

Nasty Women:

Women's Affective and Cognitive Responses to the 2016 Election and Indirect Sexism

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### Abstract

This study examines the relationships between the 2016 presidential election, indirect sexism and women's self-perceptions, attitudes and psychological well-being. Specifically, this study employs a two by two factorial design with between-subject factors of salient indirect sexism (salient indirect sexism manipulation or control) and the election (before or after) and investigates whether those factors influenced women's levels of perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., collective self-esteem, future orientation, optimism, self-efficacy, self-compassion, and state hope. Separate pre-election ( $n = 205$ ) and post-election ( $n = 202$ ) samples of female students at Duke University were collected during the month before and the month after Election Day. The manipulation took the form of an article prime, and outcome variables were assessed with an electronic questionnaire. Results indicate a trending increase in state hope for Republicans and a trending decrease in state hope for Democrats after the election, but just within the control group. Additionally, results indicate a trending decrease in self-compassion for Republicans exposed to salient indirect sexism after the election and a trending increase in self-compassion for Independents/others in the control group after the election. Finally, results indicate a significant increase in future orientation for Republicans and a significant decrease in future orientation for Democrats after the election. No significant condition effects were found for any of the outcomes. Overall, the present research suggests that the 2016 election might influence women's future orientation, self-compassion and state hope, but that political party preference might shape the direction of those influences. Possible explanations are discussed.

### Nasty Women:

#### Women's Affective and Cognitive Responses to the 2016 Election and Indirect Sexism

What does the election of Donald Trump mean for the psychology of women? How might it have influenced the way women respond to sexism? The 2016 U.S. presidential race and election was one of chaos, controversy and passion flowing in all directions and through a variety of avenues. With Hillary Clinton as the first female major party nominee and Donald Trump as the first nominee in over 75 years that is neither a politician nor a military veteran, the unlikely pair's race to the presidency is certainly a defining moment in American politics. Further, the presence of a female candidate, in combination with an influx of sexist rhetoric during the campaign and election season, created an especially interesting landscape for women. The primary purpose of this study is to investigate how this consequential election might have influenced women's self-perceptions and attitudes, both generally and in response to salient indirect sexism.

#### **The 2008 U.S. Presidential Election**

In considering the possible psychological impacts of the 2016 election, it is important to first look towards existing research surrounding previous presidential elections, especially the 2008 election of Barack Obama, because it provides compelling evidence that elections can, in fact, significantly influence the psychology of particular populations. For instance, studies show that Obama, as an in-group role model, significantly reduced the negative effects of stereotype threat (Marx, Co, & Friedman, 2009) and had positive emotional influences (Ong, Burrow, & Fuller-Rowell, 2012) for young African Americans. It is also suggested that the 2008 election of Obama was associated with increases in identity exploration, as well as both short-term and long-term influences on racial identity in African Americans (Fuller-Rowell, Burrow, & Ong,

2011).

While the 2008 and 2016 elections are very different events, they both represent especially unique, untraditional and consequential events in American history. Specifically, in 2008 the first black president of the United States was elected, and in 2016 an unconventional and controversial candidate defeated the first major party female candidate. Hence, the discussed psychological findings surrounding the 2008 election provide reason to believe that the 2016 election might also have significant psychological impacts, as past studies clearly demonstrate that such consequential elections can significantly influence emotionality, self-perceptions and attitudes.

### **The 2016 U.S. Presidential Election**

The 2016 presidential election was characterized by negative and sexist rhetoric, actions and events. Documentation of such sexism can be found in news articles and segments from media outlets all over the country (Taylor, 2016; Tolentino, 2016). Due to the recency of the 2016 presidential race and election, there is yet to be a substantial body of published scientific research surrounding potential psychological impacts of the election. However, there is some research to confirm that the media coverage and social media presence of the candidates were significantly shaped by gender and, in turn, might have played a role in perpetuating sexism during the presidential race (Allen, 2016; Patterson, 2016; Lee & Lim, 2016).

During the primaries, Clinton received more personal media coverage, as well as more negative media coverage, in comparison to male candidates. Specifically, she was more often the subject of media narratives infused with suggestions of corruption and criticisms of her femininity and personal history (Allen, 2016; Patterson, 2016). Further, while these trends were likely due, in part, to her lengthy public career and her dominant status in the presidential race,

they were also likely related to the fact that she was the first woman to be that close to breaking through the political glass ceiling (Allen, 2016). Research also shows that Clinton put more emphasis on her masculine traits than her feminine traits through her social media outlets (Lee & Lim, 2016). For example, she appeared to more commonly use language perceived as masculine in nature (words like strong, forceful, fighting, determined, effective, rational, and confident) and steer away from traditionally feminine language (words describing soft and expressive traits such as caring, warm, compassionate, empathetic, understanding, congenial, and humble). This is in accordance with previous research that found that female politicians tend to emphasize their more masculine traits in an attempt to counteract damaging gender stereotypes (Lee, 2013). This suggests that Clinton might have been inclined to use specific language and campaign techniques to avoid gender discrimination, like gender stereotypes, which implies that gender and sexism influenced her campaign.

The discussed findings point to a significant role of gender and sexism throughout the election. They provide scientific evidence to complement the frequent actions, behaviors and language during the presidential race that were widely and publicly perceived as sexist. Further, all of this together highlights the unique and challenging nature of the 2016 election from the female perspective. Due to the inherent public and widespread coverage of presidential campaigns and elections, it is likely that many women around the country were exposed to and aware of the frequent election-related sexist actions, sexist rhetoric and enhanced spotlight on gender roles. Hence, one might wonder whether this untraditional time in American politics had an impact on the psychology of women, especially in the realm of psychological responses to sexism.

### **Sexism and Women's Psychology**

There is a substantial body of research that looks at women's affective and cognitive responses to sexism. Such research serves as one of the primary motivations of the current study, with the intention being to add to that existing body of research with new insight about several key aspects of the relationship between sexism and women's psychology. This study has potential to fill several gaps in the existing research surrounding the relationship between sexism and women's psychological well-being, attitudes and self-perceptions, as well as provide an initial exploration of how the 2016 election might play a role within the relationship.

One purpose of the current study is to provide further investigation into the influence of sexism on women's psychological well-being by looking specifically at how it influences their self-compassion, self-efficacy, optimism, and state hope. Self-compassion has been found to be related to both psychological well-being and positive psychological functioning (Neff, 2011; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007). Similarly, while there is substantial overlap between the constructs of hope, optimism and self-efficacy, each has been found to make a significant and unique contribution in the prediction of well-being (Magaletta & Oliver, 1999). Previous research has consistently shown a negative association between experiences of sexism and women's psychological well-being (Dinh, Holmberg, Ho, & Haynes, 2014; Landrine et al. 1995; Pascoe & Richman, 2009; Swim, Hyers, Cohen & Ferguson, 2001). Hence, I hypothesize that this study will provide evidence that both exposure to salient indirect sexism and the 2016 election—as an event that is publicly associated with sexism—are associated with decreases in women's self-compassion, self-efficacy, optimism and hope.

Another purpose of the current study is to investigate how sexism might influence women's future orientation, collective self-esteem, and perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the

United States. Regarding collective self-esteem, there is evidence to suggest that sexism might actually have a positive influence. Research has shown that while experiencing gender, race, or sexuality-based stigma might be related to deprivation of safety, social acceptance, and opportunities, it might also be related to the adoption of a more positive and collective orientation towards their stigmatized identities (Meyer, Ouellette, Haile, & McFarlane, 2011). Therefore, I also hypothesize that both exposure to salient indirect sexism and the 2016 election—as an event that is publicly associated with sexism—are associated with a greater sense of connectedness to gender identity, as manifested by higher levels of collective self-esteem. In considering the influence of salient sexism on future orientation and perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the United States, there is little previous research. The current research will allow for an exploratory examination of how these variables might be influenced by salient indirect sexism and/or the 2016 election.

The discussed findings provide substantial and compelling evidence for several associations between sexism and women's psychological well-being, self-perceptions and attitudes. However, in the aforementioned research, experiencing sexism is most commonly operationalized as being the victim or target of sexist behaviors (direct sexism). Do similar trends hold up if experiencing sexism is operationalized as the pervasiveness of sexism made salient and brought to attention (indirect sexism), rather than as being the target of sexist behaviors? Past research has shown that this type of sexism experience can trigger social identity threat and lead to derogation of other stigmatized groups (Craig et al. 2012). Further, it has been linked with experiencing a threat response through heightened cardiovascular reactivity (Eliezer, Major, & Mendes, 2010). However, there is little research that looks at the influence of this type of sexism experience on the psychological well-being and self-perceptions of women. Therefore,

another aim of the current study is to investigate whether exposure to salient indirect sexism—making the pervasiveness of sexism in the United States salient—has the negative influences on women's self-perceptions and psychological well-being that appear in the existing research surrounding psychological effects of direct sexism.

