

Employing the Opinion-Based Group Interaction Method as a Social Intervention Tool
against Modern and Old Fashioned Sexism.

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Bachelor of Psychology with Honours

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Psychology with Honours, Murdoch University, [2013]*

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

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Rachael Hoskin

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Abstract

While recent times have witnessed significant improvements, sexism remains a problem in Australia. Yet, sexism is often denied within society. This thesis considers the role of small group interaction in promoting awareness of, and action against, sexism. Specifically, two studies test the hypothesis that participants will recognise and act against sexism when they believe other people share their views (opinion consensus), and other people are prepared to act (action consensus). The opinion-based group interaction method is employed as a mechanism through which the role of opinion and action consensus can be considered. Study 1 ($N = 37$) found that participants were more likely to find consensus around action than opinion, and, contrary to expectations, higher collective action intention was found in the brainstorming condition. Study 2 ($N = 123$) found that group interaction facilitated awareness of modern sexism, but only in the old fashioned sexism condition. Results are discussed in relation to theoretical implications for social psychological understanding of sexism, and methodological issues raised in the research. Overall this research highlights the contested nature of modern sexism in contemporary Australian society.

Keywords: sexism, group interaction, collective action, consensus

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**Employing the Opinion-Based Group Interaction Method as a Social Intervention Tool
against Modern and Old Fashioned Sexism.**

While there have been vast improvements in gender equality over the past fifty years, today Australian women remain underrepresented in the labour force (Barreto, Ellemers, Piebinga & Moya, 2010), hold fewer leadership positions, and receive a lower salary by 16% (Cerise, 2008; Dumont, Sarlet & Dardenne, 2010). Additionally, women are more likely to suffer sexual harassment and sexual violence than men (Barreto, et al., 2010; Dodd, Giuliano, Boutell & Moran, 2001; Glick & Fiske, 1996). Furthermore, research indicates that sexism is a problem that affects the majority of women (Ayres, Friedman, & Leaper, 2009) on a weekly basis (Swim et al. 2001). Consequently, sexism results in significant psychological distress and social harm (Swim et al., 2001).

Despite these statistics, the common consensus is that gender discrimination is no longer a problem (Swim et al., 1995). Attempts to improve gender equality, including legislations and collective action, are refused, ridiculed, and even resented by both men and women (Ellemers & Barreto, 2009). Indeed, sexism is so poorly acknowledged that even social research on gender discrimination within the field of prejudice reduction is underrepresented (Becker & Swim, 2012).

Failure to acknowledge gender discrimination may be due to the fact that modern expressions of prejudice have evolved. While old fashioned sexism is obvious and clearly expresses a discriminatory attitude towards women, contemporary forms of gender discrimination such as modern sexism may not be recognized as inequality within society (see Ellemers & Barreto, 2009). This lack of recognition prohibits both individual

confrontation and collective action attempts (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005a; Ellemers & Barreto, 2009; Swim et al., 2001).

This thesis aims to consider the role of consensus and social identity in promoting awareness of, and action against, contemporary forms of sexism. Figure 1 presents a conceptual model of the process that this thesis aims to test. Specifically, it is hypothesized that people will recognize gender inequality, and commit to act against it, where they perceive consensus or agreement amongst like-minded others that there is indeed gender disparity in Australia ('opinion consensus'); and that those others also intend to act against sexism ('action consensus'). This process of reaching consensus will provide the foundation for the formation of new, specific identities grounded in support for gender equality and it is this identity formation that will drive the reduction in sexist beliefs and increase in collective action intent.

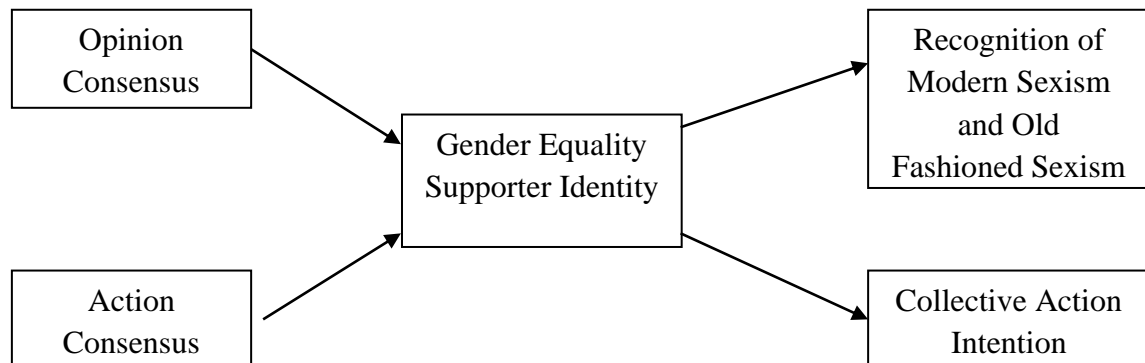


Figure 1: Conceptual model of the role of opinion and action consensus in precipitating social identity formation. Social identity provides the basis for recognizing and acting against sexism.

One way people can reach consensus about what other people think and do is through group interaction. It is through discussion and debate with others that people can source social information about the opinions and intended actions of relevant others (Smith and

Postmes, 2011). Accordingly, this thesis will consider the role of the opinion-based group interaction method (OBGIM: see Thomas & McGarty, 2009) as a mechanism for deriving opinion and action consensus and forming social identities. However, before I can fully articulate the basis for why consensus and social identity should be so instrumental in promoting recognition and action against sexism, it is necessary to discuss the problem of sexism within contemporary society.

Sexism in Contemporary Society: The Problem

Central to this thesis is the notion that, unlike other forms of prejudice, sexism is relatively difficult to recognize; and without recognition, action seems remote. Research has shown that due to the increasingly socially unacceptable nature of gender discrimination today, overt hostility towards women, termed old fashioned sexism, is generally avoided (Campbell, Schellenberg, & Senn, 1997). However, sexism is still expressed in a subtle manner, and disguised in terms of equality rather than inferiority (Tougas, Brown, Beaton, & Joly, 1995).

Modern sexism is defined as the failure to acknowledge the presence of sexism in today's society, and refusal and/or resentment of equal opportunity policies (Ellemers & Barreto, 2009). The subtle nature of modern sexism acts to support the core belief that sexism is no longer an issue in society. Modern sexism may be endorsed through belief in a meritocratic society – an ideological framework where individuals believe that achievement outcomes are reflective of individual ability, effort, or choice rather than discrimination (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005b). Failure to recognize the superior position men hold within society results in the belief that women's unfavourable personal outcomes are a result of personal inadequacies, rather than discrimination (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005b; Swim et al, 1995). Repeated failure and exposure to unfavourable outcomes can discourage women and influence them to perform worse in relevant tasks thereby confirming gender stereotypes and

maintaining the status quo (Ellemers & Barreto, 2009). On a societal level, belief in a meritocratic society is likely to lead to less support for equal opportunity procedures, and to policies which will further entrench sexism within society (Swim et al, 1995).

While modern sexism may seem innocuous in comparison to the hostility of old fashioned sexism, the subtle nature of this type of sexism means that people tend to ignore, refute, or refuse to believe in its existence, which acts to maintain the status quo (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005b). Furthermore, individuals may not believe themselves to be discriminated against; or conversely, to be behaving in a sexist manner, unless sexism is overt. To counteract modern sexism it is vital that the general public recognize that sexism still exists in society, and to make allowances for this. Although modern sexism presents in a more subtle manner than old fashioned sexism, both forms of sexism convey the same message – that women are inferior to men. Furthermore, a significant correlation has been found between these two forms of sexism, which indicates that those who endorse modern sexist views are likely to hold old fashioned sexist beliefs as well (Swim et al., 1995). Finally, research indicates that individuals believe old fashioned sexism to be more ‘sexist’ than modern sexism (Swim et al., 2005).

Interestingly, both men and women endorse sexist attitudes and behaviours (Ellemers, & Barreto, 2009). Female endorsement of sexism can have insidious consequences. Sibley and colleagues (2007) found that women who endorsed more subtle forms of sexism were more likely to endorse more overt forms of sexism at six month and twelve month intervals. The authors proposed that the endorsement of subtle sexism can result in women becoming less resistant to more hostile forms of sexism over time. While modern sexism may be perceived as innocuous compared to old fashioned sexism, modern sexism can be equally or more damaging, and women are less likely to take action (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005b). Considering the significant psychological, emotional (Swim et al, 2001), financial, and social

consequences of sexism, it is essential that action is taken to reduce gender discrimination within society.

Taking action to confront sexism can result in personal and societal benefits. On a personal level, women who confront sexism may reduce the likelihood of sexist acts occurring in the future (Ayres, et al., 2009). On a societal level, individual confrontation may alter the beliefs of the perpetrator and bystanders on acceptable behaviour, encourage others to express their opinions, and work towards shifting the status quo (Blanchard et al, 1994; Swim & Hyers, 1999). However, studies by Ayers and colleagues (2009) and Swim and Hyers (1999) both revealed that less than half of the women who experienced sexism were willing to take action to confront the perpetrator.

Women's reluctance to take action against sexism is probably due to the social costs that such confrontation may incur (Kaiser, & Miller, 2004). Possible social threats may include continued or increased harassment from the perpetrator, being negatively evaluated by others, or even loss of employment (Ayres et al, 2009; Dodd et al, 2001; Kaiser & Miller, 2004). Research indicates that in cases where women recognise sexism and believe they have been discriminated against, they do not feel comfortable in confronting the perpetrator in an assertive manner (Swim & Hyers, 1999).

Women have been found particularly to avoid confronting sexism when they are in the presence of a male (Kaiser, & Miller, 2004). This avoidance is justified, with Dodd and colleagues (2001) reported that men were more likely to negatively evaluate women who claimed discrimination in cases of both old fashioned and modern sexism. Furthermore, Kaiser and Miller (2001) found that individuals who claimed discrimination were viewed as less likeable and were more likely to be perceived as a "complainer", "trouble maker" or "emotional".

