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Selective Incivility as Modern Discrimination in Organizations: Evidence and Impact

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This collection of studies tested aspects of Cortina's theory of selective incivility as a "modern" manifestation of sexism and racism in the workplace and also tested an extension of that theory to ageism. Survey data came from employees in three organizations: a city government (N = 369), a law enforcement agency (N = 653), and the U.S. military (N = 15,497). According to analyses of simple mediation, target gender and race (but not age) affected vulnerability to uncivil treatment on the job, which in turn predicted intent to leave that job. Evidence of moderated mediation also emerged, with target gender and race interacting to predict uncivil experiences, such that women of color reported the worst treatment. The article concludes with implications for interventions to promote civility and nondiscrimination in organizations.

Keywords: *incivility; gender; race; turnover*

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Within the organizational sciences, there has been a recent surge of interest in *general incivility*, or rude and discourteous behavior that lacks a clear intent to harm (e.g., Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008; Pearson, Andersson, & Wegner, 2001; Pearson & Porath, 2009). The past 25 years have also witnessed considerable social scholarship on *modern* or *contemporary* forms of racism and sexism. This refers to subtle types of prejudice, held even by egalitarian-minded persons who harbor no discriminatory intent (e.g., Brief, 2008; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; Swim, Mallett, & Stangor, 2004; Tougas, Brown, Beaton, & St-Pierre, 1999). The current article connects these two literatures by testing elements of Cortina's (2008) theory of *selective incivility* as modern discrimination in organizations. Our central argument is that "general" incivility, in some forms, is anything but general, instead representing a modern manifestation of bias that alienates women and people of color from work life. Theories of *double jeopardy* and *intersectionality* suggest that women of color may be most at risk for this mistreatment. We test these ideas with survey data from three organizations.

Theoretical Background

Workplace incivility. Andersson and Pearson define *workplace incivility* as "low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others" (1999: 457). When the instigator aims to injure the targeted employee or organization, the uncivil conduct constitutes *psychological aggression* (e.g., Baron, 2004; Neuman, 2004). For behavior to qualify as incivility, however, any harmful intent must be ambiguous to one or more of the parties involved (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Pearson et al., 2001).

Incivility may be ambiguous, but its effects are not. Individuals targeted with uncivil work behavior report greater job-related stress, distraction, and dissatisfaction; lower creativity and cooperation; and greater psychological distress. Over time, they lose commitment to their organizations and quit at higher rates (Cortina et al., 2002; Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000; Pearson et al., 2001; Pearson & Porath, 2004). Even employees who only experience incivility *second hand* (e.g., witnessing the mistreatment of colleagues) show lower job satisfaction and commitment and greater job burnout and turnover intentions (Lim et al., 2008; Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2004, 2007). Cortina notes that these adverse consequences of incivility "have financial implications for employers, who must absorb the costs of employee distraction and discontentment, job accidents, substance abuse, sick leave, work team conflict, productivity decline, and turnover" (2008: 57).

Prior research has advanced our understanding of incivility's definition, impact, and relationship to other types of *generic* workplace mistreatment. Questions remain about how incivility relates to *group-specific* expressions of hostility, such as harassment based on gender and race. Incivility, gender harassment, and racial/ethnic harassment have a lot in common: Each behavior is antagonistic; degrades, offends, or intimidates; and violates standards of interpersonal respect. In addition, Cortina (2008) argues that these behaviors blend together at times. This may seem illogical, given that incivility is neutral on its surface.

That is, “generally” uncivil words and deeds make no *overt* reference to gender or race (or any other social dimension). Nevertheless, incivility may sometimes represent a *covert* manifestation of gender and racial bias when women and people of color are selectively targeted.

Initial evidence of working women being selectively targeted with incivility comes from research on attorneys (Cortina et al., 2002), university faculty (Richman et al., 1999), and court employees (Cortina et al., 2001). In each of these groups, women described higher rates of uncivil treatment than their male colleagues did. Less is known about race differences in uncivil work experiences, but the related literature on racial and ethnic harassment suggests that minority employees, compared to their White counterparts, are at greater risk for workplace mistreatment (e.g., Berdahl & Moore, 2006; Bergman, Palmieri, Drasgow, & Ormerod, 2001).

Cortina (2008) offers explanations for why, in certain circumstances, women and people of color may be targeted with more incivility than men and Whites. She notes that the ambiguity inherent in uncivil conduct (e.g., using a condescending tone, ignoring or interrupting a colleague, belittling a coworker’s contribution) makes it possible to rationalize these behaviors as unbiased—that is, attribute them to factors (e.g., instigator carelessness or personality) that have nothing to do with race or gender. This makes incivility a means by which individuals can degrade women and people of color while maintaining an egalitarian image. This profile of findings is highly consistent with the social-psychological notion of *modern discrimination*.

Modern discrimination. What are now termed “old-fashioned” sexism and racism involve unconcealed contempt, endorsement of offensive stereotypes, and support for blatant discrimination against women and people of color. Such overt bigotry underwent a radical decline in the United States in the latter half of the 20th century (e.g., Brief et al., 1997; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; Swim, Aikin, Hall, & Hunter, 1995; Tougas, Brown, Beaton, & Joly, 1995). Along with these changes in ideology came sweeping reforms in antidiscrimination laws and practices. In particular, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (and related reforms, e.g., the Civil Rights Act of 1991) codified the illegality of employment discrimination based on sex and race. Nearly 50 years have elapsed since the passage of that legislation; still, gender and race disparities persist in virtually every sector of the workforce, from the military to the government to the *Fortune* 500 (e.g., Barreto, Ryan, & Schmitt, 2009; Brief, 2008; Dovidio, Gaertner, & Bachman, 2001; Eagly & Carli, 2007).

To account for ongoing gender and racial inequalities in the United States, social psychologists have identified various forms of “modern” discrimination based on both gender (Jackson, Esses, & Burris, 2001; Swim et al., 1995; Swim et al., 2004; Tougas et al., 1995; Tougas et al., 1999) and race (Brief, Dietz, Cohen, Pugh, & Vaslow, 2000; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; McConahay, 1986; Sears, 1998). Different conceptualizations and terminologies have emerged across this literature (e.g., *modern sexism*, *neosexism*, *contemporary sexism*, *modern racism*, *aversive racism*, *symbolic racism*), but each construct reflects a similar set of core beliefs. This includes myths that sexism (or racism) is no longer a problem in this country, women or minorities are making unfair demands and using unfair strategies to advance their privilege and power, and “preferential treatment” or “special

favors” granted to these groups are undeserved. Today’s *modern sexists* and *modern racists* view these beliefs as empirical fact, not opinion or ideology. In fact, research suggests that they consciously endorse values of egalitarianism and justice, publicly condemn sexism and racism, and strongly identify as nonprejudiced. However, these same individuals implicitly harbor negative emotions and cognitions toward women (or minorities), driving them to discriminate in inconspicuous or rationalizable ways (e.g., Brief et al., 1997; Brief et al., 2000; McConahay, 1986; Swim et al., 1995; Swim et al., 2004). That is, they discriminate (1) when the biased nature of the behavior is not obvious or (2) when a negative response can be attributed to something other than gender or race. Both of these descriptions fit many manifestations of workplace incivility (Cortina, 2008).

