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Reports

The unexpectedly positive consequences of confronting sexism

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ABSTRACT

Majority-group members expect to dislike those who confront them for prejudiced behavior. Yet if majority-group members are susceptible to the same social constraints as minority-group members, then their public responses to confrontation should be similarly inhibited. A tempered response to confrontation could smooth a potentially problematic social interaction, thereby producing an outcome that is better than expected. Female confederates confronted men during an interpersonal interaction and then had a second conversation. When interpersonally confronted, men reported equally positive evaluations of a sexist and gender-neutral confronter and confrontational interaction. Additionally, after the sexist confrontation, men's compensatory efforts increased mutual liking and this mutual liking then reduced men's use of sexist language. Thus, social forces also constrain those who are confronted as prejudiced, thereby positively influencing intergroup relations.

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On February 1, 2007 Laura Ingraham confronted talk show host Bill O'Reilly for his superfluous use of sexually objectifying videos on his show *The O'Reilly Factor* (Tabacoff & Sohnen, 2007).

Ingraham: Intervention time, Bill... You can talk about an issue without training a camera on a bikini... Stop playing this video when there is no need.

O'Reilly: Alright. No more bikinis. They're over. Never again.

Given O'Reilly's argumentative nature, many would have expected him to lash out at Ingraham and stubbornly refuse to change his behavior. Although he did show some initial resistance to her confrontation, he conceded her point and agreed not to show similar videos in the future. What made this confrontation go better than some might expect and resulted in this notoriously surly talk show host appearing responsive to an accusation of sexism?

Would O'Reilly himself have imagined such an outcome?

The present research investigates how men actually respond when confronted as sexist during a face-to-face interaction. It is important to understand what conditions constrain our behavior during confrontation because, in general, we do not always get what we expect from intergroup interactions. For example, Whites often expect a more negative interracial interaction than actually occurs (Mallett, Wilson, & Gilbert, 2008). And although targets of prejudice report a desire to assertively confront prejudice, the social cost of confronting often keeps them from doing so (Shelton & Stewart, 2004). For example, the fear of social rejection or jeopardizing a potential job changes what one would like to be an assertive confrontation into a polite question regarding the interviewer's intentions (Woodzicka & LaFrance, 2001).

To date, most research has focused on targets' decisions to confront prejudice; comparatively little research has examined the actual responses of the confronted party. Additionally, research on the costs of confronting prejudice predominately relies on imagined interactions or on computer-mediated confrontation (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006; Dodd, Giuliano, Boutell, & Moran, 2001; Saunders & Senn, 2009). Although these methods provide valuable information about confronting discrimination, they are unable to reveal the full story of how consequences unfold throughout the course of an actual intergroup interaction.

We suspect that majority group members are susceptible to the same social constraints as minority group members and that those constraints will similarly curtail their public responses. Just as potential confronters want to avoid being seen as a complainer, perpetrators may wish to avoid being seen as a bigot. At least in some cases, men should respond less negatively than they predict to being confronted and their response could smooth a potentially problematic interpersonal interaction, thereby producing an outcome that is better than expected. Given the evidence that confronting improves intergroup attitudes and reduces future bias (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp et al., 2006), it is important to further investigate the interpersonal consequences of confrontation.

Anticipated versus actual responses

There is often a difference between how people imagine and actually respond to a situation (Wilson & Gilbert, 2003). This is also true in the context of discrimination. Although people frequently experience discrimination, they rarely respond to the responsible party in the way they imagine. Woodzicka and LaFrance (2001) found that 68% of women imagined they would refuse to answer sexually harassing questions during a job interview and 28% said they would either rudely

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confront the interviewer or leave the interview. Yet, when actually asked sexually harassing questions during a job interview, all of the women answered the questions and none rudely confronted or left the interview. Similarly, [Swim and Hyers \(1999\)](#) found that, rather than assertively responding to sexism, the most frequent response was an expression of displeasure such as a sarcastic comment or an exclamation of surprise.

