Reactions to anti-male sexism claims: The moderating roles of status-legitimizing belief endorsement and group identification

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Abstract

Men increasingly identify as victims of gender discrimination, but it is unclear how people react to men who claim to be victims of gender bias. We examined how status-legitimizing belief endorsement (SLBs) and gender identification (GID) moderated men and women's reactions to a man who claimed to have lost a promotion because of anti-male sexism or another cause. Consistent with theory that claiming bias against high-status groups reinforces the status hierarchy, SLB endorsement was associated with more *positive* reactions toward an anti-male bias claimant for both men and women. Group identification, in contrast, affects group-specific concerns and thus differentially predicted male and female participants' reactions. Men evaluated the claimant more *positively* the more strongly they identified with their gender. The more women identified with their gender, the more *negatively* they evaluated the male claimant. We also demonstrated that SLBs and GID moderated the extent to which the claimant was perceived as sexist. We discuss how these reactions may perpetuate gender inequality.

What feminism has delivered is angry women and feminine men. It emerges from this mindset that a lot of women have unfortunately bought into, this destructive idea that men prevent them from being able to achieve their goals … we have all these attacks on men. It's a very hard time to be a man in today's society.

Nick Adams, *Fox News*, 2014

This quotation captures the increasingly pervasive belief that men suffer in modern society.

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While both men and women agree that bias against women has decreased over time, men on average perceive increasing bias against men (Bosson, Vandello, Michniewicz, & Lenes, 2012; Kehn & Ruthig, 2013; Wilkins, Wellman, Babbitt, Toosi, & Schad, 2015). The number of recent anti-male discrimination lawsuits (e.g., *EEOC v. LA Weight Loss*, 2007; *EEOC v. Razzoo's*, 2008; *Hayes v. Napolitano*, 2012; *Rudebusch v. Hughes*, 2002) is also consistent with growing societal recognition of anti-male bias in the US. Given that anti-male bias is seen as increasingly pervasive, and claims of anti-male bias are being substantiated in court, it is crucial to understand how men and women react to men who claim to be victims of gender discrimination.

Reactions to Discrimination Claims

In general, individuals react negatively to discrimination claims made by both ingroup and outgroup members. For example, participants (primarily White) rated a Black individual less favorably and viewed him as more of a complainer when he claimed discrimination relative to when he took personal responsibility for a failing grade (Kaiser & Miller, 2001, 2003). Similarly, individuals evaluated ingroup claimants more harshly than outgroup claimants: theoretically because ingroup claimants tarnished their group's image (Garcia, Reser, Amo, Redersdorff, & Branscombe, 2005).

While individuals generally react negatively toward claimants relative to nonclaimants, they vary in their evaluations. There are several important individual-difference moderators that shape reactions to claimants: namely status-legitimizing belief (SLB) endorsement and group identification (GID).

Status-Legitimizing Beliefs Moderate Reactions to Discrimination Claimants

Status legitimizing beliefs (SLBs) encompass a set of ideologies—such as meritocracy and Protestant work ethic—that justify existing status hierarchies (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Hunyady, 2002). Endorsing SLBs allows people to rationalize social inequality by believing in the fairness of the existing system (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Major & O'Brien, 2005a; McCoy, Wellman, Cosley, Saslow, & Epel, 2013).

Because SLBs rationalize social hierarchies, SLB endorsers tend to perceive status-consistent treatment as fair and deserved. In other words, they believe that high-status groups deserve positive outcomes, and low-status groups deserve negative outcomes; inconsistent treatment may be seen as a result of bias. Thus, when high-status individuals (i.e., Whites and men) experience negative outcomes, those who endorse SLBs are more likely to perceive discrimination than those who reject SLBs (Major, Gramzow, et al., 2002). Because they are more likely to perceive bias against ingroup members, high-status SLB endorsers may also be more receptive (than SLB rejecters) to discrimination claims made by high-status groups. There is evidence of this pattern among Whites: SLB endorsers react less negatively to anti-White discrimination claimants than SLB rejecters (Wilkins, Wellman, & Kaiser, 2013). To date, no one has examined how SLBs relate to reactions toward anti-male bias claimants.

