

Sex-Based Harassment in Employment: New Insights into Gender and Context

Dana Kabat-Farr and Lilia M. Cortina
University of Michigan

Legal definitions of sex-based harassment have evolved over the decades; it is important that social science perspectives on this phenomenon evolve as well. This study seeks to refine our understanding of conditions in which sex-based harassment thrives, with empirical evidence from three organizations. Previous research has suggested that underrepresentation of one's gender in the employment context increases risk for sex-based harassment. This work has focused mainly on *sexual-advance* forms of harassment, mainly in the lives of women. Less is known about the *gender harassment* of women, or about any kind of harassment of men. Extending this scholarship, we analyzed survey data from women and men working in three diverse domains: academia ($N = 847$), the court system ($N = 1,158$), and the military ($N = 19,960$). Across all samples, the underrepresentation of women in a workgroup related to increased odds of women experiencing gender harassment, but not sexual-advance harassment. For men, the opposite pattern emerged: underrepresentation did not increase men's risk for either type of harassment, instead relating to decreased odds of harassment in some contexts. We interpret these results in light of theories of tokenism, gender stereotyping, and sex role spillover in organizations. Our findings support the recommendation that, to reduce harassment (whether it be illegal or legal, gender- or sexuality-based, targeted at women or men), organizations should strive for gender balance in every job at every level. For male-dominated contexts, this implies a need to recruit, retain, and integrate more women throughout the organizational hierarchy.

Keywords: sexual harassment, gender demography, tokenism, sex roles, organizations

Over 35 years have elapsed since sexual harassment was declared a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (beginning with *Williams v. Saxbe*, 1976). Legal definitions of sexual harassment originally encompassed only “quid pro quo” situations, in which job-related bribes or threats were used to coerce sexual favors out of female subordinates (e.g., *Barnes v. Costle*, 1977; *Miller v. Bank of America*, 1979). In the 1980s, the courts expanded the definition to include “hostile environment” harassment: “discriminatory intimidation, ridicule, and insult” that permeates a work environment and renders it abusive for women (e.g., *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson*, 1986; *Harris v. Forklift Systems*, 1993). With expanded definitions came realization that men, too, can be victims of illegal sexual harassment (e.g., *Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services*, 1998). Despite these developments in the law, few social science studies have empirically disentangled harassment subtypes or considered unique aspects of male experiences.

Research must evolve to capture finer-grained distinctions in sexually harassing conduct, in the eyes of all victims. It is also critical that we better understand the contexts that give rise to it.

Regarding context, over three decades ago Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977) argued that women working among male majorities are more visible than other women, and thus more likely to be stereotyped and mistreated. Drawing on Kanter's theory, researchers posited that numerical scarcity amplifies women's risk for a specific type of mistreatment: sexual harassment. Different research programs have since addressed the link between gender underrepresentation and the sexual harassment of women. This includes studies of “sex role spillover” (e.g., Gutek & Cohen, 1987; Gutek, Cohen, & Konrad, 1990), “job-gender context” (e.g., Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997; Harned, Ormerod, Palmieri, Collinsworth, & Reed, 2002), and “tokenism” (e.g., Yoder, 1991; Yoder & Sennett, 1985). Building on this important work, the present study extends the focus to additional types of sexual harassment, as faced by both women and men.

Our collection of studies offers novel insights on two major issues: First, we examine how underrepresentation may differentially affect risk for two major subtypes of sexual (i.e., sex-based) harassment: gender harassment and sexual-advance harassment. The latter subtype has received the most attention in prior research, leaving gaps in our understanding of gender harassment and its relationship to gender representation. Second, we investigate potential gender differences in how underrepresentation of one's group relates to sex-based harassment in employment. Men, we suggest, may be advantaged when their numbers are in short supply.

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Dana Kabat-Farr, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan; Lilia M. Cortina, Departments of Psychology and Women's Studies, University of Michigan.

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Dana Kabat-Farr, who is now at the University of Nevada, Reno, College of Business MS 0028, 1664 N. Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89557. E-mail: kabatfarr@unr.edu

Before we begin, a comment on terminology is in order. The term *sexual harassment*, although common in both psychology and the law, has been problematized by Berdahl (2007) due to its emphasis on sexuality rather than gender. She proposed *sex-based harassment* to be a preferable alternative. In this paper we use both sexual harassment and sex-based harassment, allowing for consistency with prior research and the law, while at the same time encouraging reconsideration of the terminology. In the following sections, we review scholarship on gender-based tokenism and stereotyping. Next comes an overview of workplace harassment research. Combining these literatures, we then present the hypotheses of the current project, tested in field surveys across three organizations.

Gender Categorization and Underrepresentation at Work

Gender is one of the most salient and visible social categories within work organizations (Eagly & Karau, 2002). We categorize people based on their gender, and this serves as a powerful determinant of our behaviors toward them (Allport, 1954; Ito & Urland, 2003; Stangor, Lynch, Duan, & Glas, 1992). Initial framing based on gender endures and influences the social interactions that follow (Ridgeway, 2009). These social categorization processes, as they operate in employment, are influenced by the gender composition of the immediate setting (Kanter, 1977). Women are increasingly present in the workforce, but remain heavily underrepresented in a variety of jobs and positions. This makes women “tokens” in many places of work.

According to Kanter (1977), a person is a token when her or his social group represents less than 15% of a given context. Tokens are often professional “pioneers,” having entered fields from which their group was historically absent. Kanter’s paradigm has inspired a great deal of research on women’s difficulties in traditionally male occupations. This work has shown, for instance, that female construction workers suffer from heightened visibility, polarization, and role entrapment (i.e., acceptable behavior by tokens being limited to behavior that confirms gender stereotypes; Whittock, 2002). Token female African American firefighters encounter increased visibility, coworker disregard for their competence, and double standards in addition to sexual harassment (Yoder & Aniakudo, 1996). Similarly, while blatant structural disadvantages have been removed for token women on Wall Street, they continue to report social exclusion, hostile work environments, and colleague perceptions that they lack competence (Roth, 2004).

Kanter (1977) referred to male tokens as “high status tokens,” but predicted similar struggles as female tokens. Empirical research has found the opposite, however, with men often benefiting from underrepresentation on the job. Men in traditionally feminine fields tend to advance more quickly than their women counterparts (e.g., Furr, 2002; Padavic & Reskin, 2002), which Williams (1992) termed the “glass escalator effect.” For example, in four female-dominated occupations (elementary school teaching, nursing, librarianship, and social work), Williams (1992) found that men enjoyed benefits related to structural advantages. Heikes (1991) reported that male nurses’ positive professional outcomes (e.g., assimilation, visibility) often result in overachieving. Drawing on national panel data, Budig (2002) showed that men across indus-

tries are advantaged in terms of pay level and wage growth, regardless of tokenism. In short, male workers often profit when their numbers are few. We do not mean to imply that men face no problems in feminine fields. They do encounter certain barriers, such as workplace aggression (Andrews, Stewart, Morgan, & D’Arcy, 2012) and perceptions of incompetence and suspicious motives when working with small children (Sargent, 2004). Our point is that these men enjoy advantages as well, especially relative to women in masculine fields.