In sum, the current study aims to fill key gaps in the current body of research surrounding the relationship between sexism and women's psychology. The discussed findings from previous research provide substantial and compelling evidence for several associations between sexism and women's psychological well-being, self-perceptions and attitudes. Through the inclusion of variables related to psychological well-being including self-compassion, self-efficacy, hope and optimism, we expect this research to offer further evidence of those associations. Further, in operationalizing sexism as indirect sexism, rather than as being the target of sexist behaviors, this study expands on the related body of research by offering a relatively unique exploration of the experience of sexism.

### **The Current Study**

The current study aims to determine how the 2016 presidential election might influence women's self-perceptions, attitudes, and psychological well-being, especially regarding their response to indirect sexism. More specifically, my primary research question asks whether young women's levels of perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., future orientation, optimism, self-efficacy, self-compassion, collective self-esteem, and state hope shift from before to after the 2016 presidential election and/or with exposure to salient indirect sexism.

To answer this research question, I adapted a previously developed experimental manipulation that uses articles to prime participants (McCoy & Major, 2003). The experimental group (salient indirect sexism condition) received an article about the pervasiveness of sexism in



the U.S. and the control group (neutral condition) received a neutral article. After the participants read the articles, they filled out a self-report questionnaire that includes measures for the outcome variables previously listed. Two separate samples of young women were recruited to participate—one sample before the 2016 election and the other after the 2016 election. The analysis compares the results of all four groups to identify how salient indirect sexism and/or the election might have influenced the mentioned attitudes and perceptions of women. I hypothesize that (1) both salient indirect sexism and the 2016 presidential election will be related to decreases in women's levels of self-compassion, self-efficacy, optimism and hope, and increases in women's levels of collective self-esteem, future orientation, and perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S.; and that (2) the influences of the election and exposure to salient indirect sexism will be additive.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

There were 413 female identifying undergraduate and graduate students at Duke University that gave consent to participate in this study, which was approved by the Duke University Campus Institutional Review Board. Participants were recruited in three ways. Some were recruited using the Duke Psychology and Neuroscience Subject Pool. Others were recruited in various campus locations (libraries, student unions, etc.). Finally, others were recruited using the Duke Behavioral Research Participant Pool. All participants received a compensation of three to five dollars, except for those from the Psychology and Neuroscience Subject Pool, who received partial course credit. All participants were assigned to one of the two conditions via random assignment coded into the electronic Qualtrics questionnaire. Data were collected at two

time points. The pre-election sample was collected in the four weeks leading up to Election Day and the post-election sample was collected in the four weeks following Election Day.

**Exclusions.** A total of six complete response sets were excluded from the analysis. Two cases were excluded because they spent under six minutes to complete the study, which suggests that they did not read the articles before completing the survey. An additional two were excluded because the participants indicated the same response selection for all of the items across all of the scales, despite reverse worded items, which suggests a lack of attention to the individual items. One was excluded because it was largely incomplete. One was excluded because the participant had mistakenly participated in the study twice. Additionally, certain outcome measures from a number of cases were excluded from the analysis due to incompleteness, multiple blatant contradictions within the scale, or indication of the same answer choice for all items in the scale, despite reverse wording. Specifically, beyond the mentioned six cases that were excluded altogether, these exclusions included three perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S. responses, five collective self-esteem responses, two self-compassion responses, two future orientation responses, two optimism responses, and three self-efficacy responses.

**Descriptive statistics.** The sample used for analysis ( $N^{\text{total}} = 407$ ,  $n^{\text{pre-election}} = 205$ ,  $n^{\text{post-election}} = 202$ ) was comprised of all Duke female undergraduate or graduate students. The age breakdown is as follows: 71% 18-20 years old, 22% 21-23 years old, and 7% over 23 years old. Regarding ethnic/racial background, the sample is 51% White/Caucasian, 30% Asian or Pacific Islander, 9% African-American, 5% Hispanic or Latino, 4% other, and <1% Native American or American Indian. About 64% of the participants reported a preference for the Democratic Party, 11% for the Republican Party, 20% Independent and 5% other. Similarly, 79% indicated a liberal orientation, 13% indicated a conservative orientation and 8% indicated a neutral orientation.

## **Materials and Measures**

**Salient indirect sexism manipulation.** This research adapted the article manipulation that was developed by Major and colleagues (Major, Kaiser, O'Brien, & McCoy, 2007; McCoy & Major, 2003) and later adapted by Craig and colleagues (Craig & Richeson, 2014; Craig & Richeson, 2012; Craig, DeHart, Richeson, & Fiedorowicz, 2012). All participants were provided three articles to read with the final article providing the experimental manipulation. There were two conditions in this research. The first two articles were the same for all participants and did not have any relevance to gender or sexism (one article discussed plagiarism and the other described a lawsuit against McDonald's). The final article outlined an alleged research study. For the indirect salient sexism condition, the described research study focused on the pervasiveness of sexism in the United States and its negative consequences. This manipulation article was adapted very closely from the manipulation in Study 1 of Craig, DeHart, Richeson, and Fiedorowicz (2012). For the control condition, the described research study investigated risk factors for lupus, noting higher frequency and greater severity of the disease in women as compared to men. This control article was adapted very closely from the control in Study 2 of Craig and Richeson (2014). The purpose of including information that is negative towards women in the control article is to provide a more precise control by having both groups receive negative information about women. This minimizes the risk of perceived negativity serving as a confounding variable. Hence, the manipulation was able to more purely and specifically address indirect sexism, rather than to just evaluate the effect of negative gender-specific information more broadly. All of the article manipulation materials used can be found in Appendix A.

**Demographic and political measures.** The following indicators of respondents' demographic characteristics were assessed: age (18-20, 21-23, or >23), race/ethnicity (African-

American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native-American/American-Indian, White Caucasian, or other), U.S. citizenship (citizen or not), field of study (STEM field or not), and native language (English or not). The following indicators of respondents' political characteristics were assessed: political party preference (Democrat, Republican, Independent, or other), voting behaviors (intend to vote/voted, or not), and political orientation (7-point Likert-type scale from "very liberal" to "very conservative").

**Perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the United States.** Perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S. was assessed with five self-report items describing the degree to which individuals agree that gender discrimination exists, is frequent, and is widespread in the United States. Example items include, "gender discrimination is common in this country" and "gender discrimination and sexism are no longer problems in this country." Items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." In the present study, this scale had an internal consistency reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.85$ .

**State hope.** Hope was assessed with the Adult State Hope Scale (Snyder et al. 1996), which has previously demonstrated good psychometric properties. The scale consists of six self-report items that are categorized into two subscales—the agency subscale and the pathways subscale. The agency subscale includes items describing the degree to which individuals feel that they are successful, and are pursuing and meeting their goals in the present moment. The pathways subscale includes items describing the degree to which individuals feel, at the present moment, that they can conceive of various methods to reach their goals or handle challenges. Example items from the scale include, "at the present time, I am energetically pursuing my goals" and "there are lots of ways around any problem that I am facing now." Items were scored

on an 8-point Likert-type scale ranging from “definitely false” to “definitely true.” In the present study, this scale had an internal consistency reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.82$ .

**Collective self-esteem.** Collective self-esteem was assessed with the identity subscale of the Collective Self-Esteem Scale developed by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992), which has previously demonstrated good psychometric properties. The scale consists of four self-report items describing the degree to which individuals feel that being a member of a specific social group (in this case, being a woman) is an important reflection of who they are, is an important part of their self image, is an important part of their sense of what kind of person they are, and has a lot to do with how they feel about themselves. Example items include, “in general, being a woman is an important part of my self-image” and “being a woman is an important reflection of who I am.” Items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” In the present study, this scale had an internal consistency reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.82$ .

**Self-compassion.** Self-compassion was assessed with the Self-Compassion Scale developed by Neff (2003), which has previously demonstrated good psychometric properties. The scale consists of 26 self-report items describing the extent to which individuals accept their flaws and inadequacies, keep their difficulties in perspective, are kind to themselves, and are emotionally balanced. These items are categorized into six different subscales including, self-kindness subscale, self-judgment subscale, common humanity subscale, isolation subscale, mindfulness subscale, and over-identified subscale. Example items from the scale include, “I’m disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies” and “when times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself.” Items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging

from “almost never” to “almost always.” In the present study, this scale had an internal consistency reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.93$ .

**Future orientation.** Future orientation was assessed with the planning ahead subscale of the Future Orientation Scale (Steinberg et al. 2009), which has previously demonstrated good psychometric properties. The scale consists of four self-report items and each item includes a pair of opposite statements. The items describe the degree to which individuals prefer to plan things out or jump into things, make to-do lists or not, and break big projects into smaller parts or not. Example items include, “some people like to plan things out one step at a time...other people like to jump right into things without planning beforehand” and “some people are always making lists of things to do... other people find making lists of things to do a waste of time.” Items were scored on a 4-point scale that includes the response options, “really true of me” and “sort of true of me” for each statement within each item. Thus, the scale ranges from “really true of me” on one end of the spectrum (one statement within the item) to “really true of me” on the opposite end (the other statement within the item). In the present study, this scale had an internal consistency reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.75$ .

**Optimism.** Optimism was assessed with the Revised Life Orientation Test (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994), which has previously demonstrated good psychometric properties. The scale consists of 10 self-report items, four of which are filler items and six of which describe the extent to which individuals expect the best in uncertain times, expect good things to happen to them over bad things, and are optimistic about their future. Example items include, “in uncertain times, I usually expect the best” and “overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.” Items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “strongly disagree”

to “strongly agree.” In the present study, this scale had an internal consistency reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.82$ .