Regardless of group status, SLB endorsers are likely to be more receptive to high-status discrimination claims than SLB rejecters because the claims reinforce the hierarchy they perceive as being fair (Major, Gramzow, et al., 2002). Discrimination claims from high-status groups support the existing status hierarchy by suggesting that high-status individuals should experience positive outcomes. Thus, high-status discrimination claims should elicit relatively positive responses from those who support the hierarchy—regardless of their group membership.

Unzueta and colleagues (Unzueta, Everly, & Gutierrez, 2014) provide evidence that beliefs about the social hierarchy are more important than group membership for predicting responses to racial discrimination claimants. For example, Blacks and Whites respond similarly to claims of anti-White and anti-Black bias based on their support for group-based hierarchy (social dominance orientation [SDO]; Sidanious & Pratto, 1999). Specifically, greater support for the hierarchy was associated with more *positive* reactions to anti-White

bias claimants and more *negative* reactions toward anti-Black bias claimants (Unzueta et al., 2014). Thus, we expect that both male and female SLB endorsers will react less negatively to anti-male bias claimants than SLB rejecters.

Group Identification Moderates Reactions to anti-male Bias Claimants

Group identification (GID) refers to the extent to which an individual considers their group membership to be important and central to their self-concept (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Because group identification reflects an individual's commitment to the group's interests, highly identified individuals are particularly concerned about obtaining positive outcomes for their group (Lowery, Unzueta, Knowles, & Goff, 2006). Thus, highly identified men and women likely have divergent goals, and GID should differentially predict men and women's reactions to anti-male bias claimants.

Men's Reactions

Among men, stronger gender identification should be associated with more *favorable* reactions to anti-male bias claimants. Highly identified group members are more inclined than weakly identified group members to perceive bias against their group (see Major, Quinton, & McCoy, 2002; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002, for reviews). Therefore, strongly identified men may be more receptive to claims of anti-male bias because they are more likely to believe it exists. Furthermore, claimants may be seen as particularly committed to advancing group interests and may be liked because of that.

Indeed, several studies have found that strongly identified individuals respond particularly positively toward ingroup members who confront discrimination, presumably because they interpret those confrontations as an effort to maintain the ingroup's positive identity (Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Henson, 2000; Branscombe, Wann, Noel, & Coleman, 1993; Kaiser, Hagiwara, Malahy, & Wilkins, 2009). While bias confrontations are

distinguished from claiming bias in that they involve the additional step of sharing the perception of bias with the perpetrator (Kaiser et al., 2009), group identification likely shapes reactions to claimants and confronters similarly. Highly identified Black and Asian American students expressed more positive attitudes toward ingroup members who confronted a blatant incident of discrimination than their weakly identified counterparts (Kaiser et al., 2009). Because confronting bias is associated with negative interpersonal consequences (Dodd, Giuliano, Boutell, & Moran, 2001; Kaiser & Miller, 2001, 2003; Shelton & Stewart, 2004; Swim & Hyers, 1999), highly identified group members likely perceive ingroup discrimination claimants as particularly loyal group members who are willing to incur social costs for the good of the group. Therefore, we can infer that highly identified men will evaluate anti-male bias claimants more positively than weakly identified men.

Women's Reactions

In contrast, highly identified women will likely respond *less* positively than weakly identified women to male claims of anti-male bias because those claims may be seen as inconsistent with women's interests. When individuals claim to be victims of discrimination, they are perceived of as being more biased toward the outgroup (Blodorn & O'Brien, 2013). Thus, men who claim to be victims of sexism are likely viewed as sexist against women. Because highly identified women are particularly sensitive to cues of group-based discrimination (McCoy & Major, 2003), they will likely react negatively toward anti-male bias claimants who are seen as being sexist.

Hypotheses

We expected both male and female participants to view anti-male bias claimants more negatively than nonclaimants (Kaiser & Miller, 2001, 2003). Furthermore, we hypothesized that SLB endorsement would interact with claims (but not with sex); for both men and women, we expected greater SLB endorsement to predict more positive evaluations

of the male claimant. We did not expect SLBs to predict reactions to the nonclaimant.