We test whether perpetrators of discrimination are susceptible to the same social constraints as targets, making it difficult to accurately predict their own responses. Perpetrators might not react to confrontation as strongly as they imagine if, like most people, they want to be liked ([Swann & Schroeder, 1995](#)) and want to be seen as non-prejudiced ([Plant & Devine, 1998](#)). The social constraints introduced by the desire to portray a particular image should exert the same influence on perpetrators of prejudice as they do on targets. That is, just as the desire to be liked sometimes prevents targets from confronting ([Shelton & Stewart, 2004](#)), it should also prevent perpetrators from always reacting harshly to confrontation.

The role of compensation

At times, targets of discrimination try to make up for the potentially negative impact of discrimination on an interaction by engaging in compensatory behavior. For example, heavy women who fear rejection based on their weight smile, seek common ground, or ask their interaction partner for his or her opinion during a conversation ([Miller & Major, 2000](#)). Engaging in compensatory behaviors can be quite effective for targets; heavy women are perceived as more attractive and likeable when they compensate ([Mallett & Swim, 2005](#)). If perpetrators wish to be liked and to be seen as non-prejudiced then they should be motivated to smooth the awkwardness of a prejudiced remark by using compensation.

Failing to consider the motivation and ability to compensate could lead perpetrators to expect they would respond differently than they actually do when confronted. People may not be aware they are compensating and may not even anticipate the need for compensation until they are involved in a potentially problematic interaction ([Mallett & Swim, 2005](#)). The desire to compensate could be internally or externally motivated. For example, perpetrators might compensate in response to a confrontation to verify for themselves that they are not sexist or to convince others that they are not sexist.

If perpetrators are motivated to compensate for their behavior, then they should not only change the quality of their immediate interpersonal interactions, they should also attempt to correct their future behavior. Confrontation is linked to positive intergroup outcomes including apology, concern over offending, and short-term attitude change ([Czopp and Monteith, 2003](#); [Czopp et al., 2006](#)). For example, after being confronted for racism in a computer-mediated exchange Whites reported negative feelings toward the confronter (e.g., "I probably wouldn't be friends with someone like my partner"), but were less likely to provide stereotypic descriptors for photographs than if they had not been confronted ([Czopp et al., 2006](#)).

Study overview

We test men's immediate responses to confrontation as well as the impact that confrontation has on subsequent interpersonal interactions and biased future behavior. First, we test men's immediate response to confrontation in the form of evaluations of the confronter and the quality of the initial exchange. We also consider immediate verbal and nonverbal responses to being confronted. Research suggests that men should rate their confronter and the interaction more negatively and show stronger verbal and nonverbal responses to a sexist, as compared to gender-neutral confrontation ([Czopp et al., 2006](#); [Dodd et al., 2001](#)). However, if men's responses are socially

constrained in a manner similar to targets of prejudice, then their responses should not differ across type of confrontation.

We also investigate three delayed consequences of confrontation on future behavior. Past research has not yet explored what happens when two parties interact for a second time after a confrontation has occurred. The first delayed consequence of confrontation we investigate is the use of compensation to make up for the potential awkwardness of the interaction. Men have higher social status than women, so they may not feel the need to compensate after being confronted. If so, we should see no difference in compensation across types of confrontation. If, however, men are susceptible to the same social pressures as targets of discrimination (e.g., desire to be liked) as well as to the additional social pressure to be seen as non-prejudiced, they should compensate more following a sexist confrontation than a gender-neutral confrontation.

The second consequence deals with interpersonal outcomes that occur post-confrontation. If men dislike those who accuse them of bias and that dislike drives their interpersonal actions, then a subsequent conversation should be less pleasant after a sexist, as compared to gender-neutral, confrontation. Yet men could compensate after the confrontation, effectively creating a pleasant interaction with their accuser. If this occurs, we should see no difference between confrontation conditions. Therefore, we test whether the relation between the type of confrontation and interpersonal outcomes is mediated by the use of compensation. We expect that men will compensate in response to the sexist confrontation and that compensation will produce interpersonal outcomes that are equivalent to a gender-neutral confrontation.