Empirical research connects modern sexist and racist beliefs to *formal* types of discrimination, such as unfair selection decisions (e.g., Brief et al., 2000; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). Building on that work, Cortina (2008) theorizes that these ideologies could also fuel *interpersonal* discrimination in the form of selective incivility. The result would be disparate incivility incidence rates by gender and race, such that women and employees of color receive more uncivil treatment than do men and Whites (respectively). In the current set of studies, we test for this incidence rate pattern across three organizations, seeking to corroborate prior findings on gender and incivility (Cortina et al., 2002; Cortina et al., 2001; Richman et al., 1999), and also extend that work to consider race, race-by-gender, and age effects. We begin with the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Women will report more experiences of workplace incivility than men.

Hypothesis 2: People of color will report more experiences of workplace incivility than Whites.

Extending Selective Incivility Theory: Intersectionality and Double Jeopardy

The literatures on intersectionality and double jeopardy also suggest a combination of gender and race effects. Theories of intersectionality “simultaneously consider the meaning and consequences of multiple categories of identity, difference, and disadvantage” (Cole, 2009: 170). Emerging from feminist and critical race theories, intersectional perspectives recognize that people concurrently occupy numerous social locations (based on gender, race, class, etc.) that vary in the degree of privilege and power they afford. An intersectional analysis considers multiple social identities simultaneously rather than focusing on any single identity in isolation. Intersectional perspectives have been vital in shedding light on the unique experiences of women of color—experiences that often differ from those of men of color and White women (e.g., Browne & Misra, 2003; Cole, 2009; Greenman & Xie, 2008).

More specific to negative experiences, double-jeopardy is a related theory arguing that women of color face a “double whammy of discrimination” (Berdahl & Moore, 2006: 427) based on both sexual and ethnic prejudice (e.g., Beal, 1970; Buchanan, Settles, & Woods, 2008; Epstein, 1973; Greenman & Xie, 2008). In other words, women of color are disadvantaged because they are female *and* because they are ethnic minority, and this doubly oppressed status exacerbates their experiences of mistreatment. In a study of workplace harassment, Berdahl and Moore (2006) found evidence supporting the double-jeopardy

hypothesis, such that women reported more sex-based harassment than men did and minorities reported more ethnic harassment than Whites did, the net result being minority women describing the most hostility on the job. Based on theories of intersectionality and double jeopardy, we expect:

Hypothesis 3: Gender and race will interact in affecting vulnerability to uncivil treatment, the result being that women of color report more experiences of workplace incivility than men of color or Whites of either gender.

Implications for Employee Turnover

Finally, we suggest that selective incivility could contribute to thoughts of turnover, ultimately driving women and people of color out of some organizations. We know from census and Department of Labor statistics that employees who are female or minority remain heavily underrepresented in a variety of occupations. For example, in 2010, women held less than 15% of the executive officer positions in the *Fortune* 500 (Catalyst, 2010), and only 32% of lawyers and 32% of physicians and surgeons were female (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Likewise, in 2010, only 14% of people in management occupations, 12% of physicians and surgeons, and 8% of lawyers were Black or Latino (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Many factors likely influence these disparities, one of which may be selective incivility. Supporting this possibility, past studies have identified links between uncivil experiences and turnover intentions (e.g., Cortina et al., 2002; Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008), and intent to turnover is one of the strongest antecedents of voluntary turnover in organizations (e.g., Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). In short, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 4: Greater exposure to incivility within an organization will predict greater thoughts and intentions of leaving that organization (i.e., turnover intentions).

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4 suggest a chain of events: Being a woman and/or person of color increases the risk of uncivil treatment, and this treatment then increases turnover cognitions. The proposition underlying these hypotheses can be summarized as a case of *simple mediation*: Female gender and minority race have indirect effects on intent to turnover, via experiences of incivility.

Hypothesis 3 further proposes that not only should race and gender have main effects on uncivil experiences, but those effects should also interact. Hypotheses 3 and 4 can be combined and tested as a special case of *moderated mediation*, in which “an interaction between an independent and moderator variable affects a mediator variable that in turn affects an outcome variable” (Edwards & Lambert, 2007: 7). In other words, we expect gender to interact with race in influencing risk for uncivil treatment; that incivility risk should in turn affect turnover intentions. This model would also be consistent with what Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes refer to as a *conditional indirect effect*, when an indirect effect “[varies] in strength conditional on the value of at least one moderator variable” (2007: 195). In summary, we expect to find:

Hypothesis 5: The indirect effect of gender on turnover intentions, via incivility, should be moderated by race, such that the strength of the mediated relationship is stronger for people of color than for Whites.

Further Extending Scholarship on Selective Incivility: What About Age?

Cortina's theoretical arguments about selective incivility focus primarily on gender and race. That said, she acknowledges that "workplace mistreatment can be based on other social dimensions as well, such as sexual orientation, age, disability status, etc. . . . Similar arguments could be developed for [these] other characteristics that divide and stigmatize individuals" (2008: 257, Note 1). Following up on these possible extensions of selective incivility theory, in the current article we consider age-based incivility, that is, incivility that is disproportionately targeted at older employees.

Ageism, similar to racism and sexism, has been institutionalized insofar as Americans receive countless messages that growing old is bad (Nelson, 2009, 2011). Research on age bias in the workplace suggests that multiple factors, including stereotypes, relational demography, career timetables, and "prototype matching" (comparing a job applicant's age to the age of the average employee) influence whether employees are discriminated against because of their age (e.g., Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995; Shore & Goldberg, 2004). Common stereotypes of older adults are complex, such that people internalize both positive and negative views of the elderly (Cuddy & Fiske, 2002; Cuddy, Norton, & Fiske, 2005; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Nelson, 2009). However, within the workplace, beliefs about older adults tend to be uniformly negative (for a review of this literature, see Wiener & Keller, 2011). Additionally, experimental studies have shown that older adults receive more negative evaluations than do their younger or middle-age counterparts (e.g., Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995; Kulik, Perry, & Bourhis, 2000; Levin, 1988). *Overt* discrimination against older adults is prohibited by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, but negative attitudes toward older workers could manifest in *covert* ways, such as selective incivility. This brings us to our next and final hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: Increasing age will be associated with more experiences of workplace incivility.

