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Samantha Matzerath

Providence College, smatzera@friars.providence.edu

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# Biased Perceptions of Women in the Music Industry



Samantha E. Matzerath & Saaid A. Mendoza, Ph.D. | Providence College

## Introduction

### Research Question

- ❖ **How are men and women's perceptions of a female musician biased by the gender of a formal critic?**

### Gender Bias in Music Industry

- ❖ Female musicians typically achieve less mainstream success and earn less money than men (Schmutz & Faupel, 2010)
- ❖ The USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative (2019) revealed a gender bias in music production credit for Top 100 Billboard songs:



### Protecting the Status Quo

- ❖ **Lack of Fit Model:** Posits that performance expectations are biased by a perceived fit between one's attributes and their job requirements (Heilman, 2001)
  - Given that the music industry is male dominated, women's abilities may be negatively stereotyped, hindering their potential for success
- ❖ **Ambivalent Sexism:** Proposes that hostile & benevolent feelings towards women produce sexism (Glick et al., 1997)
  - Hostile sexism characterizes women as inferior to legitimize men's social control
  - Benevolent sexism idealizes women in traditional female roles in a patronizing manner
  - Men in the music industry may be motivated to maintain their power and/or restrict women's paths to success in this realm

### Study Overview & Hypotheses

- ❖ We examined how men and women would respond to a negative review of a female musician when the critic was male, female, or anonymous
  - H1: Participants would be more influenced by a negative review written by a male versus a female critic
  - H2: Men would respond more negatively to the female musician than women
  - H3: We expected participant gender to interact with the gender of the critic, such that men would respond most negatively to the musician after reading a male review

