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ONE DOOR OPENING IS ANOTHER PERSON'S INSULT:  
EXAMINING BENEVOLENTLY SEXIST BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES  
IN AMERICAN MALES

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Psychology

Murray State University

Murray, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment

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in Clinical Psychology

by Rachael Turner

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## Abstract

This study explores Ambivalent Sexism Theory and takes a closer look at the correlation between the behaviors and attitudes that surround it. In this study 133 male participants completed surveys questioning their acceptance and engagement in certain benevolent behaviors, as well as measuring their level of being considered sexist and kind. Results indicate that men who endorsed benevolently sexist ideology more frequently engaged in benevolent behaviors with women as well as believed this behavior was appropriate. However, regression analysis show kindness had a higher predictability in determining whether the men would in engage in these behaviors and consider it appropriate.

*Key words:* Ambivalent Sexism Theory, Benevolent Sexism, Kindness behaviors

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## One Door Opening is Another Person's Insult: Examining Benevolent Sexist Behaviors and Attitudes

As some of the current debate surrounding the behavior of Harvey Weinstein and the resulting *MeToo* movement have shown us, there is still an extensive gray area concerning how individuals define sexual assault and misconduct (Bennett, 2018). This can make establishing guidelines in the workplace, education, and the real world quite complicated. However, it is no surprise that there is confusion, as we are also varied on our ideas and definitions of related underlying issues, such as sexism. Typically, sexism is a type of prejudice most commonly directed at women that contains deep-rooted feelings of dislike and inflexible generalizations, that often results in discrimination (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Sexism can encompass many behaviors or beliefs and includes sexual objectification, degrading comments, derogatory names, and traditional gender-role stereotyping based on someone's biological sex. It occurs cross-culturally, manifests in many forms, and can impact a person's life in many ways. Moreover, this type of prejudice can transpire at work, in academics, daily life, family dynamics, and even interpersonal relationships (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

Ambivalent Sexism Theory is a theoretical framework that proposes that sexism is comprised of two distinct and sometimes interrelated forms of sexism: hostile and benevolent (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Both forms of sexism are believed to communicate how women *should* be and how they *should* behave (Ramos et al., 2018). Although both are derived from the same ideal of women, hostile sexism has an overtly negative connotation while benevolent sexism is often seen as more positive (Ramos et al., 2018). Hostile sexism is the traditionally defined, antagonist view of women generated towards those that challenge traditional gender-roles or try to be equal to or above men (Glick & Fiske, 1997; Sibley & Wilson, 2004). Hostile sexism is usually explicitly overt, more distressing, and unwanted. This type of behavior could include

derogatory slurs, banning women from certain clubs and organizations, or catcalling as a woman walks by (Glick & Fiske, 1997).

Conversely, benevolent sexism is a subtle type of prejudice that is often perceived as affectionate rather than aggressive (Hammond & Overall, 2015). Benevolent sexism is the exaltation or admiration of women who conform to traditional gender-norms (Ramos et al., 2018). Counterintuitive at first, benevolent sexism is argued as sexist because it adheres to the perception of women as belonging to stereotypical and restricted roles (Duran et al., 2011). Benevolent attitudes are a romanticized view of women and are comprised of both an affectionate and protective stance toward females (Glick & Fiske, 1997). It encompasses the idea that women need men to take care of them, and is unique to women in that these behaviors and attitudes often appear kind, chivalrous, positive, or warm in nature (Oswald et al., 2018). Since benevolent ideology idealizes and even benefits women, benevolent behaviors are typically interpreted as less sexist, more flattering, or often even justified (Duran et al., 2011; Oswald et al., 2018). These kinds of benevolent behaviors could include simple tasks such as lifting heavy objects for a woman, holding the door open for a woman, paying the bills (e.g., picking up the check), or supporting the household so that the woman does not have to work outside the home (Glick & Fiske, 1997; Oswald et al., 2018).

Both benevolent and hostile sexism share the common presumption that traditional gender roles are justified and serves to maintain a patriarchal social structure (Glick & Fiske, 1997). However, benevolent sexism is argued to be a subtle form of the same oppression (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Benevolent sexism is often seen as approval or compliments for a woman who fulfills these appropriate gender roles and conversely derogation of women who do not. For example, these benevolent attitudes can sometimes appear in the form of praise for domestic

tasks such as cleaning, cooking, or caring and attending to the children. This ideal may continue even when the woman must also work fulltime to help support the household (Oswald et al., 2018). Other benevolent ideology may include men directing women's behaviors in given situations, giving unsolicited help or explanations, and encouraging women to choose financially stable men for romantic partners (Oswald et al., 2018).

According to ambivalent sexism theory, there are three subtypes of benevolent sexism: heterosexual intimacy, protective paternalism, and complementary gender differentiation (Oswald et al., 2018; Sibley & Wilson, 2004). Heterosexual intimacy refers to the belief that women are objects of affection, to be cherished, honored, and loved, and that men and women were made to be romantic partners (Oswald et al., 2018). Behaviors that are said to demonstrate heterosexual intimacy may involve physical, emotional, or sexual expectations in the relationship, such as a man's belief that he needs a woman in order to be truly complete (Oswald et al., 2018). Men may also place women *on a pedestal*, or believe that a woman is a man's *better half* (Glick & Fiske, 1997). In these men may believe that a romantic relationship with a woman is a necessary component to his success and wellbeing. However, this can also lead to more support and emphasis being placed on the man's success and future and not as much on the woman's future successes (Oswald et al., 2018).