In situations where sexism is subtle, such as in the case of modern sexism, women may avoid confrontation due to the belief that others may not acknowledge that they are validly discriminated against (Bosson et al, 2010; Dodd et al, 2001). Finally, particularly in cases of sexual harassment, confrontation could lead to physical danger (Ayres, et al., 2009).

It is evident that courage is required to confront sexism, and that individual confrontation is something that many women may not be willing to do (Swim & Hyers, 1999). Considering the risks and barriers to confrontation, collective action may be a more useful tool to raise awareness of and reduce sexism on a societal level.

However, individuals are often reluctant to engage in collective action, and believe that it will have little effect in influencing third parties, building an oppositional movement and expressing values (Hornsey et al, 2006; Klandermans, 2002; van Zomeren et al, 2004). While perceived injustice often promotes thoughts of collective action, only a small amount of people will engage in collective action (Klandermans, 2002). The aim of collective action is to generate collective benefits for the whole disadvantaged group (as opposed to, for example, securing a pay rise for oneself as an individual). If successful, these benefits will be available to everyone in the group whether they personally engaged in collective action or not (Klandermans, 2002). Indeed, Liss, Crawford and Popp (2004) found that university age women were disinclined to engage in collective action for women's equality. The authors suspected that women may not be motivated to engage in collective action unless they feel under threat of severe discrimination. Subtle forms of sexism, including modern sexism may not be recognized as discrimination, and women may not feel validated in feeling discriminated against. Thus, subtle forms of contemporary sexism may not be seen as sufficiently large enough problem as to warrant collective action (Dodd et al, 2001)

Overcoming Sexism: Considering Solutions

It is evident that sexism, in both modern and old fashioned forms, is still causing significant personal and social harm within society today. Modern sexism is often subtle and may go unnoticed and therefore many people do not believe that it exists. To remedy the problem of sexism today, it is vital that individuals recognise that sexism is still a problem, and for individuals to support policies and attempts of collective action aimed at reducing gender discrimination (Tougas, et al., 1995). But how can we encourage individuals to recognise and act against sexism?

I am unaware of any research to date that describes interventions or methods for promoting awareness of and action against sexism. Therefore this thesis considers the possibility that a solution to the problem of modern sexism may lie in crafting identities that provide a basis for recognizing and opposing sexism. Moreover, as suggested in Figure 1, the basis for the formation of those new identities may lie in generating consensus that the problem does indeed exist (opinion consensus), and that action is required (action consensus). I will consider the role of group interaction in providing a means of people to for consensus on the issue of sexism, and action to be made, thereby forming new social identities which allow for recognition of, and action against, sexism.

Why social identity?

This thesis is informed by the insights of the social identity approach (Hornsey, 2006) which encompasses social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987). Social identity theory proposes that a social category to which a person belongs, becomes a part of their individual identity and prescribes certain attitudes, behaviours, and norms (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). When a social identity becomes salient, the particular attitudes, behaviours, and norms associated with that category are activated (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Reicher, 1996). This phenomenon has been well documented, from

research into crowd behaviour (e.g. Reicher, 1996), to prejudice reduction (e.g. Gee et al) to stereotype threat (e.g. Smith & Postmes, 2011).

Self categorization theory posits that individuals are not members of a group until they subjectively see themselves as a group member. For example, although all females are part of the social group “women”, not all women will categorize themselves as “feminists” (McGarty et al, 2009; Reicher, 1996). Once an individual recognizes themselves as a member of a particular group, that individual will be more likely to take on the beliefs and values of that group, and subsequently will be more likely to act on behalf of that group (Thomas & McGarty, 2009). Together, these theories provide the framework for the social identity approach, a psychological perspective relating to group processes.

Importantly, the social identity approach makes the distinction between personal and social identities. Personal identities reflect psychological interests and abilities, attitudes, behaviours, and physical characteristics that are individual to the person (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Conversely, social identities are defined as the parts of oneself that relate to group membership (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Social identities are important when seeking to understand social problems and group behaviour. Notably, social identification can predict an individual’s willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of that group (Klandermans, 2002; Reicher, 1996 Thomas et al., 2010; van Zomeren, Postmos & Spears, 2008). Within the field of sexism, Nelson et al (2008) found a significant link between feminism and a willingness to engage in collective action. Moreover, Kelly and Breinlinger (1995) showed that the more that people identified as a woman, the more likely they were to engage in collective action attempts on behalf of the group. In sum, social identity can promote engagement in collective action to support gender equality.

In addition to driving group behaviour, social identities inform social attitudes. Hogg and Smith (2010, p. 89) describe attitudes as being a “window” on identities:

“Attitudes are windows on identity. When someone expresses an attitude we feel we have learned something about who that person is, and when we express attitudes ourselves we feel we are communicating something about who we are. Furthermore, when someone expresses an attitude we tend to make inferences about other attitudes that person may have. We categorise people on the basis of their attitudes and make attitudinal inferences on the basis of their category membership”.

Because attitudes are shaped by social identities, in the context of this thesis it is expected that attitudes towards sexism – and the recognition of sexism – would be affected by ones identity. That is, a person’s ability to recognize modern sexism is dependent on their social identities.

Overall, the social identity approach suggests that crafting social identities holds the key for promoting the recognition of sexism and action against it. Social identity encourages people to take collective action; it shapes attitudes and therefore recognition of injustice (e.g. Hogg and Smith, 2010). Therefore, if we are able to create an identity that supports gender equality, it is likely to result in positive attitudes towards equality and thus positive behaviours towards gender discrimination reduction.

While we understand that social identities are important to social change (Reicher, 1996), what is less understood is how to create such groups (Thomas et al., 2010). This thesis considers the role of the opinion based group interaction method, and how it is a useful tool in crafting social identities, and consequently change.

Crafting social identities through consensus.

Figure 1 shows that social identity formation will be preceded by consensus (opinion consensus and action consensus). A cornerstone of this thesis is the idea that individuals look to other people as a source of information about the world. Turner (1991) called this phenomenon ‘social reality testing’, where individuals look to others for information on how to behave, and what attitudes and beliefs to hold. Similarly, Hogg (2000) proposed the uncertainty reduction hypothesis, where all human behaviour is driven to reduce uncertainty about the world. Uncertainty can be reduced by knowing the attitudes and behaviours of others. However, other people are only a useful source of information if they agree. That is, if there is a lack of agreement, a lack of consensus among relevant others, then it is difficult to use them as a guide for attitudes and behaviour. Hence consensus is an important precursor to guiding attitudes and behaviours (Thomas et al., 2009).

One powerful demonstration of the role of consensus in shaping attitudes and behavior comes from the stereotype threat literature. Smith and Postmes (2011) found that when groups of women agreed that the stereotype that women have poorer mathematical ability than men was valid, they performed worse on a maths test than those who thought about the stereotype individually. This finding supports the notion that other group members are a resource through which we validate social realities, particularly when consensus is reached. In the context of the current research, where consensus is reached in regards to sexism, individuals are likely to form gender equality supporter identities therefore rejecting sexism and supporting collective action attempts.

Research by Van Zomeren (2004) and colleagues, and Klandermans (1984) has identified two separate types of consensus: opinion consensus, where individuals share an opinion or appraisal of a particular issue; and action consensus where individuals agree that collective action must be taken, and are willing to engage. Results show that both forms of

consensus are important in influencing collective action intentions. While the work above has considered the role of consensus in a generic sense, I believe it is important to consider both types of consensus separately, particularly in the realm of sexism. Why?

Firstly, we must consider the contested nature of sexism. It can be easy to agree that there are problems that need to be addressed in areas such as poverty reduction (Thomas, 2009) and stigma (Gee et al., 1997). Indeed, sexism, and particularly modern sexism, remains largely unrecognized (Swim et al., 1995). Thus, while achieving widespread recognition is not a challenge for many other issues in the social justice sphere, achieving opinion consensus will be an important first step in the realm of sexism.

Secondly, Klandermans (1984) and van Zomeren and others (2004) have found that both forms of consensus are distinct. That is, they have unique predictors. For example, Klandermans (1984) found that opinion consensus is necessary before action consensus. Given the distinct nature of these two forms of consensus, it is preferable that they are tested separately.

The opinion-based group interaction method.

The opinion-based group interaction method (OBGIM) is a recently developed social intervention mechanism for exploring the role of social identity formation and action to overcome injustice and inequality (Thomas, Smith, McGarty & Postmes, 2010). The method aims to promote social justice actions by having people who are nominally sympathetic to a social change movement engage in small group interaction or discussion (Thomas & McGarty, 2009).

This method involves the employment of opinion based groups. Opinion based groups are defined only by a shared opinion, premised on the idea that people can use opinions as a basis for self definition (Thomas, Mavor, & McGarty, 2011; McGarty et al (in press)). Opinion based groups have a social identity and participants perceive themselves to

be the same because they agree with each other, not just because they happen to share a characteristic such as race, gender or ethnicity (McGarty et al, in press). Engaging in opinion based groups has been found to be an excellent predictor of collective action (Bliuc et al., 2007).

Indeed, this method has shown promising results in other areas of social justice including commitment to activism against poverty reduction (Thomas & McGarty, 2009), improving attitudes towards those affected with mental illness (Gee, Khalaf & McGarty, 2007), and promoting action to overcome the mistreatment of animals (Thomas, McGarty & Louis, 2013). Given its success in other areas of social justice, this thesis aims to assess whether the OBGIM is a useful tool in promoting awareness towards and collective action against sexism.

The OBGIM works by using group discussion to strengthen social identities and individuals sense of alliance with the cause, which can promote commitment to social action (Thomas & McGarty, 2009). Additionally, discussion within groups and the ability to reach consensus also has effects on intergroup attitudes and behaviour. That is, group members are more likely to take on attitudes and behaviour regarding the topic when consensus is reached through discussion (Smith & Postmes, 2011). Research finds the OBGIM to have powerful results. For example, Thomas, McGarty & Louis (2013) found that social interaction can contribute to both political engagement, political action and even radicalization.