The Present Studies

To test our hypotheses, we conducted secondary analyses of survey data from three organizations. The organization in Study 1 was a city government that had sufficient variance on gender to test Hypothesis 1. Study 2 took place in a law enforcement agency; this being an industry that is more ethnically diverse than most, it lends itself well to tests of the race effect in Hypothesis 2. For Study 3, we drew on survey data collected by the U.S. military. This last study oversampled women and people of color, the result being thousands of participants in each sex-by-race group (women of color, men of color, White women, White men); this allowed us to test Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 5. In addition, each of these studies collected data on turnover intentions, so we were able to test Hypothesis 4 in all

three organizations. Finally, Studies 1 and 2 also collected information about respondent age, permitting tests of Hypothesis 6.

We also recognize that there are alternative explanations for disparities in descriptions of uncivil work experiences. Both gender and race are sometimes confounded with number of years on the job because women and people of color have only recently gained entry into many professions (e.g., Reskin & Padavic, 2006; Valian, 2000). This provides an alternative explanation for why they may feel less respect than their (longer tenured) White male colleagues. We therefore added job tenure as a control in all analyses.

A second possibility is that the gender or race of the *situation*, not the target, is what drives incivility. In other words, perhaps women or people of color receive higher rates of incivility than others because their gender or race is underrepresented in their work environments, making them highly visible minorities. This would be consistent with work by Kanter (1977) and others (Gruber, 1998; Gutek, Cohen, & Konrad, 1990), which has found women “tokens” in male-dominated work groups to experience social isolation, performance pressures, gender role encapsulation, and harassment. Further complicating this picture, Ely (1994) reported that in organizations with low proportions of women in senior leadership, women in gender-imbalanced groups perceived more competition with their female peers and less support in these relationships. To explain such effects, Ely (1994) argued that organizational demographics affect social identities and work relationships, such that women in the upper echelons indicate to junior women the possibility of obtaining a position of power. This, in turn, shapes the meaning and significance women associate with being female in that organization, ultimately influencing work relationships with other women. In our project, the demographic composition of work groups was most striking with respect to gender in the military context, where the work environment remains extremely male dominated, particularly at the senior leadership level (men comprise over 85% of today’s active-duty military personnel; Department of Defense, 2009). We therefore added work group gender composition and supervisor gender as controls in all Study 3 analyses.

Study 1: City Government

Method: Participants and Procedure

Approximately 50% of the employees of a Midwestern municipality were randomly sampled and invited to participate in this study.¹ With a 79% response rate, 393 employees completed the on-site survey. Participants’ job types varied, primarily including public safety, manual labor, and administrative positions. We excluded 24 participants from all analyses for omitting critical information (on gender or incivility) or for returning surveys largely blank. Hence, the final sample consisted of 369 employees. Thirty-eight percent were female, 80% were White, and 64% were married or partnered. They ranged in age from 22 to 62 (age $M = 40$, $SD = 9.24$) and averaged 12 years of job tenure ($SD = 9.15$). Eighty-four percent had at least some college education.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics, Alpha Coefficients, and
Correlations for Study 1 (city government)

Variables	Number of Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	1	2	3	4	5
1. Target gender (0 = <i>male</i> , 1 = <i>female</i>)	1	0.38	0.49	–	1.00				
2. Target job tenure	1	12.27	9.15	–	-.07	1.00			
3. Target age	1	39.85	9.24	–	.03	.72***	1.00		
4. Target's experience of incivility	12	8.27	8.76	.92	.19***	.08	.08	1.00	
5. Target's turnover intentions	3	2.13	2.53	.87	.21***	.04	.05	.49***	1.00

*** $p < .001$.

Measures

Descriptive statistics, coefficient alphas, and intercorrelations for all variables appear in Table 1. For multi-item scales, we summed relevant items to create scale scores; higher scores reflect greater levels of the underlying construct.

Demographics. Participants self-reported their gender, which we coded 0 (*male*) or 1 (*female*). They also provided their job tenure (i.e., number of years employed at that organization) and age in write-in boxes.

Workplace incivility. We used items from the reliable and valid Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS; Cortina et al., 2001) to measure the frequency of participants' personal experiences of uncivil conduct. We also supplemented the WIS with new items, to assess the construct domain more fully. The complete instrument appears in the appendix. Participants responded on a 5-point scale (0 = *never* to 4 = *many times*), describing how often they had experienced each behavior from a coworker or supervisor during the prior year at work. In other words, this scale assesses actual experiences of specific behaviors rather than general perceptions or imagined reactions to hypothetical scenarios.

Turnover intentions. A three-item job withdrawal scale (Hanisch & Hulin, 1990, 1991) measured thoughts about or intentions to quit the organization, using a 5-point scale (response options vary, depending on the item: 0 = *once or twice a year* to 4 = *once a week or more* or 0 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*). Hanisch and Hulin (1990, 1991) discuss the development and validation of this measure, reporting an average coefficient alpha of .70 and longitudinally linking prior job stresses to subsequent withdrawal.

Study 1 Results and Discussion

We tested the simple mediation effects implied in Hypotheses 1, 4, and 6 using both the *product of coefficients* approach (the Sobel test) and bootstrap² confidence intervals. The independent variables in this analysis were gender and age, incivility was the mediator, and

Table 2
Results of Regression Analysis of Simple Mediation in Study 1 (city government)

Predictor	<i>B</i> ^a	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Mediator variable model (criterion: incivility)				
Constant	5.19	2.32	2.23	.026
Target job tenure	0.06	0.07	0.88	.381
Target gender (0 = male, 1 = female)	3.26	0.95	3.42	.001
Target age	0.03	0.07	0.38	.707
Dependent variable model (criterion: turnover intent)				
Constant	0.61	0.59	1.03	.305
Target job tenure	0.01	0.02	0.04	.972
Target gender (0 = male, 1 = female)	0.67	0.24	2.73	.007
Target age	0.01	0.02	0.21	.831
Target's experience of incivility	0.14	0.01	10.22	.001

a. Here and throughout this article, we report *unstandardized* beta coefficients, as recommended by Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes (2007). Standardization would not have altered either the *t* ratios or *p* values.

turnover intent was the dependent variable. In addition, these analyses controlled for job tenure.

We began by testing two ordinary least squares (OLS) regression equations, the results of which appear in Table 2. The first equation was the mediator variable model, with the criterion being incivility. Our primary question here was whether target gender and target age predict uncivil treatment (as suggested by Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 6), over and above the effects of target tenure. A significant regression coefficient supported a relationship for target gender. More specifically, women reported significantly higher average exposure to incivility ($M = 10.45$, $SD = 9.68$) than did men ($M = 6.97$, $SD = 7.93$). Target age, however, showed no significant effect.

The second regression equation—the dependent variable model—also appears in Table 2. The key question here was whether the target's experience of incivility (the mediator) significantly predicted his or her intent to turnover (the dependent variable), and indeed this was the case. Taken together, the collection of variables (gender, age, incivility, and job tenure) explained 26% of the variance in employees' turnover intentions.

A Sobel analysis confirmed that gender had a significant indirect relationship with turnover intent via incivility (point estimate of indirect effect = .47, $SE = .13$, $z = 3.47$, $p = .000$). In contrast, a second Sobel test suggested that age had no indirect relationship with turnover through incivility (point estimate = .01, $SE = .01$, $z = 1.52$, $p = .13$).