Protective paternalism refers to a type of benevolence where the male is seen as the protector. It is the notion that women are weaker than men and require them for their protection. As an example, this idea can be evidenced in the belief that women and children should be rescued before men in a disaster such as the sinking of the Titanic (Oswald et al., 2018). Furthermore, with protective paternalism, women are admired for their ability to reproduce, but must be mothers or romantic partners to be fully accepted. Protective paternalism may be



witnessed through a variety of behaviors. These types of behaviors may include restricting a woman from situations that the man deems as dangerous, holding a woman's arm while walking, escorting a woman to ensure she feels safe, carrying or lifting heavy objects for the woman, or questioning a woman's ability to handle an object or situation by herself (Oswald et al., 2018). In this case, the underlying message sent to women, is that she is weak, unable to protect, defend, or do for herself and therefore must rely on a man to help her.

Lastly, complementary gender differentiation refers to the ideology that men and women fulfill obligatory roles that are made to complement one another (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Although research shows this is still viewed as acceptable, it is a patriarchal approach to traditional gender roles (Oswald et al., 2018). These gender roles endorse the belief in a gender-based division of labor, such that women should take care of the household and care for the children. Conversely, men should be the *breadwinners* and financially support the household (Ramos et al., 2018). In this paradigm, it is assumed that a woman's role is not to continue her own education or engage in her own career or work opportunities. These favored gender attitudes (i.e., benevolent behaviors) originate as far back as the Victorian era and help maintain gender inequality now because these behaviors are still seen as a reinforcement or reward for what society deems as right or acceptable behavior (Glick & Fiske, 2011).

It is argued that benevolent beliefs communicate obligatory expectations of women and maintain the ideology of patriarchy and traditional gender roles. This is because benevolent beliefs support societal dominance of men and preserve the intimate idea of the relationship between men and women (Ramos et al., 2018). It is true that a sexist attitude encompasses the ideal that women are unable to do for themselves and require the companionship, protection, and endorsement of men (Ramos et al., 2018). However, it is not just men who perpetuate these

standards. Current research indicates that benevolent sexism is still widely accepted and positively endorsed by women (Gul & Kupfer, 2018; Ramos et al., 2018). Benevolent sexism is often seen as more appealing and is even romanticized, often as acts of chivalry or romance. It is argued that the romantic notion that a woman should be cherished, protected, and provided for is a key reason that benevolence is still relatively attractive to women (Cross & Overall, 2017; Gul & Kupfer, 2018). New research shows that women perceive benevolent men as more attractive, traditional, willing to commit, and willing to invest, which greatly impact mate preference and selection (Gul & Kupfer, 2018).

Though favorable and even preferred over hostile sexism, benevolent sexism is problematic because it is still related to the discrimination of women (Duran, et al., 2011). However, it is important to note that some individuals may not be aware of the implicit sexist assumptions that underlie these actions. Even though Ambivalent Sexism Theory helps us understand sexist ideals, the male's motive for these behaviors is inferred. Arguably, if a nefarious motive is inferred, it is deemed sexist; whereas if a non-nefarious motive is inferred it is deemed courteous. Moreover, it has been argued that women who endorse benevolent behaviors may not be aware of the harm associated with or underlying these actions (Glick & Fiske, 2001). That is, current research upholds that benevolent behaviors are wrongly interpreted as warmth and chivalry when they unconsciously promote oppression and helps to maintain inequality. As a result, it is argued that benevolent behaviors should also be discouraged (Gul & Kupfer, 2019).

Hostile sexism has been associated with lower self-esteem and increased self-doubt in women (Ramos et al., 2018). In that same vein, benevolent sexism can undermine a woman's competence, ambition, independence, and prevent her from professional success and personal

career advancements (Oswald et al., 2018). Benevolently sexist behavior is believed to perpetuate gender stereotypes as these behaviors include rewards or punishments for conforming to traditional gender roles and acceptable societal behavior. Although seen by some as supportive or positive behavior, endorsing benevolent sexism is to also endorse sexist beliefs and sexism. These behaviors are now being dissuaded in hopes of stopping the promotion of sexist beliefs and gender stereotypes (Ramos et al., 2018).

However, past research lacks an empirical division between attitudes and their related behaviors. Although benevolent ideology may play a pivotal role in gender inequality, is this *always* the function of benevolent behaviors? That is, although correlated, there may not be perfect overlap between the act of opening a door for a woman and the attitude that the woman was unable to open the door for herself. Does engaging in benevolently sexist behavior directly indicate a benevolently sexist attitude? Current research makes it clear that these behaviors are not intended for overall admiration or respect, and assumes anyone who performs a benevolent behavior endorses or supports a sexist ideology. Ostensibly, there may be a variety of reasons a person chooses to engage in a behavior, some of which could possibly be entirely unrelated to discrimination, oppression, or inequality. Additionally, it is possible for someone to participate in a benevolently sexist behavior without awareness of its underlying sexist indication. It brings up the question of whether benevolent behavior occurs without the benevolent attitude?