We expected a three-way interaction between sex, GID, and claims such that GID would be associated with men's more positive evaluations and women's more negative evaluations of the claimant. We did not expect GID to affect evaluations of the nonclaimant.

We also examined the extent to which men and women perceived an anti-male bias claimant as sexist toward women. Specifically, we were interested in determining whether the tendency to view claimants as racially biased (Blodorn & O'Brien, 2013) would translate to sexism. Given societal norms against expressing bias (e.g., Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004), we reasoned that perceptions of sexism would mirror evaluations such that greater perceived sexism would be associated with less positive attitudes. Thus, we hypothesized that greater SLB endorsement would be associated with *lower* perceptions of claimant sexism. We also hypothesized that strongly identified men would perceive the claimant as less sexist than weakly identified men. In contrast, we expected that strongly identified women would perceive the claimant as *more* sexist than weakly identified women.

Mediational Hypotheses

We hypothesized that perceived target sexism would mediate the relationship between SLBs and target evaluations in the claim condition. Since anti-male discrimination claims may be perceived as a method for men to reinforce the social hierarchy, SLB endorsers should perceive a claimant as being less sexist than SLB rejecters. Thus, SLB endorsement was expected to lead to more positive evaluations of an anti-male bias claimant because the claimant is seen as being less sexist.

We hypothesized that given the divergence in men and women's group interests, perceptions of the claimant's sexism would mediate the relationship between GID and positive evaluations differently for men and women. We expected that the more men identified with their group, the less sexist they would perceive the claimant and the more positively they would evaluate him. Conversely, we expected that the more women identified with their group, the more sexist they would perceive the claimant, and the less positively they would evaluate him. Thus, we expected sexism to mediate the moderation between GID and participant sex in predicting claimant evaluations.

Method

Participants

We recruited 200 participants (196 of which completed measures; 43.4% female; 84.6% White; age: $M = 36.94$, $SD = 11.88$) online through MTurk in exchange for US $1.00. After removing individuals for randomly clicking, 175 participants remained.

Procedure

Participants completed GID measures first.[1] We then asked participants to form an impression of a purported participant from a previous study on "career success." All participants read about a man in his 30s who lost a work promotion to a female coworker. Participants were then randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions, which manipulated the target's attribution for the promotion decision. In the *discrimination claim* condition, the target wrote: "I was probably rejected because I'm a guy. All this stuff about gender equality is just discrimination against men." In the *no-claim* condition, the target said he was unsure why he did not receive the promotion and wrote: "I guess it was more competitive than I thought" (see Wilkins et al., 2013). Participants then reported how they would behave toward the target and the extent to which they believed that the claimant was sexist. Finally, participants reported their SLB endorsement.

Measures

We assessed all questions on a 0–6 scale (anchored at 0 = *strongly disagree* and 6 = *strongly agree*, unless otherwise indicated).

Status-legitimizing beliefs. We measured SLBs with 11 items[2] (adapted from Levin, Sidanius, Rabinowitz, & Federico, 1998), for example: "America is a just society where differences in status between groups reflect actual group differences"; "America is an open society where individuals of any group can achieve higher status"; "If people work hard they almost always get what they want." We averaged these items together to form an SLB composite (Major & O'Brien, 2005b), α_{Males} = .91; $\alpha_{Females}$ = .88 (M = 2.44, SD = 1.11; range: 0 to 5.18).

Gender identification. We assessed participants' GID with four items: "Being a (woman/man) has very little do with how I feel about myself" (reverse scored); "Being a (woman/man) is an important reflection of who I am"; "Being a (woman/man) is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am" (reverse scored); "In general, being a (woman/man) is important to my self-image" (see centrality subscale; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; McCoy & Major, 2003), α_{Males} = .93; $\alpha_{Females}$ = .91 (M = 3.82, SD = 1.47; range: 0 to 6).

Positive evaluations. We assessed participants' evaluations of the target with five items: "He would be nice to have a conversation with"; "He seems like he has a good personality"; "If this person asked you for help, how likely would you be to help him?"; "If you worked for the same company would you work to make the hiring process more transparent?"; "Would you like to get to know this individual?"; α_{Males} = .88; $\alpha_{Females}$ = .91 (M = 2.94, SD = 1.38; range: 0 to 6; the last three items rated on a scale 0 = *not at all*; 6 = *very much*).