In studies of *solo status* (an extreme form of tokenism), gender differences in outcomes have also emerged. When men are in the minority they are aware of their membership in a high-status social category. When women are scarce, however, they are aware of social stigma as a member of a disadvantaged group (Swan & Wyer, 1997). Experimental work has further found that women compared to men perform worse on tasks when in a solo position (e.g., Inzlicht & Ben-Zeev, 2000; Sekaquaptewa & Thompson, 2002). Taken together these various research programs suggest that, despite the changing gender composition of the workforce, women continue to be disadvantaged and men advantaged when their gender is underrepresented.

The Role of Gender Stereotyping

To explain gendered effects of underrepresentation, scholars have emphasized gender status and stereotypes (Ott, 1989; Yoder, 1991). Numerically underrepresented individuals are often “under a magnifying glass” (Ott, 1989, p. 42), in the sense that their uniqueness draws attention to their performance, role, and position in the group. Along with increased visibility and salience comes strong stereotyping (e.g., Milliken & Martins, 1996; Ott, 1989). Here, gender differences come to the fore, with robust disparities in stereotypes of women versus men.

Prescriptive stereotypes dictate that women ought to be submissive, dependent, weak, emotional, kind, and best suited for domestic roles. Stereotypes of men, in contrast, paint them as dominant, resilient, analytical, stoic, competitive, and well-suited for leadership (e.g., Eagly & Sczesny, 2009; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). These divergent gender stereotypes have created a “think manager—think male” mindset throughout the industrialized world (e.g., Schein, 2001). These stereotypes have also bred denigration and rejection of women—but not men—in positions of power (e.g., Heilman, 2001; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Researchers point to the positive stereotypes of masculinity (e.g., strength, leadership) to explain why numerical scarcity benefits men in many work contexts (e.g., Ott, 1989; Stockdale, Visio, & Batra, 1999).

Adding further complexity to this picture, occupations themselves carry gender stereotypes (e.g., upper-level managerial jobs being male-typed; Lyness & Heilman, 2006). However, when person stereotypes cross with job stereotypes, gendered prescriptions for the person often triumph. For example, male nurses are expected to show (masculine) leadership abilities (e.g., Evans, 1997), while female executives and veterinarians should demonstrate (feminine) caring attributes (Irvine & Vermilya, 2010; Rudman & Glick, 2001). The tenacity of person-based gender stereotyping has also been clear in court cases. *Price Waterhouse v Hopkins* (1989) revolved around partnership being withheld from Ann Hopkins, who had conformed to the prescriptions of her masculine job (accounting firm senior manager) rather than her

feminine gender; to increase chances of promotion, the firm's partners advised Hopkins to attend "charm school" and behave more "lady-like." In these and other examples, prescriptive gender stereotypes of the person appear to outweigh stereotypic expectations of the job.

These arguments complicate Kanter's original propositions and predict that effects of underrepresentation should differ for women and men (e.g., Ott, 1989; Yoder, 1991). This could entail differential treatment, including differential mistreatment, such as sex-based harassment.

Sex-Based Harassment in Employment

In its broadest sense, sex-based harassment refers to "behavior that derogates, demeans, or humiliates an individual based on that individual's sex" (Berdahl, 2007, p. 644). This umbrella term captures (at least) three related categories of behavior (e.g., Fitzgerald, Gelfand & Drasgow, 1995; Fitzgerald, Swan & Magley, 1997). First, *unwanted sexual attention* involves romantic or sexual advances that are unwelcome, unreciprocated, and unpleasant to the recipient (e.g., unwanted touching or attempts at kissing, repeated requests for dates despite discouragement). The second category is *sexual coercion*: bribes or threats to alter the victim's conditions of employment depending on sexual behavior (e.g., offering a job in exchange for sex, threatening demotion unless sex acts are performed). Third is *gender harassment*, which encompasses "a broad range of verbal and nonverbal behaviors not aimed at sexual cooperation but that convey insulting, hostile, and degrading attitudes" about people of one's gender (Fitzgerald et al., 1995, p. 430). Gender harassment examples include female- or male-bashing jokes, comments that women do not belong in management or that men have no place in childcare, and crude gender-related terms of address (e.g., denigrating a coworker as a "hussy" or a "male whore"). The law generally views sexual coercion as *quid pro quo harassment*, whereas unwanted sexual attention and gender harassment parallel the legal concept of *hostile environment harassment*.

In the current project, we organized the types of sex-based harassment into two higher-order categories of behavior: that which is sexually advancing (i.e., unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion), which we term *sexual-advance harassment* (SAH); and that which is rejecting, that is, *gender harassment* (GH). This follows the precedent set by Cortina et al. (Konik & Cortina, 2008; Leskinen, Cortina & Kabat, 2011; Lim & Cortina, 2005), and mirrors Stockdale, Ganfolfo Berry, Schneider, and Cao's (2004) approach-rejection typology. Distinctions among harassment subtypes have strong theoretical support (e.g., Berdahl, 2007; Fitzgerald et al., 1995, 1997; Fitzgerald, Swan et al., 1997; Gruber, 1998; Stockdale et al., 2004). However, with notable exceptions (e.g., Langhout et al., 2005; Leskinen et al., 2011), empirical studies have typically analyzed harassment as a unitary phenomenon. That is, even when surveys measure GH and SAH separately, researchers often collapse across these experiences to create a "global" assessment of sex-based harassment. The current project disentangles the two categories of behavior, testing how gender representation differentially affects risk for these diverse experiences in the work lives of both women and men.

Harassment of Women

To explain the sexual harassment of women, many psychologists have turned to sex role spillover theory (SRST), referring to "the carryover into the workplace of gender-based roles that are usually irrelevant or inappropriate to the work setting" (Nieva & Gutek, 1981, p. 60; see also Gutek, 1985; Gutek & Morash, 1982). According to SRST, the shortage of women in a context makes their gender and attendant gender role highly salient, and the traditional female gender role emphasizes sexual availability (Deaux, 1995; Gutek et al., 1990). Men therefore perceive women not as colleagues but as potential sex partners, thus making sexual advances toward women seem appropriate (Burgess & Borgida, 1997). In line with SRST, both Gruber (1998) and Gutek and colleagues (Gutek & Cohen, 1987; Gutek et al., 1990) found women working in male-dominated contexts to experience more sexual overtures than women in gender-balanced settings. SRST has thus helped explain women's experiences of SAH. The theory, however, has focused less on GH and less on men.

Both psychology and the law have neglected GH, especially when compared to the attention given to SAH (Leskinen et al., 2011). This is highly problematic because "much of the time, harassment assumes a form that has little or nothing to do with sexuality but everything to do with gender" (Schultz, 1998, p. 1687). According to empirical research, the harassment of women in male-dominated professions (e.g., the law) frequently entails GH in the absence of unwanted sexual overtures (Leskinen et al., 2011). This supports the argument that sex-based harassment often aims to tell women that they are neither welcomed nor respected when they encroach on "male territory" (Gruber, 1998, p. 303; see also Reskin & Padavic, 1994). GH may be particularly relevant when considering experiences of women in mostly male settings, as GH alienates and isolates women, reducing their access to information and opportunities (typical effects of female underrepresentation; e.g., Crocker & McGraw, 1984).

