et al., 1995). In study 3, we examined representation of victims who experienced myriad forms of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual abuse.

We first analyzed patterns of representation of sexual harassment in search media (Google and Bing), which can powerfully shape people's perceptions of social categories – including people's gender prototypes and perceptions of gender distributions in various professions (Vlasceanu & Amodio, 2022). We also examined stock photography databases (e.g., Getty Images), which exert a disproportionate influence over images represented across the Internet because they are a primary source of images for other websites and are used by journalists, businesses, political campaigns, and laypeople. In study 3, we then narrowed our focus to Me Too coverage specifically. We examined representation in the *New York Times* coverage of the Me Too movement, which published the landmark Pulitzer Prize winning investigations of sexual harassment and assault that helped ignite the #MeToo movement and was at the forefront of #MeToo coverage in the United States. We further analyzed patterns of representation by examining whether victims in the *New York Times* coverage were public figures (e.g., celebrities, politicians, athletes, and others in the public eye) or private figures. If Black women are typically invisible in the context of sexual violence, then to reach the threshold of newsworthiness, they may need to *already* be public figures, whereas white women's prototypicality and visibility may mean that violence against even unknown white women is perceived to rise to the threshold of newsworthiness in reporting. This theorizing would predict that the majority of Black women covered in the *New York Times* are public figures, whereas a smaller percentage of white women may be public figures (*H2,* study 3).

Next (studies 4-5), we examine whether individuals perceive Black (vs. white) women to be likely victims of workplace sexual harassment, despite the opposite being true (*H3*, studies 4-5*)*.

We focus our attention on sexual violence in the workplace, as workplace sexual misconduct was a prominent focus of Me Too reporting, public dialogue, policy and task force development, legislation, and collective action responses (Kantor, 2018; Williams & Tippet, 2022).

Finally, we examined whether Black (vs. white) women Twitter users who posted about #MeToo during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism Movement experienced more neglect (*H4*, study 6). To do so, we retrieved a random sample of relevant tweets from the first year after #MeToo went viral on Twitter on October 15th, 2017. To examine potential racial disparities in neglect in online collective behavior, we used trained neural networks to predict whether the tweet was authored by a Black or white women and then examined whether tweets from users estimated to be Black (vs. white) women received fewer likes and retweets. Receiving likes and retweets can help people feel supported and acknowledged after online disclosures of sexual violence and are important predictors of user and tweet visibility (Cha, Haddadi, Benevenuto, & Gummadi, 2010; Hosterman et al., 2018).

Studies 1-3: Representations of sexual violence victims/survivors in collective information environments

Studies 1-3 test our first hypothesis that Black women are underrepresented as sexual harassment victims/survivors and white women are overrepresented as sexual harassment victims/survivors in our cultural representations. We examined representation in widely used and trusted commercial search engines (Google, Bing) (Pew, 2012) as well as commercial stock photography databases (Getty Images, Adobe Stock, Shutter Stock). Additionally, we examined victim/survivor representation in the *New York Times* Me Too coverage.

Image Search Results

Study 1

Method

To investigate prototypical online portrayal of harassment victims, we searched "sexual harassment" and "sexual harassment victim" in Google Images and Bing images. We used a private browser to avoid tailored results based on previous online activity. Research assistants, unaware of hypotheses, then coded the first 250 images returned by each search along several dimensions, including the gender and race of any victims/survivors present in each image.

Results

Victim/survivor base rate estimates based on Title VII sexual harassment discrimination charges filed between 2012 and 2016 with U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and state Fair Employment Practices Agencies (FEPAs) were used as benchmarks to examine whether (a) Black women are *underrepresented* in online portrayals of harassment victims/survivors and (b) white women are *overrepresented* in online portrayals of harassment victims/survivors. Black women filed 27% of all sexual harassment charges and white women filed 48% of all sexual harassment charges (EEOC, 2018; McCann, Tomaskovic-Devey, Badget, 2018). The true base rate of Black women victims/survivors of harassment is likely even greater than 27% given that Black (vs. white) women are less likely to report their experiences of sexual violence (e.g., Tillman et al., 2010; Wyatt, 1992), but we use these Title VII victim base rates as conservative benchmarks. The percentage of victims/survivors who are Black women is less than

the 27% victim/survivor base rate among the Google Images searches of "sexual harassment" (5.6%, χ^2 (1,249) = 58.09, $p < .001$, $d = 1.10$ 95% CI [.81, 1.38]), and "sexual harassment victim" (9.02%, χ^2 (1, 249) = 40.18, $p < .001$, $d = .87$ 95% CI [.60, 1.14]) as well as for the Bing Images search of "sexual harassment" (2%, χ^2 = (1,249) = 79.27, $p < .001$, $d = 1.36$ 95% CI [1.06, 1.66]). The percentage of victims/survivors who are white women is more than the 48% victim/survivor base rate among Google Images searches of "sexual harassment" (76%, χ^2 (1,249) = 78.52, $p < .001$, $d = 1.35$ 95% CI [1.05, 1.65]) and "sexual harassment victim" (65%, χ^2 (1, 249) = 28.26, $p < .001$, $V = .32$) and Bing Images search of "sexual harassment" (70%, χ^2 = (1,249) = 46.73, $p < .001$, $d = .71$ 95% CI [.45, .98]). For conservative robustness checks, we also examined whether Black women are underrepresented and white women are overrepresented in online portrayals of harassment victims/survivors relative to (a) population base rates and (b) victim/survivor base rates of all sexual harassment charges filed by women, and we observed the same pattern of results (see Supplemental materials).

Stock Photography Databases

Study 2

Method

To further investigate prototypical online portrayals of harassment victims/survivors, we searched "sexual harassment" in three large stock photography databases: Getty Images, Adobe Stock, and Shutterstock. Research assistants, unaware of research hypotheses, coded the first 250 images returned by each search along several dimensions, including the gender and race of any victims/survivors present in each image.

Results

Using the Title VII victim/survivor base rates, we found that Black women were underrepresented in the ‘sexual harassment’ results returned by Getty Images (3.6%, $\chi^2 = (1,249) = 69.45$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.24$ 95% CI [.95, 1.53]), the ‘sexual harassment’ results returned by Shutterstock (6.4%, $\chi^2 = (1,249) = 53.86$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.24$ 95% CI [.95, 1.53]) and the ‘sexual harassment victim’ results returned by Adobestock (2.8%, $\chi^2 = (1,249) = 73.55$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.29$ 95% CI [.99, 1.58]). white women were overrepresented in the results returned by Getty Images (76%, $\chi^2 = (1,249) = 78.53$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.35$ 95% CI [1.05, 1.65]) Shutterstock (69.2%, $\chi^2 = (1,249) = 45.01$, $p < .001$, $d = .94$ 95% CI [.66, 1.21]), and Adobestock (61.2%, $\chi^2 = (1,249) = 48.46$, $p < .001$, $d = .98$ 95% CI [.7, 1.26]). For conservative robustness checks, we also examined whether Black women are underrepresented and white women are overrepresented in online portrayals of harassment victims/survivors relative to (a) population base rates and (b) victim/survivor base rates of all sexual harassment charges filed by women, and we observed the same pattern of results (see Supplemental materials).

New York Times Me Too Coverage

Study 3

Method

We compiled all content in the *New York Times* published between October 2017 and July 2019 including the term “MeToo.” From this set of 2,668 pieces of content, we extracted the 597 articles that reported primary news (as opposed to opinion pieces, editorials, move reviews, etc.).

Research assistants, unaware of research hypotheses, coded these articles along several dimensions, including the gender and race of any victims/survivors described. Research assistants also coded whether the people described who experienced sexual violence were famous public figures (e.g., athletes, politicians, actors). While this coverage included myriad forms of sexual violence (e.g., sexual harassment, sexual assault) that occurred both in and outside of the workplace, we again compared representation to Title VII victim base rates due to the lack of similarly centralized and structured reporting structures and reliable data for sexual harassment and assault that occur outside of the workplace.

Results

In total, there were 1,004 victims/survivors described of whom 943 (94%) were coded as women and 58 (6%) were coded as men. There were three additional victims/survivors whose gender could not be determined. In total, research assistants were able to code the race/ethnicity of 770 victims/survivors: 572 were coded as white, 112 were coded as Black, 44 were coded as Latinx, 38 were coded as Asian, and 4 were coded as multiracial. Again, using the Title VII victim base rates, we found that Black women were underrepresented among victims/survivors in the *New York Times* news coverage of the #MeToo movement (16.3%, $\chi^2 = (1,769) = 65.76$, $p < .001$, $d = .61$ 95% CI [.46, .76]) and white women were overrepresented (73.11%, $\chi^2 = (1,769) = 95.67$, $p < .001$, $d = .79$ 95% CI [.60, .90]. For conservative robustness checks, we also examined whether Black women are underrepresented, and white women are overrepresented in portrayals of sexual violence victims/survivors in news media relative to (a) population base rates and (b) victim/survivor base rates of all sexual harassment charges filed by women, and we observed a similar pattern of results (see Supplemental materials). Additionally, among the

victims, 45% of white women were coded as public figures whereas 61% of Black women were coded as public figures. Thus, whereas the majority of white women were not public figures, the majority of Black women were, a significant reversal, χ^2 (1, 627) = 8.12, p = .004, d = .23, 95% CI [.07, .38].

Discussion

The results of these studies support our proposal that Black women have been made relatively invisible in representations of sexual violence in our information services and news media and white women have been made hyper-visible. Black women were underrepresented as sexual harassment and sexual violence victims/survivors in search engines (Google and Bing), stock photography databases (Getty Images, Shutterstock, Adobestock) and the *New York Times* relative to the Title VII Black women victim base rate estimate (27%) and white women were overrepresented relative to the Title VII white women victim base rate (48%). Because sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence are severely underreported and many people, especially Black women, never file formal charges, these results likely underestimate the extent to which Black women are underrepresented in our collective information environments (e.g., Tillman et al., 2010; Wyatt, 1992). Additionally, these results suggest that when Black women were represented in the *New York Times*, a large percentage of them were famous, whereas both famous and non-famous white women were represented. This suggests that the threshold for Black women to be featured in NYT may be higher than that of white woman and that non-famous Black women were especially underrepresented in Me Too coverage.

The relative invisibility of Black women as victims of harassment evidenced in our search media and news media is consistent with critiques that Black women have been relatively excluded from the mainstream #MeToo movement (Burke, 2017; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018), as well as the United States' long history of omitting Black women from public knowledge and representations of sexual violence (Crenshaw, 1991; McGuire, 2011). When the stories and experiences of Black women are not adequately represented in our collective information environments, the heightened vulnerability to and unique forms of harassment and violence Black women face are rendered relatively invisible (e.g., Buchanan et al., 2008; Cassino & Besen-Casino, 2019; Crenshaw, 1991).

Cultural representations of social groups and cognitive prototypes of social groups often reflect and reinforce one another (Vlasceanu & Amodio, 2022; Schug et al., 2015; Adams & Markus, 2004). Group representation in media and commercial search engines can guide prototype formation, strengthen existing prototypic associations, and influence people's perceptions about real-world distributions (e.g., Vlasceanu & Amodio, 2022 ; Kay, Matuszek, & Munson, 2015; Leavitt et al., 2015). Thus, given that Black women were underrepresented – and white women overrepresented – as victims/survivors in our collective information environments (as well as Black women's lower prototypicality as women (Kaiser et al., 2022; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008)) we propose that people perceive white (vs. Black) women to be more prototypical victims of sexual harassment. Studies 4 and 5 explore this possibility and examine whether people erroneously think that white (vs. Black) women are more likely victims of workplace sexual harassment.

Study 4 & 5

Studies 4 and 5 examine whether people think it is more likely that a Black (vs. white) woman was targeted by workplace sexual harassment. In both studies, participants read that an employee was recently sexually harassed by her coworker. They were then presented with an equal number of Black and white women employees from the department where the harassment occurred (race of employee was indicated with images in study 4 and stereotypical names in study 5) and were asked to select which employee they thought was most likely targeted by the sexual harassment. To control for a base rates explanation, participants were informed that there were an equal number of white and Black women in the workplace they read about and that they were choosing from all potential victims. This design eliminates the possibility that participants are simply more likely to choose a white woman because they are relying on base rates about the population distribution of white and Black Women (i.e., there are more white women than Black women in the U.S and therefore there are more white than Black victims). To explore the effect of social class on target selection, the employees' level within the company was varied. We hypothesize that participants will be significantly more likely to select white (vs. Black) employees, and this effect will not be moderated by employment level. For preregistrations see https://osf.io/rq4aw.

Method

Participants (Study 4: N = 372 Mturk workers, Study 5: N = 467 Mturk workers) either read that a low-level or mid-level employee was recently sexually harassed by a coworker. Participants were then told that there are 14 [low-level/mid-level] women employees in the

department where the sexual harassment occurred and were asked to select the employee they think was most likely targeted by the sexual harassment. The employee's level in the company was varied by condition to examine whether status of the employee influenced victim choice selections. In study 4, images of seven Black women and seven white women from the Chicago face database (Ma, Correll, & Wittenbrink, 2015) matched on attractiveness, femininity, masculinity, and age were presented as potential victims in a randomized order for each participant. In study 5, race of the potential victims was manipulated using stereotypically Black and white names (Gaddis, 2017; Newman et al., 2018) as opposed to images.

Results

As predicted, in study 4 participants were significantly more likely to choose a white victim than a Black victim, $\chi^2(1, 371) = 30.20$, $p < .001$. 64% of participant chose a white woman as the potential victim whereas only 36% of participants chose a Black woman. The tendency for the majority to pick a white (vs. Black) woman as the victim did not vary between the low-level and mid-level employee condition, $\chi^2(1, 371) = 1.07$, $p = .301$. As expected, in study 5 participants were significantly more likely to choose a white victim than a Black victim, $\chi^2(1, 466) = 65.57$, $p < .001$. 68.73% of participants chose a white woman as the potential victim whereas only 31.26% of participants chose a Black woman. The tendency for the majority to pick a white (vs. Black) woman as the victim did not vary between the low-level and mid-level condition, $\chi^2(1, 466) = 0.00$, $p = .945$.

Discussion

Studies 4 and 5 suggest that harassment victim prototype with regards to race is a white (vs. Black) woman. Participants thought that white (vs. Black) women were more likely to be targeted by workplace sexual harassment, even when controlling for age, attractiveness, masculinity, femininity, and status within the workplace, as well as assumptions about population base rates. This is a biased assessment, as Black women are much more likely to be targeted by workplace sexual harassment (e.g., EEOC, 2018**,** Cassino & Besen-Cassino, 2019). Importantly, narrow prototypes of victims of sexual violence can facilitate prototype-consistent biases, where people are less likely to recognize non-prototypical victims as such and they are subject to higher levels of disbelief, minimization, and neglect than prototypical victims (Kaiser et al., 2022; Goh et al., 2021). Therefore, we propose that non-prototypical victims, specifically Black women, were subject to higher levels of neglect compared to white women when they publicly shared their experiences of sexual harassment and assault during the Me Too movement. In study 6, we explore how the narrow victim prototype may have perpetuated inequality in attention to Black (vs. white) victims by examining whether Black (vs. white) women Twitter users received less support during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism Movement.

Study 6: Neglect of Black women during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism Movement

When Alyssa Milano tweeted a request for solidarity of victims by asking people to reply with “#MeToo”, space was provided for individual survivors to come forward and recount their personal experiences on social media. The hashtag campaign, which was based on the work of ‘Me Too’ founder Tarana Burke, led millions of Twitter users to disclose their experiences and highlight the pervasiveness of sexual violence. In study 6, we hypothesized that people were less likely to support (like and retweet) #MeToo tweets authored by users estimated to be Black (vs.

white) women Twitter users during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism movement, even when accounting for potential alternative explanations such as number of followers, word count, use of self-referencing language, and emotional valence of the tweet.

Method

We used *Tweepy* (Roesslein, 2020) to retrieve a random subset (1%) of one year of public tweets in English in the U.S that contained the hashtags '#metoo', '#survivor', '#domesticviolence', '#abuse', '#whyididn(o)t', and '#myvoice' (as well as hashtags containing any of those character sequences as sub-strings) in the text of the tweet itself from October 15, 2017 to October 15, 2018 (Zach-Doughty et al., 2020) from the 1% Streaming Twitter API. This dataset consisted of 388,473 tweets from 145,511 unique users. The data was then filtered to only include tweets that had a hashtag or string match in the text of the tweet itself to exclude non-MeToo related tweets that were retrieved because users had a relevant hashtag in their username, name, or description, leaving 90,986 tweets from 71,736 unique users. To estimate the demographics of the users, we then used machine learning and employed multiple trained neural models from *Demographer* (Wood-Doughty et al., 2018). Three models, NeuralGenderDemographer, EthSelfReportNeuralDemographer, and NeuralOrganizationDemographer, were used to infer users' binary gender (woman, man), singular race or ethnicity (Black, white, Asian, Hispanic), and whether the user is an individual or organization, respectively, based on user names and/or user descriptions (for more information on the models see Wood-Doughty et al., 2018). The data was then filtered to only include non-verified users who were estimated to be individuals and white and Black women (45,885 tweets from 36,037 unique users). Finally, because Twitter engagement metrics only measure user

engagement with an original tweet, retweets and quote tweets were removed, leaving 13,381 original tweets from 10,788 unique users to be included in analyses.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

To account for any potential race effects on engagement being driven by Black and white women tweeting differently about #Metoo, we ran the text of the tweets through the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program (Pennebaker, Booth, Boyd, & Francis, 2015) to estimate word count and the frequency of self-referencing language (I and we), negative emotions, and positive emotions in the text of each tweet. We then ran a series of independent samples t-tests to examine if race of the user predicts these outcomes. Race of user predicted the expression of positive emotions, $b = -.26$, $t(9{,}216.76) = -2.12$, $p = .03$, $d = -.04$ and the use of self-referencing language, $b = .24$, $t(9{,}962.11) = 3.60$, $p < .001$, $d = .07$, but neither of these variables were associated with our engagement outcomes (likes ($r = 0.00$, $p = .44$; $r = 0.00$, $p = .49$) or retweets ($r = 0.00$, $p = .44$; $r = 0.00$, $p = .47$)). Therefore, they were not entered as covariates in any subsequent analyses.

Primary Analyses

To examine the effect of race on level of tweet engagement (likes and retweets), two multi-level Negative Binomial regressions were conducted to intrinsically model the positive skew of the count data and account for overdispersion (Nussbaum, Elsadat, & Khago, 2008; Sellers & Premuex, 2020). In each multi-level model, tweets were nested within users, number of followers was entered as a covariate, and race of user was entered as a predictor. The number of

followers, which reflects the number of followers the user had at the time of the tweet, was transformed to have a mean of zero, variance of one, and a normal distribution by calculating the percentile rank and applying the inverse normal function to the percentile rank (Benjamin et al., 2020). Because tweets can be engaged with over time as users accumulate or lose followers, we ran additional models using an alternative metric of followers that reflects the number of followers a user had at the time the tweets were retrieved as a covariate (February, 2021). The race effects presented below are the same when the alternative followers metric was used, and these results are also robust to additional models (see Supplemental Materials).

In Model 1, we examined the effect of estimated race on number of times a tweet was retweeted and number of followers at the time of the tweet was included as a covariate. There was a main effect of followers, b =1.19, se = .21 p <.001, d = .35 95%CI [0.18,0.61], such that as number of followers users have increases the number of retweets received also increases. There was a main effect of user estimated race, b =0.99, se = .19 p < .001, d = .25 95%CI [.12,.44], such that white women users received more likes (M = 0.82, SD = 8.70) than Black women (M = 0.48, SD = 1.47). The exponential effect size is 2.69 95%CI [1.82,3.94], which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is estimated to be white is 2.69X the predicted number of likes when the user is estimated to be Black. There was no followers*race interaction on likes, b =-0.68, se = .49, p =.49.