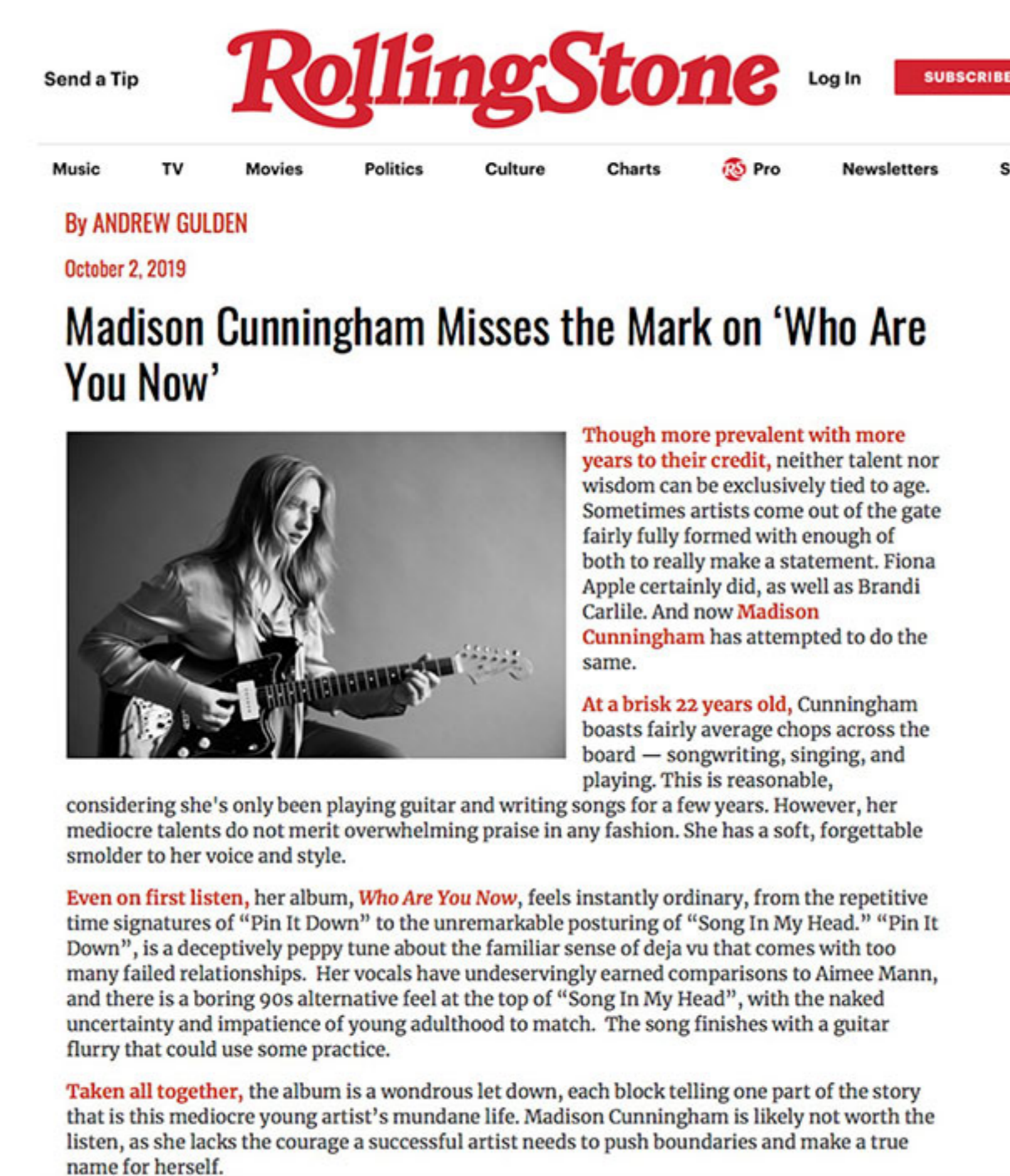
## Methods

### Participants & Design

- ❖  $N = 133$  participants (55% Female, 59% White,  $M_{age} = 25.32$ ) participated online via Amazon's Mturk platform
- ❖ 3 (Critic Gender: Male v. Female v. Anonymous) x 2 (Participant Gender: Male v. Female) between-subjects factorial design

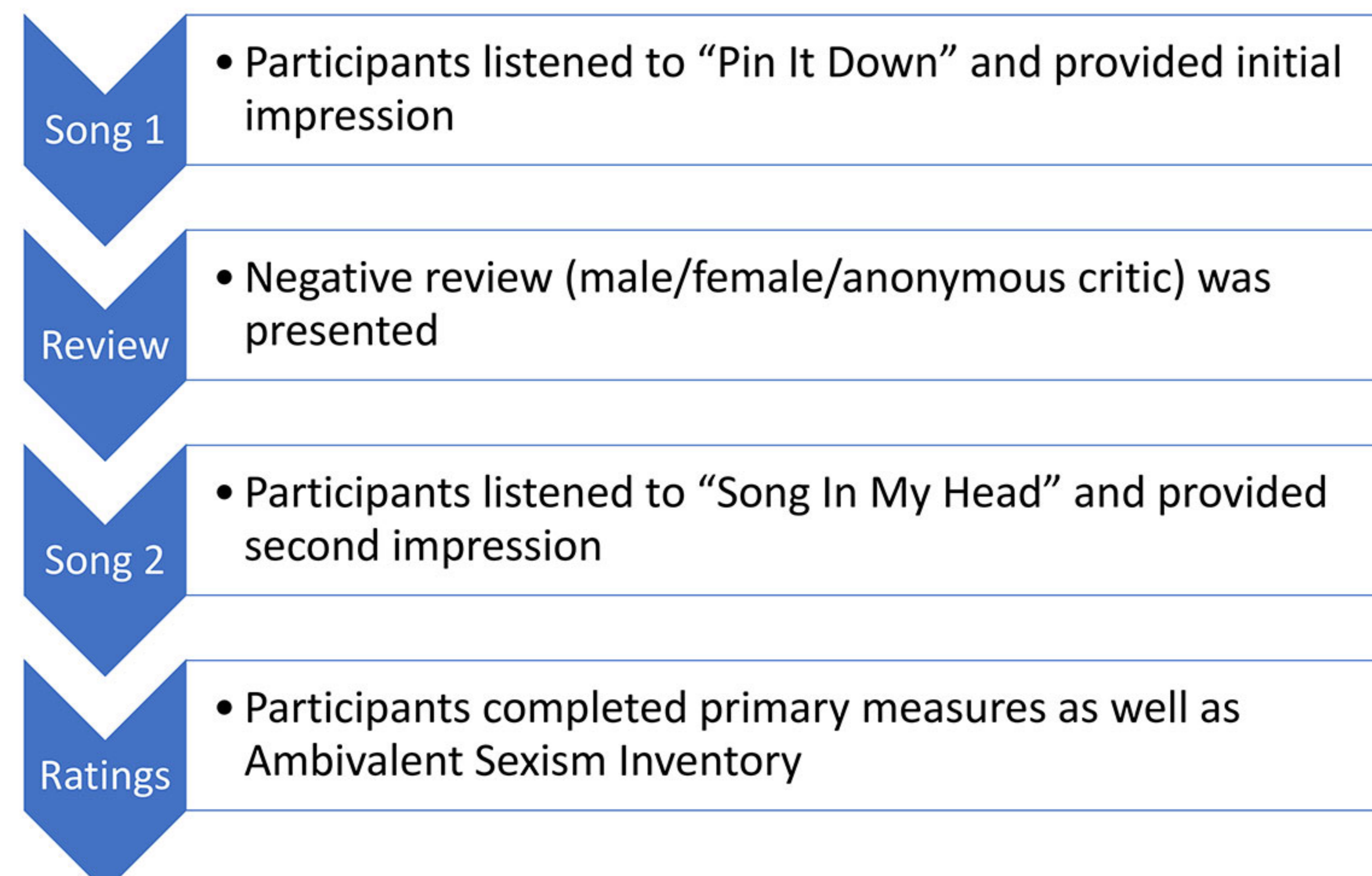
### Procedure

- ❖ Participants listened to a pair of songs by female musician, Madison Cunningham
  - "Pin It Down"
  - "Song In My Head"
- ❖ After providing their first impression, participants read a negative review written by a male, female, or anonymous critic