Past research has found that the gender composition of the immediate work context is a stronger predictor of harassment than higher-order measures of gender predominance in an occupation (Gruber, 1998). For this reason, we focused on the gender make-up of people with whom an employee regularly interacts (termed "the workgroup," for linguistic convenience). Consistent with prior studies, we expected to find that for women, greater underrepresentation in the workgroup would be associated with increased likelihood of sex-based harassment. However, we argued that underrepresentation should affect likelihood of GH and SAH differently, as these two forms of harassment are distinct both in their expression and intent. GH involves interpersonal derogation, scorn, and rejection, which are common responses to women who violate gender stereotypes by doing "male" work (e.g., Gruber, 1998; Heilman, 2001; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). The purpose of the GH could be to punish women for violating role norms, or reclaim a job as "men's turf." Whatever its goal, GH of women should arise most in workgroups that (for some reason—history, stereotypes, recruitment methods, etc.) contain few women.

We also expected to find workgroup gender underrepresentation predicting women's experiences of SAH, based on prior research documenting this relationship, as described earlier (e.g., Gruber, 1998; Gutek & Cohen, 1987; Gutek et al., 1990). At the same time, we predicted the underrepresentation-SAH link to be weaker than

the underrepresentation-GH link. As noted above, GH often acts as a gendered form of occupational turf protection, “used to preserve the sex segregation of jobs by claiming the most highly rewarded forms of work as masculine in composition and content” (Schultz, 2006, p. 22). It seems only logical that women’s scarcity in a workgroup—which typically signifies their venture into a male preserve—would trigger a rejection response (GH) more than an attraction (SAH) response. In sum, we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Women’s underrepresentation in a workgroup should confer particular risk for gender harassment (H1a). The same relationship should hold for sexual-advance harassment, but it should be significantly weaker (H1b).

Harassment of Men

Prevalence rates of sex-based harassment of men vary, from a low of 14% in the federal workforce (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1981, 1988, 1995) to a high of 34% in the U.S. Military (Department of Defense Manpower Data Center, 2008). In a recent study of manufacturing, social service workers, and university staff, men reported more “sexual behavior” at work than women (though women appraised these experiences as more negative; Berdahl & Aquino, 2009). GH has also surfaced as a salient male experience. Konik and Cortina (2008) found male and female university employees reporting equal rates of GH, and GH was the second most common theme reported by male utility company employees, when asked what constitutes “sexual harassment” (Berdahl, Magley, & Waldo, 1996).

Berdahl and colleagues (1996) have attributed the harassment of men to “negotiations of gender in the workplace” (p. 542), interpreting this behavior as punishment for men deviating from the prescriptions of traditional masculinity (e.g., violating norms of male dominance). Likewise, Stockdale and colleagues (1999) have maintained that this harassment aims “to enforce preferred heterosexual, hypermasculine gender role behavior. . . men who appear to be effeminate, gay, or in other ways not sufficiently masculine (e.g., young and inexperienced) are likely targets” (p. 10). Whatever the explanation, it is clear that men are not immune from being sexually harassed. There remain unanswered questions, however, about how men’s harassment experiences relate to their proportional representation in the work environment.

Past research (reviewed earlier) has found men to benefit from rarity in many ways and a variety of work contexts. We expected to find a similar pattern of advantage when analyzing links between men’s underrepresentation and sex-based harassment. The notion of scarcity increasing harassment risk makes sense for women: underrepresentation of a group makes stereotypes of that group more salient, and the traditional female stereotype emphasizes qualities (e.g., emotionality, weakness) that many professions shun. Men, by contrast, may be advantaged by underrepresentation: even if their paucity conjures up stereotypes, the male stereotype is one of competence, resilience, and leadership—traits that are highly valued in the workplace. Instead of increasing men’s risk of either GH or SAH, we therefore hypothesized the reverse:

Hypothesis 2: Workgroup underrepresentation should protect men from being harassed. That is, for men there should be inverse relationships between underrepresentation and harass-

ment: the more that men are underrepresented in their workgroup, the less they should experience both gender harassment (H2a) and sexual-advance harassment (H2b).

The Present Project

In summary, recognizing that sex-based harassment is not a unitary phenomenon, we sought to unpack this construct. Men’s experiences of harassment diverge from women’s, and GH differs from SAH. Crossing these two factors (victim gender \times harassment subtype), we find four unique situations: GH of women, SAH of women, GH of men, and SAH of men. Our goal was to understand how gender imbalance (specifically, underrepresentation of one’s gender in the workgroup) affects each of these four categories of victimization. Owing to the disparities in women’s versus men’s work lives, and in GH versus SAH, we analyzed each category separately. We did so via secondary analyses of data from three samples, drawn from different real-world work contexts: academia, the court system, and the military.

Study 1: University Staff Employees

Method: Participants and Procedures

For the first survey, virtually all employees ($N = 2,772$) at a small public university were invited to participate. Following Dillman’s (2000) method, we mailed employees prenotices, invitations, and reminders to complete surveys on a restricted-access website. Nonrespondents eventually received a paper version of the same survey. As a further participation incentive, we offered gift certificates to a random subset of participants. Participants were assured that their data would remain confidential and that they would not be identifiable in any research reports. With a response rate of 66%, we obtained usable surveys from 1,711 employees. Our analyses were based only on data from the staff, excluding faculty, as staff employees often operate in cohesive structures (e.g., workgroups, teams). Faculty members, in contrast, operate with a great deal of autonomy. Many faculty have no “workgroup” per se, so we did not include their data in these analyses.

The subsample of staff ($n = 527$ women, 320 men) had an average age of 43.82 years ($SD = 10.40$) and average job tenure of 10.19 years. This sample was predominantly married or partnered (75%), White/European American (92%), and educated in college if not graduate school (70%). Job positions ranged widely, from Service/Maintenance Employees (5%) to Secretaries/Clerical Staff (19%) to University Administrators (4%). More information about these participants and procedures appears in Cortina and Magley (2009) and Miner-Rubino and Cortina (2004). (Although analyzing data from the same sample, these past studies concentrated on none of the same variables as the current study).

Measures

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all variables appear in Table 1.

Demographics. Participants self-reported their race (coded 0 = White or 1 = person of color/other). They also provided their years on the job (i.e., job tenure), and highest level of education. Response

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 1 (University Staff)

Variables	Women Mean (SD)	Men Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Race	.07 (.25)	.08 (.27)		-.06	.03	-.01	-.08	.04
2. Tenure	10.39 (11.91)	9.92 (8.44)	-.17**		-.11*	.07	.03	-.07
3. Education	4.16 (1.25)	4.49 (1.33)	.07	-.02		-.06	.01	.03
4. Workgroup underrepresentation	2.76 (1.10)	2.70 (1.02)	-.06	-.10	.27**		.11*	.06
5. Gender harassment ^a	.30 (.46)	.37 (.48)	.01	.10	-.15**	-.20**		.36**
6. Sexual-advance harassment ^a	.15 (.36)	.18 (.38)	.14*	-.08	-.07	-.11	.36**	

Note. Correlations for female employees appear above the diagonal, male employees below the diagonal. Higher scores reflect greater levels of the underlying construct.

^a Scored dichotomously: 0 = no experience, 1 = at least one experience.

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

options were ordered categories: 1 = less than a high school degree; 2 = high school diploma or GED; 3 = some college; 4 = graduated from college; 5 = some graduate school; 6 = graduate or professional degree.

Workgroup underrepresentation. To assess workgroup gender underrepresentation, we used an item that asked the gender composition of the people the employee works with on a normal day. Response options ranged from 1 (*almost all men*) to 5 (*almost all women*). We recoded this variable such that higher values represented greater underrepresentation. For example, men who worked with almost all women received a score of 5, and women who worked with almost all men also received a score of 5. This variable was roughly normally distributed for both women ($M = 2.78$, $SD = 1.10$) and men ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 1.02$).