In Model 2, we examined the effect of estimated race on number of times a tweet was liked and number of followers at the time of the tweet was entered as a covariate. There was a main effect of followers, b =0.41, se = .11 p <.001, d = 0.38 95%CI [.15,.67], such that as number of followers increases number of likes increase. There was a main effect of user estimated race, b =0.43, se = .12 p < .001, d = .24 95%CI [.01,.43], such that white women users

received more likes (*M* = 2.20, *SD* = 15.37) than Black women (*M* = 1.32, *SD* = 3.46). The exponential effect size is 1.51, which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is estimated to be white is 1.51X the predicted number of likes when the user is estimated to be Black. There also was a followers*race interaction on likes, b =0.36, se = .14, p =.009, d = .19 95%CI [.03,.39]. The effect of followers on likes is greater for white users, b =0.67, se = .03, p <.001, d = .47 95% CI [.42,.51], compared to Black users, b =0.31, se = .14, p =.016, d = .20 95% CI [.02,.42]), such that white (vs. Black) women receive a disproportionately higher number of likes as their number of followers increase. Additionally, the effect of estimated race becomes larger as the number of followers users have increases. The average marginal effect of race among users within one standard deviation above and below the average number of followers is 1.09 95% CI [2.35, 3.52], p =.02, whereas the average marginal effect of race among users within 1 and 2 standard deviations above the average number of followers is 4.35 95% CI [3.88, 4.42], p <.001. Thus, even when Black women users have a high follower count, they are not protected against the effect of race on the number of likes received and may be especially likely to receive less likes relative to their white counterparts with high follower counts.

We propose that the observed #MeToo race effects reflect the neglect of Black (vs. white) women in the domain of sexual violence as opposed to a negative social or algorithmic bias that disadvantages Black (vs. white) women users indiscriminately across Twitter. To explore this possibility, we examined the effect of user race on tweet engagement for tweets from a different social movement, Say Her Name, which centered Black women and raised awareness for Black women victims of police brutality and anti-Black violence (Crenshaw, 2015). To do so, we used the same methods and analyses as described above. Contrary to the #MeToo data, there was no

main effect of race on retweets. Consistent with #MeToo data, white (vs. Black) women users received more likes. However, both effects were qualified by an interaction, such that Black (vs. white) women with higher follower counts received more retweets and likes (see Supplemental materials). This is a reversal of the pattern observed in the #MeToo data, which suggests that the observed #MeToo results do not reflect a negative social or algorithmic bias that affects Black women equally across Twitter or all topics involving violence. Additionally, given the fact that Black women were de-centered in #MeToo (but were centered in #SayHerName), these divergent results suggest that who is made relatively visible/invisible in social movements may importantly shape who receives attention and support.

Discussion

The results of this study suggest that Black women were subject to neglect relative to white women during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism movement. Black (vs. white) women users received less engagement (likes and retweets) when sharing their experiences of sexual violence or expressing solidarity, even when accounting for number of followers, word count, use of self-referencing language, and emotional valence of the tweet. Race-based differences in engagement occurred even among (and especially so, for likes) users with high follower counts. Liking and retweeting are common ways for people to communicate social support after online disclosures of sexual violence and can influence the extent to which survivors feel acknowledged and supported (Hosterman et al., 2018). Further, retweets and likes are important predictors of user and tweet visibility, tweet virality, and which conversations and topics are trending on Twitter and elicit collective action responses (Cha, Haddadi, Benevenuto, & Gummadi, 2010; Hosterman et al., 2018; Katchen et al., 2020). Thus, the race-based differences in engagement likely

constrained the visibility of Black (vs. white) women users' #MeToo tweets, facilitating unidimensional narratives of sexual violence and racial disparities in large-scale responses to #MeToo disclosures on Twitter. Indeed, there were several instances of high-profile white women vocalizing their #MeToo experiences on Twitter, setting off a "Weinstein effect", where perpetrators were called out, and in several cases, lost their jobs. In contrast, many high-profile Black women who disclosed on Twitter were not afforded this same level of support and action (Leung & Williams, 2019; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018).

General Discussion

The findings of the present investigation suggest that the experiences of Black women were marginalized during the mainstream Me Too movement, elevating white women's voices over the voices of Black women for whom Tarana Burke primarily started the movement for in 2006. In studies 1-3, Black women were underrepresented, and white women were overrepresented, as victims/survivors in our commercial search engines (Google and Bing), stock photography databases (Getty Images, Shutterstock, and Adobestock) and the *New York Times* compared to Title VII sexual harassment victim base rate estimates. These studies suggest that Black women have been made relatively invisible and white women have been rendered hyper-visible as victims/survivors in our collective information environments. The result of studies 4 and 5 suggest that this biased pattern of representation is also evident in individuals' prototypes of workplace sexual harassment victims. Participants erroneously perceived that white (vs. Black) women were more likely victims of sexual harassment, even when controlling for alternative explanations, including population base rates, socioeconomic status, attractiveness, femininity, masculinity, and age. Taken together, these findings are consistent with critical

theories of intersectional invisibility and victim prototypes that suggest that Black (vs. white) women are subject to cultural and cognitive erasure in the domain of sexual violence due to their non-prototypicality as women (e.g,. Crenshaw, 1991; Kaiser et al., 2022).

We next explored whether Black women survivors who tweeted about #MeToo were subject to neglect at the collective scale on behalf of individual Twitter users, as non-prototypical group members, including non-prototypical women and non-prototypical sexual harassment and assault victims (e.g., Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008, Sesko & Biernat, 2010; Kaiser et al., 2022), are often subject to neglect due to their distance the group prototype. Twitter users were less likely to like and retweet #MeToo tweets that were estimated to be authored by Black women users (i.e., less prototypical victims) compared to white women users (i.e., more prototypical victims) during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism movement, potentially preventing Black women users from receiving adequate visibility, attention, and support. These findings are consistent with critiques that the mainstream movement centered and supported white women while marginalizing Black women victims/survivors that the original movement aimed to center and support due to longstanding inequities in attention and care (Burke, 2022; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018).

Relative invisibility in cultural and mental representations of social groups often mutually constitute and reinforce one another, creating a recursive cycle of relative invisibility that can be difficult to combat (Vlasceanu & Amodio, 2022; Schug et al., 2015; Adams & Markus, 2004; Fryberg & Eason, 2017). While survivors are often not in control of the larger narratives and representations of harassment in our search and news media, the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag

Activism Movement provided an opportunity for the cycle to potentially be reconstituted by centering and elevating the voices of victims/survivors the movement was primarily designed for — Black women— in collective #MeToo narratives. However, our findings suggest that twitter users engaged less with Black (vs. white) women who tweeted about #MeToo, limiting their visibility on a platform engaged in collective storytelling and action to address sexual violence. Thus, the experiences of Black women remain relatively invisible and unsupported, even as the Me Too movement has raised awareness of the pervasiveness of and harms caused by sexual violence.

Limitations & Future Directions

The present work suggests that Black women experienced inequities in collective and individual representations and responses to sexual violence in the Me Too era. While we theorize that the relative invisibility of Black women in cultural representations and cognitive prototypes, as well as their large-scale neglect on behalf of individual twitter users, are interrelated, future research is needed to establish the directional and causal relationships between cultural and cognitive invisibility and neglect. For example, future research should examine whether shifting patterns of victim representation in media to more accurately reflect the fact that Black (vs. white) women are more vulnerable to sexual violence can shift narrow and erroneous victim prototypes and subsequent neglect, potentially elucidating an avenue for intervention.

Additionally, while we theorize that the evidenced neglect of Black women who experienced sexual violence was driven in part by their relative invisibility, it also could have been driven by how Black women victims are typically made visible as victims. For example, Black women

victims/survivors are often portrayed and stereotyped as being more promiscuous and aggressive, leading people to think they are to blame and are in less need of support (e.g., Donavon, 2007; Rosenthal & Lobel, 2016; West, 2006; Collins, 2000). Thus, to potentially address the neglect of Black women, in addition to being made more visible in representations of sexual violence, it is also important that they are made visible in a way that is unbiased. Further, while we observed an effect of race even controlling for emotional valence, use of self-referencing language etc., it is possible that the pattern of neglect was driven by Black (vs. white) women tweeting about #MeToo differently. For example, perhaps people being less likely to engage with #MeToo tweets discussing the intersection of sexual violence and racism, which Black women were more likely to discuss (Wood-Doughty et al., 2018)). Therefore, in addition to exploring how victim prototypes facilitate neglect it is also important to address how prototypes of sexually violent behavior (e.g., gender-only vs. gendered racism) may facilitate neglect.

The current work also does not account for the potential effect of perceived social class on victim/survivor neglect. Because people often conflate race and poverty (e.g., Brown-Iannuzzi et al., 2017; Lei & Bodenhausen, 2017), it is possible that the evidenced neglect was driven by users assuming that Black women users were lower-SES and white women users were higher-SES, as lower (vs. higher) SES victims of sexual violence are subject to bias and neglect (Cheek, Bandt-Law, & Sinclair, 2022; Fitzgerald, 2021). Thus, a multidimensional intersectional approach is also needed to better understand who is most vulnerable to relative invisibility and the extent to which holding multiple marginalized identities has an additive or multiplicative effect on the severity of invisibility and neglect. Indeed, many other groups, including other Women of Color, LGBTQIA+ populations, people with disabilities, and people living in poverty,

experience relative invisibility and neglect in the domain of sexual violence, and the barriers to care and support for Black women who experience sexual violence are even more severe when combined with the effects of classism, transphobia, heterosexism, ableism, and other forms of prejudice (e.g., Fitzgerald, 2021; Boe, Jordan, & Ellis, 2022; Johnson, 2020). In addition to exploring relative invisibility and neglect in the Me Too era for additional identity dimensions, future research should also examine this in a different cultural context where victim/survivor representation may vary, as prototypes are socially determined and context dependent (e.g., Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

Conclusion

Our findings suggest that the longstanding erasure and neglect of Black women as survivors/victims of sexual violence in the United States compared to white women extends into the Me Too era. Black women were underrepresented (and white women were overrepresented) in public knowledge and representations of victims/survivors of sexual violence in prominent news coverage of the Me Too movement, in search media, and people's perceptions of likely victims. Additionally, Black women survivors were subject to neglect on a collective scale when tweeting about #MeToo on Twitter, limiting their visibility on a platform engaged in viral collective storytelling and action to address sexual violence. Thus, consistent with critiques of the Me Too movement (e.g., Burke, 2017; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018), while the movement has increased people's awareness of sexual violence, the experiences of the women the movement was originally designed for remain relatively invisible and unsupported. The relative erasure and neglect of Black women survivors in the United States evidenced in the mainstream Me Too movement aligns with prominent forms of historical and systemic gendered racism targeting

Black women survivors of sexual violence that contribute to inequities in violence, economics, health, and justice (e.g., Black Women's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Sexual Violence, 2016; Crenshaw, 1991; Buchanan & Ormerod, 2002; Omolade, 1989; McGuire, 2010).

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Part 3: People underestimate transgender women's vulnerability to workplace sexual harassment

Bryn Bandt-Law [1], Nathan N. Cheek [2], Jessica Glazier[3], Cheryl Kaiser[2], Kristina Olson[3]

[1] University of Washington

[2] Purdue University

[4]Northeastern University

[3] Princeton University

Word Count: 9523

People underestimate transgender women's vulnerability to workplace sexual harassment

Abstract

Despite experiencing sexual harassment more frequently and more severely, transgender women survivors/victims of workplace sexual harassment and other forms of sexual are disproportionately neglected and mistreated. Drawing from theorizing on victim prototypes and neglect, across eight studies (total N = 3,568), we show that people incorrectly believe that transgender women are less likely to experience workplace sexual harassment compared to transgender women. This effect is stronger among individuals who deny and pathologize the woman identity of transgender women. We also show that people perceive claims of sexually harassing unwanted advances made by transgender (vs. cisgender) women to be less credible, which may in part contribute to the neglect of transgender women who are sexually harassed. Contrary to our expectations, participants perceived transgender and cisgender women to be equally harmed by sexual harassment. The implications of misperceiving transgender women as unlikely and less credible victims of sexual harassment for trans rights are discussed.

Cisnormative perspectives on sexual harassment have decentered and overtly excluded transgender women's experiences with sexual harassment in research, policies, healthcare, and social movements, including the mainstream Me Too movement (Bauer et al., 2009; Boe, Jordan, & Ellis, 2021; Tambe, 2018; Wirtz et al., 2020; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Talusen, 2018). A comprehensive view of the scope and prevalence of the sexual harassment in the lives of transgender women (women who were assigned male at birth) is relatively underdeveloped – as public records and surveys typically exclude them and only account for the experiences of cisgender women (women who were assigned female at birth) (Wirtz et al., 2020). Available studies, however, do suggest that transgender (trans) women often experience disproportionately high rates of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, relative to cisgender (cis) women (e.g., Grant et al., 2011; Callander et al., 2019; Matsuzaka & Koch, 2019; Schuyler et al., 2020; Heino et al., 2020). Sexual harassment has profound implications for the well-being of survivors, increasing their risk of job insecurity, mental and physical health problems, and vulnerability to future violence (e.g., Harned & Fitzgerald, 2002; McLaughlin, Uggen, & Blacktone, 2017; Coker et al., 2005). In the present work, we seek to extend existing theorizing on harassment victim prototypes and neglect (Goh et al., 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022) to help understand why, despite trans women's disproportionate risk of sexual harassment, they often experience widespread neglect relative to cis women. More specifically, the current studies examine whether people perceive transgender (vs. cisgender) women to be less prototypical sexual harassment victims, leading people to discount and minimize the experience of transgender women when they are sexually harassed.

The neglect of trans women who are sexually harassed

Trans women who experience sexual harassment are disproportionately likely to encounter neglect both institutionally and interpersonally. Indeed, trans (vs. cis) women who experience sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence are frequently met with disbelief, disregard, and punishment, are often criminalized, and are less likely to receive support and justice from their workplace, health-care providers, and advocacy organizations. This neglect can compound the psychological, physical, and economic harms caused by sexual harassment (Wirtz et al., 2020; Matsuzaka & Koch, 2019; Wahlert & Gill, 2017; Seelman, 2015; Hawkey et al., 2021). Importantly, due to institutional and interpersonal marginalization, trans (vs. cis) women experience higher rates of economic insecurity, homelessness, violent victimization, adverse mental and physical health outcomes, as well as myriad barriers to fundamental resources, care, and justice that cis women can more readily access (James et al., 2016; Shires & Jaffee, 2015; Grant et al., 2011; Jordan et al., 2020). Thus, disparities in responses to sexual harassment targeting trans women may widen existing gender identity-based disparities in economics, health, and justice and further contribute to the marginalization of trans women.

Prototypes and victim neglect

Recent research that draws on the psychology of prototypes (Rosch, 1978; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008), which are how individuals cognitively organize and represent a given category, suggests that, because sexual harassment is largely framed and represented as a form of discrimination that targets women, there is substantial overlap between prototypes of women and prototypes of sexual harassment victims. As such, people erroneously mentally represent sexual harassment victims as gender prototypical women on both within-category dimensions (e.g.,

stereotypically feminine and attractive vs. stereotypically masculine and unattractive) and intersectional dimensions (e.g., white vs. Black) and hold the biased perception that prototypical women are more likely victims of sexual harassment (Goh et al., 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022; Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Bandt-Law, Cheek & Sinclair, 2022). Further, because non-prototypical group members are often subject to *invisibility* and *neglect* due to their perceived distance to the subordinate category, when non-prototypical (vs. prototypical) victims are sexually harassed, their harassment is less likely to be labeled as such, they are perceived as less credible and less harmed by the harassment, and they are less likely to receive support and justice (Goh et al., 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). This theorizing highlights a "prototype paradox" with regards to sexual harassment, where the people who disproportionately bear the brunt of harassment (e.g., women of color, more stereotypically masculine women) are not the people who are typically represented or imagined to be the targets of sexual harassment and responded to as such.

The current work applies this framework to perceptions of and responses to transgender women, who are also disproportionately vulnerable to harassment and victim neglect. Cis (vs. trans) women are the dominant cultural representation of both women and sexual harassment victims and are often perceived as being more stereotypically feminine and attractive (Gazzola & Morrision, 2014; Mao, Haupert, & Smith, 2019; Hill & Willoughby, 2010). Thus, trans women are likely perceived to be less representative (i.e., prototypical) of the social category 'sexual harassment victim' compared to cis women. As such, we first propose that trans (vs. cis) women will be perceived as less likely victims of sexual harassment (*H1*).

We also examine whether a woman's trans (vs. cis) identity influences people's perceptions of how credible she is and how harmed she is by sexual harassment, two outcomes that are central to the institutional and interpersonal treatment of sexual harassment (e.g., EEOC, 2017) and are influenced by victim prototypicality (Goh et al., 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022). We propose that if participants perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less likely victims of harassment, then they will also perceive them to be less credible victims (*H2*) and as less being less harmed (e.g., traumatized, upset) by harassment (*H3*), as previous sexual harassment research suggests.

Importantly, trans women have experienced unprecedented levels of public visibility in recent years due to coordinated campaigns to restrict the rights of trans people. The legitimacy of their womanhood and vulnerability to harassment and violence have been made the subject of contentious public debate and underly many of the recent discriminatory and protective rhetoric, legislation, policies, and judicial decisions on trans issues in the United States. Indeed, the womanhood of trans woman is often denied in the context of them being erroneously portrayed as mentally ill non-women who are perpetrators of sexual violence towards women (e.g., Jones, 2021; ACLU, 2023; Paterson, 2023; Hasenbush et al., 2019). In reality, being trans is not a mental illness and trans women are women who are especially vulnerable to being targeted by sexual violence, including sexual harassment (e.g., Grant et al., 2011; Callander et al., 2019; Matsuzaka & Koch, 2019). People who deny (vs. do not deny) the identity of trans women may perceive trans women to be even further from the prototypical group image of sexual harassment victims. Therefore, we propose that individuals who deny the identity of trans women will be especially likely to perceive trans (vs. cis) women as less likely and credible victims of sexual harassment *(H4)*. We do not have clear predictions on whether identity denial will moderate the

effect of gender identity on perceptions as harm. Individuals high in identity denial could be more likely to minimize the harm caused if they perceive trans women as being especially non-prototypical women (i.e., not women) compared to those who do not deny the identity of trans women. Alternatively, because they are pathologizing trans women's identity, they may be especially likely to think that trans women will be more emotionally unstable and as being more harmed by sexual harassment *(H5)*.

The Present Research

In the present research, we explored whether people think that trans women are less likely victims of sexual harassment, less credible victims, and less harmed by harassment than cis women. We also examined whether these effects are moderated by identity denial of trans women, such that individuals who deny the identity of trans women will be especially likely to perceive trans (vs. cis) women as less likely and credible victims of sexual harassment and as being less or more harmed by harassment. In these studies, we focused on perceptions of more prototypical forms of sexual harassment, unwanted romantic and sexual advances and sexual coercion, that people more closely associate with prototypical women as victims compared to gender harassment (Cortina & Berdhal, 2008; MacKinnon, 1979; Goh et al., 2020; Brassel et al., 2019). If these forms of harassment are more strongly associated with women and harassment victims, people may be especially likely to underestimate the extent to which less prototypical women/victims are targeted by them. Additionally, harassment targeting trans women is often assumed to be motivated by prejudice and to take the form of gender harassment (Mezzapelle & Reiman, 2021; Brassel et al., 2019), even though trans women also frequently experience unwanted advances and sexual coercion at as high or higher rates than cis women (Callander et

al., 2019; Schuyler et al., 2020; Heino et al., 2020). Thus, we focus on the forms of harassment that people may perceive trans women as being especially infrequent victims of compared to cis women, potentially facilitating their neglect when they do experience them.

Studies 1-5 examined whether people think that trans (vs. cis) women are more likely victims of sexual harassment. In studies 1 and 2, participants read about sexual harassment scenarios involving unwanted advances and sexual coercion and were asked to rate how likely it is that each of these events will happen to a cisgender or transgender woman in the workplace. In studies 3-5, participants read about sexual harassment scenarios and were asked to choose which woman (a cisgender or a transgender woman) in the department where the harassment occurred experienced the harassment.

Studies 6-8 explored whether people perceive trans women to be less credible and less harmed by harassment. Additionally, they examined whether people who deny trans women's identity are especially likely to think that trans (vs. cis) women are less likely and less credible victims of harassment and as being less or more harmed by the harassment. In studies 6-8, people read about trans or cis women who experienced sexual harassment and rated how credible the woman was and how harmed she was by the harassment. In study 8, we also measured how likely it is that a trans or cis women will experience these forms of harassment as well as identity denial of trans women. All studies were preregistered and are available through the Open Science Framework: https://osf.io/7gqyr/

Studies 1-5: Gender identity & perceived likelihood of experiencing workplace sexual harassment

Studies 1-5 test our first hypothesis that trans (vs. cis) women will be perceived as less likely victims of sexual harassment. In study 1, participants read about various sexual harassment scenarios involving unwanted advances and sexual coercion and were asked to rate how likely it is that each of these events will happen to a cisgender or transgender woman in the workplace. In study 2, we examine whether people perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less likely to experience unwanted or sexually coercive sexual harassing interactions in the workplace, but not non-sexually harassing negative or neutral workplace interactions, to examine the possibility that the effect of gender identity on sexual harassment likelihood is driven by the belief that trans women are less likely to experience workplace interactions/hostile workplace interactions in general. Participants read about various harassing and non-harassing scenarios in the workplace rated how likely it is that each of these events will happen to a cisgender or transgender woman in the workplace.