The procedure of OBGIM consists of three major steps. Firstly, participants must self categorize with the appropriate opinion based group identity being targeted. In the case of this study, participants need to sign on as a supporter of gender equality. Consistent with self categorization theory, this step ensures that participants see themselves as a group member with the same opinions as other group members.

Secondly, participants are organized into groups of three to five members, and are asked to brainstorm strategies which will improve the current situation. Participants are specifically asked to reach a consensus. Formation of consensus will work to craft a gender equality supporter identity, and construct group norms concerning the recognition of sexism and the intention to engage in collective action towards equality. In the current thesis, extending from other OBGIM literature, participants will be asked to form consensus on their *opinions* of sexism and later on what *action* needs to be taken against sexism. The third step is to measure relevant dependant variables, usually via a questionnaire (Thomas & McGarty, 2009).

A major difference between the current study and previous studies involving OBGIM, is that sexism is a highly controversial topic, distinguished by the inability of the general public to accept that it still exists. Previous studies have targeted issues such as poverty (Thomas & McGarty, 2009), and reducing the stigma associated with mental illness (Gee, 2007), which are social issues that most people generally agree need addressing. Additionally, it may be seen as socially unacceptable to disagree with these issues, and to not form consensus that action needs to be taken.

While previous research concerning OBGIM has focused on the outcome that the method will influence people to take collective action, the current study has the main goal of changing individuals' attitudes towards sexism by reaching consensus that sexism is still a problem. If consensus is reached that sexism still exists, this in itself will assist in reducing gender discrimination. Furthermore, due to the link between consensus, identity, and attitudes discussed previously, shared consensus that sexism exists will be more likely to result in support of collective action. For collective action to occur, individuals must first acknowledge unfair treatment of a particular group (Ellemers & Barreto 2009). An additional

goal will be for individuals to intend to engage with collective action attempts following participation.

The Current Research.

Sexism is still a major problem within contemporary society (Barreto et al., 2010). I contend that part of the solution to the problem lies in crafting new gender equality supporter identities (Thomas et al., 2009). Identities are related to social behaviours and attitudes, thus in the realm of sexism, a social identity will be linked with attitudes and behaviours that recognise sexism and support collective action attempts (as in Figure 1). Additionally, consensus has an important role in identity formation. Specifically, identities are formed from reaching consensus about what other people believe (Thomas et al., 2009). The distinction between opinion and action consensus is particularly relevant to sexism (Klandermans, 1984; van Zomeren, 2004).

Consequently, this research will utilize the OBGIM paradigm to consider the ways that people can generate consensus and new identities which allow for the recognition and action against sexism. This research is amongst the first interventions to recognise and take action against sexism. It is also the first to consider the OBGIM paradigm in the contentious area of sexism. Furthermore, this research is the first to explicitly and empirically consider the role of consensus in OBGIM and identity formation and, specifically, to consider the distinction between opinion and action consensus. Overall, it is hypothesized that group discussion as per the OBGIM will result in consensus and facilitate a social identity within participants, thus raising awareness of sexism within contemporary society and encouraging collective action intention.

Study 1

In an initial test of these ideas, the OBGIM was employed to test the efficacy of small group discussion in generating support and collective action towards modern sexism. To remove gender as a complicating factor, only female participants were recruited in this initial test of the model.

In line with the OBGIM procedure (see Thomas & McGarty, 2009), participants were asked to read information on current gender inequality and modern sexism, self categorize as a supporter of gender equality, and participate in a brainstorming activity either as part of a group (OBGIM condition) or individually (brainstorming condition). Consistent with Figure 1, this study has allowed discussion of the issue (opinion consensus) and discussion of action (action consensus) by asking participants in the OBGIM to focus on these separately at two separate times. Specifically, testing at time one measures the effect of opinion consensus. Klandermans (1984) argues that for mobilization to occur, action consensus is not possible without opinion consensus. Therefore, time two tests the additive effect of opinion and action consensus. Participants in the brainstorming condition will complete an analogous task where they individually generated ideas concerning the existence of sexism (opinion consensus) and strategies for action (action consensus). Consequently the brainstorming group formed a comparable control group to explore the effect of group interaction over and above the effect of time and rumination. Table 1 illustrates how Study 1 aims to test consensus items at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 1

Study one study design showing the split testing of consensus items within the OBGIM group.

	Individual brainstorming	OBGIM
Time 1	opinion consensus	opinion consensus
Time 2	opinion + action consensus	opinion + action consensus

The aim of the study was to determine the validity of the OBGIM model in the realm of modern sexism. That is, the study aimed to determine whether forming both opinion consensus and action consensus on modern sexism issues leads individuals to forming a gender equality supporter identity, thus expressing decreased modern sexism beliefs, and increasing collective action intention. If the ideas contained in Figure 1 are correct, it is hypothesized firstly that at time one, people who have engaged in the small group discussion about modern sexism will be more likely to recognise it than those who complete the exercise individually. Secondly it is hypothesized that at time two, people who engaged in small group discussion will report greater intention to act collectively to oppose sexism, compared to those who completed the exercise individually. Overall, it is expected that the OBGIM group will report greater support and collective action towards modern sexism than those in the brainstorming condition.

Method.

Design.

This study employed a 2 x 2 mixed factorial design manipulating intervention type (OBGIM vs. brainstorming control) and time (time one vs. time two testing) for the dependant variables of collective action intention, modern sexism, action consensus and opinion consensus. Other variables were assessed through a between subjects design comparing OBGIM and control conditions.

Participants.

Participants were 37 females recruited from the general community (n = 21) and the university (n=16). Over half (n = 19) of the participants were aged between 18 and 25, and nearly a quarter (n=8) were aged between 26 and 35. A further 4 participants were aged between 36 and 45, and 6 participants were aged between 46 and 55. All but four participants were a citizen or permanent resident of Australia. University participants were awarded course credit for participation, and members of the general community were invited to take part in a prize draw to win a \$100 shopping voucher. All participants provided their written consent prior to participation.

Procedure.

Participants were recruited through snowball sampling to participate in a study interested in women's attitudes and beliefs towards gender equality. The goal was to assign participants randomly to either the OBGIM or the brainstorming condition. In practice, however, participants who attended group sessions were often unable to participate in the group interaction due to poor attendance. Therefore, these participants ended up allocated to the brainstorming condition. This introduced an unexpected confound to the experiment which will be discussed later. Participants in the OBGIM condition were randomly assigned to groups of three to five persons, while participants in the brainstorming condition were tested individually. Prior to testing, all participants were given information about the study (Appendix A), assured of confidentiality, and gave their informed consent (Appendix B).

Consistent with OBGIM methodology (Thomas & McGarty, 2009), participants were firstly presented with statistical evidence reflecting the current extent of gender inequality and asked to self categorize as a supporter of gender equality (Appendix C). Participants then read information on modern sexism (Appendix D) following which they participated in

either a ten minute discussion or 10 minute brainstorming exercise to reflect on their understanding of modern sexism (opinion consensus instruction). After this, participants completed the short questionnaire (Appendix F) which aimed to assess recognition of modern sexism, collective action intention and consensus (consensus was measured in the OBGIM group only). Participants then partook in either a 20 minute group discussion or a 20 minute brainstorming exercise (the action consensus interaction; see Appendix E for instructions). Both activities involved participants considering ways in which the community can act to reduce modern sexism in society.

Finally, participants completed the longer questionnaire (Appendix G) which assessed individual attitudes, beliefs and collective action intentions in regards to gender equality. Participants were debriefed at the conclusion of the study.

Questionnaires.

Two questionnaires were employed in this study: a short questionnaire at time one (see Appendix E) which aimed to assess the effect of opinion consensus; and a long questionnaire at time two (see Appendix F) which aimed to assess the effect of opinion and action consensus. Questionnaires were identical in both treatment conditions with the exception of the consensus items which were only presented to participants in the OBGIM condition. Some items were reversed scored. Please refer to Table 2.

Table 2

Constructs Measured, Measurement Approach, Items and Reliability for Time 1 and Time 2

Construct	Measurement approach	Items	Example items	Time 1 reliability	Time 2 reliability
Modern sexism	Adapted from Swim & Fiske (1995) (Time 1) Adapted from Swim & Fiske and Becker & Wagner (Time 2)	3 (Time 1) 11 (time 2)	1. "Discrimination against women is still a problem in Australia". 2. "Australian society has reached the point where men and women have equal opportunities for achievement." 3. "Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for quite some time." 4. Having a female prime minister is a sign that gender discrimination is no longer a problem in Australia	$\alpha = .68$ To increase internal consistency, the third item was removed before analysis.	$\alpha = .87$
Collective Action Intention	Adapted from Becker & Wagner (2009)	5 (Time 1 and Time 2)	1. "I intend to sign a petition advocating for greater gender equality"	$\alpha = .83$	$\alpha = .88$
Opinion consensus (OBGIM questionnaires only)	These items were crafted to assess the extent to which the group interaction had successfully engendered a sense of consensus that the problem exists in Australia.	3 (Time 1 and Time 2)	1. "Our group agreed with the information we were given about gender inequality" 2. "Our group found it difficult to reach agreement about what the real problems are with gender inequality" 3. "I had the same attitude and beliefs regarding the nature of gender equality as other group members"	These three items did not form a reliable scale ($\alpha = .44$) so I retained the second item in the analysis as it had the strongest construct validity.	$\alpha = .64$

Old Fashioned Sexism	Swim & Fiske (1995)	5	1. "Women are generally not as smart as men"	--	$\alpha = .63$
Social identity	Adapted from Leach & others (2008)	11	1. "I feel a bond with other supporters of gender equality" 2. "I think that supporters of gender equality have a lot to be proud of" 3. "The fact that I am a supporter of gender equality is an important part of who I am" 4. "I have a lot in common with the average supporter of gender equality" 5. "Supporters of gender equality are very similar to each other"	--	$\alpha = .92$
Action consensus	These items were crafted to assess the extent to which the group interaction had successfully engendered a sense of consensus that other group members are prepared to act.	3	1. "I agreed with the other group members on what can be done to promote gender equality" 2. "Our group found it difficult to reach any solutions" 3. "the solutions that our group proposed were supported by all members of our group"	--	$\alpha = .71$ To increase internal consistency, the third item was removed before analysis.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analyses.