Gender harassment (GH). To assess experiences of GH, we used items from Fitzgerald, Shulman, Bailey, and Richards (1988) and Fitzgerald et al. (1995) Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ). The SEQ has demonstrated strong reliability and validity across multiple samples and contexts (e.g., Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). Five items asked respondents how often, “during the past year, has any faculty, staff, administrator, or student” targeted them with behaviors such as “displayed, used, or distributed sexist or suggestive materials” or “made sexist remarks about people of your gender.” Response options were 0 = *never*, 1 = *once or twice*, and 2 = *more than once or twice*. We combined these items into a single index of gender harassment, based on both rational and empirical considerations (including principal components analysis; results are available from the authors upon request).

Sexual-advance harassment (SAH). The SEQ also included nine SAH items. These items asked how often, during the past year, any faculty, staff, administrator, or student had targeted the respondent with behaviors such as “made unwanted attempts to draw you into a discussion of sexual matters” or “attempted to establish a romantic or sexual relationship despite your efforts to discourage it.” Response options matched those of the GH items. These SAH items assessed experiences of unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion—both of which involve unwanted sexual pursuit on the job. Based on theoretical considerations (e.g., item content) and principal components analyses (available from the authors), we grouped all nine items into a single measure of SAH experience.

Study 1 Results

We began by inspecting the psychometric properties of our variables, and found non-normal distributions in both GH and SAH, in both women and men. Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum and Strahan (1999) define severe deviations from normality as skewness values exceeding |2| or kurtosis values exceeding |7|. In our GH and SAH data, skewness values averaged 3.03, and kurtosis values averaged 11.60. Moreover, the modal score on GH and SAH, for both women and men, was zero. Such extreme departures from normality are typical in harassment research (Nye & Drasgow, 2011), presenting a situation in which dichotomization is justified (MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher & Rucker, 2002; Nye & Drasgow, 2011). We therefore rescored these variables to be dichotomous indicators. For instance, a respondent received a 0 for GH if they answered “never” to all GH items; if instead they answered “once or twice” to at least one GH item, they received a 1. The same applied to our scoring of SAH (we created a dichotomous indicator: 0 = no experience, and 1 = at least one experience). We do not report Cronbach’s alpha for these indicators, alpha not being applicable to dichotomous variables.

Linear regression was also not appropriate, as many of the assumptions of a linear model are not applicable with a discrete dichotomous outcome (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). We instead conducted binary logistic regression, which does not assume a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Logistic regression yields odds ratios, which estimate the change in the odds of an event occurring associated with a one-unit change in the independent variable (Wright, 1995). In our analyses, we used workgroup gender underrepresentation to predict the odds of experiencing harassment (either GH or SAH – examined in separate analyses). Controls in these analyses were race, tenure, and education. Results appear in Table 2.

Women. In terms of descriptive findings, 30% of women reported some experience of GH (i.e., facing at least one GH behavior, at least once or twice, in the prior year), and 15% had had at least one encounter with SAH. According to logistic regression results, increases in workgroup underrepresentation were associated with increases in women’s experiences of GH, odds ratio = 1.22, $p = .03$, 95% CI [1.02, 1.45]. In other words, women in male-dominated workgroups had higher odds of experiencing GH than women in gender-balanced or female-dominated workgroups. The same was not

Table 2

Study 1 (University Staff): Logistic Regression Predicting Gender Harassment and Sexual-Advance Harassment, Separately by Gender

Predictor	Gender harassment (GH)				Sexual-advance harassment (SAH)			
	B	SE	Odds ratio	95% CI	B	SE	Odds ratio	95% CI
Women								
Race	-.92	.50	.40	[.15, 1.06]	.36	.45	1.44	[.60, 3.46]
Tenure	.00	.01	1.00	[.99, 1.02]	-.03	.02	.97	[.94, 1.00]
Education	.04	.08	1.04	[.89, 1.21]	.04	.10	1.04	[.86, 1.27]
Workgroup underrepresentation	.20	.09	1.22*	[1.02, 1.45]	.15	.11	1.16	[.93, 1.45]
Men								
Race	.18	.46	1.20	[.49, 2.95]	.79	.48	2.20	[.86, 5.63]
Tenure	.02	.02	1.02	[.99, 1.05]	-.03	.02	.97	[.93, 1.01]
Education	-.17	.10	.84	[.70, 1.01]	-.11	.12	.90	[.72, 1.13]
Workgroup underrepresentation	-.34	.13	.71**	[.55, .92]	-.27	.16	.77	[.56, 1.06]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Beta coefficients are unstandardized.

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

true for SAH, in that workgroup underrepresentation did not significantly affect women's odds of experiencing SAH, odds ratio = 1.16, $p = .18$, 95% CI [0.93, 1.45].

Men. In this sample, 37% of men reported at least one experience of past-year GH, and 18% reported facing SAH (at least once or twice in the preceding year). For men, we found workgroup underrepresentation associated with a decrease in risk for GH (odds ratio = 0.71, $p = .01$, 95% CI [0.55, 0.92]). Underrepresentation did not relate to SAH, odds ratio = 0.77, $p = .10$, [0.56, 1.06]. This suggests that being in the numerical minority did not increase men's risk for either type of harassment; instead, underrepresentation may have protected men.

Study 1 focused on an academic workplace, which has a host of unique features. For example, academic institutions often operate as "loosely coupled systems" (Orton & Weick, 1990; Weick, 1976), in which linked elements preserve their independence. Normally the highest-level administrators articulate visions and goals for the institution, yet these are typically remote from staff members' daily lives, which take place primarily in departments and programs led by chairs (Bennett & Figuli, 1990). For this reason, one purpose of Study 2 was to determine whether results would replicate in a fairly different employment setting: the federal courts.

The federal court system consists of 12 regional "circuits" that operate as hierarchical, bureaucratic, public-sector organizations. These are similar to other governmental workplaces, with an important exception: the federal courts as employers are largely exempt from federal civil rights legislation, including Title VII. Instead, they have Equal Employment Opportunity policies, but these local policies offer fewer protections than Title VII (Cortina & Magley, 2003). This creates an interesting context in which to study sex-based harassment.

Study 2: Court Employees

Method: Participants and Procedures

Data were collected by means of pencil-and-paper surveys mailed to all employees ($N = 1,662$), excluding judges, of one of the larger federal court circuits. Using procedures recommended by Dillman (2000) to maximize the return rate, we sent employees

a second survey if they had not returned the first within 2 weeks. Participants were assured that their data would be kept confidential and that any research findings would only be presented in the aggregate. These procedures yielded a 71% response rate. Owing to extensive missing data, 13 individuals were excluded from all analyses. The final sample of usable data contained 833 women, 325 men, and 9 individuals who declined to identify their gender. Participants ranged in age from 21 to 78 years ($M = 40.31$, $SD = 9.97$), had worked in this organization for an average of 8.42 years ($SD = 6.76$), and were nearly all (96%) employed full-time. The great majority were European American/White (88%), had at least some college if not a college or professional degree (85%), and were married (69%). Their job classifications varied somewhat, with 16% employed as managers or unit heads, 17% as attorneys, 25% as specialists (e.g., financial specialist, personnel specialist, paralegal), 11% as secretaries, and 31% as administrative support staff (e.g., library technician, data quality analyst, mail room clerk). More information about this sample appears in Cortina, Magley, Williams, and Langhout (2001) and Cortina & Magley (2003, 2009). (These past studies focused on either incivility in isolation, or incivility in concert with sexual harassment. There is no overlap with the hypotheses or theories of the current study).