In studies 3-5, participants read about sexual harassment scenarios and were asked to choose which woman (a cisgender or a transgender woman) in the department where the harassment occurred experienced the harassment. To control for a base rates explanation, participants chose between 2 women (1 cis woman and one trans woman in study 3) or among five women (4 cis woman and 1 trans woman in studies 4 and 5) and we examined whether participants were less likely to choose the trans (vs. cis) woman less than we would expect based on chance (50% and 20%, respectively). This design eliminates the possibility that participants are simply more likely to choose a cisgender woman because they are relying on base rates about the population

distribution of cisgender and transgender women (i.e., there are more cisgender women than transgender women in the U.S and therefore there are more cisgender than transgender victims of sexual harassment). In study 3, no images of the potential harassment targets were included, so the potential effect of gender identity on victim likelihood could be driven by both between-category differences in perceived prototypicality (cis vs. trans) and/or within-category differences in prototypicality, as trans (vs. cis) women are often stereotyped and perceived as being less stereotypically feminine and attractive (e.g., Gazzola & Morrision, 2014). Therefore, to examine the effect of between-category variation in prototypicality only, in study 4 we included images of women matched on attractiveness, masculinity, and femininity that were counterbalanced across gender identity conditions. In study 4, we only used images of white targets. In doing so, our goal was not to imply that white is “neutral” or not a racial identity (Roberts & Mortenson, 2022), but rather to control for inferences about target race, as we were unsure whether people more closely associate transgender (vs. cisgender) women with a particular racial group. Additionally, because of their more gender prototypical racial identity, white women are more likely to be perceived as victims of sexual harassment compared to Black women and other Women of Color (Bandt-Law, Cheek, & Sinclair, 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022). Using white targets thus allowed us to test whether gender identity can influence the perceived likelihood of sexual harassment among women who are otherwise most likely to be perceived as victims of sexual harassment. In study 5, we include matched images of white, Black, Latina, and East Asian women as targets to examine whether the effect of gender identity on harassment likelihood generalized across these additional racial groups. To do so, we examine whether effects emerge when all targets are included in analyses and whether they emerge when we exclude white targets from analyses. We present the method and procedures for the five studies

and then present the overall results through internal meta-analysis. Results from each individual study are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Methods & Procedures

Participants in studies 1-5 were recruited from Amazon mechanism Turk (Mturk). To be included in analyses, participants had to pass an attention check question and confirm that they had not responded randomly. Across all five studies, the harasser was identified as a straight man to control for inferences that people might make about the sexual orientation of the harasser. Additionally, the occupation was matched across gender identity conditions to control for inferences about social class.

Study 1

In study 1, we examined whether people think trans (vs. cis) women are less likely to experience unwanted advances and sexual coercion. Unsure of what effect size to predict in Study 1, we aimed to achieve a large enough sample to detect moderate-to-small effect sizes. We recruited 440 participants, of whom 388 met the inclusion criteria for analyses, to detect an effect as small as $d = .25$ ($\alpha = .05$, power = 90%, independent samples t-test). Participants were told that they will read about various workplace interactions between a woman employee and one of the men she works with and were asked to make guesses about likely it is that these events happen to a transgender/cisgender (an individual who identifies as a woman and was assigned male/female at birth) woman in the workplace. Participants read about three sexual harassment scenarios involving unwanted advances (e.g., “a straight male coworker put his hand on her lower back while they were working together) and three sexual harassment scenarios involving sexual

coercion (e.g., "A straight male supervisor promised her that he would give her a favorable performance review if she went on a data with him). For each scenario, participants in the cisgender condition rated 'how likely is this to happen to a cisgender woman in the workplace?' and participants in the transgender condition rated 'how likely is this to happen to a transgender woman in the workplace?' on a 1 to 7 scale, with higher numbers indicating greater likelihood. Cisgender and transgender women were described as individuals who identify as women and were assigned female/male at birth. The three unwanted items were averaged to create a composite 'unwanted advances likelihood' score (α = .89) and 'sexual coercion likelihood' score (α = .89).

Study 2

In study 2, we examined whether people think trans (vs. cis) women are less likely to experience unwanted advances and sexual coercion, but not non-harassing neutral and negative workplace interactions. We recruited 316 participants (d= .40, alpha= .05, power = 90%, independent samples t-test) and 278 of them met the inclusion criteria for analyses. Participants completed the same procedures as in study 1, except they also rated the likelihood of cisgender or transgender women experiencing three neutral and three negative workplace events. For the sexual harassment items, three items were averaged to create a composite 'unwanted advances score'(α= .94) and three items were averaged to create a 'sexual coercion' composite score (α= .89). For the non-harassing items, three items were averaged to create a composite 'negative interactions score'(α= .71) and three items were averaged to create a 'neutral interactions score'(α= .73)

Study 3

In study 3, we examined whether when selecting between one cisgender and one transgender woman as the most likely target of an incident of workplace sexual harassment, people will choose the transgender woman less than what we would expect based on chance (50%). We recruited 230 participants, of whom 203 met the inclusion criteria for analyses, to detect an effect as small as ($w = .25$, $\alpha = .05$, power = 90%, df = 1, chi-squared goodness of fit). Participants read about one unwanted advances and one sexual coercion sexual harassment scenario. Participants were then told that there were two women in the department where the harassing occurred and were asked to choose which of the two women in the department they think experienced the sexual harassment. One of the women was described as cisgender (meaning she identifies as a woman and was assigned female at birth) and one of the women was described as transgender (meaning she identifies as a woman and was assigned male at birth).

Study 4

In study 5, as a more conservative test, we examined whether when selecting the most likely target among five women (1 trans woman and 4 cis women) people will choose the trans woman less than what we would expect based on chance (20%). We recruited 300 participants, of whom 388 met the inclusion criteria for analyses, to detect an effect as small as ($w = .25$, $\alpha = .05$, power = 90%, df = 1, chi-squared goodness of fit). Participants read about sexual harassment scenarios involving multiple unwanted advances (e.g., 'her coworker has repeatedly asked her out despite her declining each time, has touched her lower back while working together, and has made comments such as "you look really sexy today.") and sexually coercive behavior (e.g., 'her supervisor told her that in order to be considered for a promotion, she had to have a drink with

him and implied that going on a date with him would help her get a more positive performance evaluation'). They were told there were 5 women in the department where the incident of sexual harassment occurred. Participants viewed the employee's picture and bios from their Twitter accounts and were asked to select the employee they think was most likely targeted by the sexual harassment. Participants saw the bio of one transgender woman (indicated by a trans flag emoji after her name and 'transgender woman' in her description among other hobbies and interests) and four cisgender women (indicated by having no emoji or an emoji associated with hobbies (e.g., book, guitar) and only information about hobbies and interests in the description). The images were of white females from the Chicago Face Database who were matched on attractiveness, femininity, masculinity, and age. Thus, the images were of 'cis passing' women, which means they would be likely be visually identified as being a cis woman according to cis normative sociocultural gender norms (Simon et al., 2023).

Study 5

In study 5, to examine whether our findings generalize beyond white women, we replicated study 3, where people selected between one cisgender and one transgender woman as the most likely target of an incident of workplace sexual harassment, but participants were randomly shown either two white women, two Black women, two Latina women, and two East Asian women. We recruited 230 participants, of whom 223 met the inclusion criteria for analyses, to detect an effect as small as (w = .25, α = .05, power = 90%, df = 1, chi-squared goodness of fit).

Internal meta-analytic results of studies 1-5

We present the results of studies 1-5 that examined whether people think that trans (vs. cis) women less likely victims of sexual harassment meta-analytically (metafor R package; Viechtbauer, 2010). Consistent with hypothesis 1, participants rated trans (vs. cis) women as less likely victims of unwanted advances, $g = 0.76$, $Z = 9.51$, $p<.001$ 95% CI [.61,.92], and sexual coercion, $g = 0.56$, $Z = 7.12$, $p<.001$ 95% CI [.40,.72] (studies 1&2, continuous variable). They also were also less likely to choose a trans (vs. cis) woman as the most likely victim of unwanted advances, $g = 1.96$, $Z = 18.09$, $p<.001$ 95% CI [1.75, 2.18], and sexual coercion, $g = 2.33$, $Z = 15.99$, $p<.001$ 95% CI [2.05, 2.63] (studies 3-5, chi-squared design). The meta-analytic effect for unwanted advances and sexual coercion for all five studies are $g = 1.18$, $Z = 18.52$, $p<.001$ 95% CI [.58,.79] and $g = 0.96$, $Z = 13.88$, $p<.001$ 95% CI [.83,1.01], respectively. Results of each individual study were all significant in the predicted direction and are presented in Tables 1 and 2. Exploratory moderation by participant gender and participant political orientation are reported in the supplemental materials.

Table 1: Means (SDs) of unwanted advances harassment likelihood (studies 1-2) and percentage of sexual coercion harassment target selection (*studies 3 and 5 expected percentage = 50% and study 4 expected frequency = 20%*)

Study	*n*	Trans woman	Cis woman	Effect
Study 1	388	3.87 (1.56)	4.98 (1.46)	$t(386) = 7.23$, $p <.001$, $d = .74$ 95%CI [0.53,0.94]

Study 2	278	3.35 (1.58)	4.56 (1.40)	$t(276) = 6.73$, $p < .001$, $d = .81$ 95%CI [0.56,1.05]
Study 3	203	8.41%	91.58%	$\chi^2(1, 202) = 139.72$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.83$ 95%CI [0.69,0.97]
Study 4	288	12.15%	87.85%	$\chi^2(1, 287) = 11.08$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.78$ 95%CI [0.64,0.97]
Study 5	223	24.21%	75.78%	$\chi^2(1, 222) = 59.31$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.52$ 95%CI [0.38,0.65]
Study 5 (non-white targets only)	167	26.95%	73.05%	$\chi^2(1, 166) = 35.50$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.46$ 95%CI [0.31,0.61]

Table 2: Means (SDs) of sexual coercion harassment likelihood (studies 1-2) and percentage of sexual coercion harassment target selection (*studies 3 and 5 expected percentage = 50% and study 4 expected frequency = 20%*)

Study	*n*	Trans woman	Cis woman	Effect
Study 1	388	3.59 (1.64)	4.37 (1.64)	$t(386) = 4.69$, $p < .001$, $d = .48$ 95%CI [0.27, 0.68]

Study 2	278	3.11 (1.53)	4.19 (1.60)	$t(276) = 5.75$, $p <.001$, $d = .81$ 95%CI [0.56,1.05]
Study 3	203	5.46%	94.56%	$\chi^2(1,202) = 160.40$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.89$ 95%CI [0.75,1.03]
Study 4	288	11.81%	88.19%	$\chi^2(1, 287) = 12.89$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.76$ 95%CI [0.65,0.88]
Study 5	223	16.59%	83.41%	$\chi^2(1, 222) = 99.65$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.67$ 95%CI [0.54,0.80]
Study 5 (non-white targets only)	167	19.16%	80.84%	$\chi^2(1, 166) = 64.38$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.62$ 95%CI [0.47,0.77]

Discussion

In line with the victim prototype framework, studies 1-5 suggests that people think that trans (vs. cis) women are less likely victims of workplace sexual harassment. Participants rated trans women as likely victims of harassment (studies 1-2) and were less likely to choose them as the most likely victim of a harassing incident (studies 3-5). This effect did not extent to evaluations of neutral and negative workplace harassing events (see supplemental materials, study 3), so our findings do not reflect people just perceiving trans women to be less likely to experience workplace interactions or adverse workplace interactions in general. We see the effect of gender identity on harassment likelihood when controlling for attractiveness, masculinity, femininity, and assumptions about social class and population base rates and when using images of ‘cis

passing' women that are counterbalanced across gender identity conditions, Additionally, we see this effect when people are evaluating white women, Black women, Latina women, and East Asian women as potential targets of sexual harassment and when just evaluating Black women, Latina women, and East Asian women as potential targets (we also see this effect when examining each racial group separately, see supplemental materials). Thus, labeling the same woman as trans (vs. cis) may lead people to think she is less likely to be targeted by sexual harassment. This is a biased assessment, as trans women often experience as high or even higher rates of sexual harassment, including unwanted advances and sexual coercion, than cis women in the workplace (e.g., Callander et al., 2019; Schuyler et al., 2020; Heino et al., 2020). In our next study, we examine whether a woman's gender identity influences the extent to which people perceive her to be credible and harmed by sexual harassment, as past research shows that victim prototypicality can influence perceptions of credibility and harm in ways that disadvantage less prototypical victims (Goh et al., 2022).

Study 6

In study 6, we examine whether people perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less credible victims and as being less harmed by unwanted advances and sexual coercion. Previous research on victim prototypes and victim neglect suggests that less prototypical victims of sexual harassment are less likely to be believed and are perceived as being less psychologically harmed by the harassment (Goh et al., 2022). Thus, if people perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less prototypical victims, as studies 1-5 suggest, we hypothesize that people will perceive them to be less credible when they claim they have been sexually harassed and as being less harmed by the harassment. In this study, the images of the women were of 'cis passing' white women that were

matched on were matched on attractiveness, masculinity, femininity, and age and were counterbalanced across the cisgender and transgender conditions. Thus, we examine whether manipulating between-group prototypicality by labeling the same woman as trans (vs. cis) leads people to perceive to her as being less credible and less harmed by sexual harassment.

Methods & Procedure

Participants (N = 844 Mturk workers to detect an effect of d = .23, alpha = .05, power = 90%, two-tailed independent samples t-test) read about two claims of sexual harassment that involve unwanted advances (e.g., she says that her coworker sat very close to her when working and complimented her appearance) and sexual coercion (e.g., she says that her supervisor asked her if they could have some alone time this week to talk about her future at the company).

As in studies 1-5, the harasser was identified as a straight man and the occupation of the woman who was harassed was standardized. The sexual harassment scenarios were piloted tested to be ambiguous, as prototypes are more likely to influence perceptions of discrimination in which the discrimination is ambiguous (Major et al., 2002). The women making the claims were either described as cisgender (meaning they identify as women and were assigned female at birth) in the cisgender condition or as transgender (meaning they identify as women and were assigned male at birth) in the transgender condition. The images of were of white women from the Chicago Face Database that were matched on were matched on attractiveness, masculinity, femininity, and age and were counterbalanced across the cisgender and transgender conditions. For each scenario, participants rated how much they believe and how confident they are that the woman was sexually harassed on a 7-point scale, with higher numbers indicating greater belief

and confidence. These two items were averaged to create a composite credibility score for unwanted advances (α = .92) and sexual coercion (α = .93). Participants also rated how psychologically harmed (upset, distressed, traumatized) the woman was by the harassing behavior on a 7-point scale, with higher numbers indicating stronger emotional reactions. These three items were averaged to create a composite harm score for unwanted advances (α = .88) and sexual coercion (α = .89).

Results

In line with hypothesis 2 and the victim prototype framework, participants perceived transgender women targeted by unwanted advances to be less credible (M = 3.42, SD = 1.86) compared to cisgender women (M = 3.74, SD = 1.85), $t(842) = -2.49$, $p = .013$, $d = -0.17$ 95%CI[-0.31, -0.04]. They also perceived transgender women targeted by sexual coercion to be less credible (M = 3.57, SD = 1.93) compared to cisgender women (M = 3.88, SD = 1.94), $t(842) = -2.34$, $p = .019$, $d = -0.16$ 95%CI[-0.30, -0.03]. Contrary to our hypothesis regarding harm, participants did not perceive transgender women targeted by unwanted sexual/romantic advances to be less harmed (M = 4.34, SD =1.53) than cisgender women (M = 4.46 , SD = 1.47), $t(842) = -1.08$, $p = .280$. They also did not perceive transgender women targeted by sexual coercion to be less harmed (M = 4.35, SD =1.58) than cisgender women (M = 4.46 , SD = 1.54), $t(842) = -1.75$, $p = .081$. See supplemental materials for moderation by participant gender and political orientation.

Discussion

The results of study 6 support our hypothesis that people perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less credible when they claim they have been sexually harassed. Importantly, people evaluated

the same woman as being less credible when she was labeled as trans compared to when she was labeled as cis. Contrary to our hypothesis regarding perceptions of harm, people did not perceive trans women as being less psychologically harmed by sexual harassment. It could be the case that the anticipated victim prototype harm effects will emerge when within-category features of victim prototypicality with regards to trans women (e.g., perceived femininity and attractiveness) are less tightly controlled, strengthening the victim prototypicality manipulation. Indeed, we saw that the effect of gender identity on harassment target selection was larger in study 3 when no images were provided (V = .89) compared to study 4 when matched images of 'cis passing' white women were provided (V = .76). Additionally, given that 'non-passing' trans women under cis normative expectations are especially likely to experience transmisogyny and neglect when they experience sexual violence (e.g., Grant et al., 2011; Weiss et al., 2021; Matsuzaka & Koch, 2019), it is important to examine whether 'non-passing' trans women are potentially subject to credibility discounts and minimization when they share their experiences of sexual harassment. Therefore, in study 7 we replicate study 6 but do not include any images to strengthen the prototypicality manipulation.

Study 7

In study 7, we again test the hypotheses that people perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less credible victims and as being less harmed by unwanted advances and sexual coercion. While study 6 included tightly controlled images of 'cis passing' women who made sexual harassment claims, in study 7 we did not include any controlled images. We anticipate that, without images, people may mentally represent trans women being 'non-passing' and less prototypical on within-category attributes, as they may rely on stereotypes that trans women are less attractive, more

masculine, and are more ‘visibly trans’ compared to cis women. In addition to these stereotypes, people may rely on their exemplars of the social category ‘transgender woman’ to guide their mental representations (Park. Judd, & Ryan, 1991). Less than a third of Americans know a transgender woman, and when people do have interpersonal encounters with or see trans women in the public sphere, they often assume that trans women (especially more privileged and gender prototypical trans women) are cis women due to cis-normative expectations and assumptions (e.g., Minkin & Brown, 2021; Robinson, 2022). Thus, people may only notice and identify that a woman is trans (and therefore have more frequent category exemplars) of less gender-prototypical and ‘non-passing’ trans women. We therefore anticipate that, without images people may imagine a trans woman who is less gender prototypical on within-category dimensions and more ‘non-passing’, strengthening the prototypicality manipulation.

Methods

Participants (N = 691 Mturk workers) completed the same methods as in study 6, except no images were provided with the sexual harassment claims.

Results

Contrary to our hypotheses, participants did not perceive trans women targeted by unwanted advances to be less credible (M = 3.39, SD = 1.84) compared to cisgender women (M = 3.32, SD = 1.84), $t(689) = 0.56$, $p = .713$. Additionally participants perceived transgender women targeted by sexual coercion to be more credible (M = 3.94, SD = 1.97) compared to cisgender women (M = 3.58, SD = 1.83), $t(689) = 2.50$, $p = .012$, $d = 0.19$ 95%CI[0.04, 0.34]. Additionally, also contrary to our hypothesis, participants perceived transgender women targeted by unwanted

advances (M = 4.47, SD = 1.49) and sexual coercion (M = 4.73, SD = 1.47) to be more harmed compared to cisgender women (M = 4.73, SD = 1.47; M = 4.47, SD = 1.52)), $t(689) = 2.55$, $p = .01$, $d = 0.19$ 95%CI[0.04, 0.34], $t(689) = 2.41$, $p = .016$, $d = 0.18$ 95%CI[0.03, 0.33]. See supplemental materials for exploratory moderation by participant gender and participant political orientation.

Discussion

The results of study 7 did not support our hypotheses that people would perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less credible and less harmed by sexual harassment. For unwanted advances, there was no effect of gender identity on credibility and people perceived trans (vs. cis) women to be *more* harmed. For sexual coercion, people perceived trans (vs. cis) women to be *more* credible (a reversal of the finding in study 6) and *more* harmed. Thus, when removing the images of matched 'cis passing' women, the observed effects of gender identity on credibility disappeared (unwanted advances) or reversed (sexual coercion) and effects emerged in the opposite of the expected direction for harm (unwanted advances and sexual coercion).