Descriptive statistics for the major variables are presented in Table 3. As can be seen in Table 3, overall consensus means were high, indicating that groups reached consensus during the brainstorming activity. Overall, modern sexism scores were generally towards the lower end of the scale, indicating that participants tended to disagree with modern sexist statements. Participants displayed stronger disagreement with old fashioned sexism statements. Overall, scores for social identity and collective action intention both fell into the mid range of the scale, indicating a moderate level of identification with social identity and moderate intentions to engage in collective action.

Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation Values for Variables in All Conditions.

	Brainstorming Control Group Time 1:	OBGIM Group Time 1: (Opinion consensus)	Brainstorming Control Group Time 2	OBGIM Group Time 2 (Opinion + Action consensus)	Overall
	M (SD) n = 17	M (SD) n = 20	M (SD) n = 17	M (SD) n = 20	M (SD) n = 37
Opinion Consensus	**	8.25 (1.49)	**	8.56 (1.18)	8.56 (1.18)
Action Consensus	**	**	**	9.00 (1.16)	9.00 (1.16)
Modern Sexism	4.48 (2.06)	4.48 (1.32)	3.75 (1.77)	4.17 (1.03)	4.22 (1.48)
Old Fashioned Sexism	**	**	9.81 (1.01)	9.5 (1.61)	9.64 (1.35)
Collective Action	7.21 (2.42)	5.62 (1.07)	6.8 (2.65)	5.52 (1.37)	6.11 (2.13)
Social Identity	**	**	6.57 (1.97)	6.15 (1.35)	6.34 (1.65)

** indicates conditions that did not undergo group interaction

Main Analyses.

Collective Action Intention. A mixed measures ANOVA (SPANOVA) was used to compare the collective action intention between groups, at time one and time two testing. Contrary to expectations, results indicated a significant main effect for condition, $F(1,35) = 5.47, p = .025$, with individuals in the brainstorming condition ($M = 7.01$) reporting higher collective active intention than individuals in the OBGIM condition ($M = 5.57$). No significant effects were revealed for the main effect of time, $F(1,35) = 2.04, p = .162$, and there was a non-significant interaction, $F(1,35) = .736, p = .397$.

Modern and Old Fashioned Sexism. A SPANOVA was used to compare the modern sexism scores between groups at time one and time two. Results indicated a reduction in modern sexism as a result of participation in opinion and action consensus $F(1,34) = 11.51, p = .002$, with individuals indicating higher modern sexism scores in the time one testing than in the time two testing. No significant effects were revealed for the main effect of condition, $F(1,34) = .20, p = .65$. No significant interaction was found, $F(1, 35) = .74, p = .40$. This finding indicates that both group discussion and individual brainstorming were useful tools in raising awareness of modern sexism.

Consensus. A between subjects t-test found that there was no difference between pre and post testing for opinion consensus items $t(19) = -.905, p = .37$. Perhaps participants may have felt that modern sexism was hard to define, but were able to think of ways to take action against modern sexism as it is a form of discrimination.

Social Identity. Because social identity was only measured at time 2, an independent sample t-test tested differences between the brainstorming control and OBGIM groups. There was no difference, $t(35) = -.781, p = .440$.

To summarize, this study revealed some unexpected results. Consistent with Klandermans (1984) both opinion *and* action consensus boosted awareness of modern sexism. Unexpectedly, however, individual brainstorming was equally successful in raising awareness of modern sexism. That is, simply thinking about the issue, either solo or in groups, was sufficient to raise awareness of modern sexism. Moreover, participants in the brainstorming condition reported higher intentions to engage in collective action than did those who had engaged in the group interaction. However, some of the methodological issues with the study obscure the straightforward interpretation of results.

This study had four major limitations due to pragmatic difficulties in conducting the research. Firstly, an additional control group would be useful. Since the brainstorming activity also acted as an intervention, there was no true baseline comparison. That is, we did not measure participant levels of sexism, identity and action before engaging in any task so we are not able to account for the effects of time, rumination and interaction.

Secondly, a sampling error may have lead to an unexpected confound. While the aim was to conduct random assignment to conditions, in practice, assignment tended to occur on the basis of how many people attended an experimental session. That is, people who attended alone were assigned to the brainstorming condition, and when there were sufficient numbers of participants then they were assigned to the group interaction condition. This practice resulted in most of the brainstorming group participants being university students (82.35%). Conversely, the majority of participants in the OBGIM condition consisted of community members (85%). Thus, it is unclear whether effects are genuine or are due to a sampling confound.

Thirdly, an additional confound may have occurred in relation to whether people participated in groups or alone. Specifically, participants in the brainstorming condition

participated alone and therefore had the full attention of the researcher. Participants in the OBGIM condition participated in groups, therefore receiving less researcher attention. It is therefore possible that those in the in the brainstorming condition displayed a greater social desirability bias. This may have contributed to the finding that those in the brainstorming condition displayed higher collective action intention than those in the OBGIM condition.

Fourthly, opinion and action consensus were only able to be measured in groups who engaged in group interaction. Thus, there was no between groups comparison to consider.

Given the methodological issues and limitations of the current study, a second larger study was conducted with the aim of addressing issues of control, sample size, and sampling error. Moreover, given the evidence linking the energizing effects of group interaction on resisting gender stereotypes (Smith & Postmes, 2011), and energizing collective action (Gee et al., 2007; Thomas & McGarty, 2009) I retained my focus on the role of group interaction in Study 2.

Study 2

A major refinement in Study 2 is the introduction of old fashioned sexism as an additional independent variable. Previous research has documented a significant difference between people's reactions to modern or old fashioned sexism (Swim et al., 1995). Compared with the overt nature of old fashioned sexism, modern sexism may not be recognized as discrimination (Ellemers & Barreto, 2009). Therefore, the old fashioned condition acts as a comparison group for the modern sexism condition. This contributes to a more complete test of the ideas proposed in Figure 1, and aims to determine whether the intervention works in the area of sexism more broadly; modern, or old fashioned.

To avoid sampling errors, the main study employed a larger ($N = 123$) sample size which included men as well as women. Additionally, all participants were second year university students within the same class at university. To eliminate any potential social desirability confounds, all participants were tested within groups of three to five, thus receiving the same amount of researcher attention. Finally, in contrast to study one, a control group was incorporated. This control group consisted of people who had not participated in any group interaction. Consequently, this control group offered a true baseline measure and comparison group.

Based on the literature (Ellemers & Barreto, 2009) it is predicted that people will find it easier to form consensus surrounding issues of old fashioned sexism, rather than modern sexism. It is therefore expected that group discussion for those in the old fashioned sexism condition will bolster awareness of sexism (old fashioned and modern), and collective action intention.

Predictions for the modern sexism condition are more complex. Social interaction may act as an energizer, where consensus is reached and social identity formed, thus endorsing sexism awareness and collective action. Conversely, as established in the literature (e.g. Ellemers & Barreto, 2009), people may not see modern sexism as a problem, therefore not reaching consensus and not formulating a social identity. In this case, group interaction is divisive and counterproductive to promoting sexism awareness and collective action.

Method

Design.

This study was a 2 (old fashioned vs. modern sexism) x 2 (OBGIM vs. control) design. There were fifteen interacting groups of three to five people, and thirteen control

groups of three to five people. All research was conducted within a three day period during university class time. Two classroom tutors assisted the researchers with data collection.

Procedure.

Students participated as part of a routine class activity during a second year undergraduate social psychology class. Students could opt not to have their data used for research purposes by ticking a box, and the data of four participants was removed on this basis. There were eight classes, and each class was randomly allocated to a particular condition: OBGIM and modern sexism; OBGIM and old fashioned sexism; control and modern sexism; or control and old fashioned sexism. According to the condition they were assigned to, all participants were then given information on old fashioned sexism (Appendix I) *or* modern sexism (Appendix H), and were asked to ‘sign on’ as a supporter of gender identity (Appendix C).

Following this, all students were then randomly assigned to small groups of three to five people. The OBGIM groups participated in a group discussion (see Appendix E for instructions), while the control groups completed the questionnaire (Appendix J). To satisfy learning requirements while also ensuring a robust control group, students completed the group interaction activity following completion of the questionnaire. Table 4 describes the procedural differences between the interaction and control groups. All students were debriefed following participation.

Table 4

Comparing Procedure for the OBGIM vs. Control conditions in the Main Study

OBGIM Conditions	Control Condition
1) Study information and consent	1) Study information and consent
2) Statistics on gender inequality	2) Statistics on gender inequality
3) Information on OFS/MS	3) Information on OFS/MS
4) Identity sign on	4) Identity sign on
5) Group interaction sessions	5) Questionnaire
A) Opinion consensus	
B) Action consensus	
6) Questionnaire	6) Group interaction sessions
	A) opinion consensus
	B) action consensus

Participants.

Participants were 123 second year psychology students, 90 females and 28 males (5 did not specify) who were enrolled at Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia. The majority (70.73%) of students were aged 18 – 25; with a further 13.82% aged 26 – 35; 7.32% aged 36 – 45; 3.25% aged 46 – 55; and 0.81% aged between 56 and 65 (4.05% of students did not indicate their age). 17 participants indicated that they were not Australian citizens or permanent residents.

Questionnaire.

A questionnaire entitled “Attitudes and beliefs towards gender equality” (Appendix) was used for all conditions¹. As in the first study, an 11 point Likert style scale was used, from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, “no agreement” to “strong agreement”, or “not at all willing” to “very willing”. The measurement approach was identical to the first study except where indicated below.

Manipulation comprehension checks. To check that participants comprehended the difference between modern and old fashioned sexism, a manipulation comprehension check was employed on the same page as the modern sexism/old fashioned sexism manipulation. Participants were asked to rate:

“In your opinion, to what extent does the information that you have just read suggest that: Sexism occurs mainly through failure to recognise the presence of gender discrimination in society” and “Sexism occurs mainly through an obviously hostile or discriminatory attitude towards women”.