Measures

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all variables appear in Table 3.

Demographics. Participants self-reported their race (coded 0 = White or 1 = person of color/other), their tenure at the organization at the time of the survey, and highest level of education (1 = high school diploma or GED; 2 = high school diploma and technical training; 3 = some college; 4 = bachelor's degree; 5 = some graduate school; 6 = Master's, law, or professional degree).

Workgroup underrepresentation. Measurement and scoring were the same as in Study 1 (e.g., responses on a 1 to 5 scale; 5 indicates that workgroup members are "almost all" people of the other gender). There was ample variance in this variable ($M = 2.32$, $SD = .91$ and $M = 3.36$, $SD = .89$ for women and men, respectively).

Gender harassment (GH). Three SEQ (Fitzgerald et al., 1988, 1995) items assessed experiences of GH from "superiors or

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 2 (Court Employees)

Variables	Women Mean (SD)	Men Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Race	4.70 (.96)	4.74 (.93)		-.04	-.01	.04	.09**	.05
2. Tenure	8.74 (6.74)	7.67 (6.81)	-.04		-.32**	-.04	.01	.05
3. Education	4.68 (1.60)	6.03 (1.15)	.11	.00		.17**	.13**	.01
4. Workgroup underrepresentation	2.32 (.91)	3.36 (.89)	.01	-.08	-.15*		.14**	.01
5. Gender harassment ^a	.42 (.49)	.47 (.50)	-.07	.05	-.05	-.17**		.47**
6. Sexual-advance harassment ^a	.34 (.47)	.27 (.44)	-.05	-.02	.02	-.09	.46**	

Note. Correlations for female employees appear above the diagonal, male employees below the diagonal. Higher scores reflected greater levels of the underlying construct.

^a Scored dichotomously: 0 = no experience, 1 = at least one experience.

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

coworkers," including any judge, attorney, bankruptcy trustee, marshal or court security officer, coworker, or building maintenance staff. For this sample, measurement of GH was specific to the gender of the respondent, for instance: "made offensive remarks or jokes about women in your presence" (for analyses of men's data, this item was replaced with an identical item on remarks/jokes about men). Response options ranged from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*).

Sexual-advance harassment (SAH). To assess experiences of SAH, again from "superiors or coworkers," we used 10 items from the SEQ (e.g., "implied more favorable treatment if you were sexually cooperative" and "touched you in a way that made you uncomfortable"). Response options again ranged from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*). Once again, principal components analyses (available from the authors) supported the separation of GH and SAH items into distinct factors.

Study 2 Results

As in Study 1, we found severe deviations from normality in both GH and SAH, so we dichotomously scored both scales: 0 if the respondent reported no experience of the behavior, and 1 if she or he reported at least one experience. Analyses for Study 2 then paralleled those of Study 1, including the same controls (race, tenure, education). Results appear in Table 4.

Women. Of the women in this sample 41% described at least one recent experience of GH, and 33% reported that they had encountered at least one instance of SAH (at least once or twice). In support of our first hypothesis, we found that increases in women's workgroup underrepresentation conferred increased risk for GH, odds ratio = 1.30, $p = .004$, 95% CI [1.09, 1.55]. Once again, women in male-dominated groups were more likely to be gender-harassed than women in gender-balanced groups, who were more likely to be gender-harassed than women in female-dominated groups. We did not find this effect for experiences of SAH, such that workgroup gender composition had no impact on women's SAH risk, odds ratio = 1.00, $p = .977$, 95% CI [0.84, 1.20].

Men. Men's reported rates of GH and SAH were similar to those of women (46% and 27%, respectively). We tested the same logistic regression models for men and found that men in the minority in their workgroups were at decreased odds of experiencing GH (odds ratio = 0.64, $p = .002$, 95% CI [0.47, 0.85]) and SAH (odds ratio = 0.73, $p = .049$, 95% CI [0.53, 1.00]) after controlling for race, tenure, and education. This supports the argument that men in some cases may benefit from their group being scarce. A follow-up analysis comparing the magnitude of these two effect (i.e., comparing their associated beta weights, Hardy, 1993) found the beneficial effect of men's underrepresent-

Table 4
Study 2 (Court Employees): Logistic Regression Predicting Gender Harassment and Sexual-Advance Harassment, Separately by Gender

Predictor	Gender harassment (GH)				Sexual-advance harassment (SAH)			
	B	SE	Odds ratio	95% CI	B	SE	Odds ratio	95% CI
Women								
Race	-.65	.29	.52*	[.30, .91]	-.46	.29	.63	[.36, 1.11]
Tenure	.01	.01	1.01	[.99, 1.04]	.01	.01	1.01	[.99, 1.04]
Education	.14	.05	1.15*	[1.03, 1.28]	.02	.06	1.02	[.92, 1.14]
Workgroup underrepresentation	.26	.09	1.30**	[1.09, 1.55]	.00	.09	1.00	[.84, 1.20]
Men								
Race	.47	.44	1.60	[.68, 3.77]	.00	.47	1.00	[.40, 2.54]
Tenure	.02	.02	1.02	[.98, 1.05]	-.01	.02	.99	[.95, 1.03]
Education	-.14	.11	.87	[.70, 1.08]	.00	.12	1.00	[.79, 1.26]
Workgroup underrepresentation	-.45	.15	.64**	[.47, .85]	-.32	.16	.73*	[.53, 1.00]

Note. CI = confidence interval. Beta coefficients are unstandardized.

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

tation to be greater for GH ($B = -.45$) than for SAH ($B = -.32$), $t(274) = -.84, p < .05$.

Study 3: United States Military

In the first two studies, the two subtypes of sex-based harassment co-occurred at a moderately high rate (correlations between GH and SAH, scored dichotomously, averaged $r = .41$ across the samples). That is, most employees who experienced SAH had also experienced GH. To extend findings from Studies 1 and 2, we analyzed data from a sample that was large and diverse enough to investigate effects of underrepresentation on “pure” experiences of GH and SAH. “Pure GH” would be encounters with GH in the absence of any SAH, while “pure SAH” would entail SAH without GH. This analytic method allows us to tease apart and isolate effects of gender underrepresentation on unique subtypes of sex-based harassment. This approach mirrors experimental paradigms, which typically expose participants to one (and only one) subtype of harassing behavior, avoiding confounds with exposure to other subtypes.

In Study 3, we also added a new control to our analyses: perceptions of organizational climate (or “tolerance”) of GH and SAH. One alternative explanation of Study 1 and Study 2 results is that harassment relates not to the proportional representation of one’s gender in the workgroup, but rather to the increased tolerance of harassment found in gender-imbalanced units. Indeed, past work has theorized and found organizational tolerance of harassment to be one of its most powerful antecedents (e.g., Hulin, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1996; Fitzgerald, Drasgow et al., 1997). By controlling for perceptions of unit tolerance of harassment, we tested for the possibility that tolerance, not underrepresentation, is fueling women’s risk for being harassed.