The Sobel test is widely used in research on mediation, but it erroneously assumes normality in the distribution of the indirect effect.³ Methodologists (e.g., Hayes, 2009; Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Shrout & Bolger, 2002) therefore recommend that it be supplemented with bootstrap confidence intervals, which do not make assumptions about the shape of the sampling distribution. If the confidence intervals exclude zero, the indirect effect (i.e., mediation) is considered meaningful. We therefore calculated *percentile-based*, *bias-corrected*, and *bias-corrected and accelerated* confidence intervals across 5,000 bootstrap resamples; these results appear in the upper panel of Table 3. None of the

Table 3
Bootstrap Analysis of Simple Mediation in Study 1
(city government) and Study 2 (law enforcement)

	95% Bootstrap Confidence Intervals					
	Percentile-Based		Bias-Corrected		Bias-Corrected and Accelerated	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Study 1						
Gender	.18	.74	.19	.75	.19	.75
Age	-.02	.02	-.01	.02	-.01	.02
Study 2						
Race	.02	.10	.02	.10	.02	.10
Age	-.01	.00	-.01	.00	-.01	.00

Note: Results are based on 5,000 bootstrapped samples.

confidence intervals for gender contained zero, which further supported a significant indirect relationship between gender and turnover intent, via incivility. In contrast, all confidence intervals for age *did* include zero, confirming that age did not link with turnover intentions through incivility.

This pattern of results supported Hypotheses 1 and 4 but not Hypothesis 6. That is, female gender (but not advanced age) was associated with increased risk for uncivil treatment on the job, which in turn related to increased intentions to leave that job. Moreover, these results cannot be explained by women having shorter tenure than men in their organizations. Of course, many additional factors would contribute to turnover decisions (e.g., health, job satisfaction), but incivility proved to be an important predictor.

Whereas Study 1 focused on links from gender and age to incivility, Study 2 addressed links from race and age.

Study 2: Law Enforcement Agency

Method: Participants and Procedures

As part of a larger study of a law enforcement agency on the East Coast, a sample of 797 sworn personnel was drawn, including all of the women, all of the minority men, and a random sample of the White men. Those with the rank of lieutenant or below completed surveys in large groups. Employees with the rank of captain, major, or higher received the survey questionnaire in the mail, which they returned in postage-paid envelopes. A total of 679 personnel responded to the survey (85% response rate). We excluded participants who failed to complete questions about race or incivility, yielding a sample of 653 for analyses. Ninety percent of this sample was male, 93% had at least some college education, and 82% was married. Fifty-four percent identified as White, 24% as African American/Black, 12% as Hispanic, 3.5% as Native American, 2% as Asian American, and 2.5% as "Other"; 2% did

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics, Alpha Coefficients, and
Correlations for Study 2 (law enforcement)

Variables	Number of Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	1	2	3	4	5
1. Target race (0 = <i>White</i> , 1 = <i>minority</i>)	1	0.45	0.50	–	1.00				
2. Target job tenure	1	14.62	6.90	–	.02	1.00			
3. Target age	1	38.75	6.21	–	.06	.88***	1.00		
4. Target's experience of incivility	20	26.74	8.79	.91	.11**	.05	.01	1.00	
5. Target's turnover intentions	3	1.50	0.73	.76	.11**	.14***	.09*	.32***	1.00

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

not indicate their race. This sample ranged in age from 24 to 54 (age $M = 39$, $SD = 6.21$), and they averaged 15 years of job tenure ($SD = 6.90$).

Measures

Summary statistics, coefficient alphas, and intercorrelations for all constructs appear in Table 4. For multi-item scales, we summed items to create scale scores; higher scores reflect greater levels of the underlying construct.

Demographics. Participants self-reported their race, which we coded 0 (*White*) or 1 (*minority*). In addition, they provided the number of years they had been employed with that law enforcement agency, as well as the number of years they had been employed in law enforcement prior to working for that organization. We summed responses to these two items to create a measure of total job tenure in law enforcement. Participants also gave their age in a write-in box.

Workplace incivility. To assess experiences of uncivil behaviors, we used a 20-item measure based on the WIS (Cortina et al., 2001). This included all of the incivility items used in Study 1 plus additional items to increase coverage of the construct domain (e.g., “refuse to work with you,” “withhold information that you needed to do your job correctly”). Participants again described how often they had experienced each behavior in the prior year (from 0 = *never* to 4 = *many times*) from other employees in their agency.

Turnover intentions. To assess turnover intentions, we again used Hanisch and Hulin's (1990, 1991) three-item job withdrawal scale, identical to that employed in Study 1.

Study 2 Results and Discussion

Analyses for Study 2 paralleled those of Study 1, the only difference being that race rather than gender was an independent variable. Age was a second independent variable, and job tenure was a covariate. Our focus this time was testing Hypotheses 2, 4, and 6.

Table 5
Results of Regression Analysis of Simple Mediation in Study 2 (law enforcement)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Mediator variable model (criterion: incivility)				
Constant	29.25	3.62	8.96	.000
Target job tenure	0.18	0.11	1.68	.093
Target race (0 = <i>White</i> , 1 = <i>minority</i>)	2.09	0.70	2.99	.003
Target age	-0.16	0.12	-1.35	.178
Dependent variable model (criterion: turnover intent)				
Constant	0.85	0.28	3.10	.002
Target job tenure	0.02	0.01	2.45	.015
Target race (0 = <i>White</i> , 1 = <i>minority</i>)	0.12	0.06	2.19	.029
Target age	-0.01	0.01	-1.03	.303
Target's experience of incivility	0.03	0.01	7.81	.000

We again began with two OLS regression equations, the first of which was the mediator variable model predicting incivility; Table 5 displays these results. The primary question behind this analysis was whether target race and target age predict uncivil treatment (as suggested by Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 6), over and above the effects of target tenure. A significant regression coefficient supported a relationship for target race. Minority members' average exposure to incivility was significantly higher ($M = 27.86$, $SD = 9.26$) than that of their White colleagues ($M = 25.87$, $SD = 8.40$). Target age, however, showed no significant effect on incivility exposure.

We then tested the dependent variable model, predicting turnover intent; these results also appear in Table 5. The focus of this analysis was again whether the target's exposure to incivility significantly predicted his or her intent to turnover, over and above the effect of tenure in the organization. Once again, this was indeed the case. Taken together, this collection of variables (race, age, incivility, and job tenure) explained 12% of the variance in turnover intentions in law enforcement.

According to the Sobel analysis, racial minority status had a significant indirect relationship with turnover intent via incivility (point estimate = .05, $SE = .02$, $z = 2.83$, $p = .005$). Another Sobel test, however, suggested that age had no indirect association with turnover by way of incivility (point estimate = .0006, $SE = .001$, $z = 0.41$, $p = .68$).