**Self-efficacy.** Self-efficacy was assessed with the general self-efficacy subscale of the Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Sherer and colleagues (1982), which has previously demonstrated good psychometric properties. The scale consists of 17 self-report items describing the degree to which individuals feel that they pursue challenges, cope with problems or failures, and work effectively, efficiently and persistently. Example items include, “when I make plans, I am certain I can make them work” and “when I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.” Items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” In the present study, this scale had an internal consistency reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = 0.88$ .

**Probe for suspicion.** An item was included at the end of the questionnaire to probe for suspicion about the manipulation and true purpose of the study. The item was a free response question—“What do you think this study is about?” None of the responses indicated a problematic depth of understanding of the purpose of the study.

## **Procedure**

This study employs a two by two factorial design with between-subject factors of salient indirect sexism (either exposure to salient indirect sexism or not) and the 2016 election (either before or after the election). Participants were exposed to the salient indirect sexism or control conditions by reading either the salient indirect sexism article or the control article, which were randomly assigned through a Qualtrics survey that was administered. The dependent variables included in this study are perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., future orientation, optimism, self-efficacy, self-compassion, collective self-esteem, and state hope. These variables

were assessed with the self-report measures previously described, which were also included in the Qualtrics survey and followed the presentation of the articles. For participants from the two different subject pools, a brief and general description of the study was posted, as well as information regarding the duration of the study (15-25 minutes) and the compensation (partial course credit or five dollars). Participants in these subject pools were able to select and sign up for a specific timeslot to come participate in the study in-person in a specified lab space. For those recruited around campus, they were approached and asked if they would be willing to take about 20 minutes to participate in a research study surrounding various attitudes, perceptions and beliefs of young women at Duke for three dollars as compensation. All participants were given a written consent form before participating. Once the consent form was read and signed, they were invited to begin participating in the study, which consisted of completing the Qualtrics survey that asked participants to first read the articles and then respond to a questionnaire that included the demographic and political indicators, outcome measures, and probe for suspicion. All measures and items included in the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

### **Results**

The primary research question of this study asks whether young women's self-perceptions and attitudes (as defined by the seven outcome variables previously described) shifted from before to after the 2016 presidential election and with exposure to salient indirect sexism. I hypothesized that both salient indirect sexism and the 2016 election would be associated with decreased levels of state hope, self-compassion, optimism, and general self-efficacy, and increased levels of perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., collective self-esteem, and future orientation. Further, I hypothesized that the influences of the election and exposure to salient indirect sexism would be additive.



A three-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of time (pre-election, post-election), condition (salient indirect sexism, control) and political party preference (Democratic, Republican, Independent/other) was conducted for each outcome measure (perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., state hope, collective self-esteem, self-compassion, future orientation, optimism, general self-efficacy). No main effects or interactions were found for perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., collective self-esteem, optimism, or self-efficacy. However, there are several trends to note regarding state hope, self-compassion and future orientation.

### **State Hope**

**Total state hope.** In support of my hypothesis, trends in the results suggest that the election might have led to a decrease in state hope for some women—Democrats in the control condition. However, contrary to my hypothesis, trends in the results also suggest that the election might have led to an increase in state hope for other women—Republicans in the control condition. Specifically, results indicate a main effect of time on total state hope,  $F(1, 395) = 4.06, p = 0.04$ , but this trend is qualified by a trending two-way interaction between time and party  $F(2, 395) = 2.54, p = 0.08$ , and a trending three-way interaction between time, party and condition  $F(2, 395), p = 0.07$ . Participants who indicated a preference for the Republican Party, as well as those who indicated Independent/other as their preference, reported higher levels of total state hope after the election ( $M = 6.35, SD = 0.93$  and  $M = 6.17, SD = 0.94$ , respectively) than before the election ( $M = 5.88, SD = 1.07$  and  $M = 5.84, SD = 1.02$ , respectively). Respective p-values for these differences are  $p = 0.10$  and  $p = 0.09$ . However, as mentioned, those results are further qualified by a trending three-way interaction between time, condition, and party,  $F(2, 395), p = 0.07$ . While results reveal that there are no trends within the salient indirect sexism

condition, total state hope decreased within Democrats in the control group ( $p = 0.02$ ) from before ( $M = 6.23$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ) to after ( $M = 5.84$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ) the election. Alternatively, there is a trend towards increased total state hope from before ( $M = 5.75$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ) to after ( $M = 6.47$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ) the election within Republicans in the control condition ( $p = 0.09$ ). These differences are shown in Figure 1. There are no significant or trending differences within the other groups.

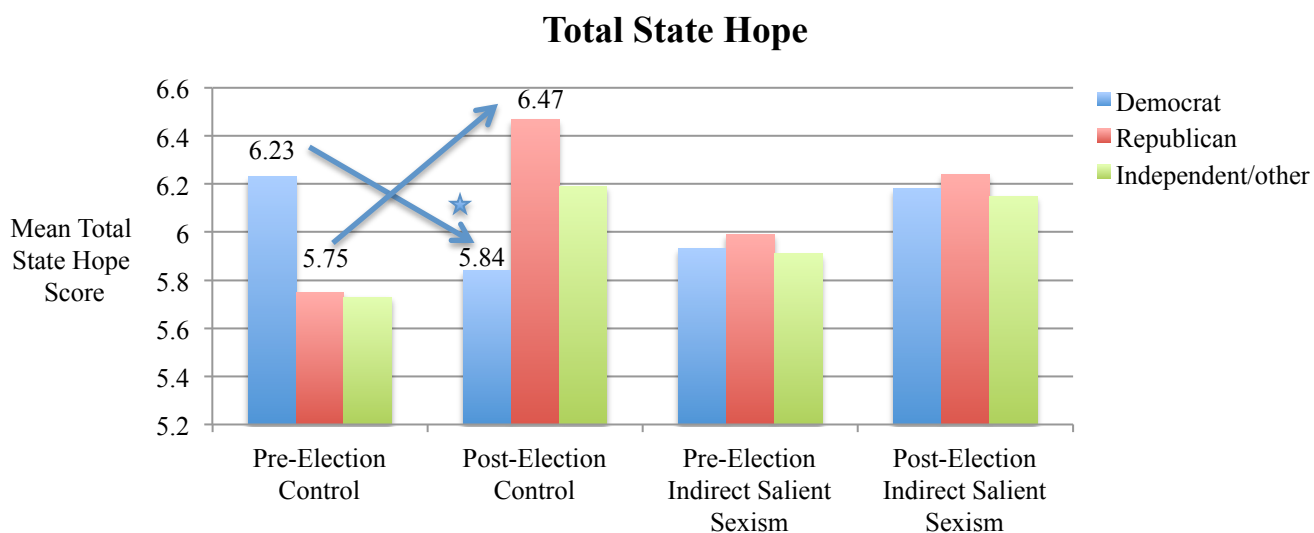


Figure 1. Total state hope by time, condition and political party; arrows indicate a trend ( $p < 0.1$ ) and arrows with a star indicate a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Agency subscale.** The described trends in state hope remain consistent across both subscales of the state hope measure, but within the agency subscale specifically, the time x condition x party interaction is statistically significant  $F(2, 395) = 3.87$ ,  $p = 0.02$ . Consistent with trends for total state hope, Democrats in the control group showed less agency-focused state hope after the election ( $M = 5.72$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ) than before ( $M = 6.24$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ), while Republicans in the control group showed more agency-focused hope after the election ( $M = 6.52$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ) than before ( $M = 5.30$ ,  $SD = 1.64$ ). These differences are shown in Figure 2. There are no significant or trending differences within the other groups.

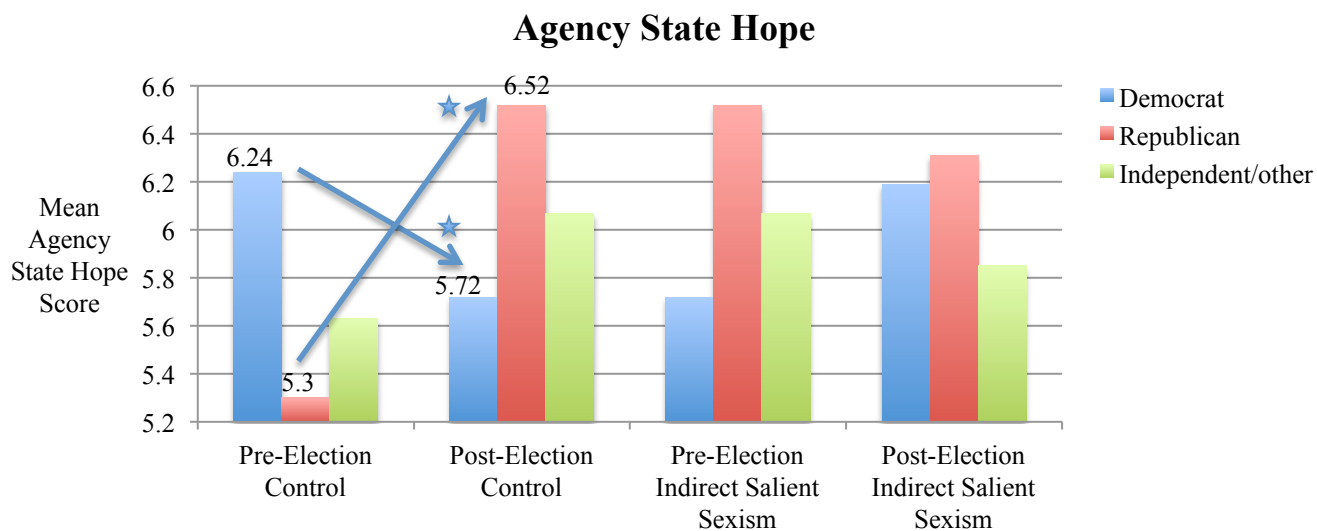


Figure 2. Agency state hope by time, condition and political party; arrows indicate a trend ( $p < 0.1$ ) and arrows with a star indicate a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).