Method: Participants and Procedures

This study began with a nonproportional stratified, single-stage random sample of active-duty members from all branches of the U.S. Military (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard). 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). All participants were assured that their data would be kept confidential and any reports would present findings only in the aggregate. Forty-nine percent of the sample was female ($n = 9,725$), 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. For more information on this sample and procedures, see Lipari and Lancaster (2003). [Other researchers have also analyzed this publicly released dataset, addressing topics that differ from the current study: sexual harassment and race (Buchanan, Settles, & Woods, 2008); sexual harassment and outcomes (Leskinen et al., 2011); organizational climates for sexual harassment (Bergman & Henning, 2008); and workplace incivility (Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta and Magley, 2011). There is no overlap in the hypotheses of those prior works and the current article.]

Because we were predicting experiences of “pure” GH and SAH, analyses focused on two subsets of individuals: (1) those who had experienced either pure GH or no harassment at all, $n = 17,145$, of whom 43% were female; and (2) those who had experienced either pure SAH or no harassment at all, $n = 11,876$ (35% female). The military on a whole is overwhelmingly male. However, due to the large sample size, diverse workgroups were represented in sufficient numbers, with 6,448 women in male-dominated workgroups and 340 men in female-dominated workgroups. The large difference in these sample sizes was not a problem, because we analyzed women’s and men’s data separately.

Measures

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for all variables appear in Table 5.

Demographics. Participants self-reported their race (coded 0 = White or 1 = person of color). They also reported their years of military service (i.e., job tenure), and the DMDC collapsed these 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;

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 3 (U.S. Military)

Variables	Women Mean (SD)	Men Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Race	.45 (.50)	.42 (.49)	1.00	-.04**	-.13**	-.05**	-.02	-.08**	-.08**	.00
2. Tenure	2.09 (1.07)	2.38 (1.09)	-.03**	1.00	.33**	.15**	.02	-.02	-.06**	-.07**
3. Education	2.18 (.70)	2.12 (.73)	-.12**	.30**	1.00	.09**	.06**	-.01	.03**	-.03**
4. Organizational intolerance of GH	11.38 (2.35)	11.90 (2.17)	-.04**	.19**	.16**	1.00	.36**	-.05**	-.27**	-.01
5. Organizational intolerance of SAH	20.49 (2.22)	20.67 (2.29)	.01	.07**	.08**	.35**	1.00	.02*	-.03*	.02
6. Workgroup underrepresentation	2.55 (.69)	1.18 (.46)	.07**	.08**	.10**	.04**	.01	1.00	.15**	-.02
7. “Pure” gender harassment ^{a,b}	.46 (.50)	.22 (.41)	.01	-.06**	-.01	-.18**	-.03**	.00	1.00	—
8. “Pure” sexual-advance harassment ^{a,b}	.04 (.20)	.01 (.08)	.01	.01	.00	-.01	.01	.04**	—	1.00

Note. GH = Gender harassment; SAH = Sexual-advance harassment. Correlations for female employees appear above the diagonal, male employees below the diagonal. Scale scores were derived by summing responses across all items in each scale; higher scores reflected greater levels of the underlying construct.

^a Scored dichotomously: 0 = no experience, 1 = at least one experience. ^b Correlation cannot be computed between “Pure” gender harassment and “Pure” sexual-advance harassment because one of the variables is a constant.

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

4 = 20 years or more. Participants reported their years of education, which the DMDC collapsed into three ordered categories: 1 = less than 12 years of school, 2 = less than 2 years of college credits, no degree, 3 = four year college degree or some graduate school. These demographic variables served as controls in all analyses.

Workgroup underrepresentation. To assess workgroup gender underrepresentation, participants were asked to report the “gender mix of their current workgroup, that is the people with whom you work on a day to day basis.” Response options were 1 = all men, 2 = almost entirely men, 3 = more men than women, 4 = about equal numbers men and women, 5 = more women than men, 6 = almost entirely women, 7 = all women. As in the previous two studies, we recoded this variable such that higher numbers represent greater experiences of underrepresentation. In addition, we collapsed response options into three categories to increase cell sizes needed for analyses. The collapsed categories were 1 = gender majority status in workgroup, 2 = gender-balanced workgroup, 3 = gender minority status in workgroup.

Gender harassment (GH). To assess experiences of sex-based harassment, the survey contained an updated version of the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire—Department of Defense (SEQ-DoD) developed by Fitzgerald, Magley, Drasgow, and Waldo (1999; see also Stark, Chernyshenko, Lancaster, Drasgow, & Fitzgerald, 2002). Participants described how often over the prior 12 months they had experienced various forms of unwanted, uninvited “sex/gender-related talk and/or behavior” involving military personnel (on- or off-duty, on- or off-installation or ship), civilian employees, and/or contractors. They responded on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 = *never* to 4 = *very often*. For the purpose of our analyses, we again divided GH and SAH items into separate dimensions (supported by principal components analyses, available from the authors upon request).

Eight items specifically assessed experiences of GH. Examples included: “made offensive sexist remarks (e.g., suggesting that people of your gender are not suited for the kind of work you do)” and “referred to people of your gender in insulting or offensive terms.” As in Studies 1 and 2, we created a dichotomous indicator

from these items: 0 if the respondent reported no experience of GH, and 1 if they reported at least one experience of GH.

Sexual-advance harassment (SAH). Ten items from the SEQ-DoD assessed experiences of SAH, for example, “made unwanted attempts to establish a romantic relationship with you despite your efforts to discourage it” and “implied faster promotions or better treatment if you were sexually cooperative.” Again, we created a dichotomous variable from these items.

Organizational intolerance of GH. Patterned after Hulin et al.’s (1996) organizational tolerance for sexual harassment measure, respondents were asked what they thought would happen to a coworker who complains if another “coworker at your duty station were to talk a lot at work about sex, trying to get others to talk about it, too.” Three items assessed how the respondent perceived the organizational tolerance: “The complaint would be taken seriously,” “It would be risky for the person making the complaint” (reverse coded), and “Some corrective action would be taken,” (coefficient $\alpha = .77$). Response options ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. Items were scored such that higher scores indicate greater intolerance (greater responsiveness to complaints).

Organizational intolerance of SAH. Respondents were also asked their perceptions of organizational responsiveness to a coworker who complains about “a coworker at your duty station [who] keeps asking others for dates even after they have made it clear that they were not interested” and “a supervisor at your duty station [who] suggests that the way to get along and get good assignments is to be sexually cooperative to him/her.” Paralleling the measure of organizational tolerance to GH, three items (per scenario) assessed organizational intolerance ($\alpha = .88$). Response options ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

Study 3 Results

Study 3 Results appear in Table 6. Controls in these models were race, tenure, education, and organizational intolerance of sex-based harassment.

Table 6
Study 3 (U.S. Military): Logistic Regression Predicting Gender Harassment and Sexual-Advance Harassment, Separately by Gender

Predictor	“Pure” gender harassment (GH)					“Pure” sexual-advance harassment (SAH)				
	<i>n</i>	B	SE	Odds ratio	95% CI	<i>n</i>	B	SE	Odds ratio	95% CI
Women										
Race	7,070	-.35	.05	.71**	[.64, .78]	3,966	-.02	.16	.98	[.72, 1.34]
Tenure	7,070	-.11	.03	.90**	[.85, .94]	3,966	-.33	.08	.72**	[.61, .85]
Education	7,070	.20	.04	1.22**	[1.13, 1.32]	3,966	-.01	.12	.99	[.79, 1.25]
Organizational intolerance of harassment	7,070	-.27	.01	.76**	[.75, .78]	3,966	.04	.04	1.05	[.97, 1.13]
Workgroup underrepresentation	7,070	.45	.04	1.56**	[1.45, 1.68]	3,966	-.08	.11	.92	[.75, 1.13]
Men^a										
Race	9,306	-.02	.05	.98	[.89, 1.09]					
Tenure	9,306	-.09	.03	.92**	[.87, .96]					
Education	9,306	.09	.04	1.10*	[1.02, 1.18]					
Organizational intolerance of harassment	9,306	-.20	.01	.82**	[.80, .84]					
Workgroup underrepresentation	9,306	.06	.06	1.06	[.96, 1.19]					

Note. CI = confidence interval. Beta coefficients are unstandardized.