Next, we again calculated confidence intervals across 5,000 bootstrap resamples; these appear in the lower panel of Table 3. None of the confidence intervals for race, but all of the confidence intervals for age, contained zero.

This pattern of results was consistent with an indirect connection between race and turnover intentions through incivility, supporting Hypotheses 2 and 4. Hypothesis 6, about age having an indirect link, was not supported. We thus found that minority race (but not age) related to increased risk for rude treatment in an organization, which in turn predicted greater thoughts and intentions of leaving that organization. Moreover, these results cannot be explained by job tenure. It is important to note that the uncivil behavior assessed in this study *came from coworkers, supervisors, and command staff*. These findings therefore cannot be attributed to hostile treatment directed at law enforcement officers from members of the public (e.g., on the streets, during arrests, while issuing citations).

To build on findings from Studies 1 and 2, we next analyzed survey data from a sample that was large and diverse enough to examine effects of *both* gender and race simultaneously, permitting tests of whether women of color face double jeopardy when it comes to workplace incivility (as Hypothesis 3 proposes). This sample also included enough African American women and men, within both the enlisted and officer ranks, such that analyses of race could focus more specifically on Whites compared to African Americans. This overcomes the limitation inherent in combining all people of color into a single “minority” group. An additional advantage of this survey was that it contained questions about supervisor gender and work group gender composition; these data enabled tests of whether women’s increased reports of incivility might be attributable to the severe underrepresentation of their gender in the military work environment. In other words, assuming that military women report more uncivil treatment than military men do, Study 3 allowed us to test whether this was due to their own gender (and/or race), the gender of their work environment, or both. We could not test for age effects, having no age question in the Study 3 survey (moreover, military samples are less likely to have older workers).

Study 3: U.S. Military

Method: Participants and Procedures

This study (the 2002 Status of the Armed Forces Surveys: Workplace and Gender Relations) began with a nonproportional stratified, single-stage random sample of active-duty members of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard (excluding reservists on active duty). The initial sample contained 60,415 individuals, of whom 53,170 were deemed eligible for the survey (reasons for ineligibility were various, such as inability to locate the sample member). These individuals were invited to complete surveys either on paper or online, and 19,960 usable surveys were returned (38% response rate). Forty-nine percent of the sample was female, 62% was married, and 47% had approximately 12 to 14 years of schooling. Their number of years of active service revealed a bimodal distribution, with 38% of the sample reporting less than 6 years and 36% reporting 10 to 20 years of active duty. Fifty-seven percent of this sample was White, and 21% was African American; all analyses focused on this subset of 15,497 participants. (For more information on this sample and procedures, see Lipari & Lancaster, 2003).

Measures

Descriptive statistics, coefficient alphas, and intercorrelations for all variables appear in Table 6. For multi-item scales, we summed relevant items to create scale scores; higher scores reflect greater levels of the underlying construct.

Demographics. Participants self-reported their gender (coded 0 = *male* or 1 = *female*), their race (coded 0 = *White* or 1 = *Black or African American*), and their immediate supervisor’s gender (coded 0 = *male* and 1 = *female*). In addition, they provided their years of military service (i.e., job tenure), and the Defense Manpower Data Center collapsed their

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics, Alpha Coefficients, and Correlations for Study 3 (U.S. military)

Variables	Number of items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Target gender (0 = <i>male</i> , 1 = <i>female</i>)	1	0.53	0.50	–	1.00					
2. Target race (0 = <i>White</i> , 1 = <i>African American</i>)	1	0.51	0.50	–	.06***	1.00				
3. Target job tenure	1	2.33	1.08	–	–.15***	.06***	1.00			
4. Supervisor gender (0 = <i>male</i> , 1 = <i>female</i>)	1	0.17	0.37	–	.15***	.09***	–.02	1.00		
5. Workgroup gender composition	1	2.80	1.19	–	.25***	.13***	.04***	.36***	1.00	
6. Target's experience of incivility	10	18.76	8.88	.93	.09***	.03*	–.15***	.02*	–.04***	1.00
7. Target turnover intentions	5	2.96	1.73	.80	–.01	.01	.00	.00	.00	.19***

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

responses into four ordered categories: 1 = *less than 6 years*, 2 = *6 years to less than 10 years*, 3 = *10 years to less than 20 years*, and 4 = *20 years or more*. Participants also described the “gender mix” of their work groups, defined as “the people with whom you work on a day-to-day basis.” Response options fell along a 7-point scale (1 = *all men*, 2 = *almost entirely men*, 3 = *more men than women*, 4 = *about equal numbers of men and women*, 5 = *more women than men*, 6 = *almost entirely women*, and 7 = *all women*).

Workplace incivility. This survey assessed experiences of incivility with Glomb’s (in press; Glomb & Liao, 2003) reliable and valid Aggressive Experiences Scale. These 10 items asked how often, in the past 12 months, respondents had “been in workplace situations where military personnel, civilian employees, and/or contractor employees” had targeted them with behaviors such as “avoiding you,” “saying offensive or crude things about you,” or “insulting, criticizing you (including sarcasm).” The 5-point response scale ranged from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*).

Turnover intentions. To assess thoughts and intentions to leave the military, five items were adopted from the 1999 Survey of Active Duty Personnel (Helba et al., 2001). Examples included “thought seriously about leaving the military” and “discussed leaving and/or civilian opportunities with family or friends.”

Study 3 Results and Discussion

Before proceeding, we sought to equalize the cell sizes in our analysis. The data set contained many more White men ($n = 5,964$) and White women ($n = 5,387$) than African American men and women ($n = 1,816$ and $n = 2,330$, respectively), yielding an unbalanced

Table 7
Results of Regression Analysis of Moderated Mediation in Study 3 (U.S. military)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Mediator variable model (criterion: incivility)				
Constant	21.81	0.36	60.47	.000
Target job tenure	-1.13	0.09	-12.03	.000
Supervisor gender (0 = <i>male</i> , 1 = <i>female</i>)	0.66	0.29	2.28	.023
Work group gender composition ^a	-0.49	0.09	-5.29	.000
Target gender (0 = <i>male</i> , 1 = <i>female</i>)	0.86	0.29	2.99	.003
Target race (0 = <i>White</i> , 1 = <i>African American</i>)	0.12	0.29	0.42	.675
Target gender × race	0.90	0.40	2.26	.024
Dependent variable model (criterion: turnover intent)				
Constant	2.21	0.08	25.94	.000
Target job tenure	0.04	0.02	2.17	.030
Supervisor gender (0 = <i>male</i> , 1 = <i>female</i>)	-0.03	0.06	-0.55	.580
Work group gender composition	0.01	0.02	0.72	.469
Target gender (0 = <i>male</i> , 1 = <i>female</i>)	-0.20	0.06	-3.58	.000
Target race (0 = <i>White</i> , 1 = <i>African American</i>)	-0.13	0.06	-2.36	.018
Target gender × race	0.26	0.08	3.28	.001
Target's experience of incivility	0.04	0.00	17.23	.000

a. Work group gender composition was coded such that higher scores reflect a greater presence of women.