The discrepancy between attitude and behavior is a widely researched topic in social psychology. Yet, attitudes have always had a complicated relationship with behavior. Although attitudes are predictive of a person's behavior, past research has also shown that not all attitudes can predict behaviors, and not all behaviors are reflective of an attitude (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001). Attitudes can be highly malleable and very context-dependent (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001;

Zanna et al., 1980). The relationship between attitudes and behaviors is also issue-specific (Zanna et al., 1980). However, people must have knowledge of what attitude is driving their behavior for it to be indicative of specific beliefs and opinions. Many people have subconscious attitudes that affect their behavior without them really being aware of it. Research has shown that individuals with little knowledge of a prior attitude, such as benevolently sexist beliefs, likely base their behaviors on many other factors outside of opinion (Kallgren & Wood, 1986).

Regarding benevolent behaviors, regular contact with women, cultural upbringing, or even societal norms could lead men to be more accustomed to traditional behaviors and not aware of the connection to modern beliefs (Swim et al., 1995). When participants are instructed to consider an attitude's implication for a behavior, people may increase their attention to factors such as self-preservation, popular opinion, or assumed beliefs (Kallgren & Wood, 1986). Reminding individuals that an attitude specifically implies a behavior automatically increases the attitude-behavior consistency (Kallgren & Wood, 1986).

However, measures used in previous research may not be indicative of how benevolent behaviors occur in the real world and consequently cannot accurately interpret the attitudes and interactions that may be driving these behaviors. Currently, the research on sexism implies that all benevolent behavior is indicative of a sexist attitude. However, there is not a separation of the "expression" of sexism resulting from a person's attitude and the actual behaviors that may occur in the environment, behaviors that are said to communicate this underlying sexist ideology (Ramos et al., 2018). As these benevolently sexist behaviors are still perceived as desirable in a relationship, this may indicate the possibility of more positive views toward benevolent behaviors isolated or apart from a benevolent attitude or sexist ideology. This may mean these behaviors may still be valuable because they may communicate other traits or information such

as kindness, manners, tradition, or respect, especially in certain situations. Previous research used scales consistent with the theory of benevolent sexism (e.g., Ambivalent Sexism Inventory) and not with the actual experience of the behaviors in a natural environment (e.g., men offering their seat to a woman on a bus).

Most studies use vignettes or complex self-report surveys that question the participants' acceptance of sexist beliefs and ideas. For example, one study had participants read statements such as "many people believe that no matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman, and every man ought to have a woman he adores" (Ramos et al., 2016, p.163). The study then measured what the female participants believed this communicated about the attributes of men. This is an issue because it infers the attitudes and behaviors of an opposite gender.

In another example, statements regarding the belief that only women have the trait of purity, which male individuals cannot possess are rated by female participants who are questioned about what this kind of stereotype communicates about men (Ramos et al., 2018). This caused issues in past research by highlighting sexist beliefs and then relating them to external benevolent behaviors. However, this assumes that all men who would engage in such behaviors are aware of the benevolent ideology they represent and hold sexist ideals or attitudes.

Often participants are primed towards a hostile or benevolent attitude prior to completing the experiment. This means the vignettes and questions are often worded to imply a specific sexist belief and behavior. Usually the wording of the vignettes is simply changed to reflect a more hostile or benevolent male figure (Gul & Kupfer, 2018). Questions may be written in a "patronizing and undermining" manner aimed at measuring the woman's acceptance of a man with this demeanor (Gul & Kupfer, 2019, p.149). Often if benevolent behavior is explicitly

questioned it is represented through a man telling a woman what they *should do* or are *supposed* to do or men ignoring the woman's skills or successes (Hammond & Overall, 2015). Although these measures demonstrate a sexist attitude, they do not assess what the behaviors by themselves may communicate. Research has shown that participants can often edit their judgments before responding in self-report measures due to self-presentation and social desirability (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001). Like attitudes, judgements are usually context-dependent and may not have been formed or even considered until the question was asked (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001).

Moreover, attitudes are shown to be highly impacted by minor changes in the wording on measurements (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001). Although the research may be an accurate representation of the perception of sexist ideals, the measures only record benevolent attitudes and then label benevolent behaviors as automatically connected and indicative of this ideology (Ramos et al., 2018). This is an issue if the behaviors themselves are not in question. Until now, the literature on benevolent sexism seems to make a correlation between specific behaviors and an unwanted attitude. The current study is aimed at determining whether benevolently sexist behaviors can occur independently from a benevolently sexist attitude. This study will also explore other factors, like kindness, that could cause these types of behaviors.

Kindness is selected as a possible factor due to the current literature which has found that prosocial behavior, such as kindness, enhances the well-being of those who engage in it (Gherghel, Nastas, Hashimoto, & Takai, 2019). Kindness can be considered inversely related to sexism. This factor may show a different attitude behind these behaviors.

## Chapter II: The Current Study and Hypotheses

This research evaluated whether the behaviors that have been labeled as benevolently sexist *always* represent oppression, discrimination, and the inequality between the sexes. That is, outside of the interpretation of these behaviors as sexist, do benevolent behaviors always represent sexist ideology for those who engage in them? The Theory of Ambivalent Sexism is based on an idea of how men and women believe the female sex should behave and the function of these behaviors is believed to promote oppression and maintain the inequality between men and women. This study was limited to the male's behavior and attitude to assess specifically if their engagement in benevolently sexist behaviors towards females support their belief in the current Ambivalent Sexism Theory. If this is true, then men who engage in benevolent behaviors should also endorse the connected benevolent ideology and score high on a measure of benevolent sexism. Only the direct correlation of a behavior motivated by a sexist ideal can determine if a benevolent behavior is in fact directly indicative of a benevolent attitude for the men that engage and support them.