In sum, the results surrounding state hope show two primary trends. First, there is a trending increase in state hope from before to after the election for Republicans in the control condition. While this increase is trending within total state-hope, it is statistically significant within the agency subscale. Second, there is a trending decrease in state hope from before to after the election for Democrats in the control condition. This trend is statistically significant within total state hope and the agency subscale. These results both support and refute my hypotheses. One of my hypotheses for this study was that the election would lead to decreased levels of state hope, which is supported by these results, but only for Democrats in the control group. Alternatively, that hypothesis is also contradicted, as the state hope of Republicans in the control group appears to have increased after the election. Another hypothesis that I had for this study was that exposure to indirect salient sexism would lead to decreased levels of state hope. Considering that the Democrats showed decreases in state hope in the control condition only, that hypothesis was not supported.

### Self-Compassion

**Total self-compassion.** In support of my hypothesis, trends in the results suggest that the election and exposure to salient indirect sexism might have led to a decrease in self-compassion for some women—Republicans in the salient indirect sexism condition. However, contrary to my hypothesis, trends in the results also suggest that the election might have led to an increase in self-compassion for other women—Independents/others in the control condition. Specifically, while no main effects or trends towards main effects of time or condition were found for total self-compassion, there are some trends within the three-way interaction between time, condition and party,  $F(2, 393) = 1.75, p = 0.18$ . Within the salient indirect sexism condition, Republicans indicated less total self-compassion after the election ( $M = 2.54, SD = 0.59, p = 0.08$ ) than before ( $M = 2.98, SD = 0.59$ ). Additionally, in the control condition, the Independent/other group indicated more total self-compassion after the election ( $M = 3.02, SD = 0.67, p = 0.09$ ) than before ( $M = 2.72, SD = 0.56$ ). These trends are shown in Figure 3. There are no significant or trending differences within other groups.

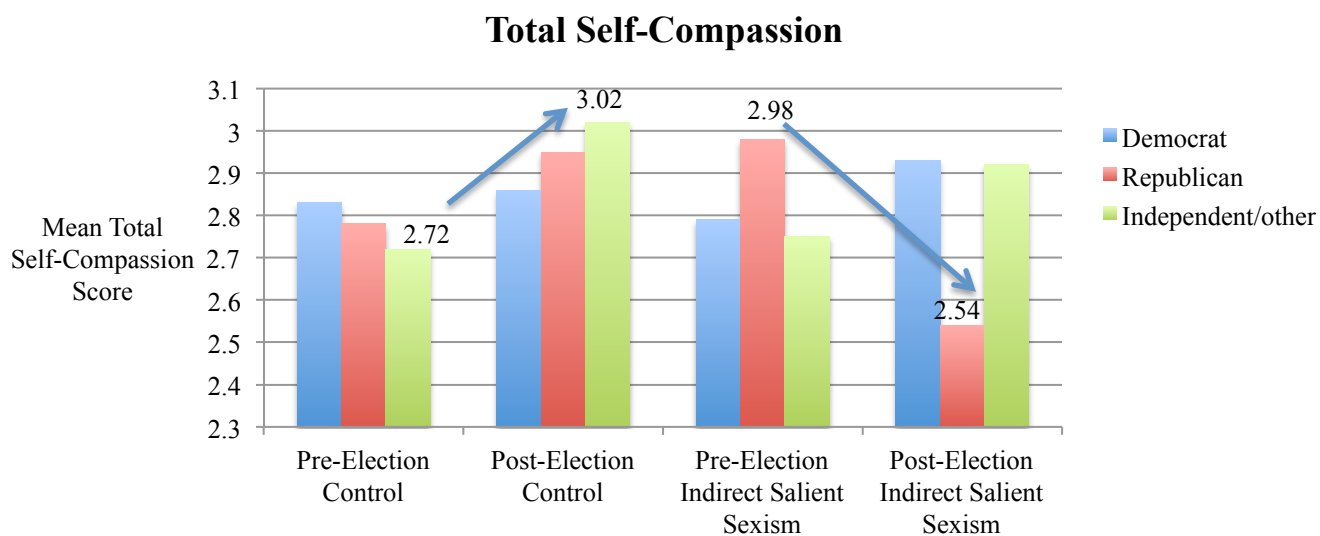


Figure 3. Total self-compassion by time, condition and political party; arrows indicate a trend ( $p < 0.1$ ) and arrows with a star indicate a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Self-judgment subscale.** Results surrounding the self-compassion subscales separately are consistent with these described patterns. Further, within the results for both the self-judgment and mindfulness subscales, these trends appear to be somewhat enhanced. Regarding self-judgment, there is a trend towards an interaction between time, condition and party,  $F(2, 393) = 2.59, p = 0.08$ . Consistent with the trends found for total self-compassion, Republicans within the salient indirect sexism condition reported significantly higher scores on the self-judgment subscale (higher self-judgment translates to lower self-compassion) after the election ( $M = 2.00, SD = 0.69, p = 0.04$ ) than before the election ( $M = 2.68, SD = 0.94$ ). This difference is shown in Figure 4. There are no significant or trending differences within the other groups.

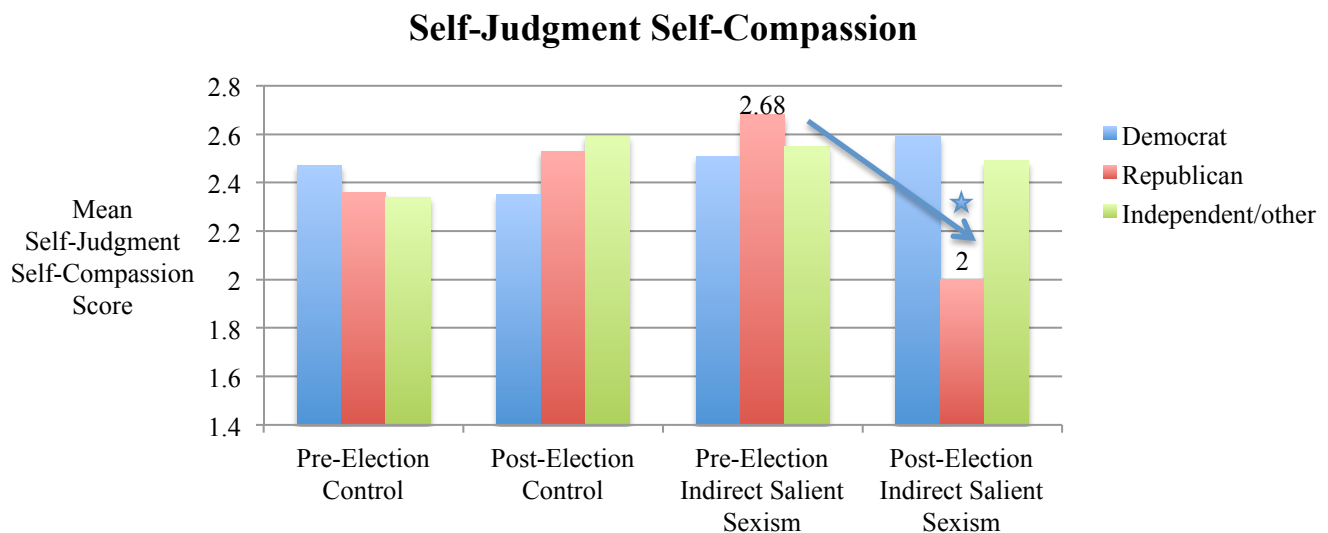


Figure 4. Self-judgment self-compassion by time, condition and political party; arrows indicate a trend ( $p < 0.1$ ) and arrows with a star indicate a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Mindfulness subscale.** Regarding the mindfulness subscale, results indicate a trend towards a main effect of time on mindfulness,  $F(1, 393) = 3.05, p = 0.08$ , but this trend is qualified by several interactions. First, there is an interaction between time and condition  $F(1,$

393) = 5.553,  $p = 0.02$ . The control group reported more mindfulness post-election than pre-election ( $p = 0.005$ ), while there is no trend within the salient sexism condition. Further, there are trends within the interaction between time and party  $F(2, 393) = 2.26, p = 0.11$ . The Independent/other group reported significantly higher levels of mindfulness after the election as compared to before ( $p = 0.003$ ), while there are no trends to note within the Democrat or Republican groups. These two-way interactions appear to be further qualified by a trending three-way interaction between time, condition and party  $F(2, 393) = 2.45, p = 0.09$ . Consistent with the total self-compassion and self-judgment subscale trends, Republicans within the salient indirect sexism condition indicated lower levels of mindfulness after the election ( $M = 2.98, SD = 0.59, p = 0.06$ ) than before ( $M = 3.52, SD = 0.53$ ). Additionally, consistent with the total self-compassion trends, the Independent/other group within the control condition showed significantly more mindfulness after the election ( $M = 3.63, SD = 0.67, p = 0.006$ ) than before ( $M = 3.07, SD = 0.71$ ). These differences are shown in Figure 5. There are no significant or trending differences within the other groups.