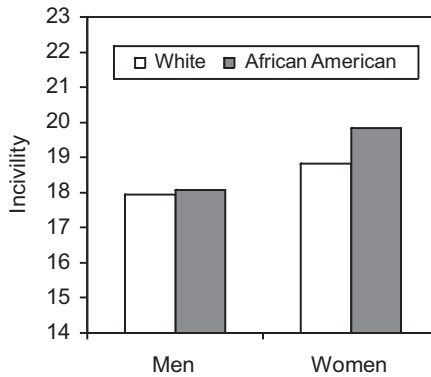
design. We therefore drew a random sample of 2,000 White men and 2,000 White women in order to more closely match the African American cell sizes. After pooling data from the two random samples with data from all of the African American respondents, we had a subsample of 8,146.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that gender and race would interact in predicting uncivil treatment, with women of color reporting disproportionately more uncivil experiences than any other gender-by-race group. Hypothesis 4 predicted that greater experiences of incivility would be associated with greater thoughts and intentions of quitting. Hypothesis 5 combined both of these predictions into a moderated mediation model, with race moderating the gender-to-incivility relationship.⁴

To test Hypothesis 5, we implemented the analyses recommended by Preacher et al. (2007), which included both normal theory-based and bootstrap-based approaches to testing moderated mediation. In these analyses, gender served as the independent variable, race was the moderator, incivility was the mediator, and turnover intent was the dependent variable. As in previous analyses, job tenure served as a covariate. We also added two new covariates—supervisor gender and work group gender composition—to test whether women's increased exposure to incivility could be attributable to their working in an environment (the military) in which they are heavily underrepresented. These analyses essentially tested whether (after controlling for job tenure, supervisor gender, and work group gender composition) incivility mediated a relationship between gender and turnover intentions and whether this mediated effect varied depending on race.

As with simple mediation, we began by estimating two OLS regression equations, corresponding to a mediator variable model and dependent variable model; these results appear in Table 7. The main question of the first model was whether target gender and race

Figure 1
Estimated Marginal Means for Gender-by-Race Effect on Incivility



interacted in the prediction of uncivil treatment (Hypothesis 3). A significant regression coefficient supported this relationship.

To better understand this effect, we plotted the marginal means for each gender-by-race group in Figure 1. This figure shows how female gender related to increased risk for uncivil treatment for both White and African American employees (consistent with a main effect of target gender, which remained significant even in the presence of the interaction). The figure also demonstrates how target gender interacted with target race, with the gender difference being more pronounced for African Americans than for Whites. Follow-up Tukey tests revealed that African American women described significantly more uncivil treatment ($M = 19.85$) than any other group: White women ($M = 18.83$), African American men ($M = 18.07$), or White men ($M = 17.95$). Consistent with Hypothesis 3, then, women of color (in this case, African American women) were uniquely vulnerable to uncivil treatment.

Because the mediator variable model also included target gender and target race as main effects, this provided further tests of Hypotheses 1 and 2. As noted above, gender had a main effect on incivility over and above effects of the interaction; race, however, did not (see Table 7). This means that racial minority status (specifically, being African American) was associated with increased risk for uncivil treatment only when combined with female gender. Female gender, in contrast, predicted increased exposure to incivility, regardless of one's race.

Although not hypothesized, another interesting finding in Table 7 was the significant effect of work group gender composition on incivility exposure, over and above the effects of target gender, gender-by-race, and so on. This suggested that the more that an employee's work group was skewed toward "all men," the more uncivil conduct that employee encountered.

Results from the dependent variable model also appear in Table 7. This model tested

Table 8
Conditional Indirect Effect of Gender on Turnover Intent via Incivility,
at Different Values of the Race Moderator in Study 3 (U.S. military)

Race	Mean conditional indirect effect	SE	Z	p	95% Bootstrap Confidence Intervals					
					Percentile-Based		Bias-Corrected		Bias-Corrected and Accelerated	
					Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
African American	.07	.01	5.43	.000	.04	.09	.04	.09	.04	.09
White	.03	.01	3.12	.002	.01	.05	.01	.05	.01	.05

Note: Results are based on 5,000 bootstrapped samples.

whether the target's experience of incivility (the mediator) significantly predicted intent to turnover, and indeed this was the case. Taken together, the variables in this equation (gender, race, gender \times race, incivility, job tenure, work group gender composition, and supervisor gender) explained 4% of the variance in respondents' intent to leave military employment.

We next conducted a bootstrap test of the conditional indirect effect at different values of the moderator. That is, across 5,000 bootstrap resamples, we calculated the mean indirect effect of gender \rightarrow incivility \rightarrow turnover intent for our two race categories, White and African American; these results appear in Table 8. These analyses further demonstrated that the indirect relationship between gender and turnover intentions—via incivility—was significant for both racial groups but over twice the size for African Americans (mean indirect effect = .07, $p = .0000$) compared with Whites (mean indirect effect = .03, $p = .0018$).

Finally, we calculated percentile-based, bias-corrected, and bias-corrected and accelerated bootstrap confidence intervals for the indirect effects; these also appear in Table 8. None of the confidence intervals contained zero, which further supported a significant indirect effect of gender on turnover intent, by way of incivility, for both African Americans and Whites.

In summary, according to moderated mediation analyses, gender and race interacted in predicting incivility; this resulted in African American women facing higher risk for uncivil treatment than African American men or Whites of either gender. Incivility, in turn, was associated with greater intention to turnover. All effects held significant while controlling for job tenure, supervisor gender, and work group gender composition.

General Discussion

This article makes novel contributions to both organizational and social psychology. First, by building bridges with social-psychological scholarship on discrimination, we extend the literature on workplace mistreatment to incorporate issues of gender, race, and age. Most extant organizational studies of aggression, deviance, undermining, injustice, and so on have

addressed generic conduct irrespective of social categories, without recognizing that antisocial work behavior may often reflect bias against members of undervalued social groups.⁵ A second contribution of the present work is to the social psychology literature. A frequent complaint in social psychology (e.g., Fiske, 2000) is that studies of “discrimination” and “intergroup conflict” have focused in detail on cognition and emotion but have neglected action. While we appreciate the importance of attitudes, stereotypes, and ideologies, we also agree that a thorough understanding of intergroup relations requires attention to intergroup behaviors (Fiske, 2000). With this goal in mind, we investigated the specific behavioral experience of selective incivility from the target’s perspective.