Overtly sexist ideals easily communicate and promote sexist beliefs (Gul & Kupfer, 2018). However, men may be unaware of what benevolent behaviors are believed to communicate. Assessing if men endorse sexist beliefs and engage specifically in benevolent behaviors can determine whether there is a direct link between these attitudes and behaviors. Importantly, these behaviors and their acceptance will be evaluated without reference to the benevolent ideology.

The current study is interested in whether engaging in benevolent behaviors is connected to sexist ideology through the male perspective, the gender believed to carry out this ideology toward women. Specifically, the current study will identify various benevolent behaviors (e.g.,

kind, polite, chivalrous). Then, the relationship between one's attitude and performance of benevolent behaviors will be examined about one's sexist ideology. The first hypothesis will examine the efficiency of Ambivalent Sexism theory to predict engagement in benevolent behaviors. That is, men who engage in benevolently sexist behaviors hold benevolently sexist ideals, as proposed by Ambivalent Sexism Theory (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Therefore, I hypothesize there will be a direct correlation between perceived acceptance and engagement in benevolent behaviors and benevolent sexism scores on the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory.

Conversely, the current study will examine another potential outside factor that could influence the endorsement of benevolent behaviors. That is, a factor other than sexism could indicate that these behaviors can communicate various and differing ideologies, attitudes, understanding, empathy, or even cultural upbringing. The current study will also examine whether kindness is a better predictor of engagement in benevolent behaviors, than sexism. The second hypotheses will find that kindness is a better predictor of engagement in benevolent behaviors than benevolent ideology. Consider there is still a world where opening the door for someone could simply be considered kindness.



## Chapter III: Method

### Participants

This study recruited male participants from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), who were paid \$1.00 for their time. Based on an a priori power analysis, the minimum number of male participants should be 120, to achieve  $\beta = .80$  at the  $\alpha = .05$  level of risk. After the analysis was completed there was a total of 134 male participants. One participant was removed due to lack of completion, leaving 133 participants in the study. All participants were recruited from within the United States to eliminate additional potential cultural differences. Demographics revealed that participants ranged in age from 23 to 72 years of age ( $M = 37.87$ ,  $SD = 11.51$ ) and were mostly Caucasian ( $n = 111$ ; 83.5%). Participants were also mostly single ( $n = 48$ , 36.1%) and identified as heterosexual ( $n = 122$ , 91.7%) and a Democrat ( $n = 75$ ; 56.4%). Most participants had grown up in the same home as their biological parents ( $n = 92$ , 69%) and expressed high religiosity ( $n = 68$ ; 51.1%).

### Materials and Procedure

Participants were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTURK) and completed a brief online survey. First, participants were shown an informed consent to explain the procedures and purpose of the current research. Then participants completed the following measures:

**Demographics (Appendix A).** Each participant was questioned regarding specific demographics such as age, ethnicity, religiosity, place of birth, and place of longest living residence. The demographics section was used to examine whether any population differences (e.g., religiosity) are correlated with acceptance or engagement in benevolent behaviors.

**Benevolent Behavior Inventory (BBI; created for this study; Appendix B1 and B2).** A list of behaviors resulted from a small pilot study where nine participants were asked to list as many polite, chivalrous, or romantic behaviors that people might engage in. Items were

collected and 20 face-valid behaviors were retained. The chosen items were then reworded to create a measure that includes two subscales: Appropriateness and Engagement of benevolent behaviors. Each subscale contains the same items, but includes two versions (i.e., one for a man and one for a woman). For example, a sample item is “I would give up my seat for a woman [man] on public transportation.” Participants were asked how appropriate each of the specific behaviors are on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (*Completely Inappropriate*) to 6 (*Completely Appropriate*) and then in a second scale, presented later, they were asked how often they engage in the behavior ranging from 0 (*Have Never and Will Never*) to 6 (*Always*). Higher scores indicated higher acceptance of the behaviors, as well as greater performance. Participants were given both versions (i.e., woman and man)

***Kindness (Canter et al., 2017; Appendix C)***. This measure consisted of 31 items ( $\alpha = .89$ ) that load onto four subscales: Benign Tolerance, Empathetic Responsivity, Principled Proaction, and Unkindness (reverse-coded). Participants were asked to rate each item according to how specifically it relates to their own behavior. Responses are anchored on a seven-point Likert scale ( $1 = \textit{not at all}$ ,  $7 = \textit{nearly always}$ ). This questionnaire assesses the participants level of the interpersonal trait kindness (e.g., I have taken care of a friend who was ill).

***Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 2001; Appendix D)***. The ASI consists of 22 items ( $\alpha = .70$ ) that load onto two major subscales: Hostile and Benevolent Sexism. Participants are asked to rate each of the items on a six-point Likert scale ( $0 = \textit{disagree strongly}$ ,  $5 = \textit{agree strongly}$ ), with higher scores indicating greater sexist attitudes. A sample for the subscale of interest is “In a disaster, women ought not necessarily be rescued before men.” (reverse-coded). This item is scored three ways to establish separate scores for each subscale: hostile and benevolent, as well as combining those two scores for an overall total score.