Perceived sexism. We assessed the extent to which participants perceived the target as sexist with four items, for example: "How prejudiced against women does he seem?"; "How sexist does he seem?"; "How prejudiced were his comments towards women?"; "How sexist were his comments?"; α_{Males} = .98; $\alpha_{Females}$ = .98 (M = 2.90, SD = 2.03; range: 0 to 6; 0 = *not at all*; 6 = *very much*).

Results

Analysis Strategy

We tested the specific hypotheses separately for SLB and GID.[3] To test the three-way interactions, we entered the main effects of the mean-centered GID or SLB, participant sex (0 = male), and condition (0 = discrimination claim) in Step 1 of a hierarchical linear regression. We entered the two-way interactions (Sex × GID [or SLB]; Condition × GID [or SLB]; Sex × Condition) in Step 2 and the three-way interaction between GID or SLB, sex, and experimental condition in Step 3. We followed the highest order significant interaction with an analysis of simple slopes.[4]

We used PROCESS to examine our moderated mediation hypotheses (Hayes, 2013). We used a biased-corrected 95% confidence interval as the index for moderated mediation, and examined direct and indirect effects based on 10,000 bootstrapped samples. A significant effect is indicated by a confidence interval that does not include zero.

Status-Legitimizing Beliefs

We examined the extent to which SLBs moderated positive evaluations of the target and perceptions of the target's sexism. Importantly, experimental condition did not affect SLB endorsement; thus, we could use it as a moderator, $t(173)$ = 0.44, p = .66. There was also no interaction between condition and gender, $F(1, 171)$ = 0.07, p = .79.

Consistent with hypotheses, the three-way interaction between SLBs, experimental condition, and participant sex was not significant for any of the dependent variables, $Fs < .92$, $p > .34$. The only significant interactions were between SLB endorsement and claim condition. Thus, we collapsed the results for men and women and examined the SLB by condition interaction (see Table 1 for regression output).

Positive evaluations. As hypothesized, there was a significant interaction between SLBs and

Table 1. Model summary of SLB hierarchical regression analyses.

	Positive evaluations		Perceived sexism	
	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2
Step 1:		.10**		.32**
SLB	.25**		−.14*	
Claim (0 = discrimination)	.18*		−.52**	
Step 2:		.03*		.014†
SLB × Claim	−.21*		.15†	

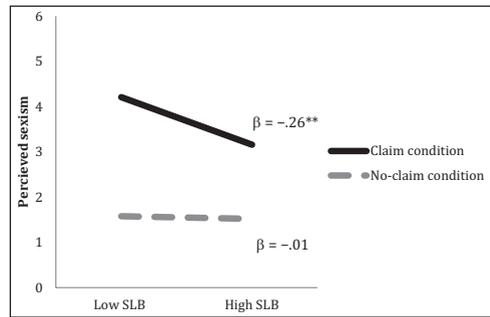*Note.* ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$. † $p = .06$.

condition in predicting positive evaluations, $F(1, 171) = 5.44$, $p = .01$, $\Delta R^2 = .03$; Model: $F(3, 171) = 14.19$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .13$. The more participants in the *discrimination claim* condition endorsed SLBs, the more positively they evaluated the target, $β = .38$, $p < .001$. SLBs were unrelated to positive evaluations of the target in the *no-claim* condition, $β = .03$, $p = .78$ (see Figure 1).
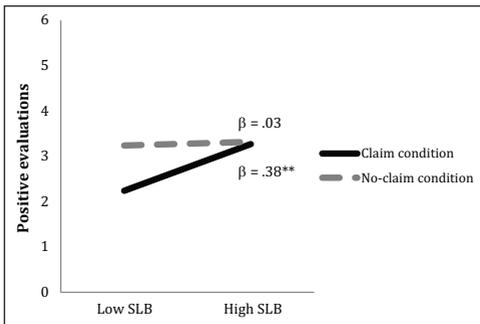
Figure 1. Positive evaluations of claimant by SLB endorsement and claim condition.
Note. ** $p < .01$.