The third consequence relates to whether men are better able to detect future instances of sexist language after being confronted for their own biased language. Confronting Whites for racism makes them less likely to type stereotypic descriptors of pictures ([Czopp et al., 2006](#)). We test whether this self-corrective behavior extends to the ability to correct one's future use of sexist language. A simple confrontation could be enough to trigger self-correction. However, having a pleasant interaction with one's confronter might go a step further and reinforce the desire to eliminate biased language. Accordingly, we test whether mutual liking that arises during a second conversation with the confronter mediates the association between the type of confrontation and sexist language detection. We expect that mutual liking after a confrontation of sexism will be at least partially responsible for the detection and correction of future sexist language.

We examine men's responses to accusations of sexism because the use of sexist language is commonplace ([Fiske & Stevens, 1993](#)) and most work on confrontation has examined sexism. Confrontations take a variety of forms, ranging from assertive accusations, pleas to egalitarianism, or a raised eyebrow after a questionable remark. We chose an intermediate form of confrontation that was not extremely assertive, nor a clear plea to egalitarianism, but a somewhat assertive confrontation that mimics many real world situations. Furthermore, we chose a confrontation involving subtle sexist behavior because [Saunders and Senn \(2009\)](#) found that men expected to respond more negatively if confronted about subtle sexual harassment (i.e., directed toward women in general) compared to overt sexual harassment (i.e., unwanted sexual attention). Examining a confrontation about this type of behavior allows us to determine how men respond when confronted about a common behavior.

Method

Participants

One hundred-nine college-aged males participated for course credit or \$8.

Procedure

Participants reported for an interaction study about “how people get to know strangers.” They were greeted by a female experimenter and asked to take a seat in the study room while they waited for another participant. After a few minutes, one of five female confederates, posing as the second participant, arrived and was seated in the same room as the participant. Confederates underwent extensive training to mimic the demeanor of the participant by reacting to his efforts to either engage or disengage from the interaction.¹

Moral dilemma task (first interaction)

The experimenter explained that the pair would be completing a 4-min, videotaped “getting to know you” exercise in the form of a moral dilemma task. The task, which contained three dilemmas phrased in gender neutral terms, was designed to activate gender role stereotypes about three occupations: doctor, professor, and nurse (see Appendix A).

The experimenter reviewed the instructions and explained that the pair should complete question 1 together, she (the confederate) should answer question 2, and he (the male participant) should answer question 3. This ensured that the participant felt responsible for his answer to the third scenario and provided an opportunity for the confederate to confront him near the end of the task. While setting up the camera, the experimenter gave a hand signal to the confederate that corresponded to the type of confrontation she would deliver during the third moral dilemma. The experimenter tapped a single finger (gender-neutral) or 5 fingers (sexist) on the table, then started the camera, set the timer for 4 min, and closed the door behind her.

Confrontation (first interaction)

Half of the participants ($n = 54$) were randomly assigned to receive the sexist confrontation and the other half ($n = 55$) received the gender-neutral confrontation.² Both types of confrontation referenced the thought-process the participant used to explain his answer. To mimic everyday life, confrontations were delivered in a mildly assertive manner. To prompt the participant to give his opinion about the nurse in the third scenario and provide an opportunity for the confederate to confront him on his response, the confederate always asked, “What do you think should happen to the nurse?” just before the confrontation. The confederate timed the confrontation to occur in the final 30 s of the moral dilemma task. This allowed us to document the participants’ immediate reaction to the confrontation, but ensured the interaction stopped shortly after the confrontation.

Below is a transcription from a typical interaction between a participant and confederate:

Participant: “Ok, it's my turn. ‘A nurse discovers a hospital patient has been given blood contaminated with the AIDS virus. What would you recommend?’ Hmm. Wow, that's really bad. I don't know.”

Confederate: “Well, what do you think should happen to the nurse?”

Participant: “Maybe they should try to track down the nurse who gave the patient the bad blood. She should probably be fired...”