Upon completion of the materials, participants were presented with a debriefing statement that explained the purpose of the study and information for further contact.

## Chapter IV: Results

Prior to examination of the hypotheses, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the Benevolent Behavior Inventory (BBI) to examine whether engagement in certain behaviors are likely to be grouped together. This analysis was completed using the male to female engagement in behavior questions. A principal-components exploratory factor analysis using an oblimin rotation was conducted on the BBI (Costello & Osborne, 2005). An examination of the scree plot and factor loading (all loadings below .40 were suppressed) indicated that the behaviors cognitively grouped together into three easily distinguishable categories. It should be noted that  $KMO = .90$  and all communalities were over .55. Both measures indicate that the sample size was adequate for this factor analysis (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Preacher & MacCallum, 2002). The eigenvalues for the three factors accounted for 70.31% of the total variance. The factor loading matrix for this final solution is presented in Table 1.

As expected, chivalrous behaviors (e.g., giving up your seat) factored separately from polite (e.g., saying please or thank you in conversation) and romantic behaviors (e.g., buying a gift). Whether targeting females or males, both engaging in and perceived appropriateness of behaviors showed overall adequate reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha > .95$ ).

Additionally, the relationships between potential demographic variables and endorsement of benevolent behaviors was calculated, via a series of bivariate correlation analyses. Results indicated that only two demographics variables had a relationship with benevolent behavior and all other variables were not significant. These results indicate, age was positively correlated with engagement in polite behaviors towards both men and women, as well as appropriateness of behaviors towards woman in all three subsets of chivalrous, romantic, and polite behaviors. Age was not correlated with appropriateness of behavior toward men for any subsets of behaviors.

**Table 1***Factor Loadings and Descriptive Information of Benevolent Behaviors Inventory*

No.	Behavior ( <i>reworded for space</i> )	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite
1	Open the car door	.643		
2	Defend their honor	.668		
3	Pull out chair	.960		
4	Allow to be rescued	.450		
5	Give up your seat	.458		
6	Offer your coat	.698		
7	Help lift object	.672		
8	Walk to car	.670		
9	Propose to		.595	
10	Cook a meal for		.834	
11	Give a gift		.753	
12	Help clean		.876	
13	Pick up check		.489	
14	Say please or thank you			.742
15	Hold elevator door			.858
16	Open the door			.696
17	Help perform task			.905
18	Give a compliment			.811
19	Help move object			.918
20	Give encouraging word			.789
Percent variance		53.12	11.26	4.69
Eigenvalue		10.62	2.25	.94

Religiosity was positively correlated with engagement in all three categories of benevolent behaviors (e.g., chivalrous) towards females, but only positively correlated with engagement in chivalrous behaviors towards males. Additionally, religiosity was correlated with appropriateness of behaviors towards females only regarding chivalrous behaviors and not romantic or polite. Moreover, religiosity was not correlated with any appropriateness of behaviors towards males. See Table 2 and 3 for the correlation between demographic variables and the engagement and appropriateness of benevolent behaviors directed toward both women and men.

**Table 2***Correlation Coefficients between Predictors and Engagement of Benevolent Behaviors*

	Toward Women			Toward Men		
	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite
Age	.16	.13	.24**	-.08	.04	.18*
Religiosity	.33**	.23**	.23**	.25**	.15	.13
M	31.97	18.80	34.00	19.95	9.71	29.40
SD	10.67	6.70	7.20	9.77	4.59	8.77

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ;**Table 3***Correlation Coefficients between Predictors and Appropriateness of Benevolent Behaviors*

	Toward Women			Toward Men		
	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite
Age	.26**	.23**	.24**	-.08	-.02	.11
Religiosity	.29**	.11	.14	.15	-.01	.04
M	39.47	25.14	32.29	31.22	20.25	35.37
SD	8.34	5.15	4.83	9.99	7.11	7.61

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ;

The first hypothesis, a test of the Ambivalent Sexism Theory (Glick & Fiske, 2001), expected that men who engage in benevolently sexist behaviors would also hold benevolently sexist ideals. To examine this, a simple Pearson's R bivariate correlation was conducted between perceived appropriateness and engagement in benevolent behaviors (i.e., BBI) and scores on the Benevolent subscale of the ASI. Results indicate that benevolent sexism was positively correlated with engagement in benevolent behaviors towards women across all three

subsets but was correlated with engagement only in chivalrous behaviors for men. See Table 4 for correlations between the components of the Ambivalent Sexism Theory and engagement in benevolent behaviors.

**Table 4**

*Correlation Coefficients between ASI and Engagement in Benevolent Behaviors*

	Toward Women			Toward Men		
	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite
Benevolent	.51**	.35**	.35**	.20*	.14	.15

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ;

This hypothesis continued to show support when comparing appropriateness of benevolent behaviors. When regarding women, the appropriateness of benevolent behaviors was positively correlated across all three subsets of behavior but was not correlated in any of the three subsets with men. See Table 5 for correlations between the components of Ambivalent Sexism Inventory and the appropriateness of benevolent behaviors.