Perceived sexism. There was a marginal interaction between SLBs and condition on perceived target sexism, $F(1, 171) = 3.40$, $p = .067$, $\Delta R^2 = .014$; Model: $F(3, 171) = 24.94$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .30$. The more participants endorsed SLBs, the less sexist they viewed the target in the *discrimination claim* condition, $β = −.26$, $p < .01$. SLBs did not affect perceived sexism in the *no-claim* condition, $β = −.01$, $p = .89$ (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Perceived sexism of the claimant by SLB endorsement and claim condition.
Note. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Does Perceived Sexism Mediate the Relationship Between SLBS and Positive Evaluations in the Discrimination Claim Condition?

We used ordinary least squares path analysis (PROCESS, Model 8; Hayes, 2013) to test our hypothesis that perceived sexism mediates the relationship between SLB and our dependent variables (DVs) and that this relationship is moderated by condition (0 = discrimination claim condition). In other words, we tested whether the mediational paths from SLB to perceived sexism to our DVs are different in the *discrimination claim* condition and the *no claim* condition.

Positive evaluations. The index of moderated mediation revealed that the indirect mediational paths from SLB to positive evaluations via perceived sexism were not significantly different in the two

Table 2. Conditional process model analyses: Status-legitimizing beliefs.

	Positive evaluations
	b
Model summary	
SLB	.24**
Perceived sexism	−.49**
Condition (0 = discrimination claim)	−.51**
SLB x Condition	−.21
Model R^2	.49**
$F(df)$	(4, 170) = 41.25
Index of Moderated Mediation [CI]	−.22 [−0.47, 0.03]
Condition indirect effects (SLB Perceived Sexism DV)	
Discrimination claim	**.23 [0.07, 0.39]**
No claim	.01 [−0.18, 0.23]
Condition direct effects (SLB → DV)	
Discrimination claim	**.24 [0.07, 0.41]**
No claim	.03 [−0.19, 0.25]

Note. Unstandardized coefficients are reported, bias corrected 95% CI, 10,000 bootstrap samples. Bold text indicates a significant path.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

conditions, $b = -.22$, 95% CI: [−0.47, 0.03]; Model: $F(4, 170) = 41.25$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .49$, $p < .001$. However, perceived sexism was a significant mediator of the relationship between SLB and positive evaluations within the *discrimination claim* condition, $b = .23$, 95% CI: [0.06, 0.39]. The direct path between SLB and positive evaluations also remained significant, $b = .23$, 95% CI: [0.06, 0.41]. In contrast, there was no direct, $b = .03$, 95% CI: [−0.19, 0.25] or indirect effect, $b = .01$, 95% CI: [−0.17, 0.23] in the *no claim* condition (see Table 2 for full model details).

Group Identification

*Positive evaluations.* As predicted, there was a significant three-way interaction between GID, sex, and condition, Step 3: $F(1, 167) = 5.38$, $p = .02$, $\Delta R^2 = .03$; Model: $F(7, 167) = 5.32$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .15$. This interaction revealed that in the *discrimination claim* condition gender identification moderated positive evaluations of the claimant.

Among men, GID was associated with more positive evaluations of the target in the *discrimination claim* condition, $\beta = .37$, $p < .001$ and was unrelated to evaluations in the *no-claim* condition, $\beta = .14$, $p = .45$ (see Figure 3a).
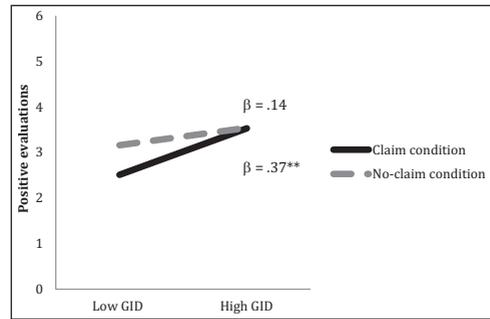
Figure 3a. Male participants' positive evaluations of the claimant moderated by GID and claim condition.