More specifically, we began testing Cortina’s (2008) theory of selective incivility as a covert manifestation of sexism and racism in organizations. Consistent with that theory, and with our hypotheses, Studies 1 and 2 found that women and people of color reported significantly more experiences of incivility on the job than did men and Whites, respectively. The uncivil behaviors assessed in these studies were neutral in content with respect to both gender and race. These findings support the possibility that some uncivil conduct represents an inconspicuous form of gender and racial discrimination. This work echoes Sue, Capodilupo, and Torino’s (2007) research on “racial microaggressions,” referring to subtle racist behaviors that are most likely to emerge when they can be explained by factors other than race.

Race effects also emerged in Study 3, but only in interaction with gender. Employees of color—specifically, African Americans—did report more uncivil treatment than White employees but only when they were women (Figure 1). One might wonder why African American *men* did not describe more incivility than White men, and one possible explanation lies in the particular context of this study: the U.S. military. Military work calls for hypermasculinity, encouraging employees toward extreme physical fitness, aggression, and even violence. These traits are also core components of stereotypes of African Americans (e.g., Devine & Elliot, 2000), especially African American men (e.g., Dottolo & Stewart, 2008; Young, 2004). This alignment between occupation and stereotype could promote acceptance of and respect for African American men in the military: Because they are seen to “belong” in this work environment, fellow employees may treat them with civility. In contrast, African American *women* could be viewed as ill suited to this employment context due to their female gender and its associated stereotypes, so employees may selectively target them with incivility.

In line with Hypothesis 4, experiences of incivility related to turnover intentions across all of our studies: The more that people faced rudeness on the job, the more they considered leaving that job. Because turnover intentions are one of the strongest predictors of actual turnover (Griffeth et al., 2000), our findings support the likelihood that uncivil treatment drives some women and people of color out of their places of work. Relationships between selective incivility and turnover might even be one explanation (out of many) for the dearth of women and people of color in certain jobs and industries; this is an intriguing possibility that warrants further study.

The size and diversity of Study 3 allowed us to test our predictions as a special case of moderated mediation. Results supported Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5, with gender and race interacting to influence risk for uncivil treatment, which in turn related to turnover intentions.

Put differently, we found that the indirect effect of gender on turnover intent, via incivility, was stronger for African American employees compared with White employees. As seen in Figure 1, African American women described more incivility than did African American men, White women, or White men. This finding is consistent with theories of double jeopardy for women of color (e.g., Beal, 1970; Buchanan et al., 2008; Epstein, 1973; Greenman & Xie, 2008). It is also in line with Crenshaw's classic intersectionality argument, suggesting that the experiences of African American women may be "the product of intersecting patterns of racism and sexism" (1991: 1243).

Our findings build on the work of Berdahl and Moore (2006), who demonstrated that women of color face double jeopardy when it comes to harassment in organizations. Whereas Berdahl and Moore addressed harassment based on sex and ethnicity, we focused on uncivil treatment that is neutral in its content. In doing so, we showed that the double-jeopardy pattern generalizes to forms of workplace mistreatment that do not overtly reference one's gender or race.

We found no evidence of age-based selective incivility in either a city government or law enforcement workplace. One possible explanation for these null effects is that participants in both of these samples were relatively young, averaging approximately 40 years of age. Moreover, these employees ranged in age from 22 to 62 (city) and 24 to 54 (law enforcement), so neither sample included elderly adults. It remains possible that age-based incivility manifests in the lives of people who work beyond middle age, that is, beyond age 65, "the magic number associated with retirement" (Cuddy et al., 2005: 277). The elderly stereotype includes both positive and negative elements—both warmth and incompetence—and this mixed pattern of stereotyping is known to breed interpersonal disregard and exclusion (e.g., Cuddy & Fiske, 2002; Cuddy et al., 2005). Such exclusionary behavior, if disproportionately targeted at older employees, would constitute selective incivility in the workplace.

Patterns of *triple jeopardy* (e.g., based on the intersection of age, gender, and race biases) are also possible with workplace incivility. For instance, perhaps older Black women face more disrespect than other employees, due to stereotypes that frame them (being Black professionals) as cold and also (being older) incompetent (e.g., Fiske et al., 2002; Glick & Fiske, 1999, 2001). Such effects may depend on job type since not only persons but also jobs carry age stereotypes (e.g., Cleveland & Landy, 1983; Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995). Our data did not include the relevant variables to test these possibilities, but they represent interesting avenues for future research.

Although unexpected, it is interesting to note that work group gender composition had a significant relationship with incivility, over and above the effects of target gender and target race. That is, the more male dominated an employee's workgroup, the more incivility that employee tended to experience. This is consistent with prior empirical research linking male-skewed gender ratios to stereotyping and discrimination (e.g., Kanter, 1977; Whitley & Kite, 2006), harassment (e.g., Berdahl, 2007; Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997; Gruber, 1998), and lower social support (e.g., Ely, 1994). More generally, this finding suggests that the demographics of situations, in addition to the demographics of persons, should be considered in models of incivility risk. There are also multiple levels of situation to consider; for instance, Ely's (1994) work suggests that the gender composition of senior leadership can influence individual experiences in work groups.

These issues of organizational demography as they relate to incivility are ripe for further inquiry.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although supported across three large studies, our findings have their limitations. First, the correlational, cross-sectional nature of our data sets precludes definitive causal or temporal inferences. Other studies, however, have identified longitudinal relationships between hostile work experiences and subsequent turnover cognitions (Glomb, Munson, Hulin, Bergman, & Drasgow, 1999) and turnover behaviors (Sims, Drasgow, & Fitzgerald, 2005). We therefore have good reason to believe that employees' thoughts and intentions of quitting followed, rather than preceded, their incivility exposure.

Second, data in this research were collected using single-source, self-report methods. Although the nature of our constructs makes the use of self-report appropriate (Chan, 2009), relying fully on self-reported data raises the potential that correlations may be distorted due to common method variance. Response biases were minimized to some extent in the design of these surveys, which assessed turnover intentions independent of and prior to measuring incivility. This creates "psychological separation" of the variables, which Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) recommended as a means of reducing common method bias. In our surveys, this strategy also decreased the chances that respondents' memories of uncivil behaviors could influence their answers to turnover questions. Still, to test the possibility that common method variance may have unduly influenced results, we conducted the Harman single-factor test in each of our three data sets (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). No overarching (method) factor emerged, making it less likely that our observed relations are primarily due to common method variance.

Another measurement issue is that the assessment of incivility varied across our three studies. In particular, Study 3 used Glomb's (in press; Glomb & Liao, 2003) Aggressive Experiences Scale, which aims to assess exposure to aggression that has an unambiguous intent to harm the target. However, as is common in the workplace mistreatment literature (Hershcovis, 2011), "intent" was factored into the definition but not the operationalization of this construct. Without any reference to intent, the behaviors assessed by Glomb's scale overlap heavily with common understandings of incivility (e.g., avoiding the target, insulting the target, using an angry tone of voice). That said, one could argue that these behaviors fall on the more hostile or angry end of the incivility continuum, or perhaps that they fall into the subdomain of incivility that bleeds into psychological aggression (these construct domains partly overlap—intent to harm should be *ambiguous* with incivility, but it can be present; Andersson & Pearson, 1999). The reader should keep in mind these measurement issues when making sense of findings across our three studies.