**Table 5**

*Correlation Coefficients between ASI and Appropriateness of Benevolent Behaviors*

	Toward Women			Toward Men		
	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite	Chivalrous	Romantic	Polite
Benevolent	.47**	.22*	.33**	.10	.03	.13

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ;

A simple linear regression was conducted in which the influence of kindness on engaging in benevolent behaviors was examined. Results indicated that kindness does influence engaging

in benevolent behaviors with women (Table 6, Model 1). Then, a hierarchical regression was conducted in which benevolent sexism scores were entered in the first step (Table 6, Model 2), and kindness was added in the second step (Table 6, Model 3). Results suggested that although benevolent sexism does influence engagement in benevolent behaviors with women, kindness improved the model, accounting for an additional 20% of the variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .21$ ). See Table 6 for a comparison of the three models.

**Table 6**

*Hierarchical Regression Predicting Engagement in Benevolent Behaviors towards Women*

	<i>B</i>	<i>p</i>	Model Statistics	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Model 1				
Kindness	.56	<.001	$F(1,132) = 60.07$	.31
Model 2				
Benevolently Sexist	.46	<.001	$F(1,132) = 34.39$	.20
Model 3				
Benevolently Sexist	.33	<.001		
Kindness	.47.	<.001	$F(2,130) = 46.28$	.42



## Chapter V: Discussion

In agreement with the current literature, there was a direct correlation between benevolently sexist ideology and engagement in benevolent behavior as well as perceived appropriateness of benevolent behaviors. These results show continued support for ambivalent sexism theory. This is especially supportive as benevolent sexism scores were not correlated with the same behaviors with men. This theory proposes that sexism is comprised of beliefs and behaviors of how women and men should be and how they should behave (Ramos, et al., 2018). Though these behaviors appear warm, the theory states that these behaviors are led by sexist ideology. The current study supports that men who engage in these specific behaviors do uphold benevolent sexist ideologies and find these types of behaviors to be appropriate. Past research has also shown that how someone feels towards engaging in a behavior is also strongly correlated with the object of that behavior (Jaccard et al., 1997). Just as ambivalent sexism theory suggests specific beliefs towards a specific gender, the current study found that men feel that benevolent behaviors are more appropriate when directed toward women and would engage in them more often with women. The results indicated there were very few instances in which men reported the performance of these behaviors with other men.

Examining these behaviors directed towards both toward women and men helped determine that benevolent behaviors do coincide with traditional gender roles. This is because the men more often believed these behaviors should be directed toward women than men. However, some participants may have felt that some of the behaviors (e.g. proposing to a man) were not feasible within the confines of their heteronormative viewpoints. This could have affected the outcome of how often they reported engaging in these benevolent behaviors with

other men or even how appropriate men felt towards specific behaviors because they were directed toward other men.

Past research indicates that heterosexual men who are benevolently sexist are perceived by women to be more intimate, warmer, and having stronger reproduction. Benevolent men are also viewed as more positive and inviting. This is because benevolent beliefs are often endorsed by women as possible interpersonal rewards in a romantic relationship (Waddell et al., 2018). This may be another reason men think these behaviors are more appropriate towards women than towards men. If men are aware of this desire or more positive view of these behaviors, then men would be more likely to engage in them with mostly women.

However, in this study the men with higher religiosity reported higher amounts of engagement in chivalrous behaviors with other men. These behaviors include getting the door, giving up your seat on public transportation, or helping lift a heavy object. This is likely because religion may play a role in prosocial behavior. For example, when primed with religion people tend to choose to engage in behaviors that bring a more positive impact to other people and other behaviors considered to be more moral (Van Tongeren et al., 2016). This may explain why highly religious men would be more apt to report engaging in these behaviors with other men.

Age was also correlated with engagement and appropriateness of benevolent behaviors. While age was correlated with all appropriateness of behaviors when directed toward women, age was only correlated with the polite subset of behaviors when directed toward men. Polite behaviors included giving someone a compliment, saying please and thank you, or helping someone else with a difficult task. Research supports that when people consider their interactions with others to be polite and tactful, overall well-being is improved (Bonnefon & Villejoubert, 2006). This may explain why men felt that only the polite behaviors were appropriate towards

other men. Interestingly, the results also indicate that age had a stronger relationship with appropriateness of benevolent behaviors than the actual engagement in them. Research regarding ambivalent sexism has found that older men tend to support more traditional gender roles (Sakalh-Ugurlu & Glike, 2003). This may be why the older participants believed benevolent behaviors were more appropriate. However, this provokes the question for future research to examine men who feel behaviors are appropriate but still do not actually engage in them.

The biggest finding from the current study was the examination of the possibility that kindness could play a factor in determining whether men would engage in benevolent behaviors with women. While ambivalent sexism theory was supported, being kind had more of an impact on whether someone would engage in these benevolent behaviors. This is a refreshing finding. That is, although sexism may play a role in the performance of certain behaviors, kindness has a larger influence on how often someone engages in benevolent behaviors. Kindness is a prosocial behavior (Gherghel et al., 2019) like many of the behaviors in the BBI. Kindness is also regarded as a highly desirable trait and has been shown to be positively correlated with happiness and general well-being. The relationship is even stronger when acts of kindness are performed more frequently (Gherghel, et al., 2019). This could explain why even after controlling for benevolent sexism, kindness predicted, above and beyond, how often people take part in benevolent behaviors throughout their everyday lives and how appropriate they believe it is to interact in these ways with others. This may say a lot about how these types of behaviors are still viewed in our everyday lives. It also supports that people may not be aware of the sexist ideology underlying the specific behaviors. This is important because it shows that are many factors that go into predicting someone's behavior. It is also important to understand considering some of the current research dissuades allowing benevolent behavior to occur in our social interactions (e.g., Fisher &

Hammond, 2019). The context, attitude, and someone's personal belief towards these types of behaviors should be taken into consideration before defining someone as engaging in a sexist act.