Among women, greater GID was associated with less positive evaluations of the claimant, $\beta = -.48$, $p < .001$. We found no relationship between GID and positive evaluations for women in the *no-claim* condition, $\beta = -.001$, $p = .99$ (see Figure 3b; see Table 3 for full regression output).
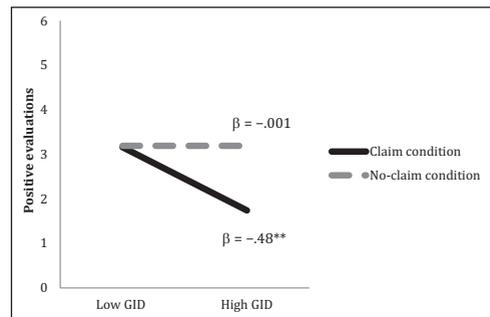

Figure 3b. Female participants' positive evaluations of the claimant moderated by GID and claim condition.
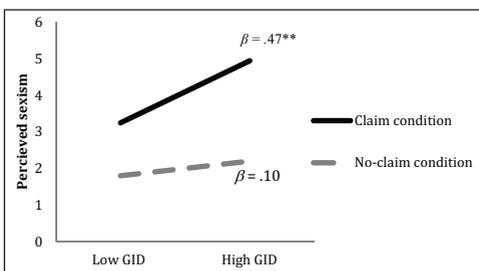*Note.* **$p < .01$. *$p < .05$.

Table 3. Model summary of GID hierarchical regression analyses.

	Positive evaluations		Perceived sexism	
	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2
Step 1:		.06**		.31**
GID	.09		−.01	
Claim (0 = discrimination)	.18**		−.52**	
Sex (0 = male)	−.13		.21**	
Step 2:		.09**		.06**
Sex × Claim	.14		−.01	
GID × Claim	.05		.07	
Sex × GID	−.39**		.30**	
Step 3:		.03*		.04**
Sex × Claim × GID	.29*		−.34 **	

Note. **p < .01. *p < .05.
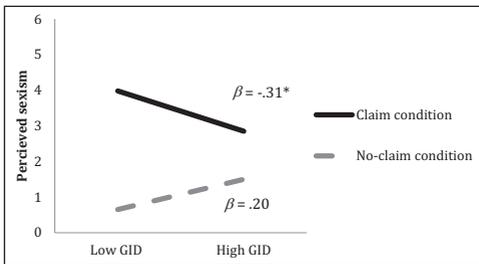
Figure 4a. Male participants' perceptions of claimant as sexist moderated by GID and claim condition.

Figure 4b. Female participants' perceptions of claimant as sexist moderated by GID and claim condition.
Note. **p < .01. *p < .05.

Perceived sexism. As expected, there was a significant three-way interaction between GID, sex, and condition, Step 3: $F(1, 167) = 10.09$, $p < .01$,

$\Delta R^2 = .04$; Model: $F(7, 167) = 16.19$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .38$ in predicting participants' perceptions of the target's sexism. The interaction revealed that gender identification moderated perceptions of the target's sexism in the *claim* condition.

Highly gender identified men viewed the claimant as less sexist than those low in GID, β = −.31, $p < .001$. We found no effects of gender identification among men in the *no-claim* condition, β = .20, $p = .66$ (see Figure 4a).

The more female participants identified with their gender, the more sexist they viewed the target in the *discrimination claim* condition, β = .47, $p < .001$. We found no GID effects among women in the *no-claim* condition, β = .10, $p = .50$ (see Figure 4b; see Table 3 for full regression output).

Does Perceived Sexism Mediate the Relationship Between GID and Positive Evaluations Differently for Men and Women in the Discrimination Claim Condition?

We used ordinary least squares path analysis (PROCESS, Model 12; Hayes, 2013) to test our hypothesis that perceived sexism mediates the relationship between GID and positive evaluations and that this relationship is moderated by gender (0 = male) and claim condition (0 = discrimination

claim condition). In other words, we tested whether the mediational paths from GID to perceived sexism to positive evaluations are different for male and female participants within each condition.