^a We could not analyze men’s experiences of “pure” SAH, because the sample size was too small to form a reliable estimate.

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

Women. Descriptively speaking, 3,352 women (34.5%) reported at least one experience of GH, but no SAH, in the prior 12 months; another 180 women (1.9%) reported SAH in the absence of GH. In partial support of Hypothesis 1, we found a significant relationship between women's underrepresentation in the workgroup and "pure GH." That is, underrepresentation increased women's odds of being gender harassed (without SAH) by a factor of 1.56 ($p = .000$, 95% CI [1.45, 1.68]). The same was not true however for "pure SAH": numerical minority status neither increased nor decreased women's risk of facing SAH in isolation from GH (odds ratio = 0.92, $p = .44$, 95% CI [0.75, 1.13]).

Men. Overall, 2,152 men (21%) reported experiencing GH at least once or twice, but never facing SAH, in the prior year at work; an additional 55 men (0.5%) had encountered SAH but never faced GH in the prior 12 months. Men's experiences of gender underrepresentation were not significantly related to their experiences of pure GH (i.e., no increase or decrease in risk, odds ratio = 1.06, $p = .39$, 95% CI [0.96, 1.19]). We were unable to form a reliable estimate for the effect of underrepresentation on men's experiences of pure SAH, due to the virtual absence of men who were both numerical minorities in their workgroups and victims of pure SAH. In other words, the 340 men in groups with more women almost never encountered this form of harassment.

An Alternative Explanation

An alternative explanation for the present findings is that sex-based harassment, both GH and SAH, is typically a male-perpetrated phenomenon (we thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting we consider this). In other words, perhaps it is not gender underrepresentation (and associated stereotyping), but rather the preponderance of men in a context that affects one's risk for being harassed, because harassers are usually male. Do our data support this proposition? We tested this with supplementary analyses of perpetrator sex. Additional survey questions asked harassed employees to describe the perpetrator(s) of the incidents that had "made the greatest impression" (Study 2) or "had the greatest effect" on them (Study 3; data from Study 1 did not permit

this type of analysis). Perpetrator-sex breakdowns for these most memorable harassing situations appear in Table 7. According to these findings, women were either sole perpetrators or coperpetrators in a sizable proportion of harassing situations. Among our Study 2 Court Employees, for instance, women had either perpetrated or coperpetrated the harassment in 40–50% of incidents. This suggests that our gender-context findings are not simply an artifact of harassment being a mostly male behavior; in two different contexts of work (the federal courts and the military), employees reported that many women had also participated in the harassment of colleagues, both female and male. Future research should further investigate this question by examining whether the gender context of the workgroup interacts with gender of the perpetrator in predicting experiences of subtypes of sex-based harassment.

General Discussion

This research offers new insights into gender differences in experiences of underrepresentation and harassment in employment. We extend the literature with two primary contributions, revealing that: (1) effects diverge in important ways across subtypes of sex-based harassment, and (2) effects diverge—even going in opposite directions—for women and men. What we found challenges some common assumptions (that unwanted sexual pursuit is the "real" problem, or that underrepresentation of one's gender is always "bad"). It also adds to our knowledge about who is most harmed (or not) by gender imbalance in the workplace, supporting the possibility that some groups reap benefits when their members are in short supply.

Workgroup Underrepresentation and the Harassment of Women

Across three unique samples, we found support for our first hypothesis, with women's underrepresentation in the workgroup associated with elevated risk for exposure to gender harassment. In fact in Study 2 (court employees), we found that

Table 7

Study 2 (Court Employees) and Study 3 (U.S. Military): Sex of Perpetrator of Most Memorable Sex-Based Harassment Experience, Separately by Subtype and Gender

	Most memorable experience only involved GH		Most memorable experience only involved SAH	
	Male target	Female target	Male target	Female target
	Court employees			
Male perpetrator	14 (52%)	28 (60%)	60 (56%)	161 (50%)
Female perpetrator	11 (41%)	15 (32%)	45 (42%)	131 (41%)
Both sexes as perpetrators	2 (7%)	4 (9%)	3 (3%)	29 (9%)
Total	27	47	108	321
	Military employees			
Male perpetrator	668 (54.4%)	2017 (82.6%)	9 (27.3%)	135 (97.1%)
Female perpetrator	188 (15.2%)	42 (1.7%)	24 (72.7%)	1 (0.7%)
Both sexes as perpetrators	332 (26.9%)	352 (14.4%)	0	2 (1.3%)
Perpetrator sex unknown	45 (3.6%)	31 (1.3%)	0	1 (0.7%)
Total	1,233	2,442	33	139

Note. GH = Gender harassment; SAH = Sexual-advance harassment.

a one-unit increase in underrepresentation boosted a woman's odds of experiencing GH by 1.3 times. Using this odds ratio, we can calculate the odds increase corresponding to a two-unit increase in underrepresentation by raising e to the ($2 \times$ regression coefficient) power (Wright, 1995). For example, when comparing a woman who works in a gender-balanced workgroup to a woman who works with almost all men, we find that the latter woman is 1.68 times as likely to encounter GH. This underscores the impact that underrepresentation has on women's experiences of gender harassment. One theoretical mechanism that would account for this finding is stereotyping: scarcity makes women more visible and their gender and associated stereotypes more salient. Because stereotypes of women (e.g., as submissive, weak, best suited for domestic roles) are inconsistent with that of a competent worker (e.g., Heilman, 2001), women face increased denigration and rejection, that is, gender harassment.

In contrast, across all three samples, workgroup gender imbalance was unrelated to women's experiences of sexual-advance harassment. We, therefore, found that the underrepresentation-harassment relationship differs, depending on the type of harassment. The more that women were scarce in their work units, the more they were targeted with behaviors that derogate them and their gender group (GH). However, imbalanced gender ratios did not increase women's risk for being subjected to inappropriate sexual overtures (SAH). These findings suggest that harassment of underrepresented women is more an expression of rejection than attraction, contrary to popular belief (but consistent with our expectations). This supports Schultz's (2006, p. 22) argument that "most harassment is not designed to achieve sexual gratification." Instead, it insults women and attempts to drive them out of contexts that have traditionally been the province of men (e.g., Berdahl, 2007; Franke, 2004; Leskinen et al., 2011). Had we collapsed across harassment subtypes, this pattern of results would not have surfaced.