While supporting this hypothesis was an overall strength, future research may want to examine other potential factors that could predict engagement in chivalrous, polite, or romantic behaviors. The behaviors themselves may also fit into other categories such as a sign of respect or generosity. It is encouraging to learn there are still people who open a door or assist in helping someone else because they feel that it is right or kind, not simply because they may be sexist.

## Chapter VI: References

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## Appendix A. Demographics

1. What is your current age \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your ethnicity/race?

African American, American Indian, Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, Other

3. What is your current relationship status?

Single, Dating, Engaged, Married, Divorced, Widowed

4. What is your highest level of completed education?

5. What is your Religious Affiliation

6. Please indicate your level of religiosity on the following scale.

Not religious at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Extremely Religious

7. Please identify where you were born (city, state) \_\_\_\_\_

8. In which state have you lived the longest? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Who was your primary caregiver?

Biological parents, Biological mother, Biological father, Adoptive parent(s),

Grandparent(s), Immediate family member, Relative, Foster Parent(s), or Other

10. What is your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual, Bisexual, Homosexual, Asexual, or Other

11. What is your political affiliation?

Republican Party, Democratic Party, Libertarian Party, Green Party, Constitution Party,

or Other



## Appendix B1. Benevolent Behavior Inventory Part 1: Appropriateness

**Rate how appropriate you believe it would be for you to engage in each of the following behaviors with a person who is not a relative (e.g., a friend, colleague)**

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Completely Inappropriate						Completely Appropriate
Give up your seat for a woman [man] on public transportation.							
Open a door for a woman[man]							
Hold open the elevator door for a woman[man]							
Offer to help a woman[man] lift a heavy object							
Buy a woman[man] a gift							
Offer your coat to a woman [man] who was cold.							
Walk a woman [man] to their car.							
Open the car door for a woman [man].							
Pull a chair out for a woman [man] to sit.							
Cook a meal for a woman [man].							
Help a woman [man] with cleaning.							
Pick up the check for a woman [man].							
Defend a woman's [man's] honor.							
Give a woman [man] an encouraging word.							
Give a woman [man] a compliment.							
Help a woman [man] move or carry something.							
Say "please" and "thank you" to a woman [man] in conversation.							
Propose marriage to a woman [man].							
Help a woman[man] perform a task (e.g., changing a tire, starting a dead battery)							
Ensure another woman[man] is rescued before me (e.g., during a crisis)							

## Appendix B2. Benevolent Behavior Inventory Part 2: Engagement

**Rate how often you engage in each of the following behaviors, using the scale provided.**

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never Have and Never Will	Never Have but Would	Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Very Often	Always
Give up your seat for a woman [man] on public transportation.							
Open a door for a woman[man]							
Hold open the elevator door for a woman[man]							
Offer to help a woman[man] lift a heavy object							
Buy a woman[man] a gift							
Offer your coat to a woman [man] who was cold.							
Walk a woman [man] to their car.							
Open the car door for a woman [man].							
Pull a chair out for a woman [man] to sit.							
Cook a meal for a woman [man].							
Help a woman [man] with cleaning.							
Pick up the check for a woman [man].							
Defend a woman's [man's] honor.							
Give a woman [man] an encouraging word.							
Give a woman [man] a compliment.							
Help a woman [man] move or carry something.							

Say “please” and “thank you” to a woman [man] in conversation.							
Propose marriage to a woman [man].							
Help a woman[man] perform a task (e.g., changing a tire, starting a dead battery)							
Ensure another woman[man] is rescued before me (e.g., during a crisis)							

Appendix C. Kindness; *Canter, Youngs & Yaneva, 2017*

Please rate each item in regard to how it relates to your own behaviors.

## Benign Tolerance

1.) I admit when I don't know something

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

2.) I am kind to others

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

3.) I try to cheer people who appear unhappy

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

4.) I find it easy to forgive

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

5.) I feel sorry for other people when they experience problems

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

6.) I like to make other people happy

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

7.) I think it's right to give everyone a chance

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

8.) I help people when they ask

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

9.) I do small favors for friends

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

10.) I can sense other people's feelings

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

## Empathetic responsiveness

11.) I try to see things the way my friends do

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

12.) I have done something that upset me to help a friend

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

13.) I feel protective toward people who are being taken advantage of

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

14.)        I give money to beggars in the street

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

15.)        I have taken care of a friend that was ill

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

16.)        I invite people to lunch if I know they'll be alone

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

#### Principled proaction

17.)        I give to charity

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

18.)        I have concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

19.)        Some things that happen really touch me

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

20.)        I share things even if I do not really want to

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

21.)        I help strangers with small things, for example if they drop something