The indirect effect of the higher order product was significant: suggesting that the mediational paths from GID to positive evaluations via perceived sexism were significantly different based on gender and claim condition, $b = .60$, 95% CI: [0.24, 1.00]; Model: $F(8, 166) = 21.29$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .51$, $p < .001$. Perceived sexism significantly mediated the relationship between GID and positive evaluations among women in the *discrimination claim* condition, $b = -.33$, 95% CI: [-0.50, -0.12]. Perceived sexism also mediated the relationship between GID and positive evaluations among men in the *discrimination claim* condition, $b = .21$, 95% CI: [0.06, 0.35]. There was no direct effect of GID on positive evaluations for either men, $b = .14$, 95% CI: [-0.01, 0.29] or women, $b = -.16$, 95% CI: [-0.38, 0.07] in the *discrimination claim* condition. There were no significant effects observed among men or women in the *no claim* condition (see Table 4 for full model output).

Discussion

In the US, men perceive more discrimination against their group now than ever before, and some believe the bias men experience is more severe than the bias women experience (Bosson et al., 2012; Kehn & Ruthig, 2013; Wilkins, Wellman, Babbitt, et al., 2015). This pattern makes it critical to understand how individuals respond to men who claim to be victims of gender discrimination. We examined the differences between men and women's attitudes toward an anti-male bias claimant and how SLBs and GID moderated those reactions.

We found that SLBs moderated reactions to anti-male sexism claimants. SLB endorsers, regardless of their gender, reacted more positively toward anti-male bias claimants than SLB rejecters. This is consistent with the contention that SLB endorsers are more receptive to high-status groups' discrimination claims because

those claims reinforce the status hierarchy they perceive as being legitimate (Wilkins et al., 2013).

To our knowledge, we are also the first to examine how gender identification shapes reactions to anti-male bias claimants.[5] Among men, greater gender identification was associated with more positive attitudes toward the anti-male bias claimant. Highly identified men likely perceived claimants as motivated to protect the ingroup and willing to incur potential social costs. Thus, they regarded the claimant more positively than weakly identified men. In contrast, stronger gender identification among women was associated with more negative reactions toward the claimant. Highly gender-identified women may have reacted more negatively (than weakly identified women) because they perceived the claim as threatening women's status. Thus, while SLB endorsement predicted convergent attitudes for men and women, GID predicted divergent attitudes.

We also examined the perceived sexism of an anti-male bias claimant because individuals who claim racial discrimination are perceived of as being racist (Blodorn & O'Brien, 2013). anti-male bias claimants were seen as more sexist than nonclaimants. Greater SLB endorsement was associated with lower perceptions that the claimant was sexist. GID moderated men's and women's perceptions of the claimant's sexism. The more men identified with their gender, the *less* sexist they viewed the claimant, and the more women identified with their gender, the *more* sexist they viewed the claimant.

While there was no evidence of moderated mediation for SLB analyses, we did find mediation within the claim condition. The more individuals endorsed SLBs, the less sexist they viewed the claimant and the more positive their evaluation of the target. While we only expected mediation in the claim condition, the lack of a significant moderated mediation index suggests we should interpret this finding with caution.

Moderated mediation analyses also suggest that perceptions of the target's sexism accounted for men and women's differing reactions towards the claimant based on their gender identification. For women, greater gender identification was associated with more negative reactions toward

Table 4. Conditional process model analyses: Group identification.

	Positive evaluations
	b
Model summary	
GID	.14
Perceived sexism	−.50**
Sex (0 = male)	−.15
Condition (0 = discrimination claim)	−.78**
GID x Gender	−.30*
GID x Condition	.13
Condition x Gender	.47
GID x Condition x Gender	.10
Model R^2	.51**
$F(df)$	(8, 166) = 21.28
Condition indirect effects (GID → Perceived Sexism → DV)	
Male discrimination claim	**.21 [0.06, 0.35]**
Female discrimination claim	**−.33 [−0.50, −0.12]**
Male no claim	−.14 [−0.29, 0.01]
Female no claim	−.07 [−0.32, 0.21]
Condition direct effects (GID → DV)	
Male discrimination claim	.14 [−0.01, 0.29]
Female discrimination claim	−.16 [−0.39, 0.07]
Male no claim	.27 [−0.003, 0.56]
Female no claim	.07 [−0.19, 0.34]

Note. Unstandardized coefficients are reported, bias corrected 95% CI, 10,000 bootstrap samples. Bold text indicates a significant path.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

the claimant because they perceived him as being more sexist. In contrast, for men, greater gender identification was associated with more positive reactions towards the claimant because they perceived him as being less sexist. Perceptions of the claimants' sexism led to differing evaluations of the target. Group identification appears to motivate individuals to take charge of the group's well-being by interpreting discrimination claims in group-relevant terms. While prior research suggests that identifying with the group leads individuals to look out for the group's best interests (O'Brien, Garcia, Crandall, & Kordys, 2010; Tajfel

& Turner, 1979), our research is the first to demonstrate that this occures in response to anti-male bias claims.