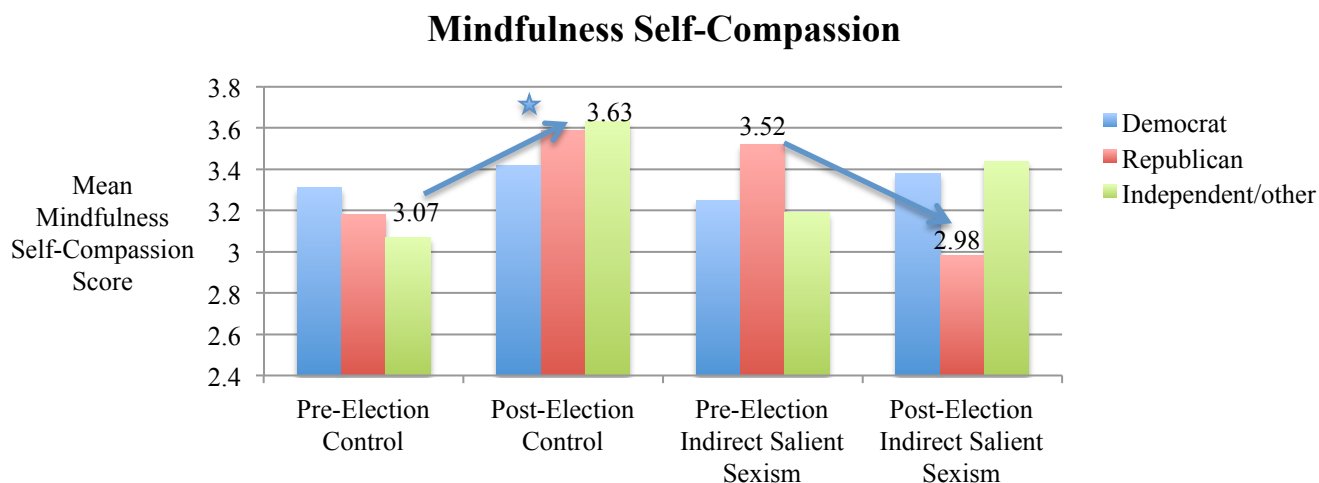


Figure 5. Mindfulness self-compassion by time, condition and political party; arrows indicate a trend ( $p < 0.1$ ) and arrows with a star indicate a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).

In sum, the results surrounding self-compassion show two primary trends. First, there is a trending decrease in self-compassion from before to after the election for Republicans in the indirect salient sexism condition. While this decrease is trending within total self-compassion and trending towards significance within the mindfulness subscale, it is statistically significant within the self-judgment subscale. In other words, Republicans in the indirect salient sexism condition reported significantly lower levels of self-compassion via significantly higher levels of self-judgment after the election. Second, there is a trend towards increased self-compassion from before to after the election for Independents/others in the control condition. While this increase is trending within total self-compassion, it is statistically significant within the mindfulness subscale. In other words, Independents/others in the control condition reported significantly higher levels of self-compassion via significantly higher levels of mindfulness after the election. These results both support and refute my hypotheses. One of my hypotheses for this study was that the election would lead to decreases in self-compassion, which is supported by these results, but only for Republicans in the salient indirect sexism condition. Alternatively, that hypothesis is also contradicted, as the self-compassion of Independents/others in the control group appears to have increased after the election. Another hypothesis that I had for this study was that exposure to indirect salient sexism would lead to decreased levels of self-compassion, which is also supported by these results, but only for Republicans in the post-election group. However, because this is only a pattern in the indirect salient sexism condition within the post-election sample, this also provides some evidence in support of my hypothesis that the influences of the election and exposure to salient indirect sexism are additive.

### Future Orientation

The results surrounding future orientation both refute and support my hypothesis that the election would be related to increases in future orientation, as this was the case for some women, while others indicated the opposite. Specifically, while no main effects or trends towards main effects of time or condition were found on future orientation, results indicate a significant interaction between time and party,  $F(2, 393) = 4.32, p = 0.01$ . Democrats reported lower levels of future orientation after the election ( $M = 3.18, SD = 0.64, p = 0.03$ ) than before the election ( $M = 3.35, SD = 0.57$ ), while Republicans reported higher levels of future orientation after the election ( $M = 3.63, SD = 0.42, p = 0.02$ ) than before the election ( $M = 3.24, SD = 0.71$ ). These differences are shown in Figure 6. There are no other significant interactions or trends for future orientation. In sum, results surrounding future orientation suggest that the election might be associated with increased future orientation for Republicans, but decreased future orientation for Democrats.

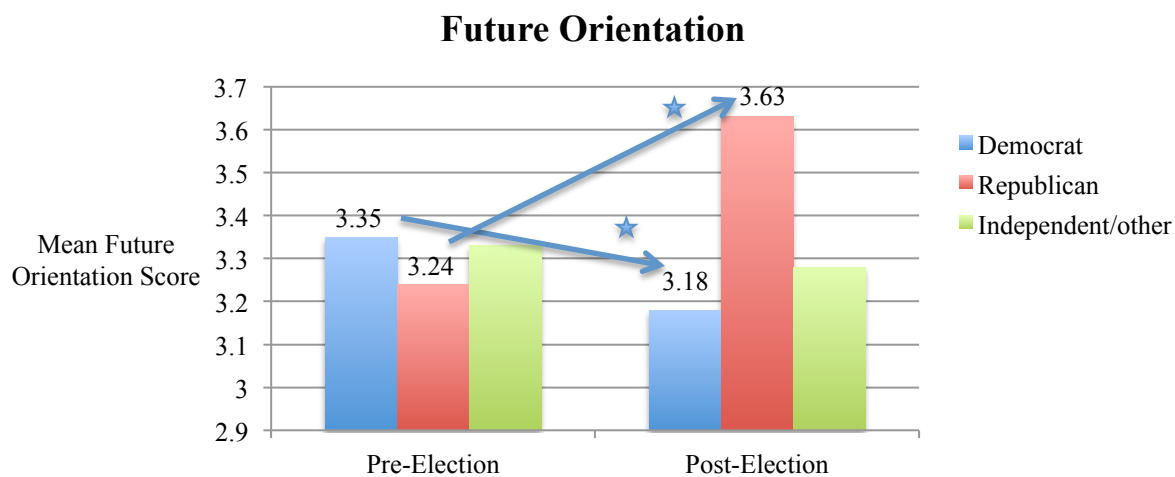


Figure 6. Future orientation by time and political party; arrows indicate a trend ( $p < 0.1$ ) and arrows with a star indicate a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).



**Alternate analyses**

All outcome measures were also analyzed with a two-way ANOVA of time and condition, and a three-way ANOVA of time, condition and race/ethnicity, but no consistent effects, interactions or trends were found. Additionally, analyses were conducted with non-U.S. citizens excluded and no significant differences were found in comparing those results to the results of the analyses that include the whole sample.

**Discussion**

To reiterate, the primary research question of this research asks whether young women's affective and cognitive responses (as defined by levels of perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., collective self-esteem, future orientation, state hope, optimism, self-compassion and self-efficacy) would shift with exposure to salient indirect sexism and/or from before to after the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States. I hypothesized that both salient indirect sexism and the 2016 election would be associated with decreased levels of state hope, self-compassion, optimism, and general self-efficacy, and increased levels of perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., collective self-esteem, and future orientation. Further, I hypothesized that the influences of the election and exposure to salient indirect sexism would be additive.

The results of this research did not point to any consistent, significant effects of the salient sexism manipulation, but there were several interesting trends regarding pre versus post election within several of the outcome variables. Specifically, while no significant results or trends were found within the analyses surrounding perceived pervasiveness of sexism in the U.S., collective self-esteem, optimism, or self-efficacy, there were interesting pre/post trends within state hope, self-compassion and future orientation. Regarding state hope, our results

suggest that the election might be related to an increase in state hope for Republicans in the control condition. This pattern is trending within total state hope and statistically significant within the agency subscale. Results also suggest a decrease in state hope for Democrats in the control condition. This decrease is statistically significant within total state hope and the agency subscale. Regarding self-compassion, results suggest that exposure to salient indirect sexism after the election might be related to decreased self-compassion for Republicans. This pattern is trending within total self-compassion, trending towards significance within the mindfulness subscale, and statistically significant within the self-judgment subscale. Results also suggest that the election might be related to increased self-compassion for Independents/others in the control condition. This increase is trending within total self-compassion and statistically significant within the mindfulness subscale. Finally, results suggest that the election might be related to an increase in future orientation for Republicans, but a decrease in future orientation for Democrats. These patterns are statistically significant.