Social Identity. Given the constraints of a classroom situation, shortened 5-item scale was used to measure social identity. These items were adapted from Leach and others’ (2008) in-group identification scale. An example item is; “I feel a bond with other supporters of gender equality”. Internal consistency was good, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .83$.

Modern Sexism. Five of Swim and others’ (1995) original eight item modern sexism scale were adjusted to reflect contemporary Australian society, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .77$. An example item is “Having a female prime-minister is a sign that gender discrimination is no longer a problem in Australia”.

¹ Note that more items were included in the original questionnaire than are described here. The full set of items are beyond the scope of this thesis, but can be seen within Appendix J.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation Checks.

To check that participants fully comprehended the information they read on modern vs. old fashioned sexism, a comprehension check question was employed. Within the modern sexism condition, a paired samples t-test found that participants were significantly more likely to rate the manipulation as descriptive of modern sexism ($M = 5.52$, $SD = 1.21$) than of old fashioned sexism ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.55$), $t(59) = 9.207$, $p < .001$. This indicates that participants fully understood the nature of modern sexism.

However, in the old fashioned sexism manipulations, paired samples t-tests revealed no significant difference between participant ratings of the manipulation as descriptive of modern sexism ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.57$) or old fashioned sexism ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 1.48$), $t(62) = .447$, $p = .65$. This suggests that participants may not have fully grasped the different forms of sexism.

Preliminary Analyses.

The descriptive statistics displayed in Table 5 illustrate that, overall, participants showed scores for social identity and collective action intention around the midpoint of the scale. Low scores were shown for modern and old fashioned sexism, indicating that participants tended to disagree with sexist statements. Moderately high action and opinion consensus scores were revealed, indicating that participants felt consensus was reached on the nature of sexism, and the necessity of action.

Table 5
 Descriptive Statistics for Each Condition.

	OBGIM+MS (n = 32)	OBGIM+OFS (n = 32)	Control+MS (n = 28)	Control+OFS (n = 31)	Combined Control (n = 59)	Overall (n = 123)
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Collective Action Intention	5.57 (1.94)	5.47 (2.26)	4.98 (1.68)	6.04 (2.04)	5.54 (1.9)	5.53 (2.01)
Social Identity	6.31 (2.02)	5.90 (1.86)	5.41 (1.90)	5.83 (2.25)	5.63 (2.08)	5.88 (2.01)
Old Fashioned Sexism	2.06 (1.34)	2.14 (1.41)	2.11 (1.47)	1.99 (1.17)	2.05 (1.31)	2.07 (1.35)
Modern Sexism	3.97 (1.48)	3.13 (1.46)	4.16 (1.72)	3.92 (1.90)	4.04 (1.81)	3.79 (1.67)
Action Consensus	7.1 (1.9)	7.93 (1.72)	--	--	--	7.52 (1.89)
Opinion Consensus	7.15 (1.77)	7.36 (2.02)	--	--	--	7.25 (1.89)

Table 6 represents the correlations between variables. As shown there were significant positive correlations between action consensus and opinion consensus ($p < .001$) and collective action intention and social identity ($p < .001$). The correlation between social identity old fashioned sexism ($p = .003$) was negative, indicating that the more an individual saw themselves as a supporter of gender equality the less they supported old fashioned sexism.

Table 6
Correlation (r Values) Between Dependant Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Action Consensus	1	.581**	.048	.150	-.142	-.105
2. Opinion Consensus		1	.190	.193	-.118	-.080
3. Collective Action Intention			1	.669**	-.154	-.043
4. Gender Equality Supporter Identity				1	-.192*	-.002
5. Old Fashioned Sexism					1	.164
6. Modern Sexism						1

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Main Analyses.

Testing the full design. Table 7 shows the significance (p) values in relation to a series of ANOVAs. As can be seen, no significant effects were found for the main effects of discussion or sexism. While the comparison of sexism type and modern sexism approaches significance, tentatively suggesting that being exposed to materials about old fashioned

sexism (but – curiously – not modern sexism) reduces modern sexism. Finally, no significant interactions were revealed.

Table 7

p values for ANOVAS completed for each dependant variable.

Dependant Variable	Main Effect of Discussion (OBGIM vs Control)	Main Effect Sexism (OFS vs MS)	Interaction
Collective Action Intention	.97	.19	.11
Social Identity	.18	.99	.26
Old Fashioned Sexism	.85	.93	.68
Modern Sexism	.10	.07	.31

The primary hypotheses of this study lie in comparing the effects of group interaction with those who did not engage in group interaction. As an alternative test of my hypotheses, I collapsed across the non interaction control conditions (who had read different information about sexism) to form a more reliable and powerful ‘non-interaction’ control group with $n = 59$. Since power is at a premium in this statistically ‘noisy’ type of research (Haslam & McGarty, 2001) and this created a three cell design comparing OBGIM and old fashioned sexism, OBGIM and modern sexism, and a non interaction control². The results of these analyses are discussed below.

Testing the three cell design. A series of one way between groups ANOVAs were conducted to compare means between the OBGIM+MS, OBGIM+OFS, and control groups. Results are described in Table 8.

² I ran a series of between subjects t-tests to check that there were no major effects of the information before collapsing across groups. All results were non-significant ($p > .45$) except for the old fashioned group which were significantly greater on collective action intention ($t(57) = 2.15$, $p = .03$) than those who read the modern sexism information. I conclude that the two control groups are largely homogenous.

Table 8 shows that there were significant differences in modern sexism ratings between conditions; Planned contrasts revealed that the differences were driven primarily by differences in the old fashioned sexism interaction and control $t(119) = -2.5$, $p = .014$, and between the old fashioned and modern sexism interaction, $t(119) = -2.04$, $p = .04$. There were no differences between the modern sexism interaction and the control. These results indicate that participants in the OBGIM and old fashioned sexism condition that were less accepting of modern sexism than participants in the other conditions.

Additionally, a between subjects ANOVA also revealed a marginally significant difference indicating that the condition affected action consensus. Planned contrasts revealed that the omnibus difference was primarily influenced by differences between the old fashioned sexism and control conditions $t(62) = 24.06$, $p < .001$, and between the old fashioned and modern sexism interaction $t(62) = 21.56$, $p < .001$. No differences were found between the control and modern sexism groups. Given this result is only approaching significance, we can only comment tentatively on its implications. However, from this result we can cautiously infer that participants in the old fashioned sexism group were more likely to form action consensus than other conditions.

Table 8

F Values and p Values From the One Way Between Subjects ANOVA's Conducted for Five Separate Variables.

	F value	Significance (p)
Opinion Consensus	.21	.647
Action Consensus	3.12	.08
Social Identity	1.18	.31
Modern Sexism	3.39	.04
Collective Action	0.20	.98

Previous research indicates that people are more likely to agree that old fashioned sexism is a problem than modern sexism (Swim et al., 1995). Additionally, consensus has been shown to increase attitudes towards collective action (Klandermans, 1984; Van Zomeren, 2004). It is likely that by reaching consensus, the old fashioned sexism group acted to bolster reactions to modern sexism, and participants were less likely to agree with modern sexist statements. Conversely, given the contentious nature of the issue, it is possible that participants in the modern sexism condition could not reach consensus. The literature on group interaction indicates that consensus is vital in driving change (Thomas & McGarty, 2009); thus groups who did not reach a strong consensus are unlikely to change their attitudes and behaviours. Overall this study has shown some evidence demonstrating that the opinion based group interaction method may have potential in promoting awareness of modern sexism and in generating consensus that something needs to be done about the issue.

Discussion

The current thesis investigated the role of small group interaction in promoting awareness of, and action against, sexism. Specifically, two studies tested the hypothesis that participants will recognise and act against sexism when they believe other people share their views (opinion consensus), and other people are prepared to act (action consensus). While much research documents the problem of sexism within modern society (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005b; Ellemers & Barreto, 2009; Swim et al, 1995) research on sexism reduction is underrepresented (Becker & Swim, 2012). Consequently, this current research was amongst the first in the prejudice reduction literature to formulate an intervention strategy within the realm of sexism, and the first to utilize the OBGIM in the gender discrimination reduction domain. Furthermore, while previous research has shown that consensus is implicated in social identity formation (Postmes et al., 2005; Thomas et al., 2009), no research to date has

considered the role of different forms of consensus (opinion and action consensus) in identity formation. Thus, this research is the first within the OBGIM literature to consider the importance of opinion consensus and action consensus as separate constructs.

I hypothesized that, in line with the OBGIM paradigm, small group interaction resulting in group consensus (opinion and/or action based) would promote social identity formation. This identity formation would, in turn, provide a basis for the recognition of contemporary sexism, and willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of this group (as in Figure 1). Study 1 *manipulated* opinion and action consensus to explore causal effects, while Study 2 explored them as *measured* variables and manipulated consensus indirectly by considering the role of modern versus old fashioned sexism.

Two studies found mixed support for this process. Study 1 found that, contrary to hypothesis, participants in the brainstorming condition reported higher levels of collective action intention than those in the OBGIM condition. While unexpected, this result indicates that thinking about the issue of modern sexism, whether solo or in groups, may be sufficient to raise awareness of modern sexism. Additionally, in line with Klanderman's (1984) study, action and opinion consensus were found to have an additive effect in boosting awareness of modern sexism in both the brainstorming and interacting groups. However, methodological problems (regarding testing procedures) and insufficient statistical power limited my ability to draw firm conclusions about these findings. Given the evidence that group discussion can successfully lead to identity formation (Smith & Postmes, 2011) and collective action (Thomas et al., 2009), I conducted a second study.

Study 2 showed that group interaction boosted awareness of modern sexism but, paradoxically, only when participants discussed old fashioned sexism (and not modern sexism). Moreover, there was also a marginal effect on action consensus for those who had

participated in the old fashioned sexism interaction. Previous research demonstrates the contentious nature of modern sexism (Swim et al., 1995), and the importance of consensus in facilitating social change (Klandermans, 1984; Van Zomeren, 2004). Considering this, it is likely that those in the old fashioned sexism group found it easier to recognize old-fashioned forms of sexism and therefore reach consensus. Ironically, this recognition of old-fashioned forms bolstered awareness of modern sexism and heightened recognition of the need for action. Overall, these results indicate that the OBGIM shows promise in recognizing sexism and reaching consensus that action needs to be taken.