These unexpected effects could have been the result of the image removal inadvertently weakening or even reversing the gender/victim prototypicality manipulation. There has been an astronomical rise in media and political coverage and debate of trans women in recent years as coordinated campaigns to restrict trans rights have aggressively progressed (e.g., Jones, 2021; ACLU, 2023; Paterson, 2023; Hasenbush et al., 2019). Because of this, trans women in the media are likely becoming people's most frequent or prominent category exemplar for transgender women. It is possible that participants in the transgender condition may have been

imagining famous trans women who have been the subject of frequent public debate or speak publicly about trans issues (e.g., Dylan Mulvaney, Laverne Cox, Lia Thomas, Zooey Zephyr, Caitlin Jenner) who are likely perceived as being very gender prototypical. Therefore, participants in the transgender (vs. cisgender) condition may have been imagining a more gender and victim prototypical woman on myriad dimensions (e.g., attractive, feminine, famous) who is also higher status. These factors may have led people to perceive trans (vs. cis) women as being as equally or more credible and harmed by the harassment (e.g., Kaiser et al., 2022; Cheek, Bandt-Law et al., 2022; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018). While we cannot be sure that this explanation accounts for our unexpected findings, in the next study we aim to strengthen our prototypicality manipulation and keep people from imagining a famous 'cis passing' trans woman in the transgender condition. To do so, we include AI-generated images of cis women and of trans women who have not undergone hormone-replacement therapy or facial-feminization surgery.

It could also be the case that, because of the prominence of and debate over trans issues in the United States, the strength of individuals' women victim prototypes with regards to gender identity is changing and depends on which 'side' of the public debate over the legitimacy and rights of trans women people are exposed to and endorse. As trans issues and advocacy for trans rights have entered the mainstream, some people may now be more likely to recognize the womanhood of trans women and their high vulnerability to sexual violence, including sexual harassment. If this is the case, it could have in part driven the unexpected findings in the previous study. Among other individuals, however, their victim prototype with regards to gender identity may even more strongly favor cis women as they are exposed to and endorse transphobic rhetoric denying and pathologizing trans women's womanhood as well as their vulnerability to

the forms of violence and harassment that people typically associate with women. Indeed, the womanhood of trans woman is often denied in the context of them being erroneously portrayed as mentally ill non-women who are perpetrators of sexual violence towards women, not potential victims of sexual violence themselves. When advocating to keep trans women from accessing women's restrooms, locker rooms, sports teams, and housing and gender-based violence services, the vulnerability to sexual violence such exclusions will precipitate for trans women is discounted or ignored (ACLU, 2023; Paterson, 2023; Human Rights Watch, 2013). We therefore propose that denying trans women's identities is an important moderator for perceptions of trans women who are sexually harassed and examine this possibility in the next study.

Study 8

In Study 8, we strengthen our prototypicality manipulation and aim to keep people from imagining a famous 'cis passing' trans woman in the transgender condition by including AI-generated images of trans women who have not undergone hormone-replacement therapy or facial-feminization surgery. Thus, these generated images aim to resemble trans women who are earlier in their transition or have not wanted to or been unable to access gender affirming care that may lead them to be perceived as more 'cis passing' and gender prototypical. We again examine whether people perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less likely victims and less credible victims. Given the null (study 6) and reversal (study 7) of the anticipated effects on harm, we pre-registered that individuals may perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be more, less, or equally harmed by sexual harassment.

We also examine whether identity denial of trans woman moderates people's perceptions of how likely victims of harassment trans (vs. cis) women are, how credible they are, and how harmed they are by sexual harassment. While there is largely a partisan divide on attitudes towards trans rights, there are individuals across the political spectrum who deny and pathologize trans women's womanhood and their vulnerability to harassment that people typically associate with women. People who deny (vs. do not deny) the identity of trans women may perceive trans women to be even further from the prototypical group image of sexual harassment victims. Therefore, we hypothesize that individuals who deny the identity of trans women will be especially likely to perceive trans (vs. cis) women as less likely and credible victims of sexual harassment, even when controlling for political orientation. We do not have clear predictions on whether or how identity denial will moderate the effect of gender identity on perceptions of harm. Individuals high in identity denial could be more likely to minimize the harm caused if they perceive trans women as being especially non-prototypical women (i.e., not women) compared to those who do not deny the identity of trans women. Alternatively, because they are pathologizing trans women's identity, they may be especially likely to think that trans women will be more emotionally unstable and as being more harmed by sexual harassment, as people expect mentally ill people to respond to negative events with emotional intensity (e.g., Rusch et al., 2005).

Methods

Participants (N = 643 participants from Cloud Connect to detect an interaction effect size of f = .02 (alpha = .05, power = 90%, multiple linear regression)) read about two claims of sexual harassment that involved unwanted advances and sexual coercion. The women making the

claims were either described as cisgender or transgender. In the cisgender condition, people saw an AI-generated image of a face that was previously categorized as a woman and was edited to include long hair and makeup. In the transgender condition, people saw an AI-generated image of a face that was previously categorized as a man and was edited to include long hair and makeup (https://generated.photos/face). Thus, the images of the transgender women represent their appearance prior to gender affirming care such as hormone-replacement therapy of facial-feminization surgery. For each unwanted advance and sexual coercion scenario, participants completed the same credibility ($\alpha = .94$, $\alpha = .95$) and harm outcomes ($\alpha = .91$, $\alpha = .92$) as in studies 6 and 7. Participants also rated likely it is that something like this happens to a cisgender (cisgender condition) or transgender (transgender condition) in the workplace and completed a measure of identity denial of transgender with 8 items (e.g., transgender women are not really women; transgender women are delusional; transgender women will never really be women) which were averaged to create a composite identity denial score ($\alpha = .95$).

As in studies 1-5, people thought that it was less likely that trans (M = 4.75, SD = 1.72) vs. cis women (M = 5.51, SD = 1.45) would experience an unwanted advance in the workplace, $F(1, 639) = 44.60$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .07$ 90% CI [.04, .10]. As expected, this effect was moderated by trans identity denial, $F(1, 639) = 11.18$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .02$ 90% CI [.00, .04], such that the effect of gender identity condition on likelihood was stronger among those higher in identity denial ($d = .53$ 95%CI [.38, .69], $p < .001$) than those lower in identity denial ($d = .16$ 95%CI [.00, .31], $p = .04$). We see the same pattern of results for sexual coercion. People thought that it was less likely that trans (M = 4.67, SD = 1.72) vs. cis women (M = 5.33, SD = 1.45) would experience sexual coercion in the workplace, $F(1, 639) = 30.53$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .05$ 90% CI [.02, .07]. This

effect was moderated by trans identity denial, $F(1, 639) = 14.41$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .02$ 90% CI [.01, .04], such those higher in trans identity denial perceived trans (vs. cis) women as less likely victims ($d = .50$ 95%CI [.34, .65], $p < .001$) but those lower in identity denial did not ($p = .37$). These moderation results hold when controlling for participant political orientation (see Supplemental materials).

With regards to credibility, consistent with hypothesis 2, people thought that trans women who experienced an unwanted advance were less credible (M = 3.90, SD = 1.80) than cis women (M = 4.24, SD = 1.80), $F(1, 639) = 6.377$, $p = .012$ $\eta_p^2 = .01$ 90% CI [.00, .03]. There was no moderation by identity denial, $F(1, 639) = 0.65$, $p = .41$. However, people did not think that trans (vs. cis) women who experienced sexual coercion were less credible (but this effect was approaching significance): $F(1, 639) = 3.49$, $p = .06$. There was no moderation by identity denial, $F(1, 639) = 1.34$, $p = .24$. There was no effect of gender identity condition on the perceived harm of unwanted advances, $F(1, 639) = .08$, $p = .766$, or moderation by identity denial, $F(1, 639) = .42$, $p = .51$. There was also no effect of gender identity condition on the perceived harm of unwanted advances, $F(1, 639) = .08$, $p = .766$, or moderation by identity denial, $F(1, 639) = 1.12$, $p = .28$.

Additionally, identity denial was a significant predictor of all outcomes, such those higher in identity denial perceived both cis and trans women to be less likely to experience unwanted advances ($d = -.34$) and sexual coercion ($d = -.26$), as less credible ($d = -.34$, $d = -.27$) and as less harmed ($d = -.30$, $d = -.25$). See supplemental materials for main effects of identity denial and exploratory analyses of gender identity moderation by participant gender and political orientation.

Discussion

In support of hypothesis 1 and 2, participants perceived trans (vs. cis) women to be less likely and less credible victims of sexual harassment. Inconsistent with hypothesis 3, participants did not perceive trans (vs. cis) women to be less harmed by sexual harassment. Further, as expected, the effect of gender identity on the perceived likelihood of sexual harassment was moderated by identity denial, such that the effect was stronger among those higher in identity denial. Given the overlap of victim prototypes and women prototypes (e.g., Goh et al., 2022), the finding that those who perceive trans women to be non-women consider them to be especially unlikely victims of harassment is consistent with our theorizing. However, we did not see identity moderation on perceptions of credibility. All participants, including those who deny and do not deny the identity the identity of trans women, perceived trans (vs. cis) women to be less credible. Thus, while the effect was small, even those who acknowledge trans women's womanhood perceive trans women to be less credible victims of sexual harassment, consistent with the victim prototype framework. While we expected this effect to be stronger among those who deny the identity of trans women, the lack of moderation may be driven by the fact that individuals who are transphobic and transmisogynistic are also frequently misogynistic towards cis women and endorse gender stereotypes, which predict responses to sexual harassment (e.g., Epstein et al., 2020; Tudor, 2023; Negoshi et al., 2008; Norton & Herek, 2013). So, the people who are more likely to discount the credibility of trans women are also more likely to discount the credibility of cis women. The main effect of identity denial on perceived credibility is consistent with this possibility. Additionally, as in study 6, and unlike study 7 where people perceived trans women to be more harmed, we did not see an effect of gender identity on perceived harm or identity denial moderation. Thus, even when evaluating trans women who are less gender prototypical

and are not ‘cis passing’, an effect of gender identity on perceived harm does not emerge. Given the inconsistent effects of gender identity on perceived credibility and harm observed across studies 6-8, we next examine the results meta-analytically.

Meta-analytic results of studies 6-8

Consistent with the victim prototype framework and hypothesis 2, participants rated trans (vs. cis) women as less credible when they claim they experienced unwanted advances, $g = -.11$, $Z = -2.52$, $p=.01$ 95% CI [-.19,.02], but the effect size is small. There was not, however, a meta-analytic effect on the credibility of sexual coercion, $g = -0.04$, $Z = -1.01$, $p=.31$, or the harm of unwanted advances and sexual coercion, respectively, $g = 0.02$, $Z = 0.66$, $p=.51$; $g = 0.03$, $Z = 0.59$, $p=.55$. Because trans (vs. cis) women are perceived as less likely victims of both unwanted advances and sexual coercion, the victim prototype framework predicts that they would also be perceived as less credible and harmed when they experience unwanted advances and sexual coercion. However, across studies 6-8, we only see a small effect of credibility emerge for unwanted advances.

General Discussion

The current studies sought to extend existing theorizing on harassment victim prototypes and neglect to help understand why, despite trans women’s disproportionate risk of sexual harassment, they often experience widespread neglect relative to cis women (Goh et al., 2022; Kaiser et al., 2022). In line with theorizing on victim prototypes, people erroneously perceived trans women to be much less likely victims of sexual harassment. This robust effect emerged both when both within and between group variation in prototypicality was manipulated. (e.g.,

transgender vs. cisgender; less stereotypically feminine) and when just between-group variation (transgender vs. cisgender) was manipulated. Thus, even when the same woman was labeled as trans (vs. cis), people perceived her to be a less likely victim of both unwanted advances and sexual coercion. These results fit with critiques of the #MeToo movement as largely excluding trans women as survivors of sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence (Rodriguez, 2018; Taluson, 2018).

The effect of perceiving trans (vs. cis) women as less likely victims was stronger among individuals who deny the womanhood of trans women. Given the overlap between prototypes of women and victims, it is consistent with our theorizing that those who deny and pathologize the womanhood of trans women would think they are especially unlikely victims compared to cis women (e.g., Goh et al., 2022). Importantly, a central feature of mainstream transmisogynistic rhetoric, policies, and judicial decisions that deny trans women's womanhood position trans women as perpetrators, as opposed to victims of sexual violence, including sexual harassment. Indeed, many of these perspectives actively deny that trans women are vulnerable to the forms of sexual violence that we typically associate with women to restrict their access to women's spaces. Thus, biased perceptions of trans women's vulnerability to sexual harassment perpetrated by men may be an important predictor of support for anti-trans policies, including restricting trans women's access to public bathrooms and locker rooms and access to gender-based violence services. Future research should explore this possibility.

The current studies also examined whether, due to their distance from the victim prototype, people perceive trans women to be less credible and less harmed by sexual harassment relative to cis women. These outcomes are central to the interpersonal and legal treatment of sexual

harassment and are influenced by victim prototypicality (Goh et al., 2022). We observed inconsistent effects of credibility and harm across studies. When we included images of trans women ('cis passing' women in study 6 and 'non passing' women in study 8), we observed the predicted effects of credibility on unwanted advances (studies 6 and 8) and sexual coercion (study 6) and null effects for harm. When no images were included (study 7), the credibility effects disappeared (unwanted advances) or reversed (sexual coercion) and effects emerged in the opposite of the expected direction for harm for both unwanted advances and sexual coercion. It is possible that when no images were provided people were imagining famous trans women (e.g., Dylan Mulvaney) who are frequently the topic of public debate, national news coverage, and virality on social media who are very gender prototypical and high status. This could potentially facilitate higher credibility and harm ratings (Goh et al., 2022; Cheek et al., 2022). Future research should examine mental representations of trans women in this current cultural moment to explore this possibility. Alternatively, the inconsistent results may reflect uncertainty in what to make of trans women who are targeted by harassment given their historic invisibility and marginalization in general and in the domain of sexual harassment.

We observed a small meta-analytic effect of gender identity on the credibility of unwanted advances, such that people perceived trans (vs. cis) women to be less credible. We did not observe this effect for sexual coercion. Credibility is a central feature of rights-claiming systems in the United States and an important predictor of whether people who claim they have been sexually harassed receive interpersonal and institutional support, redress, and justice (e.g., Tuerkheimer, 2017; Epstein, 2020). Thus, discounting the credibility of trans (vs. cis) women who experience unwanted advances could prevent them from receiving adequate support and civil rights protections and may be one of the factors that is facilitating the widespread neglect of

trans women who are sexually harassed. We did not, however, see the expected effect of gender identity on the perceived credibility of sexual coercion meta-analytically. Perhaps this occurred because people were more likely to correctly identify that sexual coercion is motivated by power and prejudice towards women (even though unwanted advances often are as well but are often perceived as being motivated by attraction; e.g., McDonald, 2012). People often assume that harassment targeting trans (vs. cis) women is driven by prejudice (e.g., Brassel et al., 2019). Thus, while future research should directly test this, people may have perceived trans (vs. cis) women as more credible victims of sexual coercion but not unwanted advances because the behavior more closely matched people's expectations for harassment motivations targeting trans women.

While previous research suggests that less prototypical victims are perceived to be less harmed by sexual harassment, we did not observe that people perceived trans women (less prototypical victims) vs. cis women (more prototypical victims) to be less harmed by sexual harassment. Thus, perhaps different features of victim non-prototypicality (e.g., gender identity) differentially effect perceptions of harm compared to others. While harm minimization is an important predictor of interpersonal and institutional neglect (e.g., Hoffman & Trawalter, 2016; Cheek, Bandt-Law, & Sinclair, 2022), this null finding may provide important insights on the neglect of trans women who are sexually harassed. These results potentially suggest that as opposed to the evidenced neglect of trans women who are harassed being driven by observers failing to recognize that they have been harmed, withholding offers of help, support, and protection may stem from antipathy or indifference to their harm. Thus, people may be identifying that trans women who are harassed have been harmed and need help, but potentially may be less likely to provide it. This may especially be the case among people who deny the identity of trans women

and hold higher levels of anti-trans prejudice and stereotype endorsement (e.g., Gallagher & Bodenhausen, 2021; Norton & Herek, 2013). Future research should examine this possibility by exploring whether trans women are perceived to be equally (or more) harmed by harassment, but less likely to be offered social support, monetary assistance, and other care outcomes, such as assistance offered to survivors in organizational and clinical settings.

A major limitation of the current work is the lack of intersectional perspectives and a predominant focus on white women targets with mid-level jobs in corporations. While we provide an initial demonstration that the effect of gender identity on the perceived likelihood of experiencing unwanted advances and sexual coercion generalizes to judgements about non-white women (study 5), we were not well-powered to examine whether target race *interacts* with target gender identity (e.g., Blake & Gangestad, 2020). Using white, financially stable targets allowed us to test whether a woman being trans (vs. cis) influences perceptions of women victims who are otherwise most likely to be perceived as prototypical victims in need of attention and care (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Bandt-Law, Cheek, & Sinclair, 2021; Cheek, Bandt-Law, & Sinclair, 2022). However, the trans women most disproportionately vulnerable to sexual harassment and neglect are trans women who hold multiply marginalized identities, such as trans women who are queer, Women of Color, work in lower-wage occupations and as sex-workers, are disabled, and experience job instability and are unhoused (e.g., Bryant & Leath, 2022; Grant et al., 2011; Matsuzaka & Koch, 2019). Thus, future research is needed to examine perceptions of and responses to trans women (as well as non-binary trans women and trans feminine people) with different intersecting identities to better understand the factors that facilitate the neglect of the most vulnerable and marginalized victims of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence.

In addition to examining various identity dimensions, future work should also explore perceptions of additional forms of sexual harassment targeting trans women beyond the most prototypical forms. Trans women's experiences of sexual harassment and neglect are not just an amplification of the experiences of cisgender women, they also experience high levels of overlapping and other forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence (e.g., misgendering, fetishization, transphobic violence upon identity disclosure) due to their interpersonal and institutional marginalization as trans women (e.g., Matsuzaka & Koch, 2019). Further, myriad policies, practices, and prejudices severely constrain trans women's access to fundamental resources, care, and justice (James et al., 2016; Shires & Jaffee, 2015; Grant et al., 2011; Jordan et al., 2020). Thus, to better understand perceptions of trans women who experience sexual harassment, it is critical that future research examine various forms of sexual harassment and how responses to trans women are informed by and interact with anti-trans policies and prejudice.

Conclusion

Sexual harassment is a highly prevalent structural and interpersonal form of sexual violence that is disproportionately perpetrated against trans women. Despite this, our findings suggest that trans (vs. cis) women are perceived to be unlikely victims of unwanted advances and sexual coercion. Their relative invisibility as victims (and the credibility discounts they may be subject to when they experience unwanted sexual advances) may contribute to their evidenced neglect on behalf of healthcare, advocacy, and justice systems (e.g., Wirtz et al., 2018; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2015; Grant et al., 2011; Kattari & Hasche, 2016). Importantly, people who deny the identities of trans women were especially likely to underestimate their vulnerability to sexual

harassment. Denying trans women's womanhood and their vulnerability to the forms of sexual violence women typically experience have emerged as central features of anti-rhetoric, policies, and legislation that are contributing to the ongoing genocide towards trans people in the United States (e.g., ACLU, 2023, Jones, 2021). Future research needs to further explore the relative invisibility of trans women as victims of sexual violence and elucidate avenues for intervention.

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Conclusion and future directions

In the years since the mainstream Me Too movement began, Tarana Burke and others have voiced many concerns about its trajectory and how the prevailing iteration and structural changes it has brought forth neglect the experiences and needs of the marginalized survivors Me Too was originally designed to center and support (Burke, 2022, 2017; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018). The movement was critiqued as reproducing existing historical and structural vulnerabilities and single-axis approaches to gender-based violence. A very narrow subset of survivors (e.g., women who are white, cisgender, heterosexual, not disabled, gender conforming, affluent) were centered and supported, and those who experience higher rates of sexual violence and encounter more barriers to resources, care, and justice were marginalized (e.g., Women of Color and indigenous women, queer, transgender, and gender nonconforming people, children and the elderly, immigrants, individuals living in poverty, and disabled people) (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018; Burke, 2020). Thus, the populations most vulnerable to being targeted by sexual violence and unsupported due to structural inequities were again pushed to the margins in a movement that aimed to raise awareness of and address endemic sexual violence. The current work draws on social psychological theories of prototypes, discrimination attributions, and critical theories of intersectional invisibility to provide a framework to understand and identify this patten of neglect in the Me Too era (e.g., Rosch, 1973; Crenshaw, 1989; Major et al., 2002; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2018).

Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual violence have historically, culturally, and legally been framed through a singular gender lens – where women specifically are targeted by sexual violence because of their membership to their gender group. This single-

axis, woman-centered approach is reflected in myriad foundational sexual harassment laws and policies, in the media, historical and contemporary feminist movements, and lay beliefs about sexual violence, but does not reflect the lived experiences of many survivors of sexual violence. Indeed, in addition to people who belong to different gender groups (men, genderqueer and nonbinary people) being targeted, people's vulnerability to and experiences of sexual violence are often informed by the intersection of additional marginalized social identity dimensions (e.g., race, social class, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability) (e.g., Crenshaw, 1991; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018; Kessler et al., 2020; Gorris, 2015). While the Me Too movement has amplified the voices of survivors, bringing international attention to the frequency, severity, and harm of sexual violence and improving individual and institutional responses to allegations of misconduct, we propose that the prominence of narrow gender-only representations and understandings of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence remain, influencing perceptions of and responses to sexual harassment. Across three papers, my collaborators and I examined whether three subsets of women who disproportionately bear the brunt of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence, more stereotypically masculine women, Black women, and transgender women, are not typically represented as or imagined to be the targets of it, facilitating their invisibility and neglect in the Me Too era.

The findings in part 1 suggests that prototypes of sexual harassment victims overlap with prototypes of women on within-category attributes (e.g., femininity, attractiveness). In these studies, people mentally represented sexual harassment victims as more gender prototypical women, as assessed through participant-generated drawings, face selection tasks, reverse correlation, and self-report measures. Additionally, when less (vs. more) gender prototypical

women were sexually harassed, the incident was less likely to be labeled as such, participants perceived her claim of sexual harassment to be less credible, the harassment was thought to cause her less harm, and her harasser was given more lenient punishment.

In part 2, we demonstrate that, even though Me Too was originally founded in part to address the longstanding erasure and neglect of Black women and girls targeted by sexual violence, the experiences of Black women remain relatively invisible in cultural representations (news coverage, search media) of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, in the mainstream Me Too era. We also show that people erroneously thought that Black (vs. white) women were less likely victims of workplace harassment, and Black (vs. white) women were subject to higher levels of neglect when they publicly shared their stories of sexual harassment and assault during the #MeToo Twitter Hashtag Activism movement. This potentially elevated white women's voices over the voices of Black women for whom Tarana Burke started the movement for in the first place. Despite Black women's disproportionate vulnerability to sexual violence, compared to white women they were not culturally represented, were not thought of as likely victims by individuals, and their voices were not amplified or supported to the same degree on a large-scale.

In part 3, we show that people think binary transgender women (women who were assigned male at birth) are far less likely victims of sexual harassment compared to cisgender women (women who were assigned female at birth). Individuals who deny the womanhood of transgender women were especially likely to underestimate their vulnerability to sexual harassment. While we experienced inconsistent results across studies, meta-analytic effects suggest that trans

women who experienced unwanted advances (but not sexual coercion) were perceived to be less credible than cis women, but equally harmed by unwanted advances and sexual coercion.

Taken together, these manuscripts provide preliminary support for a prototype model of sexual harassment perceptions as a framework for understanding sexual harassment (and other forms of sexual violence) targeting women. Across multiple studies, we found that people mentally represent sexual harassment victims as more gender prototypical women and perceive them to be more likely victims of sexual harassment, including women who are feminine (vs. masculine), white (vs. Black), and cisgender (vs. transgender). Less (vs. more) prototypical women were subject to neglect when they shared their experiences of sexual harassment (as well as other forms of sexual violence in part 2) across myriad outcomes that are critical catalysts to remedying sexual harassment and realizing the protections offered by civil rights laws and are important predictors of survivor well-being after disclosure. Thus, narrow victim prototypes may impede the promise and potential of civil rights laws and antiharassment policy and prevent survivors from receiving adequate acknowledgement, care, and support.

Future research is needed to better understand the role of victim prototypes in victim neglect. In the current studies, we focused our attention on women who are non-prototypical on within-category traits (e.g., femininity) and between category (Black vs. white; transgender vs. cisgender) identity dimensions. Future research should examine victim prototypes with regards to women who hold different and overlapping identity dimensions. Additionally, while we focus on sexual harassment targeting women in this dissertation because the corresponding literature and legal scholarship largely focuses on women's experiences, this framework provides a

foundation for future scholarship on men and nonbinary people who experience harassment, are excluded from prototypical representations of harassment victims, and encounter mistreatment and neglect.

Within the continuum of sexual violence, these papers largely focused on perceptions of more prototypical forms of workplace sexual harassment. It is critical that future research explore perceptions of additional forms of workplace sexual harassment as well as sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence more broadly that occurs outside of the workplace (e.g., in the home, in public spaces, at school). Additionally, while paper 3 began to explore how victim prototypes are influenced by anti-trans prejudice on behalf of perceivers, future research is needed to better understand how victim prototypes interact with additional biases and prejudices that may influence the strength of victim prototypes and compound victim neglect for different populations of survivors (e.g., endorsement of gender, racial, and social class etc., stereotypes and sexual harassment myth acceptance, biased perceptions of promiscuity, competence and warmth, and experiences of social pain; e.g., Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007; Deska et al., 2020; Cheek et al., 2020; Diehl et al., 2014).

The evidenced neglect of nonprototypical women has the potential to obstruct attempts to address sexual harassment, increase access to justice, and create more equitable workplaces that prevent harassment and support women. Thus, future research is needed to elucidate avenues for intervention, such as incorporating education about prototypes and multi-axes approaches to sexual harassment in workplace training and expanding the narrow victim prototype to more inclusively and accurately captures women's experiences with sexual harassment and other

forms of sexual violence. By recognizing that sexual harassment has a broad scope with respect to who is targeted and how it manifests, laypeople, organizations, and legal institutions will be better positioned to realize the potential of policies and laws intended to reduce and address sexual harassment. Importantly, however, even the most prototypical victims of sexual harassment who the framework predicts are most likely to be visible, recognized, taken seriously, and receive care and justice, often do not get their needs met and have immense difficulty accessing and benefitting from right claiming systems and services. While some survivors may experience more difficulty than others and it is critical to address these inequities, even the survivors most likely to be taken seriously and helped face extreme difficulty when seeking organizational and legal justice and support. Indeed, perpetrators of workplace harassment are so rarely punished that they are more likely to be struck by lightning than to face formal discipline and survivors who disclose their experiences of harassment to organizational, legal, and healthcare gatekeepers are far more likely to be further harmed as opposed to supported and redressed (Dobbin & Kalev, 2020; Epstein, 2020). The extreme difficulty survivors face when seeking organizational, legal, and social support is a pressing area for future research.

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Supplemental Materials.

Part 1: Narrow prototypes and neglected victims: understanding perceptions of sexual harassment

Power Analysis and Sample Size Justification

Study A1

Participants were 155 undergraduate students from a large public university. The recruitment goal was at least 120 participants by the end of an academic quarter. Although the pre-registration did not indicate any exclusion criteria, one participant was excluded for clicking through every page quickly and missing the manipulation; this person was not included in the count of 155 participants.

Study A2

Power analysis of the prototypicality rating in Study A1 (d = .33, α = .05, power = .80, two-sided independent t-test) revealed that Study A2 required 145 participants per condition. We planned to run 200 participants per condition (400 total), anticipating exclusions for those who failed attention check (Oppenheimer, Meyvis, & Davidenko, 2009). We recruited 410 participants from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), and nine failed an attention check. Thus, our usable sample consisted of 401 participants.

Study A3

Meta-analysis of the prototypicality rating effect in Studies A1 (d = .33) and A2 (d = .40) yielded d = .38. Power analysis (d = .38, α = .05, power = .80, two-sided independent t-test) showed that Study A3 would require 110 participants per condition. We pre-registered to run 150 per condition (300 total), anticipating exclusions of individuals for failing attention check. We recruited 323 participants from the university subject pool, and 19 failed an attention check. One person was further excluded due to computer malfunction. Thus, the final sample consisted of 303 participants.

Study A4

Meta-analysis of the prototypicality rating from Studies A1-A3 showed a d = .58. Power analysis (d = .58, α = .05, power = .80, two-sided independent t-test) showed that Study A4 would require 47 participants per condition. Because we generalized to a new form of sexual harassment, we pre-registered to run 150 per condition (300 total). Initially, 299 MTurk workers participated, with 16 failing an attention check. Study A4 had 283 final participants.

Study A5

We preregistered to run 150 MTurk participants with the goal of achieving a sample size of at least 128, anticipating exclusions for those who failed the attention check or indicated that they responded randomly (with N = 128, we can detect d = .25 with 80% power, α = .05, paired sample t-test, two-tailed test). To be included in analyses, participants had to pass an attention check and indicate that they did not respond randomly; 141 participants met these criteria and were included in analyses.

<u>Study B1</u>

We aimed to recruit at least 300 MTurk participants, and power analysis (α = .05, power = .80, two-sided independent *t*-test) showed that this would allow us to detect effect size of *d* = .32. We set a goal to 350 participants in total, anticipating exclusion of individuals who failed attention check. Originally, 355 MTurk workers participated but 26 failed the attention check, leaving 329 participants.

<u>Study B2</u>

Study B1 had an effect size *d* = .50, and power analysis indicated that 512 participants for a 2 x 2 factorial between-design would be needed to achieve 80% power to detect an interaction (Giner-Sorolla, 2018). On MTurk, we set our goal to 600 in total, anticipating to exclude individuals who failed attention check. Originally, 604 MTurk workers participated but 59 failed the attention check. The final sample for Study B2 was 545 participants.

<u>Study B3</u>

Similar to Study B2, we aimed to recruit at least 512 participants in order to achieve 80% power for a 2 x 2 factorial between-design to detect an interaction (*d* = .50). Originally, 603 MTurk workers participated but 41 failed the attention check, leaving a total of 562 participants.

<u>Study B4</u>

We pre-registered to run 600 participants from the university subject pool to achieve 80% power for a 2 x 2 factorial between-design for an interaction with a medium effect size (*d* = .50). We

ended data collection with 555 participants because the academic term had ended then; 71 participants were removed for not passing attention check, leaving 484 participants.

Study C1

We aimed to run 300 participants with the goal of achieving a sample size of at least 271 after exclusions (with $N = 271$, we can detect $d = .22$ with 95% power, alpha = .05, two-tailed paired sample *t*-test). A pilot ($N = 208$ MTurkers) was used to determine the effect size of $d = .22$.

Study C2

We aimed to run 730 participants with the goal of achieving a sample size of at least 700 after exclusions (with $N = 700$, we can detect $d = .21$ with 80% power, alpha = .05, independent samples t-test, 2-tailed test).

Appendix B:

Manipulations of Independent Variables in Series A to C

[Manipulations shown in bold]

Manipulations using photographs and all materials can be found on OSF: https://osf.io/xehu9/

Study A1: manipulation of victimization shown before non-victimization

Sara is a product manager at a finance firm Smith & Simon Co., where she has been working since 2015. At a recent company event, Sara's supervisor walked behind her and **[he discreetly groped her/ he accidentally tripped and knocked her over.]**

Study A2: manipulation of victimization shown before non-victimization

Sara is a product manager at a finance firm Smith & Simon Co., where she has been working since 2015. At a recent company event, Sara's supervisor walked behind her and **[he discreetly groped her/ he accidentally tripped and knocked her over.]**

Study A3: manipulation of victimization shown before non-victimization

Jennifer is a college student majoring in business. Last summer, she interned at a consulting firm called Smith & Simon Co. The firm gave Jennifer an offer to return for another internship next summer, but she rejected the offer. When asked why she rejected the offer, Jennifer said that **[her**

supervisor repeatedly asked her about her dating life/ her supervisor repeatedly asked her to work on meaningless tasks.]

<u>Study A4: manipulation of victimization shown before non-victimization</u>

Brenda works at a marketing firm in a mid-sized city, where she has worked since moving to the city five years ago. Brenda was originally attracted to the small startup firm due to its size, and she thought the work was interesting and important. Brenda regularly eats lunch with co-workers in the breakroom. Last week during lunch, Brenda's manager called her over to his table and asked her to provide her opinion on something. He then showed Brenda a picture of **[a penis/ the new company logo]** on his phone and asked what she thought.

<u>Study A5 did not manipulate victimization</u>

<u>Study B1: prototypical description shown before non-prototypical manipulation</u>

Jessica is a **[high school art teacher and coach of the girls' cheerleading team/ high school physical education (P.E.) teacher and coach of the girls' ice hockey team]**. She recently had a meeting with the principal that left her confused. **[He complimented her skirt and noted that it reflected her tender and caring personality/ He complimented her jersey and noted that it reflected her tough and dominant personality]**. Later in the day, the principal inquired about her weekend plans. Jessica told him that she was going on a **[weekend getaway with friends/ weekend fishing trip with friends]**. At the end of their conversation, the principal asked her if she was still dating her boyfriend. She was unsure whether the principal was simply being friendly, or whether this might be sexual harassment.

<u>Study B2: harassment context shown before control context (prototypicality was manipulated using photos; see OSF)</u>

Jane (pictured here) works at a marketing firm. She recently had a meeting with her supervisor that left her confused. She consulted him on a problem she was facing. **[He put his hand on her waist/ He put his hand in his pocket]** and told her not to worry too much. He said he was confident that she will figure out the problem eventually without giving her any feedback. She was unsure how to interpret the interaction and wondered what was going on.

<u>Study B3: harassment context shown before control context (prototypicality was manipulated using photos; see OSF)</u>

Jane (pictured here) works at a marketing firm. She recently had a meeting with her supervisor that left her confused. She consulted him on a problem she was facing. **[He put his arm around her shoulder/ He put his hand in his pocket]** and told her not to worry too much. He said he was confident that she will figure out the problem eventually without giving her any feedback. She was unsure how to interpret the interaction and wondered what was going on.

<u>Study B4: harassment context shown before control context (prototypicality was manipulated using photos; see OSF)</u>

Anna (pictured here) is a high school teacher. She recently had a meeting with the principal that left her confused. They discussed her recent course evaluation, and he told her there was room for improvement. At the end of their meeting, the principal asked her **[if she was still dating her**

boyfriend/ if she was still prepared for the conference presentation next week]. She was unsure how to interpret the interaction.

Study C1: participants were shown images of a prototypical and a non-prototypical woman (see OSF). Participants were then told that the woman has made a sexual harassment claim against a coworker. No other descriptions were provided.

Study C2: participants read either the prototypical or non-prototypical description. Participants were then told that the woman has made a sexual harassment claim against a coworker. No other descriptions were provided.

Prototypical: Jessica is a high school art teacher and coach of the girls' cheerleading team. She has a tender and caring personality, likes to wear skirts and dresses, and spends time with friends and her boyfriend on the weekends.

Non-prototypical: Jessica is a high school physical education (P.E.) teacher and coach of the girls' ice hockey team. She has a tough and dominant personality, likes to wear jerseys and athletic clothes, and spends time with fishing with her boyfriend on the weekends.

Series A Individual Study Results

Study A1 Results

Prototypicality in drawings. Consistent with the prediction that prototypes of sexual harassment targets overlap with prototypes of traditional women, trained coders rated the drawings of the woman in the sexual harassment condition (*M* = 5.28, *SD* = 1.08) as more prototypical of the category woman than drawings in the control condition (*M* = 4.77, *SD* = 1.21), $t(153) = 2.75$, $p = .007$, $d = .44$, 95% CI [0.12, 0.76].

Prototypicality rating. Also consistent with Hypothesis 1, participants rated a woman who had experienced sexual harassment (*M* = 5.10, *SD* = .68) as more prototypical than one who had not (*M* = 4.87, *SD* = .72), $t(153) = 2.04$, $p = .043$, $d = .33$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.64].

Study A2 Results

Photo selection task. A 2 (sexual harassment vs. control condition) x 2 (selected a masculinized or feminized photo) Chi-Square test showed a predicted significant difference in the overall frequency from expected values, $\chi^2 = 8.20$, $p = .004$, $\phi = .14$. Participants in the sexual harassment condition (78.50%) were more likely to select a feminized photo over a masculinized photo than those in the control condition (65.67%).

P**rototypicality ratings.** As predicted, a sexual harassment victim (*M* = 5.40, *SD* = .81) was rated as more prototypical than a non-victim (*M* = 5.07, *SD* = .81), $t(399) = 3.99$, $p < .001$, $d = .40$, 95% CI [0.20, 0.60].

Study A3 Results

Photo selection task. As predicted, participants were more likely to select feminized photos to represent a sexual harassment target (*M* = 15.01, *SD* = 4.01) than the control target (*M* = 13.53, *SD* = 4.72), *t*(292.71) = 2.95, *p* = .003, *d* = .34, 95% CI [0.11, 0.57].

Prototypicality ratings. Confirming Hypothesis 1, participants perceived Jennifer as more prototypical when she experienced sexual harassment (*M* = 4.84, *SD* = .67) relative to control condition (*M* = 4.16, *SD* = .72), *t*(301) = 8.60, $p < .001$, *d* = .99, 95% CI [0.75, 1.23].

Study A4 Results

Photo selection task. As predicted in Hypothesis 1, participants in the sexual harassment condition (*M* = 14.75, *SD* = 4.66) selected more feminized photos to represent the victim than the control condition (*M* = 13.06, *SD* = 5.18), *t*(281) = 2.89, *p* = .004, *d* = .34, 95% CI [0.11, 0.58].

Prototypicality ratings. As predicted, a woman whose supervisor showed her a crude harassing image (*M* = 5.33, *SD* = .87) was perceived as more prototypical than a woman who was not harassed (*M* = 4.99, *SD* = .81), *t*(281) = 3.34, *p* = .001, *d* = .40, 95% CI [0.16, 0.63].

Study A5 Results

As predicted by Hypothesis 1, participants rated the sexual harassment victim as appearing significantly more prototypical (*M* = 5.41, *SD* = 1.07) than the non-sexual harassment victim (*M* = 3.74, *SD* = 1.28), *t*(140) = 14.07, $p < .001$, $d_z = 1.19$, 95% CI [0.97, 1.40].

Series B Individual Study Results

Study B1 Results

Manipulation check. Participants in the non-prototypical condition (*M* = 4.89, *SD* = 1.00) rated the target as less prototypically female than participants in the prototypical condition (*M* = 5.41, *SD* = .79), *t*(310.82) = 5.27, $p < .001$, *d* = .58, 95% CI [0.36, 0.80].

Primary analyses. As predicted in Hypothesis 3, the same sexually harassing behavior was more difficult to detect when it targeted non-prototypical women (M = 3.62, SD = 1.55) relative to prototypical women (M = 4.39, SD = 1.51), $t(327) = 4.57$, $p < .001$, $d = .50$, 95% CI [0.28, 0.7].

Study B2 Results

Manipulation check. In a 2 (harassment vs. control) x 2 (prototypical vs. non-prototypical face) factorial ANOVA, there was a main effect of prototypicality such that a woman with more feminized face (M = 5.54, SD = 0.80) was perceived as more prototypical than a woman with more masculinized face (M = 5.27, SD = 0.89), $F(1, 541) = 13.54$, $p < .001$, η_p^2 = .02. There was also a main effect of harassment such that participants perceived a harassed target (M = 5.51, SD = 0.83) as more prototypical compared to a non-harassed target (M = 5.31, SD = 0.86), $F(1, 541) = 7.82$, $p = .005$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. This unanticipated main effect of harassment provides perhaps the strongest evidence in support of Hypothesis 1 as the exact same face was perceived as differentially prototypical as a function of whether it was described as harassed or not. The interaction was not significant, $F(1, 541) = 0.81$, $p = .369$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$.

Perceived likelihood of sexual harassment. In a 2 (harassment vs. control) x 2 (prototypical vs. non-prototypical face) factorial ANOVA, there was an expected main effect of work incident such that participants perceived greater harassment when a woman was touched at the waist by her supervisor (M = 5.02, SD = 1.36) compared to a supervisor putting his hand in his pocket (M = 2.41, SD = 1.50), $F(1, 541) = 455.54$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .46$. There was also a main effect of prototypicality -- a woman with a more feminized prototypical face (M = 3.83, SD = 1.98) was perceived as more likely to experience sexual harassment than a woman with a more masculinized non-prototypical face (M = 3.54, SD = 1.89), $F(1, 541) = 6.32$, $p = .012$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$.

However, the hypothesized interaction was not significant, $F(1, 541) = 0.71$, $p = .399$, η_p^2 = .00, suggesting that the effect of prototypes was not stronger when sexual harassment was present compared to absent.