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

22.)        I practice what I preach

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

23.)        I smile at strangers

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

#### Unkindness

24.)        I say nasty things about people

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

25.)        I am greedy

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

26.)        I like to gossip

1 – Not at all    2        3        4        5        6        7-Nearly Always

- 27.) I do not forgive a person who has hurt me  
1 – Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 7-Nearly Always
- 28.) I remember bad attitudes toward me  
1 – Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 7-Nearly Always
- 29.) I take advantage of people if I can  
1 – Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 7-Nearly Always
- 30.) I hold compliments back  
1 – Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 7-Nearly Always
- 31.) I am jealous of others good fortune  
1 – Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 7-Nearly Always

Appendix D. Ambivalent Sexism Inventory; *Glick & Fiske, 2001*

Below is a series of statements concerning men and women and their relationship in contemporary society. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the scale below:

1. No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

2. Many women are actually seeking special favors, such as hiring policies that favor them over men, under the guise of asking for “equality.”

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

3. In a disaster, women ought to be rescued before men.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

4. Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

5. Women are too easily offended.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

6. People are not truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex.

0	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

- |                      |                      |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Disagree<br>strongly | Disagree<br>somewhat | Disagree<br>slightly | Agree<br>slightly | Agree<br>somewhat | Agree<br>strongly |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
7. Feminists are seeking for women to have more power than men.
- |                      |                      |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 0                    | 1                    | 2                    | 3                 | 4                 | 5                 |
| Disagree<br>strongly | Disagree<br>somewhat | Disagree<br>slightly | Agree<br>slightly | Agree<br>somewhat | Agree<br>strongly |
8. Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.
- |                      |                      |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 0                    | 1                    | 2                    | 3                 | 4                 | 5                 |
| Disagree<br>strongly | Disagree<br>somewhat | Disagree<br>slightly | Agree<br>slightly | Agree<br>somewhat | Agree<br>strongly |
9. Women should be cherished and protected by men.
- |                      |                      |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 0                    | 1                    | 2                    | 3                 | 4                 | 5                 |
| Disagree<br>strongly | Disagree<br>somewhat | Disagree<br>slightly | Agree<br>slightly | Agree<br>somewhat | Agree<br>strongly |
10. Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them.
- |                      |                      |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 0                    | 1                    | 2                    | 3                 | 4                 | 5                 |
| Disagree<br>strongly | Disagree<br>somewhat | Disagree<br>slightly | Agree<br>slightly | Agree<br>somewhat | Agree<br>strongly |
11. Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.
- |                      |                      |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 0                    | 1                    | 2                    | 3                 | 4                 | 5                 |
| Disagree<br>strongly | Disagree<br>somewhat | Disagree<br>slightly | Agree<br>slightly | Agree<br>somewhat | Agree<br>strongly |
12. Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.
- |                      |                      |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 0                    | 1                    | 2                    | 3                 | 4                 | 5                 |
| Disagree<br>strongly | Disagree<br>somewhat | Disagree<br>slightly | Agree<br>slightly | Agree<br>somewhat | Agree<br>strongly |
13. Men are incomplete without women.



0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

14. Women exaggerate problems they have at work.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

15. Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

16. When women lost to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

17. A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

18. Many women get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

19. Women, compared to men, tend to have superior moral sensibility.

0	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly
----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-------------------

20. Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well-being in order to provide financially for the woman in their lives.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

21. Feminists are making unreasonable demands of men.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

22. Women, as compared to men, tend to have more refined sense of culture and good taste.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly

*Scoring:*

Total ASI score = average of all items.

Hostile Sexism = average of Items 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21.

Benevolent Sexism = average of Items 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 17, 19, 20, 22.



### Institutional Review Board

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**TO:** Jana Hackathorn, Psychology

**FROM:** Jonathan Baskin, IRB Coordinator *JB*

**DATE:** 2/11/2020

**RE:** Human Subjects Protocol I.D. – IRB # 20-130

The IRB has completed its review of your student's Level 1 protocol entitled *Chivalry, Kindness, and Romantic Behaviors*. After review and consideration, the IRB has determined that the research, as described in the protocol form, will be conducted in compliance with Murray State University guidelines for the protection of human participants.

**The forms and materials that have been approved for use in this research study are attached to the email containing this letter. These are the forms and materials that must be presented to the subjects. Use of any process or forms other than those approved by the IRB will be considered misconduct in research as stated in the MSU IRB Procedures and Guidelines section 20.3.**

**Your stated data collection period is from 2/11/2020 to 2/10/2021.**

If data collection extends beyond this period, please submit an Amendment to an Approved Protocol form detailing the new data collection period and the reason for the change.

**This Level 1 approval is valid until 2/10/2021.**

If data collection and analysis extends beyond this date, the research project must be reviewed as a continuation project by the IRB prior to the end of the approval period, 2/10/2021. You must reapply for IRB approval by submitting a Project Update and Closure form (available at [murraystate.edu/ibr](http://murraystate.edu/ibr)). You must allow ample time for IRB processing and decision prior to your expiration date, or your research must stop until such time that IRB approval is received. If the research project is completed by the end of the approval period, then a Project Update and Closure form must be submitted for IRB review so that your protocol may be closed. It is your responsibility to submit the appropriate paperwork in a timely manner.

The protocol is approved. You may begin data collection now.

**Opportunity  
afforded**

**murraystate.edu**