Note that the variance accounted for in turnover intent varied across studies, from a high of 26% (Study 1) to a low of 4% (Study 3). This diversity in effect size could be due to differences across surveys in incivility and turnover instruments. Perhaps also the smaller effect in Study 3 is due to turnover being more routine in the military context. Exiting military employment to continue one's career elsewhere is common. This is reflected in

Study 3's turnover intent data: Scale values ranged from 0 to 5, and the mean response was 2.96 ($SD = 1.73$), but the *modal* response was 5. Thoughts and intentions of exit appear customary in the military, to some extent regardless of incivility exposure. Readers should also bear in mind that even effects of small magnitude can be very meaningful (e.g., J. M. Cortina & Landis, 2011; Prentice & Miller, 1992) and, when it comes to turnover, very costly to organizations (e.g., Kacmar, Andrews, Van Rooy, Steilberg, & Cerrone, 2006; Staw, 1980).

Many interesting questions remain about incivility from the perspective of the instigator. Cortina's (2008) theory of selective incivility outlines cognitive, affective, and situational factors that can motivate instigators to target women and people of color with disproportionate disrespect. We indirectly assessed instigators' uncivil conduct by measuring targets' experiences of that conduct. Future studies could attempt to capture the instigator's perspective directly, which will require innovative methods to overcome social desirability bias. It will also be interesting to link instigators' actions with their thoughts, emotions, and contexts, which would further test Cortina's theory and help us better understand the personal and social factors that fuel selective incivility.

Although we ruled out several alternative explanations for our findings, there are additional possibilities. For instance, compared with men and Whites, women and people of color tend to occupy different types and levels of jobs, which may increase their interpersonal involvement with others (i.e., some jobs emphasize "working with people" more than "working with things"; e.g., Katz, 2009; Whiston, 1993) and therefore increase the likelihood of uncivil involvements. Put differently, gender and race can affect career choice, which in turn can shape the extent of interpersonal interaction; this can then affect risk for uncivil treatment. This complex mediational possibility (i.e., gender or race \rightarrow job type \rightarrow interpersonal interaction \rightarrow incivility) is an intriguing one that should be tested empirically.

Implications for Organizations

If selective incivility interferes with the retention of a diverse workforce, effective and creative strategies are needed to curtail this disguised form of discrimination. Cortina (2008) identified both person and situation factors that can fuel this behavior, and interventions for each of these factors could be considered. These interventions need not be limited to the organizational context, as *intraindividual* change also is possible. That is, the social psychology literature is replete with ideas on how to reform not only the situation but also the person. For example, effective strategies exist for preventing and intercepting individual stereotyping (e.g., Devine & Monteith, 1999; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995) and for modifying people's cognitive categorization of who comprises their "ingroup" (e.g., Dovidio et al., 2001; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Because stereotyping and social categorization are key forces underlying modern discrimination, similar techniques could be applied to the management of selective (i.e., discriminatory) incivility.

Situation-level interventions for creating respectful, incivility-free work environments have emerged from the organizational sciences. As Pearson and colleagues (e.g., Pearson et al., 2000; Pearson & Porath, 2004, 2009) have argued, senior management should model

appropriate, respectful workplace behavior and clearly state expectations of civility in mission statements and policy manuals. All new employees should receive education about civility expectations, and employees at all levels could undergo interpersonal skills training. When incivilities do arise, instigators should be swiftly, justly, and consistently sanctioned.

Given the connections to gender and race documented in our research, civility-promotion campaigns should be integrated with organizational efforts to prevent overt discrimination (e.g., sexual and racial harassment). For instance, civility policies and trainings could emphasize that common courtesy ought to be race blind, gender blind, age blind, and so on. Leaders should stress that unacceptable discrimination includes not just overt expressions of misogyny and bigotry but also subtle acts of disrespect. The goal would be a broadening of employees' conceptualizations of what it means to be unbiased and professional (Brief & Barsky, 2000). As Cortina notes, "This sort of combined strategy would provide a more efficient and effective means of combating antisocial work behavior, which has many behavioral faces (general, gendered, raced, etc.)" (2008: 71). Training programs could potentially benefit all employees, crossing gender and race boundaries. They might therefore hold broader appeal and meet less resistance than interventions exclusively targeting discrimination or harassment based on gender, race, and so forth (Cortina, 2008; Cortina et al., 2002; Lim & Cortina, 2005).

In sum, this collection of studies provides initial evidence that workplace incivility may be selectively targeted at women and people of color—and especially women of color—driving them out of some places of work. The uncivil treatment, in these cases, may represent a subtle and insidious form of discrimination. This speaks to the need for particular vigilance about issues of "general" incivility, which may not be so general after all.

Appendix

Incivility Items for Study 1 (city government)

During the PAST YEAR, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers...

Paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions.

Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility.

Gave you hostile looks, stares, or sneers.

Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately.

Interrupted or "spoke over" you.

Rated you lower than you deserved on an evaluation.

Yelled, shouted, or swore at you.

Made insulting or disrespectful remarks about you.

Ignored you or failed to speak to you (e.g., gave you "the silent treatment").

Accused you of incompetence.

Targeted you with anger outbursts or "temper tantrums."

Made jokes at your expense.

Note: Participants respond to each item on a 5-point scale: *never*, *once or twice*, *sometimes*, *often*, and *many times*.

Notes

1. Portions of this data set were also analyzed by Lim, Cortina, and Magley (2008), but none of the hypotheses or analyses of the current study overlap with those of Lim and colleagues.
2. Bootstrapping is a nonparametric procedure that “involves repeatedly sampling from the data set and estimating the indirect effect in each resampled data set. By repeating this process thousands of times, an empirical approximation of the sampling distribution of *ab* is built and used to construct confidence intervals for the indirect effect” (Preacher & Hayes, 2008: 880).
3. Due to this flawed assumption, some methodologists (e.g., Hayes, 2009) now recommend that tests of mediation *only* report bootstrap confidence intervals and omit the Sobel test altogether. Many readers, however, are accustomed to seeing Sobel test results in analyses of mediation, so we report them in this article.
4. Specifically, we tested a “Model 2” moderated mediation effect, in Preacher and colleagues’ (2007) nomenclature; this is conceptually analogous to Edwards and Lambert’s (2007) “first stage moderation model.” Although we designated race as the moderator variable, either race or gender could be framed as the moderator and the relevant statistical procedure would be the same. This is because “moderation is symmetric, such that either of the variables involved in a two-way interaction can be cast as the moderator variable” (Edwards & Lambert, 2007: 8, Note 2).
5. Notable exceptions exist, however. For example, see the work of Richman and colleagues on gender and “generalized workplace abuse” (e.g., Richman et al., 1999) and that of Fox and Stallworth (2005) on race and bullying.

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