In considering why the 2016 election might be related to decreases in state hope for some Democrats, but increases in state hope for some Republicans, it is important to look towards the psychology of winning and losing elections. Previous research has shown that supporters of winning candidates exhibit increases in satisfaction with democracy (Blais & Gélinau, 2007) and that, alternatively, supporters of losing candidates may exhibit lower levels of political trust, satisfaction with democracy, and confidence that the government is responsive to citizens (Craig, Martinez, Gainous, & Kane, 2006). Further, research has also shown that individuals report higher levels of subjective well-being when the party of their choice is in power (Tavits, 2008). Presumably, such outcomes would play a role in levels of state hope. Thus, this could be a driving factor behind the increase in some Republicans' and decrease in some Democrats' state

hope after the election. The fact that the direction of change in state hope from before to after the election differed across political party preference suggests that the changes might have been primarily influenced by whether participants' candidate of choice won or lost, rather than by a perceived sexist nature of the election and the winning candidate. If the latter were the primary influence, I would expect state hope to have decreased regardless of political party preference.

As mentioned, the increase in state hope within the Republican group was only found in the control condition. It is possible that, as hypothesized, exposure to indirect salient sexism did have a negative influence on Republicans' state hope, but that its influence was counteracted by a positive influence of the victory of the Republican Party candidate. Similarly, because the decrease in state hope within the Democrat group was only found in the control condition, exposure to indirect salient sexism could have actually positively influenced state hope levels, which, in turn, may have counteracted the negative influence of the election that appears in the Democrats' state hope levels in the control condition. One possible explanation for this is that making sexism salient could have sparked a passion and motivation to fight for women's rights in some participants, which could serve as a positive influence on state hope. This idea will be further discussed in the consideration of the null findings.

Regarding why exposure to salient indirect sexism after the election might be related to decreases in self-compassion for Republicans only, it is necessary to consider a possible influence of the Duke environment, as the majority of the community is liberal. Presumably, Trump, his supporters, and Republicans in general were subject to scrutiny and criticism, in the wake of a Trump victory, from those who are more liberal. Therefore, it could be that Republicans at Duke felt scrutinized, criticized, and isolated by a lack of support from the community after the election. Research has shown that having strong social support positively

influences psychological well-being, while lacking social support negatively influences psychological well-being (House, Landis, & Umberson, 1988). Therefore, since self-compassion has been found to be associated with psychological well-being (Neff, 2011; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007), if Republicans experienced criticism and a lack of social support from the largely liberal Duke community after the Trump victory, this could have negatively influenced their levels of self-compassion after being exposed to salient indirect sexism, especially in the realm of heightened self-judgment. Alternatively, Duke students who identify as Democrats or Independents presumably had a stronger network of social support in the wake of a Trump win, which might have helped to mitigate the possible negative psychological influences of the election and exposure to indirect sexism on self-compassion.

Further, as mentioned, participants who identified as Independent or other and were in the control condition actually showed a trending increase in self-compassion from before to after the election. Specifically, this increase is significant within the mindfulness subscale, which includes items that ask about the extent to which one is able to maintain a balanced perspective and open mind. Given that those in the Independent/other group chose not to identify with either Democrat or Republican, it is possible that they would be the group least likely to receive scrutiny or criticism for a particular political stance and/or that they have a heightened ability to remain politically open-minded. Thus, the election might have led to an increase in open-mindedness and emotional balance that did not occur for other political groups. This increase in mindfulness-related self-compassion is not present within the Independent/other group that was exposed to salient indirect sexism. That suggests that any possible positive influence of the election on levels of mindfulness-based self-compassion for Independents/others might have

been minimized by a negative influence of exposure to salient indirect sexism on mindfulness-based self-compassion.

With respect to the increase in future orientation from before to after the election within Republicans, but decrease in future orientation from before to after the election within Democrats, emotional factors could play a role. Research has suggested that unpleasant emotions can lead to a more constricted future time perspective, while pleasant emotions can lead to more open and unrestricted future orientation (Melges, 1982; Seginer, 2008). Additionally, research has pointed to hope, specifically, as an important mediating positive emotion within that relationship (Seginer, 2008). As noted, results of the current study indicate a possible increase in state hope after the election for some Republicans, but possible decrease in state hope after the election for some Democrats. Further, as previously described, research surrounding the psychology of winning an election suggests that individuals report higher levels of subjective well-being when the party of their choice is in power (Tavits, 2008). Thus, the results surrounding future orientation might be explained by potentially higher levels of hope and positive emotions within Republicans, as compared to Democrats.

Regarding the cluster of null results and the somewhat inconsistent nature of the found associations and trends, there are many factors to consider as contributing influences. First, the influence of the election on women's psychology might have varied considerably with personality and emotionality factors that were not investigated in this study. Previous research surrounding the 2008 election suggests that citizens' levels of state anxiety and anger before the election influenced how their levels of perceived discrimination changed from pre to post election (Valentino & Brader, 2011). Additionally, research has shown that certain dimensions of personality are linked to both the likelihood of engaging in certain coping strategies and the

efficacy or outcome of coping strategies in stress contexts (DeLongis & Holtzman, 2005). In considering such research through the lens of the 2016 election and this particular study, it suggests that specific personality traits or emotional states could have played significant roles in how attitudes and psychological well-being shifted with the election of Donald Trump and exposure to salient sexism. This study did not thoroughly investigate emotion or personality variation, so it is possible that personality type and/or emotional factors played a role in shaping women's affective and cognitive responses to the election or to exposure to sexism and, thus, prevented consistent patterns in the results.

Similarly, as previously mentioned, some women appear to have reacted to the election of Donald Trump and/or the influx of public sexist behavior and rhetoric with increased passion and motivation to stand up for women and take action against sexism. A powerful example of this is the women's marches that took place all over the country after Donald Trump's inauguration (Stein, Hendrix, & Hauslohner, 2017). Such a response might work to counteract possible negative influences of exposure to salient indirect sexism and of the victory of a candidate that is associated with sexist actions and language because previous research shows that psychological well-being is positively influenced by levels of passion (Philippe, Vallerand, & Lavigne, 2009) and intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, this could help to explain why the results did not indicate a consistent negative influence of exposure to salient indirect sexism and/or the election on women's psychological well-being.

Another factor to consider in thinking about why this study produced primarily null results is the undulating nature of the campaign and election season. That is, every day within the time periods of the data collection for this study could have provoked elicitation of a different emotion, reaction, perspective, or attitude for women. For example, some days were filled with

buzz about leaked tapes that feature Donald Trump bragging about sexual assault (Taylor, 2016), while others focused on how Hillary Clinton—the first major party female candidate—was significantly up in the polls after winning multiple presidential debates (Agiesta, 2016). This could have left women feeling extremely empowered or extremely degraded at any given time, depending on the latest trending election-related event or what they chose to read and attend to at that particular time. Thus, it is difficult to isolate and investigate the specific influences of Trump's election or exposure to indirect salient sexism within the context of this study, which could also help to explain the largely null results.

All of these considerations point to the difficult nature of predicting and studying the psychological impacts of the 2016 election, which aligns with findings surrounding previous elections. For instance, in terms of the 2008 election, it might seem intuitive to hypothesize that the election of the first African American president influenced the psychology of Americans in ways that were significant and positive in nature, especially within the African American population. However, research endeavors behind those assumptions paint a more ambiguous picture, through inconsistent and null results, which brings light to the complexity of the relationship between an election and psychological outcomes. First, research provides evidence to suggest a number of positive psychological shifts in the wake of the election of the first African American president. For instance, studies show that Obama, as an in-group role model, significantly reduced the negative effects of stereotype threat (Marx, Co & Friedman, 2009), had positive emotional influences (Ong, Burrow & Fuller-Rowell, 2012) and led to increases in identity exploration, as well as both short-term and long-term influences on racial identity (Fuller-Rowell, Burrow & Ong, 2011) for young African Americans. Beyond such positive influences for African Americans, the 2008 election was also found to be associated with

decreased levels of implicit bias in non African Americans (Columb & Plant, 2011; Plant et al. 2009). Findings such as these offer a compelling illustration of the 2008 Obama election as a significant, positive, and socially productive force of psychological change.