Contrary to previous research however (e.g. Gee et al., 2007; Thomas & McGarty, 2009), Study 2 found that interaction did not have any effect on identity formation and collective action intention. Moreover, opinion consensus was not affected by group interaction nor the different type of sexism (modern v old fashioned). While these results imply mixed support for the OBGIM, they reflect the contentious nature of sexism today. Previous research documents the failure of society to recognise contemporary forms of sexism, particularly when they are subtle in presentation (Ellemers & Barreto, 2009). This research echoes this notion. It is only when participants were presented with an overt form of sexism that they recognized a more covert form.

Theoretical Implications.

As opposed to most other issues within social justice, sexism today is controversial, contentious, and ill recognized (Swim et al., 1995). Currently, OBGIM has been employed on topics towards which there is greater community recognition on the significance of the problem. For example, it is clear that collective action is required to combat poverty and disease (Thomas & McGarty, 2009), and it is undeniable that stigma against mental disorders needs to be addressed (Gee et al, 2007). Even if individuals do not actively feel strong

identification with these issues, they are likely to claim to be a supporter, even if only for social desirability reasons. Conversely, someone who does not believe sexism to be a problem within society is unlikely to show intention to engage in collective action on behalf of the group. Indeed, when referring to Study 2, we see that it is only when participants discussed old fashioned sexism that they become less accepting of the covert modern sexism.

Therefore, it is likely that the interaction worked in the old fashioned sexism group due to the overt nature of old fashioned sexism. People were able to understand and recognise old fashioned sexism as a problem. Consequently people were able to reach consensus on the nature of old fashioned sexism, and consensus for the need for action. Previous research shows that consensus is an important driver of identity formation and consequent action (Haslam et al, 1998). Therefore, from this finding we can assume that group interaction is more helpful for issues within the social justice realm that are obvious in need of help, and where participants are likely to agree with this notion.

A second implication of these results is that examining action consensus and opinion consensus as separate constructs is a valuable distinction. A major point of innovation in my thesis concerns the split and examination of two separate types of consensus. This stems from Klandermans (1984) research which highlighted two types of consensus, opinion, and action. This current thesis found that, together, action and opinion consensus bolstered awareness of modern sexism, supporting Klandermans (1984) idea. Consistent with Klandermans (1984), Study 1 found an additive effect of opinion and action consensus. That is, it was found that *both* opinion and action consensus are required for mobilization to occur. Furthermore, the constructs did not covary, which implies they are different constructs that require separate examination. In Study 2 action consensus was shown to have tentative effects whereas opinion consensus remained insignificant, which also imply that both constructs are distinct. All these results point to the importance of considering consensus as

two separate constructs; action consensus and opinion consensus. Further research could reestablish the distinction between opinion and action consensus in a less contentious domain.

The third theoretical implication concerns the lack of effects found in relation to social identity and collective action. This result differs from much of the previous OBGIM literature which finds interaction to produce significant effects towards social identity formation and collective action intention (Gee et al, 2007; Thomas et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2013). Why didn't the current research obtain similar effects?

It appears that unlike OBGIM research into other more prominent areas of social justice such as poverty reduction (Thomas et al, 2009), animal cruelty (Thomas et al, 2013) and mental illness stigma (Gee et al, 2007), participants in the current study were unprepared to take on the core social identity of being a supporter of gender equality. One possibility for the reason why I did not observe effects on social identity is that gender identities are contentious and – in the case of feminist identities – controversial and potentially negative. As opposed to identifying as an active supporter of, for example, poverty reduction, identifying as an active supporter of sexism reduction may be seen to have unpleasant consequences (Kaiser & Miller, 2004). Indeed, research indicates a distinct lack of willingness to confront sexism, serious social costs of confrontation and negative evaluation of those who support sexism reduction (Dodd et al, 2001; Kaiser & Miller, 2004). Overall, to identify as a supporter of gender equality takes strength, conviction in the cause and courage (Swim & Hyers, 1999). Participants in the current research may not have possessed these attributes in relation to gender discrimination reduction, and therefore were unable to identify strongly as a supporter of gender quality.

Practical Implications.

This research also has significant practical implications for efforts to combat sexism in Australia. However, the findings from the two studies within this thesis suggest slightly different strategies. From Study 1 it was evident that engaging in brainstorming activities, either alone or within a small group was useful in raising awareness of modern sexism. Additionally it was shown that both opinion and action consensus were useful in boosting awareness of modern sexism.

Study 2 revealed that old fashioned sexism was more successful in bolstering awareness of modern sexism than modern sexism. Accordingly, from the findings of both studies, it is recommended that brainstorming activities are undertaken, either individually or within a small group, and information concerns old fashioned, rather than modern sexism.

Limitations and Future Directions.

There were some significant limitations that should be addressed in future research. The first major limitation concerns sampling. In Study 1 there was a sampling confound such that people in the individual brainstorming condition tended to be university students (82.35%), while those in the group interaction condition were primarily members of the community (85%). This disparity may have influenced the unexpected result where those in the brainstorming condition showed higher collective action intention than those in the OBGIM condition.

Additionally, the participants in Study 2 were all university students who participated as part of class activities. Within the sample few were working full time (3.23%) and the majority were under the age of 25 (70.3%). Campbell and colleagues (1997) argue that

university participants, particularly those who are young and not employed may lack the life experience to recognise and appreciate the significance of sexism.

Moreover, these participants were obligated to participate during class time, and they received no benefit for doing so. It is possible that they didn't want to participate, or didn't pay their full attention to the study. Research by Blink (2005) found that where participants were led to believe that the OBGIM task was merely a data collection exercise, this specifically undermined the otherwise positive effects of the interaction on support for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Considering this, it is possible that the current research was not executed in a manner that convinced people that their participation was required for more than data collection purposes. To improve these sampling limitations future research could replicate the design of Study 2 to explore whether the OBGIM method works in a sample of community members participating under usual testing conditions.

The second major limitation concerns sample size, statistical power, and the nature of group interaction research. Due to the interaction that takes place, group interaction is statistically noisy, introduces much error, and cannot be experimentally controlled (Haslam & McGarty, 2001). Thus, to detect significant effects, studies that employ group interaction need large sample sizes. In the current thesis, the sample size in Study 1 was too small to detect effects and was therefore underpowered. Study 2, while having a larger sample size, was still insufficient to conduct the multi level models that would be required to apportion out the group discussion effects. Future research requires sufficient sample sizes to allow for confident rejection of effects.

Finally, within this research all statistical analyses were completed under the assumption that data was independent. However, all data retrieved from the OBGIM groups

was inter- independent as group discussion occurred. To gain more accurate effects, future research should employ analyses that do not assume independence, such as hierarchical linear modeling.

There are many directions future research could take. Firstly, research could examine the distinction between opinion and action consensus but in another topic, perhaps a topic within the social justice domain that has more recognition than sexism. Future research could also reexamine the OBGIM in a sexism context but with a larger community sample. Alternatively, Thomas and McGarty (2009) predict that identities are more likely to be sustained after conclusion of the study if there is high consensus during the group discussion. As such, research could also devise a post test to determine whether the social identity and collective action intentions were sustained after the conclusion of the study.

Conclusion.

Sexism remains a significant problem that incurs profound individual and social effects (Barreto et al, 2010; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Swim et al, 2001;). Women today remain disadvantaged in the workforce (Barreto et al, 2010; Cerise, 2008; Dumont et al, 2010) and more likely to experience sexual harassment and violence (Barreto, et al., 2010; Dodd et al., 2001; Glick & Fiske, 1996). Consequently, sexism results in serious psychological, social and economic harm (Swim et al, 2001). This thesis examined group interaction as a social intervention tool with the aim of raising awareness of, and promoting action against sexism. Results were mixed, with Study 1 finding that collective action intention was higher in the brainstorming condition. Study 2 found that group interaction raised awareness of modern sexism but only when participants considered old fashioned sexism. These mixed results demonstrate the slippery and contested nature of sexism within contemporary society, and highlight the need for social intervention.

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Appendix A

[Opinion Based Group Instructions]

At Murdoch University we are interested in investigating ways that our local community can help with promoting gender equality.

For the next 30 minutes your group will be asked to complete two separate tasks:

- 1) For the first ten minutes we ask that you **discuss your understanding of [sexism/modern sexism]**. What do you think is the nature of [this type of] sexism?
- 2) The second part of your task is to take 20 minutes to come up with **eight** practical strategies that can be implemented locally (i.e. things we can go out and do) to help with:
 - raising awareness of [sexism/modern sexism],
 - reducing [sexism/modern sexism] in our community
 - promoting gender equality

The reason we are asking you is that, as supportive members of the public yourselves, we believe that you are well placed to highlight potential causes of sexism and suggest effective strategies. During your discussion a number of issues and possibilities are likely to be raised, but it is really important that you **come to an agreement on strategies that you all believe will be effective.**

Providing that your group agrees that we do so, the strategies that you come up with will be written up into an article and:

- Sent to appropriate political leaders/policy makers/advocacy groups
- Posted on a website linked to Murdoch University

[Control Group Instructions]

At Murdoch University we are interested in investigating ways that our local community can help with promoting gender equality.

For the next 30 minutes your group will be asked to complete two separate tasks:

- 1) For the first ten minutes we ask that you **write about your understanding of [sexism/modern sexism]**. What do you think is the nature of [this type of] sexism?
- 2) The second part of your task is to take 20 minutes to come up with **eight** practical strategies that can be implemented locally (i.e. things we can go out and do) to help with:
 - raising awareness of [sexism/modern sexism],
 - reducing [sexism/modern sexism] in our community
 - promoting gender equality

The reason we are asking you is that, as a supportive member of the public yourself, we believe that you are well placed to highlight potential causes of sexism and suggest effective strategies.