Regardless of whether the participant actually referred to the nurse as “she,”³ in the *sexist confrontation condition*, the confederate always said:

“I noticed that you said “she” when referring to the nurse. Are you assuming the nurse is female? That's kind of sexist, don't you think?”

¹ Coder ratings of confederate smiling, nodding, talking, and guiding the discussion did not differ across type of confrontation, $t(105) < 0.38$.

² Pilot testing showed the sexist ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.93$) and gender-neutral confrontations ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 2.32$) were rated as equally awkward, $t(15) = -0.40$, ns on a scale from 1 *not at all* to 7 *very much*.

³ We found that participant evaluations and behavior on all dependent measures did not differ according to whether they actually referred to the nurse as “she” in the third dilemma, $t(105) < 1.40$, ns .

Although 80% of participants in the sexist confrontation condition actually used gendered language, during debriefing all participants recalled referring to the nurse as a woman.

Again, regardless of the quality of the participant's actual answer, in the *gender-neutral confrontation condition* the confederate always said:

“I don't think that's such a good idea. There's got to be a better way. Do you think they should notify the patient first?”

Second interaction

The experimenter ended the moral dilemma task and presented the pair with a list of four topics to discuss in their next interaction. Two of the topics were gender-neutral (food in the dining halls, study abroad) and two were gender-relevant (funding for women's sports, funding for the Feminist Forum). The experimenter explained that it was easiest if one of them was “in charge” of the topic list conversation. The confederate always won a rigged draw, which meant that she would choose which two topics to focus on.

The experimenter told the pair that before the second discussion, they would be placed in separate rooms so that they could answer a few questions about the first task. She escorted the confederate to another room so the participant could answer items regarding his impressions of his partner and their initial interaction.

When the confederate returned, she announced that they would discuss food in the dining halls (gender-neutral topic) and funding for the Feminist Forum (gender-relevant topic). Again, the experimenter started the camera and left the room, setting the timer for 7 min. Once the timer went off, the experimenter opened the door, escorted the confederate from the room, and the participant completed a series of outcome measures, including a purportedly unrelated sexist language detection task.

Debriefing

Participants were led through a funnel debriefing to probe for suspicion. No participant guessed the research hypothesis.

Materials

Immediate evaluation of the confrontation (first interaction)

After the confrontation, participants reported their impression of the confronter and the quality of the interaction during the moral dilemma task using a scale from 1 *not at all* to 11 *very much*. Men evaluated the confronter using a single item: “The other participant is nice”. We created an index reflecting men's impressions of the quality of the first interaction using six items: “I enjoyed working on the task with the other participant,” “The two of us worked well together,” “Our interaction was awkward” – reverse scored, “The two of us communicated well,” “I agreed with the other participant during our discussion,” “The other participant and I could successfully work together on a group project” ($\alpha = .76$).

Immediate responses to confrontation (first interaction)

Two research assistants (one male, one female) independently coded men's responses to the confrontation, use of compensation, and interpersonal outcomes. Coders were naïve to condition and study hypotheses. To ensure that coders were not influenced by the type of confrontation, a coder was never assigned to watch both the first and second interaction for the same participant.

Coders rated men's verbal and nonverbal responses immediately after the confrontation for smile, justification, laughter, surprise, denial,⁴ apology, body movement/gesture (e.g., lean back), and

⁴ In the sexist confrontation condition, denial was operationalized to mean the participant denied that he was biased or sexist; in the gender-neutral confrontation condition, denial meant that the participant denied making an error or rejected the confederate's suggestion.

stammer using a dichotomous 1 = yes, 0 = no scale. Coder reliabilities ranged from .75 to .95.

Delayed compensation (second interaction)

Men reported their compensation during the second interaction using a scale from 1 *not at all* to 11 *very much*. Coders also rated men's use of compensatory behaviors on a scale from 0 *not at all* to 4 *very much*. We created an index of compensation by combining self-reported compensation, "I searched for common ground on the topics," "I tried to present the most positive image of myself," and "I agreed with the other participant during our conversation" with coder observations of men's smiling during the second conversation, trying to get along, looking at the confederate, and putting a lot of thought into the second conversation ($\alpha = .66$).