Study B3 Results

Manipulation check. In a 2 (harassment vs. control) x 2 (prototypical vs. non-prototypical face) factorial ANOVA, there was a main effect of prototypicality such that a woman with more feminized face (M = 5.45, SD = 0.80) was perceived as more prototypical than a woman with more masculinized face (M = 5.17, SD = 0.91), $F(1, 558) = 16.04$, $p < .001$, η_p^2 = .03. Unlike Study B2, there was no main effect of harassment condition on perceptions of prototypicality, $F(1, 558) = 0.59$, $p = .445$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$. The interaction was not significant, $F(1, 558) = 0.07$, $p = .789$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$.

Perceived likelihood of sexual harassment. In a 2 (harassment vs. control) x 2 (prototypical vs. non-prototypical face) factorial ANOVA, there was an expected main effect of work incident such that participants perceived greater harassment when a woman was touched by her supervisor (M = 3.53, SD = 1.56) compared to a supervisor putting his hand in his pocket (M = 2.48, SD = 1.52), $F(1, 558) = 65.12$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$. This manipulation, while still considerably strong herein, was weaker than the manipulation in Study B2 and overall harassment was seen as unlikely to have occurred. Unlike Study B2, there was no main effect of prototypicality, $F(1, 558) = 0.29$, $p = .593$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$. Participants did not perceive differing levels of harassment when Jane was depicted with a prototypical facial photo (M = 3.05, SD = 1.58) as opposed to a non-prototypical face (M = 2.97, SD = 1.67).

The hypothesized interaction was not significant, $F(1, 558) = 0.01$, $p = .917$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$.

Study B4 Results

Manipulation check. In a 2 (harassment vs. control) x 2 (prototypical vs. non-prototypical face) factorial ANOVA, there was a main effect of prototypicality such that a prototypical composite face (M = 4.95, SD = 0.77) was perceived as more prototypical than a non-prototypical composite face (M = 4.52, SD = 0.84), $F(1, 480) = 36.10$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$.

There was a main effect of work context such that the woman in the harassing context (*M* = 4.85, *SD* = 0.81) was perceived as more prototypical than in the non-harassing context (*M* = 4.61, *SD* = 0.84), $F(1, 480) = 11.70$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. This again provides a strong support of our Hypothesis 1 in that the same faces are perceived differently according to their victimization. The exact same faces are perceived as more prototypical when the person is described as experiencing harassment compared to when not being harassed. The interaction was not significant, $F(1, 480) = 0.03$, $p = .869$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$.

Perceived likelihood of sexual harassment. In a 2 (harassment vs. control) x 2 (prototypical vs. non-prototypical face) factorial ANOVA, there was a main effect of work context such that the woman in the harassing context (*M* = 3.84, *SD* = 1.31) was perceived as more likely to have experienced harassment than in the non-harassing context (*M* = 2.27, *SD* = 1.17), $F(1, 480) = 194.00$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .29$. There was a marginal main effect of prototypicality such that a prototypical woman (*M* = 3.15, *SD* = 1.45) was perceived as slightly more likely to have experienced sexual harassment than a non-prototypical woman (*M* = 2.98, *SD* = 1.48), $F(1, 480) = 2.91$, $p = .089$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$.

The hypothesized interaction was not significant, $F(1, 480) = 0.12$, $p = .728$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$.

Series D: Consequences of Non-Prototypicality in Gender Harassment Contexts

The B-Series studies focused exclusively on ambiguous harassing contexts that connote romantic or sexual interests such as inquiring about relationship status or physical touch. Despite the ambiguity of the behaviors within the work contexts of our studies, these behaviors are more readily labelled as sexual harassment compared to gender harassment such as being exposed to crude sexual images or jokes (EEOC, 2017; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; Gelfand et al., 1995). Despite its prevalence, gender harassment is often not labelled as a form of sexual harassment (National

Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018) and people often perceived gender harassment to be less offensive and severe than unwanted sexual harassment or sexual coercion despite its prevalence (Leskinen, Cortina, & Kabat, 2010; Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1991; Loredo, Reid, & Deaux, 1995; Tang, Yik, Cheung, & Choi, 1995).

People may also have greater difficulty cognitively linking gender harassing behaviors specifically to women because these behaviors (e.g., sexual jokes) are not typically recognized as a legitimate form of sex-based discrimination in the workplace compared to sexual advances (Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1991; Loredo et al., 1995; Tang et al., 1995) and may be seen to equally target men and women. As such, the overlap between gender harassing behavior and the prototype of women could be more tenuous than the behaviors tested in Series B. Studies D1-D4 examine the generality of the effects observed in the B-Series studies to gender harassment manifestations of sexual harassment (e.g., hearing sexual jokes, being shown crude images).

In the D-Series studies, prototypicality was manipulated using text descriptions that described a woman as prototypical (feminine career, interests, traits, behaviors) or non-prototypical (masculine career, interests, traits, behaviors). See Appendix B for all manipulations. All studies underwent extensive pilot testing to ensure the successful manipulation of broad prototypic components that encompassed personality, cognitive, and physical traits (Diekman & Eagly, 2000). All targets were described as heterosexual to control for potential variation in assumptions about sexual orientation. We also pilot tested a variety of gender harassing behaviors to identify those perceived as ambiguous in terms of perceived sexual harassment (i.e., rated near the mid-point) as this would allow room for the manipulation to shape perceptions.

Despite concerns that gender harassment may not readily be linked specifically with women, we nonetheless hypothesized that when experiencing gender-based harassment, a prototypical woman would be perceived as more likely to have experienced harassment than a non-prototypical woman (Hypothesis 3), and men and women should similarly show this effect (Hypothesis 4). Participant gender results are described after detailing Hypothesis 3 results.

In D-Series studies, we similarly included measures of secondary impression ratings (warmth, competence, attractiveness, and thinness). We discuss analyses using these ratings as covariates after describing the gender moderation.

The prototypicality manipulation check in Studies D1-D4 was assessed with the same four items as before (αs = .76-.84; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). The meta-analysis of the manipulation check showed a strong effect confirming that the manipulated prototypical descriptions were rated as more prototypical than the non-prototypical manipulation, $g = 0.79$, $Z = 14.92$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.69, 0.90].

Study D1 Method

Procedure. In Study D1, participants ($N = 257$ MTurk workers) read a description of a woman named Julie who either embodied prototypical female attributes (art teacher, cheerleading coach, tender, caring, and fashionable dresser) or non-prototypical attributes (PE teacher, ice hockey coach, determined, tough, and casual dresser). Participants learned that the school principal made an ambiguous sexual joke toward her (i.e., a “that’s what she said” joke). Afterwards, participants rated the likelihood that Julie experienced sexual harassment.

Likelihood of sexual harassment. Participants rated the extent to which the principal sexually harassed Julie with three items (α = .78; 1 = extremely unlikely; 7 = extremely likely): 1. “In your opinion, how likely was it that the principal sexually harassed Julie”; “In your

opinion, how likely was it that the principal showed inappropriate behavior toward Julie"; 3. "In your opinion, how likely was it that the principal was simply making a harmless joke?" (reverse).

Study D1 Results

Contrary to Hypothesis 3 and findings in B-Series studies, participants did not differ in perceiving sexual harassment when it targeted non-prototypical women ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.44$) relative to prototypical women ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.47$), $t(255) = 0.63$, $p = .533$, $d = .08$, 95% CI [-0.17, 0.32].

Study D2 Methods

Study D1 did not replicate Study B1 when using a gender harassment context. One possibility for this null effect is that this particular joke was too ambiguous, and the null finding is due to something idiosyncratic about this joke. This was addressed in Study D2 with a different form of gender harassment.

Procedure. Participants ($N = 270$ MTurk workers) read a description of a Julie as a prototypical woman (art teacher, cheerleading coach, warm, nurturing, intuitive, reads novels and goes to movies with her husband, and wears cute outfits with fun colors) or as a non-prototypical woman (PE teacher, ice hockey coach, competitive, daring, analytical, goes fishing and camping with her husband, and wears rugged outfits in dark colors). We strengthened the prototypicality manipulation in this study to provide a stronger test of the hypothesis. Participants learned that Julie's supervisor showed her a crude sexual drawing as a joke (i.e., a drawing of a tiger mascot with a giant penis) in a crowded teacher's lounge. Afterwards, participants rated the likelihood that Julie experienced harassment.

Likelihood of sexual harassment. Participants rated the extent to which the principal sexually harassed Julie with three items ($\alpha = .88$; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree): 1.

"In my opinion, Julie experienced sexual harassment from the principal"; "In my opinion, the principal engaged in inappropriate sexual-related behavior toward Julie"; 3. "In my opinion, the principal was simply making a harmless joke" (reverse).

Study D2 Results

As in Study D1, participants did not differ in perceiving the likelihood of sexual harassment when it targeted a non-prototypical woman (M = 5.03, SD = 1.60) relative to a prototypical woman (M = 5.17, SD = 1.52), $t(268) = 0.73$, $p = .466$, $d = .09$, 95% CI [-0.15, 0.33].

Study D3 Methods

In spite of strengthening the prototypicality manipulation and using a different form of gender harassment, Study D2 again did not find the effect of prototypicality on perceived harassment in the form of crude jokes. In Study D3, we adjusted the manipulation so that it was clearer that the sexual harassment was targeted specifically at Julie as it was possible that participants perceived the principals' behavior as targeting anybody in the teacher's lounge, making it difficult to connect the sexually harassing behavior to Julie in particular.

Procedure. Participants were 403 MTurk workers. The procedures were similar to Study D2 and manipulated prototypicality in the same way, with the exception that Julie's supervisor drew a crude image on Julie's performance review, an individualized context that would be viewed as targeting her specifically.

Likelihood of sexual harassment. Participants rated the extent to which the principal sexually harassed Julie with the same three items from Study D2 ($\alpha = .86$; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

Study D3 Results

Participants did not differ in perceiving the likelihood of sexual harassment when it targeted a non-prototypical woman (M = 5.69, SD = 1.34) relative to a prototypical woman (M = 5.88, SD = 1.19), $t(401) = 1.45$, $p = .147$, $d = .15$, 95% CI [-0.05, 0.34].

Study D4 Methods

Three studies did not find the effect of prototypicality on perceived harassment in the form of crude jokes. In spite of varying gender harassing behaviors (from subtle “that’s what she said” jokes to cruder and more overt sexual drawings), we were unable to establish a linkage between prototypicality and gender harassment. Although it is possible that the prototypicality effect simply does not extend to gender harassment, we wanted to be cautious about this inference and explore one more possibility for the null effect. It is possible that participants view gender harassment as not specifically tied to women, as men share disparaging jokes about women with other men, and men share pornographic content with each other, too. Thus, in Study D4, we highlighted that crude gender harassing behavior was specifically targeting women, and not men.

We increased the salience that gender harassment targeted women but not men by placing the target of harassment within a solo status context or an all-female context (Sekaquaptewa & Thompson, 2003). That is, seeing a woman harassed in a room full of men (vs. an all-female room) should strengthen the behavior’s link to her gender. In an all-female room, the harassment should be likely to stem from something unique to that particular women as several women in the same space were not targeted. Therefore, we predicted that harassment would be more readily perceived in a solo-context relative to an all-female context, and that this would be qualified by the prototypicality manipulation such that in the solo context, prototypicality should have a stronger effect on perceptions of sexual harassment relative to the all-female context.

Study D4 used a 2 (prototypicality vs non-prototypicality) x 2 (room context: all women vs solo woman) factorial design.

Procedure. The prototypicality manipulation was the same as Studies D2 and D3. Participants (*N* = 612 MTurk workers) read that Julie was in a room full of women or she was the only woman in a room full of men. The principal then approached only Julie and showed her a crude drawing of a tiger mascot holding its penis.

Likelihood of sexual harassment. We used the same three items as Studies D2 and D3 ($\alpha = .88$; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

Manipulation check. In addition to the manipulation check on prototypicality that we reported in the meta-analysis above, one item was used to check if participants noticed the number of women in the room (1 = all women; 7 = all men).

Study D4 Results

Manipulation check. In a 2 (prototypical vs. non-prototypical) x 2 (all women vs. only woman) factorial ANOVA, we examined participants' estimate of number of women and men in the room (higher number = more men in the room). There was a main effect of room context manipulation, $F(1, 608) = 1170.26$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .658$. A context depicting all female teachers ($M = 1.88$, $SD = 1.41$) was rated as having more women/ less men than a context in which Julie was the only woman in the room ($M = 5.84$, $SD = 1.47$). The main effect of prototypicality was not significant on the gender composition measures, $F(1, 608) = 0.01$, $p = .919$, $\eta_p^2 < .001$.

There was an unexpected significant interaction on the gender composition measure, $F(1, 608) = 6.46$, $p = .011$, $\eta_p^2 = .011$. Simple effect tests showed that in the prototypical condition, participants estimated more men/ less women in the solo status context ($M = 5.99$, $SE = .12$) compared to the context with all women teachers in the room ($M = 1.73$, $SE = .12$), $F(1, 608) =$

658.40, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .520$. In the non-prototypical condition, solo status also showed this same large effect ($M = 5.70$, $SE = .12$ in the solo status condition and $M = 2.03$, $SE = .12$ in the all-woman condition), $F(1, 608) = 514.65$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .458$. Thus, the manipulation produced a strong effect in both conditions, but it was stronger in the prototypical condition relative to the non-prototypical condition.

Primary analysis. We conducted a 2 (prototypical vs non-prototypical) x 2 (all women vs solo woman) factorial ANOVA, with perceived harassment likelihood as the dependent variable. The main effect of prototypicality was not significant, $F(1, 608) = 0.723$, $p = .396$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$, as non-prototypical Julie ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.43$) was not perceived to experienced harassment differently from prototypical Julie ($M = 5.56$, $SD = 1.39$). The main effect of room context was not significant, $F(1, 608) = 0.024$, $p = .877$, $\eta_p^2 < .001$. Experiencing harassment as the only women in the room ($M = 5.52$, $SD = 1.40$) was not perceived as more harassing than being in a room full of women ($M = 5.50$, $SD = 1.42$). And there was no significant interaction, $F(1, 608) = 0.358$, $p = .550$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$.

Meta-analysis of Studies D1-D4

In all four Series D studies, we did not find the influence of prototypicality on perceived harassment when women were targeted by gender-based harassment, which stands contradictory to our Series B findings and Hypothesis 3. To further explore this null effect, we meta-analyzed the four studies comparing prototypical descriptions to non-prototypical descriptions of Julie with perceived harassment likelihood as dependent variable. Contrary to Hypothesis 3, the meta-analytic effect size showed negligible, non-significant differences between the prototypical and non-prototypical conditions, $g = .07$, $Z = 1.33$, $p = .184$, 95% CI [-0.03, 0.17]. This suggests that

when women are victimized by gender harassment that is not on the surface sexually or romantically driven, their prototypicality does not influence perceived harassment.

Given that the main effect of prototypicality on perceived harassment was not significant, we did not conduct additional meta-analyses that controlled for secondary impressions as we did in B-Series studies.

Studies D: Gender as Moderator

In all four studies and consistent with Hypothesis 4, participant gender did not moderate the effect of prototypicality on perceived harassment, Fs < 2.54, ps > .112, η_p^2s < .006. Thus, neither men nor women perceived prototypical women as more likely than non-prototypical women to be the targets of sexual harassment when they are exposed to gender harassment.

Series D Discussion

D-Series studies sought to replicate our previous findings from B-Series studies and generalize our theory to gender harassment contexts. In contrast to the findings in the B-Series which involved unwanted sexual attention forms of harassment, in all four D-Series studies and its meta-analysis, participants did not perceive prototypical women as more likely to have experienced gender harassment than non-prototypical women. We considered several possibilities for this lack of an effect, including subtly of the joke (Study D2), as a disconnect between the harassment and the specific target (Study D3), and a disconnect between the harassment and target's gender group (Study D4). None of these considerations produce the hypothesized effect as people still did not perceive prototypical woman to experience more harassment than the non-prototypical woman.

The lack of the significant prototypicality effect in the D-Series studies raises questions about the finding in Study A4 which found that participants mentally represent victims of gender

harassment behaviors as more prototypical than those who do not experience gender harassment. How can these seemingly contradictory findings be reconciled? These divergent findings could be due to the fact that in the A-Series studies, participants imagined that the target who experienced gender harassment might also have been targeted by more sexual intent related forms of harassment (as gender harassment may be, on the surface, perceived as sexual), and when compared to a non-victim, the former may have been perceived as more prototypical. In the D-Series studies, this generalization from gender harassment to sexual intent may have been blocked because participants were more narrowly focused on interpreting the same gender harassment behavior in both conditions. Irrespective of the reason for the divergence, we see the results of the D-Series studies as providing relatively strong evidence that prototypicality does not affect perceptions of gender harassment forms of sexual harassment. Therefore, it is likely that the link between gender and gender harassment is much more tenuous than the link between gender and sexual advances/ romantic interest, which could be why participants did not perceive prototypical women as more likely to have experienced gender harassment than non-prototypical women.

Series D

Power Analysis and Sample Size Justification

Study D1

Power analysis based on effect size from a similar study design (Study B1: d = .50) showed that we would need at least 64 participants per condition to achieve 80% power (α = .05, two-sided independent t-test). We set a goal to recruit 300 participants, anticipating exclusion of those who failed attention check and given the different harassment context. Originally, 298 MTurk workers participated but 41 failed the attention check, leaving 257 participants.

Study D2

We again set a goal to recruit 300 MTurk participants in. Originally, 302 MTurk workers participated but 32 failed the attention check, leaving 270 participants.

Study D3

We set a goal to recruit 400 MTurk participants, allowing us to detect a minimum effect of d = .28 with 80% power. Originally, 451 MTurk workers participated but 48 failed the attention check, leaving 403 participants.

Study D4

We set a goal to recruit 600 MTurk participants, allowing us to detect a medium effect size with 80% power. Originally, 676 MTurk workers participated but 64 failed the attention check, leaving 612 participants.

Part 2:

Studies 1-3

For robustness checks, we also examined whether Black women are underrepresented and white women are overrepresented in commercial search engines, stock photography databases, and news media portrayals of harassment victims relative to (a) victim base rates of all sexual harassment charges filed by women in the U.S. and (b) population base rates of all women in the U.S. The victim base rate of all sexual harassment charges filed by women between 2012 and 2016 with the U.S EEOC and FEPAs is 33.33% for Black women and 59.2% for white women. The estimated population base rates among women in U.S. is 12.9% for Black women and is 60% for white women.

Study 1: Image Search Results

Victim Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) in a Google Image searches of "sexual harassment" (5.8%, χ^2 (1,242) =81.54, $p < .001$, $d = 1.12$ 95% CI [.83, 1.41] and "sexual harassment victim" (10%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 57.27, $p < .001$, $d = 1.13$ 95% CI [.84, 1.43]) as well as for the Bing Images search of "sexual harassment" (2%, χ^2 = (1,219) =93.35, $p < .001$, $d = 1.72$ 95% CI [1.37, 2.07]). The percentage of women victims who are white is more than the 59.25% victim base rate among a Google Images search of "sexual harassment" (78.19%, χ^2 (1,242) =36.28, $p < .001$, $d = .84$ 95% CI [.56, 1.11]) and "sexual harassment victim" (69%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 9.22, $p = .002$, $d = .34$ 95% CI [.12, .56]), as well the Bing Images search of "sexual harassment" (79%, χ^2 = (1,219) = 36.04, $p < .001$, $d = .88$ 95% CI [.59, 1.17]).

Population Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) in Google Images searches of "sexual harassment" "sexual harassment" (5.8%, χ^2 (1,242) =11.02, $p < .001$, $d = .44$ 95% CI [.18, .69] and Bing Images search of "sexual harassment" (2%, χ^2 = (1,219) =22.11, $p < .001$, $d = .67$ 95% CI [.39, .95]). For Google Image searches of "sexual harassment victim", the percentage of women victims who are Black is less than the victim base rate, but did not reach statistical significance (10%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 2.03, $p = .154$). white women were overrepresented relative to the victim base rate (59.25%) in Google Images searches of "sexual harassment" (78.19%, χ^2 (1,242) =33.50, $p < .001$, $d = .80$ 95% CI [.53, 1.07]) and "sexual harassment victim" (69%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 7.82, $p = .005$, $d = .37$ 95% CI [.11, .63])), as well as the Bing Images search of "sexual harassment" (79%, χ^2 = (1,219) = 33.41, $p < .001$, $d = .84$ 95% CI [.56, 1.13]).