Providing that you agree that we do so, the strategies that you come up with will be written up into an article and:

- Sent to appropriate political leaders/policy makers/advocacy groups
- Posted on a website linked to Murdoch University

Appendix B

Consent Form

Attitudes and Beliefs towards Gender Inequality in Australian Society

1. I confirm that I am over 18 years of age.
2. I agree voluntarily to take part in this study.
3. I have read the Information Sheet provided and been given a full explanation of the purpose of this study, of the procedures involved and of what is expected of me. The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained the possible problems that may arise as a result of my participation in this study.
4. I understand I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without needing to give any reason.
5. I understand I will not be identified in any publication arising out of this study.
6. I understand that my name and identity will be stored separately from the data, and these are accessible only to the investigators. All data provided by me will be analysed anonymously using code numbers.
7. I understand that all information provided by me is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.
8. Audio taping is critical for participation in this research. We understand that some people may not want to be audio taped – and you are free to indicate this preference below – however, this will amount to withdrawing from the study.
 - I consent for this session to be audio taped.
 - I do not consent for this session to be audio taped.
9. I understand that feedback from this study will be available on the Murdoch School of Psychology Website from May 2011.

Signature of Participant: _____

Date:/...../.....

(Name)

Signature of Investigator: _____

Date:/...../.....

(Name)

APPENDIX C

Attitudes towards Gender Inequality in Australian Society

In this study we are interested in the attitudes and beliefs concerning gender inequality. Discrimination against women is still a serious problem in Australian society. Recent statistics indicate that, for example:

- Australian women working fulltime earn an average of 16% less than men. As a consequence, 50% of women aged 45 – 59 have \$8000 or less in their superannuation funds, compared to \$31,000 for men.
- Men hold more leadership positions, even in female dominated industries. For example: In Tasmania, women make up 70% of the education sector, but hold only 37% of management positions within that sector.
- In their first year of working, female graduates earn an average of \$2000 less than male graduates. By their fifth year after graduation, females earn, on average, \$7800 less than men per annum. These figures control for factors such as age, employment status (fulltime/part time), occupation type, industry and field of study.

Thinking about the gender inequality in Australian society, do you consider yourself to be a supporter of greater gender equality?

Yes

No

(Please tick one)

*All statistics reported were obtained from the 2008 Graduate Pathway Survey and the 2008 Listening Tour Report: Gender Equality what matters to Australian Women and Men.

Appendix D

Modern Sexism

One important reason why gender inequality remains a problem today is that sexism has evolved in such a way so that people do not recognise it as discrimination. Overt sexism (e.g. saying discriminatory or demeaning things) has become increasingly unacceptable; and consequently modern acts of gender discrimination tend to be more subtle. **More recent manifestations of sexism are termed modern sexism.**

Modern sexism assumes that - contrary to the evidence - women and men are now equal, that women have the same opportunities as men, and that women should not receive any special treatment. Consequently, equal opportunity procedures designed to support women are resented, and women who request equal rights are treated with hostility. Failure to recognise the advantage that men have in society results in the belief that unfavourable outcomes are due to women's personal inadequacies rather than discrimination. **The subtle nature of modern sexism makes it difficult to recognise and to take action against.**

Many people do not believe modern sexism to be a problem in our society. However, scientific research shows that modern sexism has a considerable impact on women's:

- Well-being and self esteem
- Career opportunities and performance
- Financial independence

To achieve greater equality it is essential that both men and women recognise modern sexism as a form of discrimination, and take action against it.

Appendix E

[Group interaction instructions]

At Murdoch University we are interested in investigating ways that our local community can help with promoting gender equality.

For the next 30 minutes your group will be asked to complete two separate tasks:

- 3) For the first ten minutes we ask that you **discuss your understanding of sexism**.
What do you think is the nature of sexism?

- 4) The second part of your task is to take 20 minutes to come up with **eight** practical strategies that can be implemented locally (i.e. things we can go out and do) to help with:
 - raising awareness of sexism
 - reducing sexism in our community
 - promoting gender equality

The reason we are asking you is that, as supportive members of the public yourselves, we believe that you are well placed to highlight potential causes of sexism and suggest effective strategies. During your discussion a number of issues and possibilities are likely to be raised, but it is really important that you **come to an agreement on strategies that you all believe will be effective**.

Providing that your group agrees that we do so, the strategies that you come up with will be written up into an article and:

- Sent to appropriate political leaders/policy makers/advocacy groups
- Posted on a website linked to Murdoch University

Appendix E

[Individual brainstorming instructions]

At Murdoch University we are interested in investigating ways that our local community can help with promoting gender equality.

For the next 30 minutes your group will be asked to complete two separate tasks:

- 3) For the first ten minutes we ask that you **write about your understanding of sexism**.
What do you think is the nature of sexism?

- 4) The second part of your task is to take 20 minutes to come up with **eight** practical strategies that can be implemented locally (i.e. things we can go out and do) to help with:
 - raising awareness of sexism
 - reducing sexism in our community
 - promoting gender equality

The reason we are asking you is that, as a supportive member of the public yourself, we believe that you are well placed to highlight potential causes of sexism and suggest effective strategies.

Providing that you agree that we do so, the strategies that you come up with will be written up into an article and:

- Sent to appropriate political leaders/policy makers/advocacy groups
- Posted on a website linked to Murdoch University

YOUR PERSONAL CODE

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First two letters of your mother's name
 Birth date excluding year (e.g. 17th May = 1705)

Thinking about your recent activity, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree
• Discrimination against women is still a problem in Australia.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• Australian society has reached the point where men and women have equal opportunities for achievement.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for quite some time.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• Our group agreed with the information we were given about gender inequality.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• Our group found it difficult to reach agreement about what the real problems are with gender inequality...	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• I had the same attitude and beliefs regarding the nature of gender equality as other group members.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	

Thinking about your recent activity, please rate the extent to which you would be willing to do each of the following:

	Not at all willing	Very willing
• I intend to make a conscious effort to use non-sexist language.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• I intend to go out of my way to collect additional information on gender equality.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• I intend to sign a petition advocating for greater gender equality.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• I intend to join a group which advocates for greater gender equality.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	
• I intend to participate in protests regarding women's issues.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	

Appendix G

YOUR PERSONAL CODE

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First two letters of your mother's name Birth date excluding year (e.g. 17th May = 1705)

Attitudes and Beliefs towards Gender Equality

In this questionnaire we are interested in your personal thoughts and feelings towards a range of issues regarding gender inequality. Please answer all of the questions using the scale provided. **Remember there are no right or wrong answers.** This questionnaire should take 20 minutes to complete.

Thinking back to the information you read prior to participating in the group activity; to what extent did the information provided suggest that:

- Sexism occurs mainly through failure to acknowledge the presence of gender discrimination in society and refusal or resentment of equal opportunity policies for women.....
- Sexism occurs mainly through an obviously hostile or discriminatory attitude towards women.....

Did not suggest

Strongly suggested

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Thinking about your recent group discussion, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- Our group agreed with the information we were given about gender inequality.....
- Our group found it difficult to reach agreement about what the real problems are with gender inequality.....
- I had the same attitude and beliefs regarding the causes of gender equality as other group members.
- I agreed with the other group members on what can be done to promote gender equality.....
- Our group found it difficult to reach any solutions.....
- The solutions that our group proposed were supported by all members of our group.....

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Appendix G

Thinking about your recent group discussion, please rate the extent to which you would be willing to do each of the following:

Not at all willing

Very willing

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I intend to make a conscious effort to use non-sexist language..... • I intend to go out of my way to collect additional information on gender equality..... • I intend to sign a petition advocating for greater gender equality..... • I intend to join a group which advocates for greater gender equality..... • I intend to participate in protests regarding women’s issues..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I intend to go out of my way to collect additional information on gender equality..... • I intend to sign a petition advocating for greater gender equality..... • I intend to join a group which advocates for greater gender equality..... • I intend to participate in protests regarding women’s issues..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I intend to sign a petition advocating for greater gender equality..... • I intend to join a group which advocates for greater gender equality..... • I intend to participate in protests regarding women’s issues..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I intend to join a group which advocates for greater gender equality..... • I intend to participate in protests regarding women’s issues..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I intend to participate in protests regarding women’s issues..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each following statements:

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are generally not as smart as men..... • I would be equally comfortable having a woman as a boss as a man..... • It is more important to encourage boys than to encourage girls to participate in athletics.... • Women are just as capable of thinking logically as men..... • When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the father..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would be equally comfortable having a woman as a boss as a man..... • It is more important to encourage boys than to encourage girls to participate in athletics.... • Women are just as capable of thinking logically as men..... • When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the father..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is more important to encourage boys than to encourage girls to participate in athletics.... • Women are just as capable of thinking logically as men..... • When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the father..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are just as capable of thinking logically as men..... • When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the father..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the father..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
-
- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination against women is no longer a problem in Australia..... • Having a female prime-minister is a sign that gender discrimination is no longer a problem in Australia..... • Women miss out on good jobs due to sexual discrimination..... • Society has reached the point where men and women have equal opportunities for achievement..... • I consider the current employment situation to be fair on women..... • It is rare to see a woman treated in a sexist manner on television..... • Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time..... • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a female prime-minister is a sign that gender discrimination is no longer a problem in Australia..... • Women miss out on good jobs due to sexual discrimination..... • Society has reached the point where men and women have equal opportunities for achievement..... • I consider the current employment situation to be fair on women..... • It is rare to see a woman treated in a sexist manner on television..... • Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time..... • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women miss out on good jobs due to sexual discrimination..... • Society has reached the point where men and women have equal opportunities for achievement..... • I consider the current employment situation to be fair on women..... • It is rare to see a woman treated in a sexist manner on television..... • Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time..... • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society has reached the point where men and women have equal opportunities for achievement..... • I consider the current employment situation to be fair on women..... • It is rare to see a woman treated in a sexist manner on television..... • Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time..... • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I consider the current employment situation to be fair on women..... • It is rare to see a woman treated in a sexist manner on television..... • Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time..... • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is rare to see a woman treated in a sexist manner on television..... • Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time..... • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time..... • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On average, people in our society treat men and women equally..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Appendix G