Delayed interpersonal outcomes (second interaction)

We created an index of mutual liking between the participant and confederate by combining self-reports of "The other participant liked me" and "I liked the other participant" using a scale from 1 *not at all* to 11 *very much* with coder observations of "He liked the confederate," "I (the coder) like the participant," and "Overall, the discussion went well" using a scale from 0 *not at all* to 4 *very much* ($\alpha = .70$). We used the coder ratings of "I like the participant" as a proxy for how likeable the participant was as a result of his behavior in the second conversation.

Sexist language detection (second interaction)

Participants were asked to help "pilot test a task for future research" by completing the Gender Specific Language Scale (McMinn, Williams, & McMinn, 1994; Swim, Mallett, & Stangor, 2004). Men worked as quickly as possible to correctly identify three types of errors present in 30 sentences. General Grammatical Errors included grammar, punctuation, and spelling (e.g., "Students are required *too* write a total of four summary *paper* over the term"). We averaged Generic He errors (e.g., using "he" or "his" to refer to all people), and Gender Role Errors (e.g., using gendered pronouns to discuss gender-neutral careers) to form an index of Sexist Language Detection ($\alpha = .87$). Two independent coders tallied the number of correctly identified errors for each participant; coder reliabilities were acceptable (all α s = .99).

Results

Responses to confrontation (first interaction)

We first tested whether the type of confrontation influenced evaluations of the confronter and the quality of the initial exchange. If men correctly anticipate their responses,⁵ they should report liking the confronter less and report having a less pleasant interaction after a sexist confrontation than after a gender-neutral confrontation. Unlike predictions, an independent samples *t*-test showed that ratings of how nice the confronter was and of the quality of the interaction in which the confrontation took place did not differ across sexist ($M = 8.81$, $SD = 1.82$, $M = 8.04$, $SD = 1.26$, nice, interaction quality, respectively) and gender-neutral confrontations ($M = 8.62$, $SD = 1.97$, $M = 7.85$, $SD = 1.39$, nice, interaction quality, respectively), $t < -1$. Therefore, immediately after being confronted men reported that both types of confrontation went equally well.

⁵ A separate study provided men with a detailed description of the interactions that occurred in the current study and asked them to imagine how they would respond to being confronted. Men imagined liking their partner less, engaging in less compensation, and experiencing less mutual liking after a sexist confrontation than a gender-neutral confrontation. Thus, men inaccurately predicted their responses to this type of confrontation.

To determine whether men responded more strongly to a sexist confrontation than to a gender-neutral confrontation, we compared their actual responses across condition. Men were more likely to engage in a variety of verbal and non-verbal responses immediately after the sexist, compared to the gender-neutral confrontation, $\chi^2(2) > 6.46$, $ps < .05$, except stammering, $\chi^2(2) = 4.25$, *ns* (see Fig. 1). Given the range of behaviors (e.g., smiling, apology, denial) it is difficult to discern the intent behind the responses. What is clear, however, is that men demonstrate a stronger immediate response to the sexist confrontation—perhaps indicating their surprise at being confronted for sexist behavior.

Compensation and interpersonal outcomes (second interaction)

If men are susceptible to social pressures to be liked and to be seen as non-prejudiced, then they should compensate more following a sexist confrontation than a gender-neutral confrontation. That compensation should then produce interpersonal outcomes that are equivalent to those following a gender-neutral confrontation.

We calculated the indirect effect of confrontation on mutual liking through compensation using the Preacher and Hayes (2004) bootstrap approach. Bootstrapping is a powerful method for testing indirect effects because it has greater power to detect effects in small samples while maintaining control over the Type I error rate (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002; Williams & MacKinnon, 2008). We used Preacher and Hayes (2008) macro for SPSS to generate 5000 samples from the original data set (using sampling with replacement). The type of confrontation was coded so that 0 = gender-neutral confrontation and 1 = sexist confrontation.