In contrast, there is also research to suggest that Obama's election was not only associated with positive psychological implications, but also with consequences more negative in nature. Empirical investigations of nationwide samples and polling data show that the election of Barack Obama was related to decreases in perceived pervasiveness of racial discrimination in the U.S. and increases in negative opinions of blacks, as well as heightened opposition to affirmative action and immigration (Kaiser et al. 2009; Valentino & Brader, 2011). Such findings shed a new light on Obama's election, as it no longer appears to be a strictly positive force with regard to psychological consequences. Additionally, there is also research surrounding the Obama election that did not yield significant influences at all. For instance, researchers investigated the relationship between Obama's election and academic performance of African American students and found no association (Aronson et al. 2009). Those results are surprising given the widespread assumed positive influence of Obama's election for the psychology of young African Americans and the previously mentioned results that suggest that Obama's election reduced the negative effects of stereotype threat (Marx, Co & Friedman, 2009). Further, a longitudinal study with a large heterogeneous sample indicated that there was very little evidence of any systematic change in implicit or explicit racial attitudes over a 2.5 year period spanning before, during and after the 2008 election (Schmidt & Nosek, 2010). In sum, the discussed literature surrounding the 2008 election implies that influential presidential elections can play a complicated, inconsistent and ambiguous role in the psychology of American citizens—an idea that aligns with the outcomes of the current study as well.



There are several key limitations of this study that should be noted. For one, because the sample used for this research was comprised of students from an elite institution, it is not representative of the population of American women at large (Sears, 1986). Specifically, the sample is primarily Caucasian (51%), liberal (79%), between the ages of 18 and 20 (71%) and at the college education level. While differences across race/ethnicity and political party were investigated, the sample did not permit for investigation of the influence of education level or age, which could be influential factors. While higher education is associated with increased political engagement (Hillygus, 2005), research has shown that young adults, including college students and recent graduates, are significantly more disengaged from politics than older adults (Beaumont, Colby, Ehrlich, & Torney-Purta, 2006), even despite the new age of expanded media and social networking (Baumgartner & Morris, 2009). Presumably, this could mean that young people would be less psychologically influenced by an election than older generations. Hence, future work is needed to investigate women's affective and cognitive responses to the 2016 election and Trump's presidency within a more diverse and representative sample of women.

There are also several limitations of the study design. For one, the article prime might not have been the most effective sexism manipulation method in this particular context because women were most probably exposed to related media with differing messages on any given day during the campaign and election period. In the event that such competition between media and a sexism article manipulation continues to exist throughout Trump's presidency, future work on this topic should incorporate a different type of sexism manipulation, such as having participants either witness or be the target of sexist behaviors from a confederate. Additionally, while a probe for suspicion was included at the end of the questionnaire to ensure that participants did not have a problematic depth of knowledge surrounding the true purpose of the research, nothing was

included to determine whether the participants did, in fact, read the articles presented. Thus, if future work does use an article manipulation method, reading comprehension questions and/or a fixed amount of time required to remain on the article pages before continuing with the survey should be included, in order to increase both the ability to determine whether the articles were read and the likelihood that the articles are read thoroughly.

Another limitation of the study design is the timing of the data collection. The constant shifts in the tone of the media throughout the campaign and election season, especially surrounding topics related to gender and sexism, mean that collecting one sample in the few weeks before the election and one sample in the few weeks after the election might not provide sufficient snapshots of women's pre-election and post-election attitudes and self-perceptions. If time and resources had permitted, it would have been more effective to collect data at more time points, both before and after the election. Further, the pre-election sample and post-election sample were two separate samples in this research, in order to protect the confidentiality of the student participants and prevent problematic attrition. While participants in both samples were recruited from the exact same environment, findings would be more accurate if the study had employed a pretest posttest design within the same sample. Future research surrounding women's affective and cognitive responses to Trump's presidency and/or exposure to sexism should attempt to collect data at multiple time points within the same sample in order to yield more accurate results.

Despite its limitations, this research provides initial insight into how the 2016 presidential election might be influencing the psychology of young women. Specifically, results point towards a possible influence of the election on the state hope of some young women—in the negative direction for Democrats, but positive for Republicans—and suggest that exposure to

salient indirect sexism after the election might be related to decreases in self-compassion for Republicans. Further, results also suggest that the election could be related to increased future orientation for Republicans and decreased future orientation for Democrats. Hence, results imply possible influences of the election on women's psychological well-being, as it pertains to state hope and self-compassion, as well as on their tendency to be future oriented and plan ahead. Results also suggest that political party preference is an important factor in considering the direction of such influences. Future research using alternate manipulation designs within more diverse and representative samples of women is needed to further explore the nature and duration of any influences of the Trump election and presidency on women's psychology. Further, future research on the topic should investigate possible mechanisms or determinants, beyond political party, that could underlie those influences, such as personality and emotionality factors. Such future work would help to evaluate which women are/will be influenced most substantially by the Trump election and presidency, as well improve our general understanding of how women are experiencing this untraditional time in politics.

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## Appendix A

### Article Manipulation Materials

There were two groups in both the pre and post election samples (salient indirect sexism and control). Both groups read a set of three articles, all of which are included in this appendix.

Articles A1 and A2 were read in both conditions. Article A3 was the third article in the set of three for the control condition. Article A4 was the third article in the set of three for the manipulation condition.

## Article A1

## Judge Throws Out McDonald's Obesity Suit

By: Jeremy Captin

NEW YORK -- People who wolf down supersized, high calorie foods cannot blame the fast-food industry for their weight and health problems, a federal judge has ruled.

In dismissing a class-action lawsuit that claimed that McDonald's food caused health problems in children, U.S. District Court Judge Robert Sweet said consumers "cannot blame McDonald's if they, nonetheless, choose to satiate their appetite with a surfeit of supersized McDonald's products."

"If a person knows or should know that eating copious orders of supersized McDonald's products is unhealthy and may result in weight gain ... it is not the place of the law to protect them from their own excesses," Sweet wrote in the 65-page ruling issued Wednesday. "Nobody is forced to eat at McDonald's."

The lawsuit, filed last summer, became a flashpoint for pundits and editorial writers who jeered that it was the latest example of a litigious society in which people abdicate personal responsibility.

"Common sense has prevailed," McDonald's spokesman Walt Riker said after the decision. "We said from the beginning that this was a frivolous lawsuit. Today's ruling confirms that fact."

Attorney Samuel Hirsch, who represented the plaintiffs, said they "have every intention of amending their complaint and refileing it in the federal court within the next 30 days."

Hirsch had argued the high fat, sugar and cholesterol content of McDonald's food is "a very insipid, toxic kind of thing" when ingested regularly by young kids.

He cited the case of a 13-year-old New York City boy who said he ate at McDonald's three to four times a week and is now 5-foot-4 and 278 pounds. Other affidavits filed by the parents of obese children claim they never saw posters or pamphlets inside McDonald's restaurants describing the nutritional content of the food.

According to a McDonald's Web site, a Big Mac packs 590 calories and 34 grams of fat while a large french fry weighs in at 540 calories and 26 grams of fat. Riker said McDonald's "has been providing nutrition information about our food for the past 30 years so that customers can make informed choices about what they eat."

## Article A2

Plagiarism brings out the child in college students  
By Jennifer Thompson Mustang Daily (California Poly State U.)

In fourth grade I copied just about all of the report I did on the San Diego Mission from the Encyclopedia Britannica. In eighth grade I borrowed passages I wrote in a science paper on trees from a reference book at the city library. In 10th grade I turned in a paper the captain of the swim team wrote two years earlier.

This fall I wrote my own media law term paper because I knew better.

College students across the nation are reverting to their childhood days of copying, cheating and plagiarizing, but at an expensive price.

So-called online paper mills that recycle, reuse and renew term papers charge as much as \$35 a page for custom reports at sites like [www.schoolsucks.com](http://www.schoolsucks.com). Databases with thousands of papers online are easy to access and fast to download. Most of these sites attempt to shirk responsibility for the plagiarism service they offer by stating that they are only quick fixes and should not be used when original work is warranted.

Of course, it's tempting to turn in one of these easy alternatives. Most professors don't even know my name, let alone my writing style. But the morals instilled in students as children should hold them back from committing such an infraction on today's ideals.

Recently developed software is beginning to make a mark on those students whose morals and ideals are so misguided as to plagiarize something from the Internet, or worse, turn in a complete term paper downloaded from a cheat site. Services like [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) take a digital fingerprint of a student's paper and scan the Internet and the group's own database looking for matches, highlighting passages that match and providing links to the online source, according to a Reuters article published May 13.

A University of California at Berkeley team of professors, led by John Barrie, created the program. Barrie said that hundreds of thousands of papers have already been checked by the program. According to the Reuters article, of those hundreds of thousands, 75 percent came directly from the Internet.

There are many avenues and ways to go about plagiarizing, cheating and borrowing -- too many to stamp out so that students may live a life free of temptation and destruction. Plagiarism has been a pillar among the student community for hundreds of years, and knocking it down is no solution. Finding another way around it is.

Do like my friend Scott and wait until the weekend before your senior project is due to actually put a dent in it. Write your own paper two hours before it's due. At least then, it's your own work that you can take pride in. Whether it's a D or an A paper, it's your failure or success and you didn't have to pay \$35 dollars a page for something thousands of students have already turned in. Better yet, stop acting like fourth-graders and do your own work. You should have learned that lesson back in grammar school.

## Article A3

## STUDY EXPLORES LUPUS RISK FACTORS AND TREATMENT

By: J. L. Haley, Associated Press

Recent data collected by the Illinois Research Consortium (IRC) found new risk factors and current treatments for lupus, an autoimmune disease. The IRC study is based on six years of data from lupus patients. Lupus, also known as systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), is a chronic inflammatory disease that often affects the joints, kidneys, blood and nervous system, and is known to strike some ethnic groups more than others. The severity of lupus can range from mild to fatal.