Study 2: Stock Photography Databases

Victim Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) in "sexual harassment" search results returned by Getty Images (4%, χ^2 = (1,207) = 77.34, $p < .001$, $d = 1.54$ 95% CI [1.20, 1.89]) and Shutterstock (7%, χ^2 = (1,229) = 70.56, $p < .001$, $d = 1.33$ 95% CI [1.02, 1.64]), as well as the 'sexual harassment victim' results returned by Adobestock (3%, χ^2 = (1,234) = 81.64, $p < .001$, $d = 1.46$ 95% CI [1.14, 1.78]). white women were overrepresented relative to the victim base rate (59.25%) in "sexual harassment" search results returned by Getty

Images (91%, χ^2 = (1,207) = 88.99, p < .001, d = 1.73 95% CI [1.37, 2.09]) and Shutterstock (75%, χ^2 = (1,229) = 24.43, p < .001, d = .69 95% CI [.41, .96]), as well as "sexual harassment victim" results returned by Adobestock (65%, χ^2 = (1,234) = 64.89, p < .001, d = 1.23 95% CI [.93, 1.53]).

Population Base Rate

Compared to the population base rate of Black women (12.9%), Black women were underrepresented in "sexual harassment' search results returned by Getty Images (4%, χ^2 = (1,207) = 13.61, p < .001, d = .53 95% CI [.25, .81]) and Shutterstock (7%, χ^2 = (1,229) = 7.23, p < .001, d = .36 95% CI [.1, .62]), as well as "sexual harassment victim" results returned by Adobestock (3%, χ^2 = (1,234) = 16.56, p < .001, d = .55 95% CI [.28, .82]). white women were overrepresented relative to the population base rate of white women (60%) in "sexual harassment search results returned by Getty Images (91%, χ^2 = (1,207) = 85.16, p < .001, d = 1.67 95% CI [1.31, 2.02]) and Shutterstock (75%, χ^2 = (1,229) = 22.19, p < .001, d = .65 95% CI [.38, .92]), as "sexual harassment victim" results returned by Adobestock (65%, χ^2 = (1,234) = 61.90, p < .001, d = 1.19 95% CI [.89, 1.49]).

Study 3: New York Times Me Too Coverage

Victim Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) among victims in the *New York Times* news coverage of the #Metoo movement (11.45%, χ^2 = (1,727) = 108.64 p <

.001, d = .84 95% CI [.68, .99] and white women overrepresented relative to the victim base rate (59.25%) (73.6%, χ^2 = (1,727) = 62.73, p < .001, d = .61 95% CI [.46, .77]).

Population Base Rate

Black women were directionally underrepresented among victims in the *New York Times* news coverage of the #MeToo movement, but this pattern was not significantly different from the 12.9% population base rate (11.45%, χ^2 = (1,727) = 2.43 p = .119). white women were significantly overrepresented relative to the 60% population base rate (73.63, χ^2 = (1,727) = 56.32, p < .001, d = .58 95% CI [.43, .73].

Study 6

Additional Models

Because tweets can be engaged with over time as users accumulate or lose followers, we ran additional negative binomial models using an alternative metric of followers that reflects the number of followers a user had at the time the tweets were retrieved as a covariate (February, 2021). In each model, tweets were nested within users, number of followers at the time of retrieval was entered as a covariate, and race of user was entered as a predictor. The number of followers was transformed to have a mean of zero, variance of one, and a normal distribution by calculating the percentile rank and applying the inverse normal function to the percentile rank (Benjamin et al., 2020). Model 1 examined the effect of race on retweets. There was a main effect of followers, b =1.31, se = .18 p <.001, d = .43 95%CI [0.25 , 0.71], such that as number of followers users have increase number of retweets received for a tweet also increases. There

was a main effect of user race, *b* =0.94, *se* = .17 *p* < .001, *d* = .25 95%CI [0.14 , 0.42], such that white women users received more likes (*M* = 0.82, *SD* = 8.60) than Black women (*M* = 0.48, *SD* = 1.47). The exponential effect size is 2.58 95%CI [1.84 , 3.59], which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is white is 2.58X the predicted number of likes when the user is Black. There was no race*followers interaction on likes, *b* =-0.19, *se* = 0.18, *p* =.32. Model 2 examined the effect of race on the number of likes tweets received. There was a main effect of followers, *b* =0.55, *se* = .12 p<.001, *d* = .32 95%CI [.17,0.52], such that as number of followers users have increase number of likes for a tweet also increases. There was a main effect of user race, *b* =0.54, *se* = .11 p < .001, *d* = .31 95%CI [.17,.48], such that white women users received more likes (*M* = 2.01, *SD* = 15.18) than Black women (*M* = 1.31, *SD* = 3.41). The exponential effect size is 1.71 95%CI [1.38, 2.09], which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is white is 1.71X the predicted number of likes when the user is Black. Contrary to model 2 in the main text, there was no significant race*followers interaction on likes, *b* =0.18, *se* = .12, *p* =.141.

#SayHerName Twitter Data

Methods

We retrieved a random subset of one year of archival public tweets in English in the U.S that contained the hashtag. '#sayhername' in the text of the original tweet. We retrieved 23,778 tweets from 12,374 users that were posted between October 15, 2017 to October 15th, 2018. We employed the same neural models as in Study 6 in the main text to create demographic estimates for users. The data was then filtered to only include users who were estimated to be Black women and white women individual users, leaving 8,194 tweets from 4,997 unique users.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

To account for any potential race effects on engagement being driven by Black and white women tweeting differently about #SayHerName, we ran the text of the tweets through the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program (Pennebaker, Booth, Boyd, & Francis, 2015) to estimate word count and the frequency of self-referencing language (I and we), negative emotions, and positive emotions in the text of each tweet. We then ran a series of independent samples t-tests to examine if race of the user predicts these outcomes. Race of user predicted word count, $t(1, 8192) = 6.98$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.15$ 95%CI [0.11, 1.20], the expression of positive emotions, $t(1, 8192) = 2.01$, $p = .044$, $d = 0.04$ 95%CI [0.00, 1.09], negative affect, and the use of self-referencing language $t(1, 8192) = -3.02$, $p = .003$, $d = -0.07$ 95%CI [-0.11, -0.02], but neither of these variables were associated with our engagement outcomes (likes ($r = 0.13$, $p = .21$; $r = -0.01$, $p = .63$; $r = -0.00$, $p = .75$) or retweets ($r = 0.12$, $p = .21$; $r = -0.01$, $p = .60$; $r = 0.00$, $p = .66$;)). Therefore, they were not entered as covariates in any subsequent analyses.

Primary Analyses

To examine the effect of estimated race on level of tweet engagement (retweets and likes), we conducted multi-level binomial regression models where tweets were nested within users, number of followers was entered as a covariate, and race of user was entered as a predictor. The number of followers, which reflects the number of followers the user had at the time of the tweet, was transformed to have a mean of zero, variance of one, and a normal distribution by calculating the percentile rank and applying the inverse normal function to the percentile rank

(Benjamin et al., 2020). In model 1, we examined the effect of estimated race on retweets and number of followers at the time of the tweet was included as a covariate. There was a main effect of followers, b =1.09, se = .05 p <.001, d = .96 95%CI [0.82,1.11], such that as number of followers users have increases the number of retweets received also increases. Contrary to the '#MeToo' twitter data, there was *not* a significant main effect of race, b =0.12, se = .09 p =.212, d = .06 95%CI [-0.02,0.16]. There was, however, a significant followers*race interaction, b =-0.31, se = .09 p =.001, d =- .13 95%CI [-0.18,-0.05]. The effect of followers on retweets was larger for Black, b = 1.10, se = .05 p <.001, d = .97 95% CI [.83,1.13], vs. white users, b = 0.79, se = .16 p <.001, d = .44 95% CI [0.31,0.61]. For every one unit increase in number of followers, Black women users receive an additional 3.03 retweets, whereas white users only received an additional 2.20 retweets.

In model 2, we examined the effect of estimated race on likes and number of followers at the time of the tweet was included as a covariate. There was a main effect of followers, b =0.88, se = .04 p <.001, d = 1.02 95%CI [0.90,1.15], such that as number of followers users have increases the number of retweets received also increases. There was a significant main effect of race, b =0.28, se = .07 p <.001, d = .24 95%CI [0.12,0.38], such that white women users received more likes (M = 1.15 , SD = 10.23) than Black women users (M = 0.86 , SD = 8.64). The exponential effect size is 1.33 95%CI [1.16,1.52], which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is estimated to be white is 1.33X the predicted number of likes when the user is estimated to be Black. There was a followers*race interaction, b =-0.31, se = .07 p <.001, d =- .19 95%CI [-0.26,-0.11]. As in model 1, the effect of followers on likes was larger for Black, b = 0.88, se = .05 p <.001, d = 1.02 95% CI [.90,1.16], vs. white women users, b = 0.56, se = .06 p <.001, d = .59 95% CI [0.45,0.75]. For every one unit increase in number of followers,

Black women users receive an additional 2.41 retweets, whereas white users only received an additional 1.75 retweets. Additionally, there was an effect of race among users with high follower counts, such that Black women users with higher follower counts received more retweets than white women users with high follower counts. This is a reversal of the pattern observed with the '#MeToo' tweets, where white women with higher follower counts received more likes compared to Black women with higher follower counts.

Manipulations of Independent Variables in Studies D

[Manipulations shown in bold]

Study D1: prototypical description shown before non-prototypical manipulation

Julie is a **[high school art teacher and coach of the girls' cheerleading team/ high school physical education (P.E.) teacher and coach of the girls' ice hockey team]**. She carpools to work with her husband. Julie likes her job, and other teachers and students often describe her as **[tender and caring, and a fashionable dresser/ determined and tough, and a casual dresser]**. She feels less sure around the principal. He enjoys using humor when interacting with teachers and staff, and sometimes his jokes are dirty and sexual. In a recent interaction with the principal, Julie described an assignment as long and hard, and he joked, "that's what she said." Julie felt unsure whether the principal's joke was a harmless attempt at humor or might be considered sexual harassment.

Study D2: prototypical description shown before non-prototypical manipulation

Julie is a **[high school art teacher and coach of the girls' cheerleading team/ high school physical education (P.E.) teacher and coach of the girls' ice hockey team]**. Other teachers and students often describe her as **[warm, nurturing, and intuitive/ competitive, daring, and analytical]**. She always wears **[cute outfits with fun colors/ rugged outfits in dark colors]**. Outside of work, Julie likes to **[read novels or go to movies with her husband/ go fishing or camping with her husband]**. Although Julie really likes her job, she feels less sure about the

principal at her school. He enjoys using humor when interacting with teachers and staff. In a recent interaction in the crowded teacher's lounge, the principal asked Julie to check out a drawing of a new mascot he was designing for the school. Julie looked at his drawing, and it was a tiger that was holding its giant penis in both hands. Julie felt unsure whether the principal's joke was a harmless attempt at humor or might be considered sexual harassment.

Study D3: prototypical description shown before non-prototypical manipulation

Julie is a **[high school art teacher and coach of the girls' cheerleading team/ high school physical education (P.E.) teacher and coach of the girls' ice hockey team]**. Other teachers and students often describe her as **[warm, nurturing, and intuitive/ competitive, daring, and analytical]**. She always wears **[cute outfits with fun colors/ rugged outfits in dark colors]**. Outside of work, Julie likes to **[read novels or go to movies with her husband/ go fishing or camping with her husband]**. Although Julie really likes her job, she feels less sure about the principal at her school who tends to be a joker. Recently, Julie received her performance review, and on it, the principal had drawn a picture of a tiger that was holding his giant penis in both hands. Julie felt unsure whether he was trying to be funny or if this might be considered sexual harassment.

Study D4: prototypical description shown before non-prototypical manipulation; room context with all women shown before solo status as the only woman

Julie is a **[high school art teacher and coach of the girls' cheerleading team/ high school physical education (P.E.) teacher and coach of the girls' ice hockey team]**. Other teachers and students often describe her as **[warm, nurturing, and intuitive/ competitive, daring, and**

analytical]. She always wears **[cute outfits with fun colors/ rugged outfits in dark colors]**. Outside of work, Julie likes to **[read novels or go to movies with her husband/ go fishing or camping with her husband]**. Although Julie really likes her job, she feels less sure about the principal at her school who tends to be a joker.

Most recently, Julie was eating lunch at the teacher's lounge. Four other teachers, **[Michelle, Sarah, Megan, and Libby/ Michael, Stan, Matthew, and Leon]**, were also taking a lunch break in the room. At one point during lunch, the principal walked over only to Julie, and asked her to check out a drawing of a new mascot he was designing for the school. The drawing was a tiger that was holding its giant penis in both hands. Julie felt unsure whether the principal's joke was a harmless attempt at humor or might be considered sexual harassment.

Part 2: The invisibility and neglect of Black women survivors during the mainstream Me Too movement

Studies 1-3

For robustness checks, we also examined whether Black women are underrepresented and white women are overrepresented in commercial search engines, stock photography databases, and news media portrayals of harassment victims relative to (a) victim base rates of all sexual harassment charges filed by women in the U.S. and (b) population base rates of all women in the U.S. The victim base rate of all sexual harassment charges filed by women between 2012 and 2016 with the U.S EEOC and FEPAs is 33.33% for Black women and 59.2% for white women. The estimated population base rates among women in U.S. is 12.9% for Black women and is 60% for white women.

Study 1: Image Search Results

Victim Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) in a Google Image searches of “sexual harassment” (5.8%, χ^2 (1,242) =81.54, $p < .001$, $d = 1.12$ 95% CI [.83, 1.41] and “sexual harassment victim” (10%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 57.27, $p < .001$, $d = 1.13$ 95% CI [.84, 1.43]) as well as for the Bing Images search of “sexual harassment” (2%, χ^2 = (1,219) =93.35, $p < .001$, $d = 1.72$ 95% CI [1.37, 2.07]). The percentage of women victims who are white is more than the 59.25% victim base rate among a Google Images search of “sexual harassment” (78.19%, χ^2 (1,242) =36.28, $p < .001$, $d = .84$ 95% CI [.56, 1.11]) and “sexual harassment victim” (69%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 9.22, $p = .002$, $d = .34$ 95% CI [.12, .56]), as well the Bing Images search of “sexual harassment” (79%, χ^2 = (1,219) = 36.04, $p < .001$, $d = .88$ 95% CI [.59, 1.17]).

Population Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) in Google Images searches of “sexual harassment” “sexual harassment” (5.8%, χ^2 (1,242) =11.02, $p < .001$, $d = .44$ 95% CI [.18, .69] and Bing Images search of “sexual harassment” (2%, χ^2 = (1,219) =22.11, $p < .001$, $d = .67$ 95% CI [.39, .95]). For Google Image searches of “sexual harassment victim”, the percentage of women victims who are Black is less than the victim base rate, but did not reach statistical significance (10%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 2.03, $p = .154$). white women were overrepresented relative to the victim base rate (59.25%) in Google Images searches of “sexual harassment” (78.19%, χ^2 (1,242) =33.50, $p < .001$, $d = .80$ 95% CI [.53, 1.07]) and “sexual harassment victim” (69%, χ^2 (1, 234) = 7.82, $p = .005$, $d = .37$ 95% CI [.11, .63])), as well as the Bing

Images search of “sexual harassment” (79%, $\chi^2 = (1,219) = 33.41$, $p < .001$, $d = .84$ 95% CI [.56, 1.13]).

Study 2: Stock Photography Databases

Victim Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) in “sexual harassment” search results returned by Getty Images (4%, $\chi^2 = (1,207) = 77.34$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.54$ 95% CI [1.20, 1.89]) and Shutterstock (7%, $\chi^2 = (1,229) = 70.56$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.33$ 95% CI [1.02, 1.64]), as well as the ‘sexual harassment victim’ results returned by Adobestock (3%, $\chi^2 = (1,234) = 81.64$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.46$ 95% CI [1.14, 1.78]). white women were overrepresented relative to the victim base rate (59.25%) in “sexual harassment” search results returned by Getty Images (91%, $\chi^2 = (1,207) = 88.99$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.73$ 95% CI [1.37, 2.09]) and Shutterstock (75%, $\chi^2 = (1,229) = 24.43$, $p < .001$, $d = .69$ 95% CI [.41, .96]), as well as “sexual harassment victim” results returned by Adobestock (65%, $\chi^2 = (1,234) = 64.89$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.23$ 95% CI [.93, 1.53]).

Population Base Rate

Compared to the population base rate of Black women (12.9%), Black women were underrepresented in “sexual harassment’ search results returned by Getty Images (4%, $\chi^2 = (1,207) = 13.61$, $p < .001$, $d = .53$ 95% CI [.25, .81]) and Shutterstock (7%, $\chi^2 = (1,229) = 7.23$, $p < .001$, $d = .36$ 95% CI [.1, .62]), as well as “sexual harassment victim” results returned by Adobestock (3%, $\chi^2 = (1,234) = 16.56$, $p < .001$, $d = .55$ 95% CI [.28, .82]). white women were overrepresented relative to the population base rate of white women (60%) in “sexual harassment

search results returned by Getty Images (91%, $\chi^2 = (1,207) = 85.16$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.67$ 95% CI [1.31, 2.02]) and Shutterstock (75%, $\chi^2 = (1,229) = 22.19$, $p < .001$, $d = .65$ 95% CI [.38, .92]), as "sexual harassment victim" results returned by Adobestock (65%, $\chi^2 = (1,234) = 61.90$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.19$ 95% CI [.89, 1.49]).

Study 3: New York Times Me Too Coverage

Victim Base Rate

Black women were underrepresented relative to the victim base rate (33.33%) among victims in the *New York Times* news coverage of the #Metoo movement (11.45%, $\chi^2 = (1,727) = 108.64$ $p < .001$, $d = .84$ 95% CI [.68, .99] and white women overrepresented relative to the victim base rate (59.25%) (73.6%, $\chi^2 = (1,727) = 62.73$, $p < .001$, $d = .61$ 95% CI [.46, .77]).

Population Base Rate

Black women were directionally underrepresented among victims in the *New York Times* news coverage of the #MeToo movement, but this pattern was not significantly different from the 12.9% population base rate (11.45%, $\chi^2 = (1,727) = 2.43$ $p = .119$). white women were significantly overrepresented relative to the 60% population base rate (73.63, $\chi^2 = (1,727) = 56.32$, $p < .001$, $d = .58$ 95% CI [.43, .73].

Study 6

Additional Models

Because tweets can be engaged with over time as users accumulate or lose followers, we ran additional negative binomial models using an alternative metric of followers that reflects the number of followers a user had at the time the tweets were retrieved as a covariate (February, 2021). In each model, tweets were nested within users, number of followers at the time of retrieval was entered as a covariate, and race of user was entered as a predictor. The number of followers was transformed to have a mean of zero, variance of one, and a normal distribution by calculating the percentile rank and applying the inverse normal function to the percentile rank (Benjamin et al., 2020). Model 1 examined the effect of race on retweets. There was a main effect of followers, b =1.31, se = .18 p <.001, d = .43 95%CI [0.25 , 0.71], such that as number of followers users have increase number of retweets received for a tweet also increases. There was a main effect of user race, b =0.94, se = .17 p < .001, d = .25 95%CI [0.14 , 0.42], such that white women users received more likes (M = 0.82, SD = 8.60) than Black women (M = 0.48, SD = 1.47). The exponential effect size is 2.58 95%CI [1.84 , 3.59], which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is white is 2.58X the predicted number of likes when the user is Black. There was no race*followers interaction on likes, b =-0.19, se = 0.18, p =.32. Model 2 examined the effect of race on the number of likes tweets received. There was a main effect of followers, b =0.55, se = .12 p<.001, d = .32 95%CI [.17,0.52], such that as number of followers users have increase number of likes for a tweet also increases. There was a main effect of user race, b =0.54, se = .11 p < .001, d = .31 95%CI [.17,.48], such that white women users received more likes (M = 2.01, SD = 15.18) than Black women (M = 1.31, SD = 3.41). The exponential effect size is 1.71 95%CI [1.38, 2.09], which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is white is 1.71X the predicted number of likes when the user is

Black. Contrary to model 2 in the main text, there was no significant race*followers interaction on likes, *b* =0.18, *se* = .12, *p* =.141.