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| • It is easy to understand the anger of women’s groups in Australia..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • It is easy to understand why women’s groups are still concerned about societal limitations of women’s opportunities..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Over the past few years, the government and news media have been showing more concern about the treatment of women than is warranted by women’s actual experiences..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I feel a bond with other supporters of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I feel solidarity with supporters of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I feel committed to supporters of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I am glad to be a supporter of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I think that supporters of gender equality have a lot to be proud of..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • It is pleasant to be a supporter of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Being a supporter of gender equality gives me a good feeling..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I often think about the fact that I am a supporter of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • The fact that I am a supporter of gender equality is an important part of who I am..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Being a supporter of gender equality is an important part of how I see myself..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I have a lot in common with the average supporter of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I am similar to the average supporter of gender equality..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Supporters of gender equality have a lot in common with each other..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Supporters of gender equality are very similar to each other..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I would prefer to stay at home rather than getting ahead..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I would feel foolish to keep my maiden name after marriage..... | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • I would go to work, even if I don’t need to for financial reasons..... | | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix G

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

• I would not interfere with politics as it is men’s business.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• If possible, I would not work for as long as my children go to school.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• When I date a man, I feel unpleasant if I have to pay.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• It is more important to support the career of my partner than to get ahead myself.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I would not propose marriage as it is a man’s job.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I feel a bond with other women.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I feel solidarity with women.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I feel committed to women.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I am glad to be a woman.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I think that women have a lot to be proud of...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• It is pleasant to be a woman.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Being a woman gives me a good feeling.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I often think about the fact that I am a woman.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• The fact that I am a woman is an important part of my identity.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Being a woman is an important part of how I see myself.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I have a lot in common with the average woman.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I am similar to the average woman.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women have a lot in common with each other.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women are very similar to each other.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Many women are actually seeking special favours, such as hiring policies that favour them over men, under the guise of asking for ‘equality’.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Many women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women are too easily offended.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Feminists are not seeking for women to have more power over men.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Most women fail to appreciate all that men do for them.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Appendix G

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree											
• Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women exaggerate problems they have at work.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• When women lose to men in fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Many women get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available, and then refusing male advances.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Feminists are making entirely unreasonable demands of men.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Men are incomplete without the love of a woman.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• In a disaster, women should not necessarily be rescued before men.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• People can be truly happy in life without being involved in a romantic relationship with a member of the opposite sex.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women should be cherished and protected by men.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Every man should have a woman that he adores.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Men are complete without women.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• A woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Men should be prepared to sacrifice their own well-being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• In general, relations between men and women are fair.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• The division of labour in families generally operates as it should.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Appendix G

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
• Gender roles need to be radically restructured.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• For women, Australia is the best country in the world to live in.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Most policies relating to gender and the sexual division of labour serve the greater good.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Everyone (male or female) has a fair shot at wealth and happiness.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Sexism in society is getting worse every year.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Society is set up so that men and women usually get what they deserve.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I believe that equality between men and women is possible.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Efforts to facilitate equality between men and women are pointless, as there will always be gender discrimination.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Sexism will always exist.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• If efforts are taken to reduce existing sexism, gender equality is possible.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in influencing government leaders and policy makers.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in expressing certain values.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in influencing public opinion.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in building an oppositional movement.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Appendix G

Thinking about the group discussion you just participated in, to what extent would you say that:

- There was a lot of arguing in our group..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I would like to participate again in such a group discussion..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I felt comfortable to speak my mind in my group..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I enjoyed participating in the group discussion..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- In my group, I didn't get a chance to offer my opinion..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Appendix G

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way, right now, that is, at this present moment when you think about the inequality between men and women.

1	2	3	4	5
Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
	<input type="checkbox"/> Interested		<input type="checkbox"/> Ashamed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Distressed		<input type="checkbox"/> Inspired	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excited		<input type="checkbox"/> Doubtful	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Upset		<input type="checkbox"/> Nervous	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong		<input type="checkbox"/> Determined	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Guilty		<input type="checkbox"/> Sympathetic	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Scared		<input type="checkbox"/> Outraged	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hostile		<input type="checkbox"/> Active	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic		<input type="checkbox"/> Afraid	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Proud		<input type="checkbox"/> Dismissive	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Irritable		<input type="checkbox"/> Disbelieving	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Angry		<input type="checkbox"/> Compassion	

Appendix G

Age:

- 18 – 25 26 – 35 36 – 45 46 - 55
 56 – 65 66 – 75 76+

Marital Status:

- Single In a relationship Married/Defacto
 Divorced Widowed

Do you have any children?

- Yes
 No

Are you a citizen or permanent resident of Australia?

- Yes
 No

In your opinion have you experienced sexism within the last six months?

Not at all Most of the time

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Do you currently engage in activism that supports gender equality? If yes, please provide details of the activism you engage in.

- Yes
 No

Thank you for your time and participation!

Appendix I

Sexism

One important reason why gender inequality remains a problem today is that many people think that sexism is a problem of the past. Certainly, our society has come a long way in terms of gender equality. However, discrimination against women still exists today. **Attitudes and behaviours towards women which are overtly hostile or discriminatory are termed sexism.**

Sexism stems from the belief that men hold a superior status to women within society, and can be expressed through aggressive or demeaning comments or jokes, inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour, sexual harassment or even violence. Women who challenge the traditional feminine stereotype (e.g. feminists, career women) are more likely to be the targets of gender discrimination. Therefore, sexism serves the purpose of maintaining a patriarchal society. **Although sexism is generally easy to recognise, many people feel uncomfortable or afraid to take action against sexist experiences.**

Many people may not believe sexism to be a significant problem in our society. However, scientific research shows that sexism has a considerable impact on women's:

- Well-being and self esteem
- Career opportunities and performance
- Financial independence

To achieve greater equality it is essential that both men and women recognise sexism as a form of discrimination, and take action against it.

In your opinion, to what extent does **the information that you have just read** suggest that:

Sexism occurs mainly through failure to recognise the presence of gender discrimination in society:

Did not suggest

Strongly suggested

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Sexism occurs mainly through an obviously hostile or discriminatory attitude towards women:

Did not suggest

Strongly suggested

1 2 3 4 5 6

Appendix J

Attitudes and Beliefs towards Gender Equality

In this questionnaire we are interested in your personal thoughts and feelings towards a range of issues regarding gender inequality. Please answer all of the questions using the scale provided. **Remember there are no right or wrong answers and your answers cannot be used to identify you in any way.**

For the current questionnaire we would appreciate it if you would generate your own **anonymous personal code** by providing:

The first two letters of your mother's first name: _____

The first two letters of your father's first name: _____

The first two digits of your birth date: (i.e., day of the month: "15" or "02" or "31" etc): _____

n.b. Your final code will be made up of 4 letters and 2 numbers, e.g. 'DEMA01'

Thinking about your recent group discussion, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- Our group agreed with the information we were given about gender inequality..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- Our group found it difficult to reach agreement about what the real problems are with gender inequality..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I had the same attitude and beliefs regarding the causes of gender equality as other group members. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I agreed with the other group members on what can be done to promote gender equality..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- Our group found it difficult to reach any solutions..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- The solutions that our group proposed were supported by all members of our group..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Thinking about your recent discussion please rate the extent to which you would be willing to do each of the following:

- I intend to make a conscious effort to use non-sexist language..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I intend to go out of my way to collect additional information on gender equality..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Appendix J

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I intend to sign a petition advocating for greater gender equality.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I intend to join a group which advocates for greater gender equality.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I intend to participate in protests regarding women’s issues.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women are generally not as smart as men.....											
• I would be equally comfortable having a woman as a boss as a man.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• It is more important to encourage boys than to encourage girls to participate in athletics....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women are just as capable of thinking logically as men.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the father.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Discrimination against women is no longer a problem in Australia.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Having a female prime-minister is a sign that gender discrimination is no longer a problem in Australia.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Women miss out on good jobs due to sexual discrimination.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Society has reached the point where men and women have equal opportunities for achievement.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• I consider the current employment situation to be fair on women.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• It is rare to see a woman treated in a sexist manner on television.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Gender inequality has not been a problem in Australian society for some time.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• On average, people in our society treat men and women equally.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• It is easy to understand the anger of women’s groups in Australia.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• It is easy to understand why women’s groups are still concerned about societal limitations of women’s opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
• Over the past few years, the government and news media have been showing more concern about the treatment of women than is warranted by women’s actual experiences.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Appendix J

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

- I feel a bond with other supporters of gender equality..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I am glad to be a supporter of gender equality..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- The fact that I am a supporter of gender equality is an important part of who I am..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I have a lot in common with the average supporter of gender equality..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- Supporters of gender equality are very similar to each other..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I believe that equality between men and women is possible..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- Efforts to facilitate equality between men and women are pointless, as there will always be gender discrimination..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- Sexism will always exist..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- If efforts are taken to reduce existing sexism, gender equality is possible..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in influencing government leaders and policy makers..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in expressing certain values..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in influencing public opinion..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I believe action to increase gender equality will be effective in building an oppositional movement..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- Thinking about the group discussion you just participated in, to what extent would you say that:** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- There was a lot of arguing in our group..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I would like to participate again in such a group discussion..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I felt comfortable to speak my mind in my group..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- I enjoyed participating in the group discussion..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
- In my group, I didn't get a chance to offer my opinion..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Appendix J

Gender:

- Male Female

Age:

- 18 – 25 26 – 35 36 – 45 46 – 55
 56 – 65 66 – 75 76+

Marital Status:

- Single In a relationship Married/Defacto
 Divorced Widowed

Do you have any children?

- Yes
 No

Are you a citizen or permanent resident of Australia?

- Yes
 No. Please indicate how long you have been living within Australia:

Are you currently employed within the work force in addition to your studies?

- No Casual Part time
 Full time Self Employed

In your opinion have you experienced or witnessed acts of sexism within the last six months?

Not at all Most of the
time

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Thank you for your time and participation!