### Primary Measures

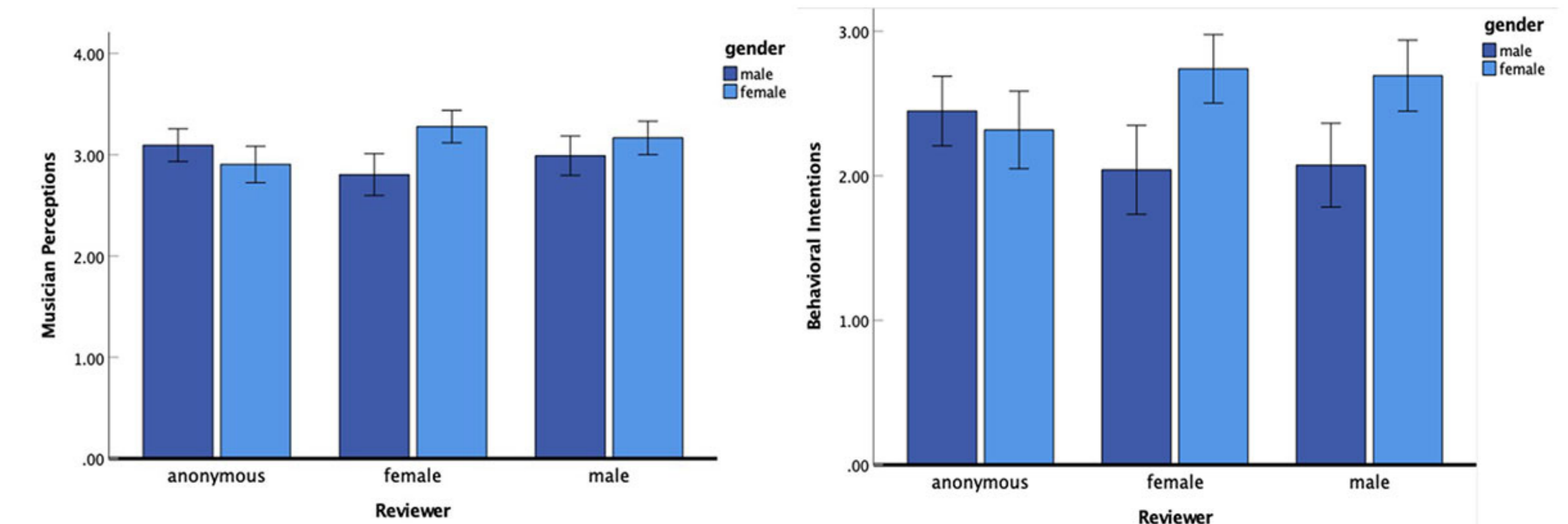
- ❖ **Review influence:** Difference score of *Song 2* – *Song 1* rating
- ❖ **Perceptions ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ):** Evaluations of musician's *songwriting*, *instrumentals*, and *voice* as well as her *talent* in these areas
- ❖ **Behavioral ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ):** Likelihood of *listening to more songs by*, *recommending*, or *attending a concert put on by* this musician
- ❖ **Legitimacy ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ):** Rated how worthy the musician was of *respect*, *radio play*, *career success*, and *legitimacy*
- ❖ **Pay:** Amount participant was willing to pay for a concert ticket



## Results & Discussion

### Primary Measures

- ❖ **Review influence:** No effects of gender or reviewer,  $F_s < 1.1$ , but a marginal interaction,  $F(2, 126) = 2.34, p = .10$ 
  - Women were more susceptible to the negative reviews of the anonymous critic than men
- ❖ **Perceptions:** No effects of gender or reviewer,  $F_s < 1.1$ , nor interaction,  $F(2, 127) = 1.76, p = .18$  (see Fig. 1)
- ❖ **Legitimacy:** No effects of gender or reviewer,  $F_s < 1.1$ , nor interaction,  $F(2, 127) = .71, p = .49$



- ❖ **Behavioral:** Marginal effect of gender,  $F(1, 127) = 3.32, p = .07$ , but no effect of reviewer or interaction,  $F_s < 1.5$  (see Fig. 2)
- ❖ **Pay:** Main effect of gender,  $F(1,127) = 7.02, p < .01$ , but no effect of reviewer,  $F < 1$ , or interaction,  $F(2, 127) = 2.16, p = .12$

### Correlations with Ambivalent Sexism

- ❖ **Male participants:** No correlations between the primary measures and hostile or benevolent sexism
- ❖ **Female participants:** All primary measures, except Review Influence, were *positively* correlated with hostile and benevolent sexism scores

** = $p < .01$	Benevolent	Perceptions	Legitimacy	Behavioral	Pay
Hostile	.70**	.44**	.42**	.55**	.52**
Benevolent	-	.64**	.60**	.60**	.65**

### Implications & Future Directions

- ❖ Men and women may perceive female musicians similarly, but show different levels of engagement or support for them
- ❖ Women high on ambivalent sexism may have viewed the music genre or a career in entertainment as gender-typed
- ❖ Future studies might examine male typed music genres (e.g. rock or rap) to determine how women are perceived when violating gender norms