#SayHerName Twitter Data

Methods

We retrieved a random subset of one year of archival public tweets in English in the U.S that contained the hashtag. '#sayhername' in the text of the original tweet. We retrieved 23,778 tweets from 12,374 users that were posted between October 15, 2017 to October 15th, 2018. We employed the same neural models as in Study 6 in the main text to create demographic estimates for users. The data was then filtered to only include users who were estimated to be Black women and white women individual users, leaving 8,194 tweets from 4,997 unique users.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

To account for any potential race effects on engagement being driven by Black and white women tweeting differently about #SayHerName, we ran the text of the tweets through the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program (Pennebaker, Booth, Boyd, & Francis, 2015) to estimate word count and the frequency of self-referencing language (I and we), negative emotions, and positive emotions in the text of each tweet. We then ran a series of independent samples t-tests to examine if race of the user predicts these outcomes. Race of user predicted word count, $t(1, 8192) = 6.98$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.15$ 95%CI [0.11, 1.20], the expression of positive emotions, $t(1, 8192) = 2.01$, $p = .044$, $d = 0.04$ 95%CI [0.00, 1.09], negative affect, and the use of self-referencing language $t(1, 8192) = -3.02$, $p = .003$, $d = -0.07$ 95%CI [-0.11, -0.02], but

neither of these variables were associated with our engagement outcomes (likes (r = 0.13, p = .21; r = -0.01, p = .63; r = -0.00, p = .75) or retweets (r = 0.12, p = .21; r = -0.01, p = .60; r = 0.00, p = .66;)). Therefore, they were not entered as covariates in any subsequent analyses.

Primary Analyses

To examine the effect of estimated race on level of tweet engagement (retweets and likes), we conducted multi-level binomial regression models where tweets were nested within users, number of followers was entered as a covariate, and race of user was entered as a predictor. The number of followers, which reflects the number of followers the user had at the time of the tweet, was transformed to have a mean of zero, variance of one, and a normal distribution by calculating the percentile rank and applying the inverse normal function to the percentile rank (Benjamin et al., 2020). In model 1, we examined the effect of estimated race on retweets and number of followers at the time of the tweet was included as a covariate. There was a main effect of followers, b =1.09, se = .05 p <.001, d = .96 95%CI [0.82,1.11], such that as number of followers users have increases the number of retweets received also increases. Contrary to the '#MeToo' twitter data, there was *not* a significant main effect of race, b =0.12, se = .09 p =.212, d = .06 95%CI [-0.02,0.16]. There was, however, a significant followers*race interaction, b =-0.31, se = .09 p =.001, d =- .13 95%CI [-0.18,-0.05]. The effect of followers on retweets was larger for Black, b = 1.10, se = .05 p <.001, d = .97 95% CI [.83,1.13], vs. white users, b = 0.79, se = .16 p <.001, d = .44 95% CI [0.31,0.61]. For every one unit increase in number of followers, Black women users receive an additional 3.03 retweets, whereas white users only received an additional 2.20 retweets.

In model 2, we examined the effect of estimated race on likes and number of followers at the time of the tweet was included as a covariate. There was a main effect of followers, $b = 0.88$, $se = .04$ $p < .001$, $d = 1.02$ 95%CI [0.90,1.15], such that as number of followers users have increases the number of retweets received also increases. There was a significant main effect of race, b =0.28, se = .07 p $< .001$, d = .24 95%CI [0.12,0.38], such that white women users received more likes (M = 1.15 , SD = 10.23) than Black women users (M = 0.86 , SD = 8.64). The exponential effect size is 1.33 95%CI [1.16,1.52], which indicates that the predicted number of likes when the race of users is estimated to be white is 1.33X the predicted number of likes when the user is estimated to be Black. There was a followers*race interaction, $b = -0.31$, $se = .07$ $p < .001$, $d = -.19$ 95%CI [-0.26,-0.11]. As in model 1, the effect of followers on likes was larger for Black, $b = 0.88$, $se = .05$ $p < .001$, $d = 1.02$ 95% CI [.90,1.16], vs. white women users, $b = 0.56$, $se = .06$ $p < .001$, $d = .59$ 95% CI [0.45,0.75]. For every one unit increase in number of followers, Black women users receive an additional 2.41 retweets, whereas white users only received an additional 1.75 retweets. Additionally, there was an effect of race among users with high follower counts, such that Black women users with higher follower counts received more retweets than white women users with high follower counts. This is a reversal of the pattern observed with the '#MeToo' tweets, where white women with higher follower counts received more likes compared to Black women with higher follower counts.

Part 3: People underestimate transgender women's vulnerability to workplace sexual harassment

Study 3: Evaluations of negative and neutral events

As expected, participants did *not* think it was more likely that a cisgender woman (M = 4.63, SE =.10) would experience *negative workplace interactions* compared to a transgender woman, (M = 4.83, SE = .10), t(276) = -1.50, p = .134. However, participants thought it was significantly more likely that a cisgender woman (M = 5.74, SE =.09) would experience *neutral workplace interactions.* compared to a transgender woman, (M = 5.31, SE = .10), t(276) = 3.21, p = .001, d = 0.39 95%CI[0.15, 0.62].

Exploratory participant gender (man, woman) and political orientation moderation

Study 1

Participant gender does not moderate the effect of gender identity condition on unwanted advances, F(1, 380) = 0.51, p = .476, or sexual coercion (F(1, 380) = .268, p = .709. Political orientation does not moderate the effect of gender identity on perceived likelihood of experiencing unwanted sexual advances, F(1, 384) = 1.063, p = .303, or sexual coercion, F(1, 384) = 0.114, p = .736.

Study 2

Participant gender does not moderate the effect of gender identity condition on unwanted advances, F(1, 269) = 0.478, p = .490, or sexual coercion F(1, 269) = 0.69, p =.405. Political orientation does not moderate the effect of gender identity on perceived likelihood of experiencing unwanted sexual advances, F(1, 273) = 0.379, p = .538 or sexual coercion, F(1, 273) = 0.269, p = .604.

Study 3

No gender moderation on unwanted advances $\chi^2(1, 202) = 0.35$, p = .551 or sexual coercion $\chi^2(1, 202) = 0.00$, p > .999. Political orientation and target selection are independent for unwanted sexual advances, $\chi^2(1, 202) = 0.00$, p = .999, and sexual coercion, $\chi^2(1, 202) = 0.00$, p = .999.

Study 4

Target selection and gender are not independent for both unwanted advances and sexual coerction $\chi^2(1, 287) = 6.482$, $p = .011$ $V = 0.16$ 95%CI[0.05,0.28], $\chi^2(1, 287) = 4.19$, $p = .041$ $V = 0.13$ 95%CI[0.00,0.25], respectively.

(1) Women

a. **Unwanted:** $\chi^2(1, 164) = 1.36$, $p = .243$
b. **Sexual Coercion:** $\chi^2(1, 164) = 2.42$, $p = .119$

Expected count for transgender women (.20) = 33

Unwanted observed = 27

Sexual coercion observed = 25

(2) Men

a. **Unwanted:** $\chi^2(1, 120) = 15.28$, $p < .001$ $V = 0.88$ 95%CI[0.71,1.06].
b. **Sexual Coercion:** $\chi^2(1, 120) = 13.57$, $p < .001$ $V = 0.87$ 95%CI[0.69,1.05].

Expected count for transgender women (.20) = 24

Unwanted observed = 7

Sexual coercion observed = 8

Study 5

Participant gender did not moderate the effect of gender identity on the unwanted advances harassment target selection, $\chi^2(1, 223) = 1.78$, p = 0.18. Participant gender did moderate the effect of gender identity on the sexual coercion harassment target selection, $\chi^2(1, 223) = 4.36$, p = 0.037, *V* = 0.15 95% CI [0.01, 0.28]. While both women and men chose the cisgender woman more than the transgender woman ($\chi^2(1, 225) = 40.33$, p < 0.001, *V* = 0.57 95% CI [0.39, 0.74], $\chi^2(1, 98) = 62.08$, p < .001, *V* = 0.80 95%CI[0.60, 0.99], respectively), this effect was larger for men.

Study 6

Gender of participants did not moderate the effect of victim gender identity on the perceived credibility of the unwanted sexual/romantic advances claim, $F(1, 836) = .66$, $p = .417$. Gender of participants did not moderate the effect of victim gender identity on the perceived credibility of the sexual coercion claim, $F(1, 836) = .81$, $p = .36$. Gender of participants did not moderate the effect of victim gender identity on the perceived harm of the unwanted sexual/romantic advance, $F(1, 836) = 0.80$, $p = .371$. Gender of participants did not moderate the effect of victim gender identity on the perceived credibility of the sexual coercion, $F(1, 836) = 3.58$, $p = .059$.

There was no gender identity condition*political orientation interaction on the credibility of unwanted sexual advances, $F(1, 840) = 0.01$, $p = .91$. There is a main effect of gender identity condition on the others perceived credibility of sexual coercion, $F(1, 840) = 5.86$, $p = .015$, $\eta_p^2 = .007$ 90% CI [.001, .019], such that people perceived the transgender woman to be less credible (M = 3.56, SD = 1.93) than the cisgender woman (M = 3.91, SD = 1.94). There is a main effect

of political orientation on the perceived credibility of sexual coercion, $F(1, 840) = 52.49$, $p <$ $.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .059$ 90% CI [.036, .086], such that liberals perceived the women to be more credible (M = 4.20, SD = 1.80) than conservatives (M = 3.27, SD = 1.87). There was a significant gender identity condition*political orientation interaction, $F(1, 840) = 7.10$, $p = .008$, $\eta_p^2 = .008$ 90% CI [.001, .022]. Simple effects analyses suggest that liberals perceived the transgender woman to be less credible (M = 3.86, SD = 1.82) than the cisgender woman (M = 4.55, SD = 1.82), $t(840) =$ 3.81, $p < .001$, d = .26 95% CI [.13, .40], but conservatives did not, $t(840) = .06$, $p = .95$. Additionally, the effect of political orientation on perceived credibility is larger in the cisgender condition $t(840) = -7.00$, $p < .001$, d = -.48 95% CI [-.62, -.35] than the transgender condition $t(840) = -3.25$, $p < .001$, d = -.22 95% CI [-.36, -.09].

There was no gender identity condition*political orientation interaction on the harm of unwanted sexual advances, $F(1, 840) = 0.41$, $p = .518$. There was no gender identity condition*political orientation interaction on the harm of sexual coercion, $F(1, 840) = 1.22$, $p = .248$.

Study 7

Participant gender does not moderate the effect of gender identity on perceived credibility of unwanted sexual advances ($F(1, 675) = 1.94$, $p = .163$) or sexual coercion $F(1, 675) = 3.27$, $p =$ $.071$. The pattern for this marginal effect is that women, not men, are rating trans (vs. cis) women as more credible. Participant gender does not moderate the effect of gender identity on the perceived harm of unwanted sexual advances, $F(1, 675) = .197$, $p = .66$. Participant gender does moderate the effect of gender identity on the perceived harm of sexual coercion, $F(1, 675) =$ 6.01, $p = .015$ $\eta_p^2 = .009$ 90% CI [.001, .024]. Simple effects analyze suggest that women

perceive the transgender woman to be more harmed (M = 4.94 , SD = 1.44) than cisgender women (M = 4.45, SD = 1.42), $t(675) = -3.16$, $p = .002$ d = -.24 95% CI [-.39, -.09], but men do not $t(675) = 0.39$, $p = .696$. Additionally, women gave higher harm ratings (M = 4.94, SD = 1.44) than men (M = 4.45, SD = 1.50) in the transgender condition, $t(675) = 2.96$, $p = .003$ d = .23 95% CI [.08, .38], but not the cisgender condition, $t(675) = -.50$, $p = .611$.

There is a main effect of political orientation, such that liberals thought that others would perceive the women to be more credible (M = 3.58, SD = 1.79) than conservatives (M = 3.08, SD = 1.83), $F(1, 675) = 13.075$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .019$ 90% CI [.005, .039]. There is a significant gender identity*political orientation interaction $F(1, 675) = 4.804$, $p = .028$ $\eta_p^2 = .007$ 90% CI [.00, .02]. Simple effects analyses suggest that there is no effect of gender identity condition for liberals, $t(675) = -1.60$, $p = .19$, or conservatives, $t(675) = 1.49$, $p = .13$. Conservatives gave lower credibility ratings (M = 2.93, SD = 1.40) than liberals (M = 3.74, SD = 1.52) for the transgender woman $t(675) = -3.61$, $p < .001$ d = -.28 95% CI [-.43, -.13], but not for the cisgender woman, $t(675) = -1.00$, $p = .314$.

There is no gender identity condition* political orientation interaction on the perceived credibility of sexual coercion, $F(1, 675) = 1.048$, $p = .31$.There is no gender identity condition*political orientation on the perceived harm of unwanted sexual advances, $F(1, 675) = 1.218$, $p = .27$. There is no gender identity condition*political orientation on the perceived harm of sexual coercion, $F(1, 675) = 0.806$, $p = .369$.

Study 8

Likelihood

a. There is no political orientation moderation on likelihood of experiencing a sexual advance in the workplace, $F(1, 639) = 1.84$, $p = .17$.

b. There is no political orientation moderation on likelihood of experiencing sexual coercion in the workplace (but is approaching significance): $F(1, 639) = 3.53$, $p = .06$.

Credibility

a. There is no political orientation moderation on the perceived credibility of unwanted advances , $F(1, 639) = 0.16$, $p = .68$.

b. There is no political orientation moderation on the perceived credibility of sexual coercion, $F(1, 639) = 0.00$, $p = .97$.

Harm

a. There is no political orientation moderation on the perceived harm of unwanted advances, $F(1, 639) = 0.41$, $p = .52$.

b. There is no political orientation moderation on the perceived harm of sexual coercion, $F(1, 639) = 0.39$, $p = .53$.

Likelihood

a. There is no gender moderation on likelihood of experiencing a sexual advance in the workplace, $F(1, 639) = 0.30$, $p = .57$.

b. There is no gender moderation on likelihood of experiencing a sexual advance in the workplace, $F(1, 639) = 0.30$, $p = .57$.

Credibility

a. There is no gender moderation on the perceived credibility of unwanted advances , $F(1, 639) = 0.14$, $p = .70$.

b. There is no gender moderation on the perceived credibility of sexual coercion, $F(1, 639) = 0.00$, $p = .94$.

Harm

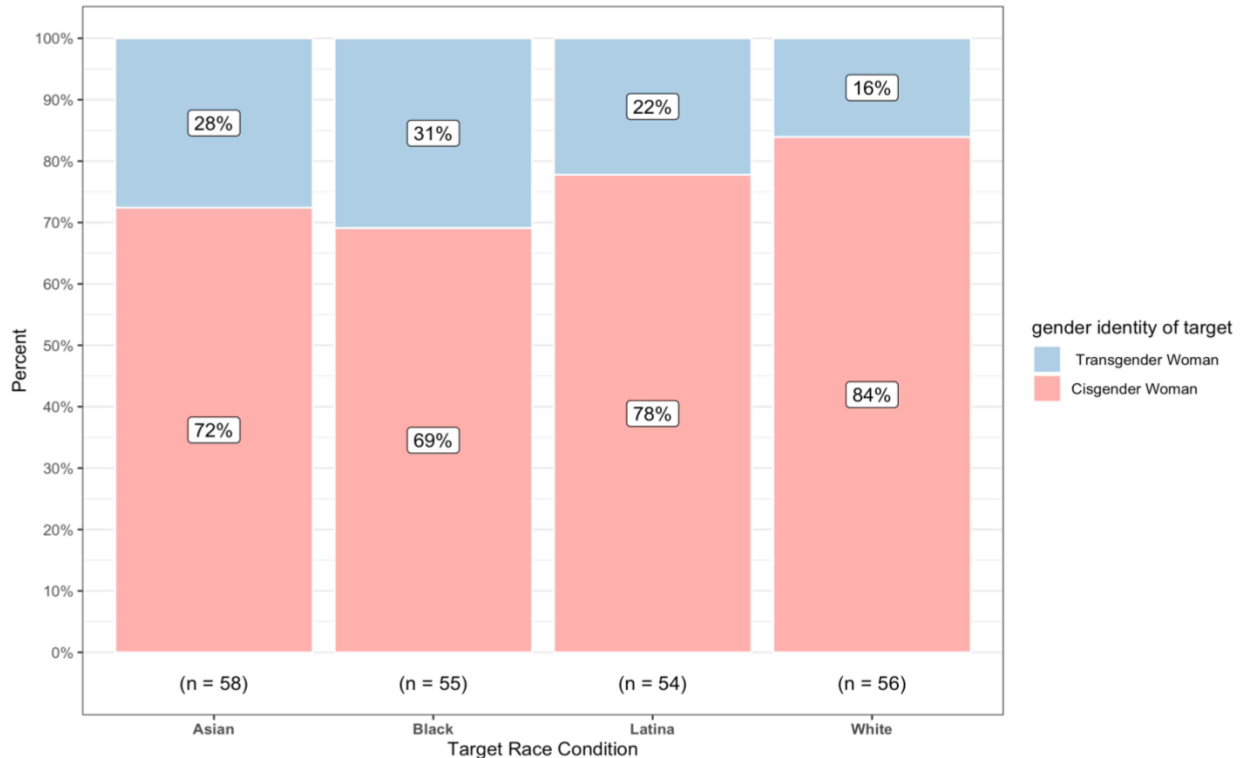
a. There is no gender moderation on the perceived harm of unwanted advances, $F(1, 639) = 1.96$, $p = .16$.

b. There is no gender moderation on the perceived harm of sexual coercion, $F(1, 639) = 0.39$, $p = .53$.

Study 5: Effects disaggregated by race of potential target

	cisgender woman count (%)	transgender woman count (%)	chi-squared goodness of fit

Women of Color (Black, Asian, and Latina women conditions) (n=167)	122 (73%)	45 (27%)	$\chi^2(1, 167) = 35.50$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.46$ 95% CI [0.31, 0.61] ***
white women (n=56)	47 (83.92%)	9 (16.08%)	$\chi^2(1, 56) = 25.79$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.68$ 95% CI [0.42, 0.94] ***
Black women (n=55)	38 (69.10%)	17 (30.9%)	$\chi^2(1, 55) = 8.02$, $p = .005$, $V = 0.38$ 95% CI [0.12, 0.65] **
Asian women (n = 58)	42 (72.41%)	16 (27.59%)	$\chi^2(1, 58) = 11.66$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.45$ 95% CI [0.19, 0.71] ***
Latina women (n =54)	42 (77.78%)	12 (22.22%)	$\chi^2(1, 54) = 16.67$, $p < .001$, $V = 0.56$ 95% CI [0.29, 0.82] ***



Study 8: Controlling for political orientation for identity denial moderation

People thought that it was less likely that trans (M = 4.75, SD = 1.72) vs. cis women (M = 5.51, SD = 1.45) would experience an unwanted advance in the workplace, $F(1, 639) = 44.60$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .07$ 90% CI [.04, .10]. This effect was moderated by trans identity denial, $F(1, 639) = 11.18$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .02$ 90% CI [.00, .04], such that the effect of gender identity condition on likelihood was stronger among those higher in identity denial ($d = .53$ 95%CI [.38, .69], $p < .001$) than those lower in identity denial ($d = .16$ 95%CI [.00, .31], $p = .04$). When controlling for political orientation, the effect of gender identity condition and the gender identity*identity denial interaction hold: $F(1, 639) = 38.96$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .06$ 90% CI [.03, .08]; $F(1, 639) = 11.12$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .02$ 90% CI [.01, .04]. Those higher in trans identity denial perceived trans

(vs. cis) women as less likely victims (*d* = .53 95%CI [.37, .69], $p < .001$) but those lower in identity denial did not ($p = .05$).

People thought that it was less likely that trans (M = 4.67, SD = 1.72) vs. cis women (M = 5.33, SD = 1.45) would experience sexual coercion in the workplace, $F(1, 639) = 30.53$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .05$ 90% CI [.02, .07]. This effect was moderated by trans identity denial, $F(1, 639) = 14.41$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .02$ 90% CI [.01, .04], such those higher in trans identity denial perceived trans (vs. cis) women as less likely victims (*d* = .50 95%CI [.34, .65], $p < .001$) but those lower in identity denial did not ($p = .37$). When controlling for political orientation, the effect of gender identity condition and the gender identity*identity denial interaction hold: $F(1, 639) = 25.02$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .04$ 90% CI [.01, .06]; $F(1, 639) = 14.64$, $p < .001$ $\eta_p^2 = .02$ 90% CI [.01, .04]. Those higher in trans identity denial perceived trans (vs. cis) women as less likely victims (*d* = .49 95%CI [.33, .65], $p < .001$) but those lower in identity denial did not ($p = .43$).