Table 1 shows that confrontation and compensation are both positively associated with mutual liking.⁶ That is, men compensated more following a sexist confrontation than a gender-neutral confrontation and as compensation increased, so did mutual liking. More importantly, because the confidence intervals for the indirect effect do not include zero, we conclude that the indirect effect of confrontation on mutual liking through compensation was reliable. Thus, men used compensation more following a sexist confrontation than a gender-neutral confrontation and those compensatory efforts paid off in the form of mutual liking. This is the first evidence that perpetrators of prejudice make efforts to mend interpersonal relationships following a confrontation and shows that those efforts are effective in terms of self-reported and coded interpersonal outcomes.

Sexist language detection

Finally, we tested whether men were better able to detect future instances of sexist language after being confronted as sexist. A simple confrontation could spur self-correction, but experiencing mutual liking with one's confronter should reinforce the desire to eliminate biased language. We calculated the indirect effect of confrontation on sexist language detection through mutual liking using the same method as above. It is important to note that all men received the same instructions regarding what constituted sexist language at the beginning of the task and men detected the same number of General Grammatical Errors across conditions ($M = 26.68$, $SD = 9.29$, $M = 25.96$, $SD = 9.06$, sexist, gender-neutral, respectively) suggesting they were equally capable of performing this type of task, $t(107) = -.41$, *ns*.

Table 2 shows that confrontation and mutual liking were both positively associated with sexist language detection. Again, because

⁶ We find the same pattern of results for the tests of indirect effects when we analyze self-reported and coded compensation and mutual liking separately as when we combine the measures. To simplify the results, we present estimates for the combined measures.

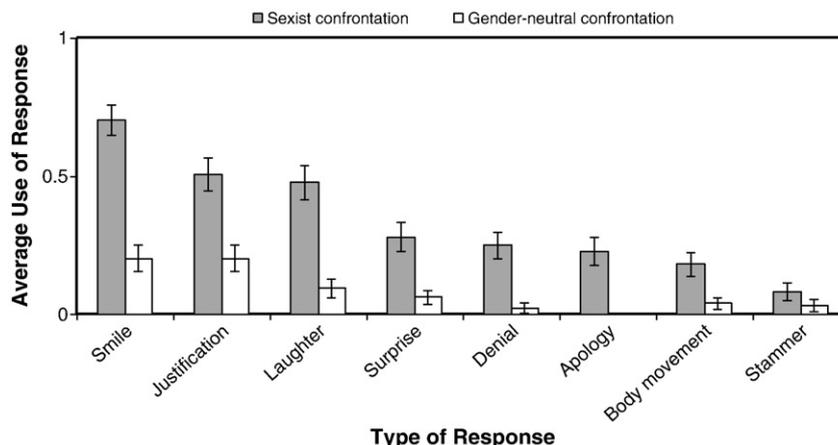


Fig. 1. Videotape coding shows that men respond more strongly to a sexist confrontation than to a gender-neutral confrontation.

the confidence intervals for the indirect effect do not include zero, we concluded that the indirect effect of confrontation on sexist language detection through mutual liking was reliable. That is, men experienced more mutual liking with their confronter after the sexist confrontation and that mutual liking increased their subsequent detection of sexist language.

Discussion

This study shows there is something unique about face-to-face confrontations that men are unable to anticipate when simply imagining a confrontation. Specifically, men are unable to anticipate their use of compensation and the positive impact that their efforts will have on a subsequent conversation with their confronter. We found that a second conversation, which involved gender-relevant topics, went just as well if the man had been confronted a few minutes earlier for using sexist language as if he had received a gender-neutral confrontation. This is not to say that all confrontations go smoothly or that subsequent interactions are always pleasant. Rather, the present research shows that the interpersonal outcomes of confrontation are not always as bad as expected.

It is interesting to discover that even members of socially privileged groups are motivated to make the best of a potentially awkward interaction. To our knowledge, this is the first research to examine whether perpetrators use compensation to repair a relationship that has been damaged by a biased remark. Our results provide preliminary evidence for the idea that majority group members' responses to confrontation are susceptible to forces similar to those that constrain targets of prejudice. Just as targets sometimes

tone down their initial responses, so do perpetrators. Even though perpetrators might wish to respond more radically, the fact that they do not always do so can produce a positive interpersonal outcome.