Our findings on the harassment of women suggest that sex role spillover theory (SRST) warrants revision. In the 1980s, the focus in both research and the law was sexual-advance forms of harassment: sexual threats, bribes, and objectification that presented odious conditions of employment for many women but few men. It made sense that theories emerging at the time, like SRST, focused primarily on harassment in its most sexualized sense. SRST originally argued that women's underrepresentation makes their gender and thus their gender role highly salient, which leads men to see female coworkers in the traditional roles of girlfriend, wife, and sex partner. This theory explained men's inappropriate sexual "come-ons" toward female colleagues. Our more recent findings, however, link women's underrepresentation to inappropriate "put-downs" more than "come-ons." We therefore suggest that SRST be extended to reflect that traditional stereotyping includes many roles for women, such as caretaker (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006) and homemaker (Hugenberg, Blusiewicz, & Sacco, 2010), which have little to do with sexuality or romance. These roles also prohibit participation in the paid workforce. So, perhaps scarcity does make a woman's gender more salient, and does call to mind the traditional roles associated with her gender. And because those roles do not include employment, underrepre-

sented women are punished with gender harassment. In the words of legal scholar Katherine Franke (1997, p. 764), this illustrates how harassment can be "used both to police and discipline the gender outlaw: the woman who dares to do a man's job is made to pay."

Workgroup Underrepresentation and the Harassment of Men

The current project also advances research on the harassment of men. We sought to understand working conditions in which men may be victimized, focusing on effects of proportional representation in the workgroup. As predicted, we found that numerical minority status in no way increased men's risk of being harassed (neither GH nor SAH). Moreover, results suggest that underrepresentation may sometimes provide men a protective buffer, being associated with reductions in harassment in some organizations.

According to Stockdale and colleagues (1999), a shortage of men in a work unit makes their gender role—and its attendant high social status—more prominent, and also evokes positive male stereotypes (e.g., as strong and robust). The heightened salience of men's perceived status, strength, and resilience may reduce the chance that others will mistreat them. Whether underrepresentation has no relationship or a buffering relationship to men's harassment, one conclusion seems clear from our data: being scarce does not seem to increase men's risk of being harassed. This finding, in stark contrast to the women's results, speaks to the large disparities in the work lives of women and men. This buffering effect for men in female-dominated groups also suggests that men who are in male-dominated groups might be at an increased risk of gender harassment, a provocative idea deserving of further research. In sum, our findings show how a lens of gender is vital to understanding (anti)social dynamics in employment.

We also found descriptive evidence, summarized in Table 7, that both men and women instigate both subtypes of sex-based harassment against men. This is interesting in light of past work reporting that men are 20 times more likely than women to experience same-sex sexual harassment (Stockdale et al., 1999). However, note that our harasser-sex data are subdivided by type of harassment, in keeping with the rest of our article (but in contrast with most research). Note also that these perpetrator data are limited to the "most memorable" harassing experiences, or those perceived to have the greatest effect; we caution against generalization to all harassing experiences. Readers should also bear in mind that cell sizes became small for some of these experiences (e.g., few court employees reported that their most memorable harassing experience solely involved GH). Owing to these concerns, we did not break down these rates as a function of workgroup composition. It remains possible that perpetrators of women's GH in male-dominated groups are more likely to be male, and the same may apply to perpetrators of men's GH in male-dominated groups. We leave it to future studies to shed more detailed light on how harasser gender, victim gender, and job gender context come together to influence sexual harassment risk.

Legal and Practical Implications

This research has important implications for organizations. Sexual harassment of both men and women is illegal under Title VII,

but it persists in U.S. work environments. In 2011 alone, some 11,364 charges of “sexual harassment discrimination” were filed with the EEOC and other fair employment practice agencies (EEOC, 2012). Organizations pay a steep price for this harassment. For instance, one study by the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (1995) estimated the annual cost of sexual harassment in the federal workforce to be \$327 million (in 1994 dollars). This included expenses related to turnover, productivity loss, and use of sick leave due to harassment. Not included were the costs of complaint processing and litigation, so this was at best an underestimate. It therefore behooves organizations, both legally and financially, to create conditions that reduce the likelihood of sex-based harassment. Our research clarifies what might be an important component of these conditions: workgroup gender balance.

Across three studies, we found that employees (of either gender) who work in female-integrated contexts report less gender harassment. Put differently, when women were present in equal or larger proportions than men, GH diminished. This supports recommendations that, to reduce sex-based harassment, organizations should devote more efforts to the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women (e.g., Cortina & Berdahl, 2008; Schultz, 2003). Whereas overall numbers of women may be increasing in some contexts (like our Studies 1 and 2), it is not enough to relegate women to positions of lower status. Gender integration must permeate the organization, providing gender-balanced workgroups throughout. The goal should be a “well-integrated, structurally egalitarian workplace,” in which women and men equally share power and leadership (Schultz, 2003, p. 2071). This sex-based “desegregation” may not eradicate workplace harassment entirely, but it can make important strides in that direction.

Limitations and Conclusion

These studies, like any others, have their limitations. This being field research, it lacks the control of a laboratory, and is subject to more extraneous influences. Moreover, we could not randomly assign participants to different conditions, nor could we manipulate their conditions. These limitations, however, are offset by a number of strengths. Our pattern of findings cross-validated across three independent samples; our results are not unique to a single employment setting. Each sample was large, and contained real employees working with real colleagues in real organizations. This ecological validity is vital when studying workplace harassment, which takes place amid complex and ongoing relationships, status hierarchies, and “high stakes” conditions (e.g., selection, compensation, promotion). This array of factors is virtually impossible to recreate, in realistic ways, within the confines of a lab.

Our data are correlational and cross-sectional, making causal interpretations tentative until confirmed with other paradigms. All measurements came from self-reports. We have no reason to doubt the veracity of participant reports, especially about the gender composition of their workgroups. Moreover, our assessment of harassment focused only on recent, first-hand experiences of specific behaviors (not general impressions or hearsay), without using the ambiguous and stigmatizing label of “sexual harassment.” Still, these harassment measures could have yielded underestimates, due to memory decay and participant underreporting. Readers should also bear in mind that we assessed sexual harassment based on behavioral, not legal criteria. Legal determinations of sexual har-

assment factor in a variety of issues (e.g., severity, pervasiveness, welcomeness, “totality of the circumstances”) that would be difficult if not impossible to gauge reliably on a self-report survey (Fitzgerald, Swan, et al., 1997). Results of our studies can inform legal decision-making, but should not be viewed as a proxy for it.

It is interesting that we found a similar pattern across two organizations where women are well-represented (although congregated at lower levels: Studies 1 and 2), as well as a third context where women are rare (Study 3). In other words, we focused on gender-balanced and male-dominated occupational contexts; what might we have found in a female-dominated setting? In a study of nurses, some men did note negative consequences of their scarcity, including being socially isolated from informal assemblies (i.e., not invited to traditionally female gatherings such as baby showers), being mistaken for doctors (seen as a negative reminder of their inferior organizational status), and being perceived as unmasculine (Heikes, 1991). It remains possible that men’s underrepresentation in traditionally feminine fields produces other negative consequences as well, including unique forms of harassment (e.g., “not man enough harassment”; Berdahl & Moore, 2006) and unique stereotyping (e.g., assumptions that male nurses fit the “gay male” subtype; Evans, 2002). We recommend that future research delve more deeply into intersections of person-based and occupation-based stereotypes and subtypes, in different contexts of work.

In closing, these studies advance our understanding of gender representation and harassment in employment. Workplace harassment continues to be a problem, especially when it comes to gender harassment of female “pioneers,” who are making inroads into domains where women remain rare. Underrepresentation, however, seems to have different ramifications for men, perhaps even protecting them from mistreatment in some settings. This possibility remains tentative at this point, but it is an intriguing one that deserves further study.

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