Limitations

Protecting group interests and protecting the status hierarchy have different implications for high- and low-status groups. For men, who are high-status, both sets of interests align. In contrast, for women, group interest and social hierarchy interests conflict. This reality provides a new perspective on women's potentially conflicting motivations in response to men's discrimination claims. It also raises the question of which motivation may be stronger for women. Readers may wonder whether women who strongly endorse SLBs respond similarly to anti-male bias claimants based on gender identification as women who reject SLBs: in other words, whether SLBs and GID interact. There were no significant interactions between SLB, GID, and condition for any of the DVs when only examining women, $Fs < 2.00$, $p > .16$.[6] Future research can clarify the relationship by, for example, manipulating SLBs (see McCoy & Major, 2007) and measuring GID.

Implications

Receptivity to men's discrimination claims may have negative implications for perpetuating gender inequality. If subsets of men and women respond relatively positively to anti-male bias claimants, it might contribute to men's social advantage. For example, recent research (Wilkins, Wellman, Flavin, & Manrique, 2015) demonstrates that simply encountering an anti-male bias claim decreases SLB-endorsing men's evaluation of female job candidates.

This possibility is especially alarming given the continuing reality of gender disparities. Women in the US make up only 4.6% of Fortune 1,000 CEOs ("Women CEOs," 2014), they are paid only 77% of what their male counterparts earn (Hill, 2014), and constitute 91% of all sexual assault and rape victims in the US (Planty, Langton, Krebs, Berzofsky, & Smiley-McDonald, 2013). Thus,

although men are increasingly likely to perceive and claim to be victims of bias, men remain relatively advantaged in society.[7]

Conclusion

While men and women react more negatively to anti-male bias claimants than they do toward nonclaimants, subsets of both groups react relatively positively; they do not distinguish between claimants and nonclaimants. SLB endorsers and strongly identified men respond to anti-male bias claimants more favorably than SLB rejecters, weakly identified men, and strongly identified women.

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Notes

1. We collected GID measures at the beginning of the study because manipulating discrimination claims has affected GID in past research (Garcia et al., 2005), and we wanted to be able to use GID as a moderator. In order to assess whether collecting gender identification at the beginning of the study primed gender and thus enhanced our gender modification effects, we ran an additional study in which GID was collected at the end. We replicated the current study, and found that GID moderated the relationship between claiming bias and positive evaluations. See the supplemental materials for more details about the replication study.
2. One item of this measure was omitted from the survey by mistake.
3. We tested whether GID was a significant covariate in SLB analyses; it was not.
   We tested whether SLBs were a significant covariate in all GID analyses. SLB covariate: positive evaluations $F(1, 173) = 12.40$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .07$; perceived sexism $F(1, 173) = 6.20$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .04$. The pattern of results was unchanged when controlling for SLBs. The reported results do not control for SLBs.
4. We also tested whether there was a significant four-way interaction between participant sex, SLB endorsement, GID endorsement, and claim condition on our dependent variables. The four-way interactions were not significant for any of our dependent variables, all Fs < 1.92, ps $> .19$.
5. Garcia and colleagues (Garcia et al., 2005) examined male and female participants' reactions to men and women's sexism claims, but they focused on gender identification as an outcome rather than as a moderator.
6. This should be interpreted with caution given the relatively low power we had to detect significant effects.
7. While we did not examine reactions to women claimants, previous research has examined these reactions. Kaiser and colleagues demonstrate that greater SLB endorsement is associated with more negative reactions to women's bias claims (Kaiser, Dyrenforth, & Hagiwara, 2006), and that gender identification is associated with women's more positive evaluations of women who confront discrimination (Kaiser et al., 2009).

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