In addition to creating a positive conversation, confrontation also increased men's ability to detect future instances of sexist language. In both confrontation conditions, men were exposed to a gender-relevant topic in the second conversation and given the same instructions for identifying sexist language. The only difference was the type of confrontation men experienced in the first interaction. We found that a positive conversation after the sexist confrontation was at least partially responsible for this change, perhaps by reinforcing positive behavior or boosting self-efficacy. This provides a strong test of the impact that confrontation has on the ability to correct the future use of sexist language.

Although this study shows promising evidence that not all confrontations produce negative outcomes, it is important to test the generalizability of these effects across social groups and with different types of confrontation. Czopp and Monteith (2003) found that men were less responsive to accusations of sexism than racism, perhaps because people are, in general, more sensitive to appearing racist than sexist. The fact that men tried to make up for sexism in this study suggests that we may find a similar, or even stronger, result for accusations of racism. We only tested one type of confrontation in this study. An extremely assertive confrontation would likely produce a stronger response from the perpetrator.

Sexist language is commonly used in everyday conversation, and many people do not find it to be problematic (Swim et al., 2004). Given the fact that cumulative exposure to subtle and blatant discrimination is related to serious mental and physical consequences, including lower self-esteem and immune functioning and higher

Table 1
Regressions testing for an indirect effect of confrontation on mutual liking that operates through compensation.

Description of estimated path (traditional Baron and Kenny paths)	Estimate (SE)	t	p	95% Confidence intervals
Confrontation to compensation (a path)	.59 (.17)	3.45	.008	
Direct effect of compensation on mutual liking (b path)	.60 (.07)	8.55	.001	
Total effect of confrontation on mutual liking (c path)	.42 (.16)	2.66	.009	
Direct effect of confrontation on mutual liking (c-prime path)	.07 (.13)	.51	.61	
Indirect effect of confrontation on mutual liking through compensation	.35 (.11)	3.22	.001	Lower = .17 Upper = .55

Table 2
Regressions testing for an indirect effect of confrontation on sexist language detection that operates through mutual liking.

Description of estimated path (traditional Baron and Kenny paths)	Estimate (SE)	t	p	95% Confidence intervals
Confrontation to mutual liking (a path)	.42 (.16)	2.66	.009	
Direct effect of mutual liking on sexist language detection (b path)	1.05 (.32)	3.19	.002	
Total effect of confrontation on sexist language detection (c path)	1.41 (.55)	2.60	.01	
Direct effect of confrontation on sexist language detection (c-prime path)	.97 (.54)	1.81	.07	
Indirect effect of confrontation on mutual liking through compensation	.44 (.21)	2.06	.04	Lower = .11 Upper = .92

depression and blood pressure (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999; Pieterse & Carter, 2007), it is important to find ways to curtail its occurrence. The present work shows that confrontation reduces the future occurrence of biased behavior. Moreover, the interpersonal outcomes of confrontations are not always as bad as people imagine. If the perpetrator is motivated to be liked by the confronter or wishes to present a non-prejudiced image then he will likely compensate in response to confrontation and change his future behavior. Thus, social forces exert the same type of influence on perpetrators as they do on targets, and have the potential to temper the way that even outspoken pundits such as Bill O'Reilly respond when confronted for prejudice.

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Appendix A. Moral dilemma task

Instructions: We are interested in the variety of ways that people may interpret and respond to moral and ethical dilemmas. Please discuss each of the following scenarios with the other participant. After you have reached a decision about one way to respond to each scenario, please write a brief recommendation regarding on how you think the person involved should deal with the situation.

1. A professor discovers a student has cheated on an exam. What would you recommend?
2. A business executive discovers a long-time employee has been stealing from the company. What would you recommend?
3. A nurse discovers a hospital patient has been given blood contaminated with the AIDS virus. What would you recommend?

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