## ABOUT LUPUS

Estimates indicate that roughly 1.5 million in the U.S. live with lupus. Lupus causes the body's immune system to attack its own tissues, causing inflammation and damage. No two cases are alike, experts say. In fact, there are four types of the illness, ranging from mild to severe. Before effective therapies were developed, the disease was fatal more often, usually from overwhelming infection and kidney failure. The Lupus Foundation estimates that more than 16,000 new cases develop every year.

## LUPUS SYMPTOMS AND RISK FACTORS

Often lupus patients encounter stiff and achy joint pain, caused by inflammation brought on by the disease. In addition to swollen joints, the other symptoms include fatigue, facial rash, fever, chest pain, swollen glands and sores in the mouth and nose. Not only does lupus tend to run in families, but, a person may be more susceptible if a relative has other autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis. Age is another risk factor; lupus is most often diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 45.

Additionally, the IRC study found that women are more likely to develop the most common form of lupus, compared to men. The reason for this is unknown, but the trend is seen around the world and archival data suggests this has been the case for many generations. Lupus also seems to appear in a more aggressive form among women compared to men. On average, women with lupus experience more frequent flare-ups as well as greater damage to the skin and kidneys. The study found that symptoms also tend to occur at an earlier age for women.

## FINAL THOUGHTS ON TREATING LUPUS

The lead researcher from the IRC study suggests that symptoms are more controllable today, saying that "the prognosis for lupus today is very good. The survival rate is usually over 90 percent in 5 to 10 years of having the disease. In the 1950s it was probably 50 percent." Part of the reason for the improved success has to do with better treatment in managing the condition. Over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin, naproxen and ibuprofen offer relief to some patients. Additionally, corticosteroids can be prescribed to treat flare-ups. In short, the IRC study demonstrated that although new risk factors are emerging, the treatment and prognosis of the disease are looking better and better for patients.

## Article A4

## SEXISM IS ALIVE

By: J. L. Haley, Associated Press

Recent data collected by the Illinois Research Consortium (IRC) reveals that women face widespread discrimination and sexism in many important areas of life. The study, which included archival data analysis and a survey of over 5,000 current undergraduates and 5,000 alumni who graduated between 1998 and 2008, revealed that women routinely face discrimination and inequality in the workplace, politics, the courtroom, and in everyday interpersonal interactions. In addition, the survey revealed that men continue to hold negative attitudes about women.

## SEXISM STILL PERVASIVE

The data also showed that stereotypes and negative attitudes about women have remained pervasive in recent years. Research has shown that between 75% and 80% of men hold sexist attitudes and would discriminate against women if given the opportunity. Men generally also rate women as more irrational, manipulative, over-emotional, and less competent than men. In a survey of American men last year, over 65% said that they thought women should stay home and raise kids. In short, all women face pervasive sexism on a regular basis and lack opportunities compared to men.

## MENTAL HEALTH RISKS

Men's attitudes definitely have an impact on women. The study revealed that 60% of current female students reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment from male students, faculty, and work supervisors. Women were also eight times more likely than male students to report hearing prejudiced assumptions made about their personal and academic interests, to be the target of derogatory remarks, and to be treated disrespectfully because of their gender. This type of discrimination-related stress is known to lead to increased physical and psychological health problems. In fact, women are more than three times as likely as men to report experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression. The Illinois Research Consortium concluded that the stress associated with experiencing discrimination likely contributed to these mental health disparities.

## NOT EXPECTING THIS

Finally, 90% of the female alumni reported that while in college they did not recognize the extent to which prejudice would cause personal and professional barriers for them. In short, the Illinois Research Consortium demonstrated that women face pervasive discrimination on a regular basis and a lack of opportunities compared to men.

More results from the survey can be found online at <http://www.irc.org>

## Appendix B

### Questionnaire Materials

All respondents filled out a questionnaire with the items and scales included in this appendix.

The questionnaire included a section of demographic items (Section B1), a section of items about the 2016 election and political orientation (Section B2), a section for the outcome measures (Sections B3 – B9), and a probe for suspicion (Section B10). There are several slight differences within the wording of some of the items between pre-election data collection and post-election data collection, which are noted.



Section B1

Demographic Indicators

Please circle the answer choice that best describes you.

What is your age?

18-20

21-23

>23

Are you studying or majoring in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) field?

Yes

No

Have not declared a major

What is your ethnic/racial background?

African-American, Black

Hispanic, Latino

Asian, Pacific Islander

Native American, American Indian

White Caucasian

Other

Are you a US citizen?

Yes

No

Are you a native English speaker?

Yes

No

## Section B2

## Political Indicators

Pre-election: As you probably know, the 2016 presidential election is coming up very soon. Please answer the following questions about the election and your political orientation. Please remember that none of this information will be tied to you in any way. // Post-election: As you probably know, the United States recently had a presidential election. Please answer the following questions about the election and your political orientation. Please remember that none of this information will be tied to you in any way.

What is your political party preference?

- Democratic
- Republican
- Independent
- Other

Pre-election: Do you plan to vote in the 2016 presidential election? // Post-election: Did you vote in the 2016 presidential election?

- Yes
- No

Which of the following best describes your political orientation?

- Very liberal
- Somewhat liberal
- Slightly liberal
- Neither liberal nor conservative
- Slightly conservative
- Somewhat conservative
- Very conservative

## Section B3

## Perceived Pervasiveness of Sexism in the U.S.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below using the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I frequently witness women being treated unfairly in this country.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Gender discrimination is common in this country.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Women and men are treated as equal in this country.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I believe that sexism is widespread in this country.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Gender discrimination and sexism are no longer problems in this country.

## Section B4

## Adult State Hope Scale (Snyder et al. 1996)

Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes how you think about yourself right now and put that number in the blank before each sentence. Please take a few moments to focus on yourself and what is going on in your life at this moment. Once you have this "here and now" set, go ahead and answer each item according to the following scale:

- 1 = Definitely False
- 2 = Mostly False
- 3 = Somewhat False
- 4 = Slightly False
- 5 = Slightly True
- 6 = Somewhat True
- 7 = Mostly True
- 8 = Definitely True

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. If I should find myself in a jam, I could think of many ways to get out of it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. There are lots of ways around any problem that I am facing now.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Right now, I see myself as being pretty successful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I can think of many ways to reach my current goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. At this time, I am meeting the goals that I have set for myself.

## Section B5

## Collective Self-Esteem Scale (Luhtanen &amp; Crocker, 1992)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling your choice based on the following key...

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Being a woman is an important reflection of who I am.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. In general, being a woman is an important part of my self-image.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Being a woman is unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Overall, being a woman has very little to do with how I feel about myself.

## Section B6

## Self-Compassion Scale (Neff, 2003)

How I Typically Act Towards Myself in Difficult Times: Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

- | Almost never |   |   |   |   | Almost always   |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 1. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 2. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.                                      |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through.             |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 4. When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world. |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 5. I try to be loving towards myself when I'm feeling emotional pain.   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 6. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.                              |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 7. When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am.         |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 8. When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself.   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 9. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people. |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 11. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.                                |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 12. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.                          |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 13. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.                      |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 14. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.                                    |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 15. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.  |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 16. When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself.   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 17. When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective.                                     |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 18. When I'm really struggling, I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier time of it.                 |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 19. I'm kind to myself when I'm experiencing suffering.   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 20. When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings.   |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 21. I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I'm experiencing suffering.                                       |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 22. When I'm feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness.                                  |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 23. I'm tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies.  |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 24. When something painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion.                                     |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 25. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.                              |
| _____        |   |   |   |   | 26. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.                       |

Section B7

Future Orientation Scale (Steinberg et al. 2009)

Please choose the one option for each item below that best describes you.

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me				Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some people like to plan things out one step at a time	<b>BUT</b>	Other people like to jump right into things without planning them out beforehand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some people would rather be happy today than take their chances on what might happen in the future	<b>BUT</b>	Other people will give up their happiness now so that they can get what they want in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some people are always making lists of things to do	<b>BUT</b>	Other people find making lists of things to do a waste of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some people think that planning things out in advance is a waste of time	<b>BUT</b>	Other people think that things work out better if they are planned out in advance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some people like to take big projects and break them down into small steps before starting to work on them	<b>BUT</b>	Other people find that breaking big projects down into small steps isn't really necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Section B8

Revised Life Orientation Test (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below using the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. It's easy for me to relax.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. If something can go wrong for me, it will.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I'm always optimistic about my future
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I enjoy my friends a lot.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. It's important for me to keep busy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I hardly ever expect things to go my way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I don't get upset too easily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I rarely count on good things happening to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.



## Section B9

## General Self-Efficacy Scale (Sherer et al. 1982)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below using the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I give up on things before completing them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I avoid facing difficulties.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When I decide to do something, I go right to work on it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Failure just makes me try harder.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I feel insecure about my ability to do things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I am a self-reliant person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I give up easily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life.

Section B10

Probe for suspicion

What do you think this study is about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_