SISTERS AT ARMS: FEMALE SAME-SEX CONFLICT AND ITS PROBLEMATIZATION AT WORK

by

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Abstract

I propose and test portions of a two-stage model that investigates the pervasive belief that women have more dysfunctional same-sex workplace relationships than men. In the first stage of this model, I assume that female same-sex conflict transpires more frequently than male same-sex conflict and make a series of propositions about why this might be the case. For example, I propose that perhaps women react worse than men to non-communal women in workplace contexts, which then sets the stage for enhanced conflict. In the second stage, I set aside consideration of gender differences in same-sex conflict frequency and discuss why female same-sex conflict might simply be problematized by third parties relative to male same-sex conflict.

I conducted five studies to determine which of these two explanations best accounts for the belief that women have more dysfunctional same-sex workplace relationships than men. In Chapter 1, I present the entirety of the model, and associated propositions, that I have developed as the basis for my dissertation and future research. In Chapter 2, I present the results of two scenario studies, which, taken together suggest that third parties view female same-sex conflict as more person-related (e.g., caused by interpersonal disliking) (Study 1) and more disruptive to relationship quality and work-related attitudes (Study 2) than male same-sex conflict. In Chapter 3, I turn to first parties’ perceptions in order to test the first stage of my model. Study 3 provides support for my proposition that women react worse than men to non-communal women, and that this leads to greater collective threat. Study 4, however, demonstrated that men and women did not experience different frequencies of same-sex conflict, nor did their same-sex conflict differ in
meaningful ways. Finally, Study 5 demonstrated that individuals did not generally report more or less negative outcomes of workplace conflict as a function of their gender and the gender of their co-party in conflict.

Overall, the results of my dissertation are more suggestive of a generalized problematization of female same-sex workplace conflict (relative to male same-sex conflict) than they are of a generalized dysfunction within women’s same-sex workplace relationships.
Preface

All aspects of this dissertation – model construction, identification and design of the specific research program, data collection, and data analysis – were conducted primarily by me. The data from Parking Enforcement Officers, as described in Study 4 (Chapter 3), was collected alongside one of my committee members, Dr. Danielle van Jaarsveld.

A version of Study 2 (Chapter 2) has been published: Sheppard, L. D., & Aquino, K. (2013). Much ado about nothing? Observers’ problematization of female same-sex conflict at work. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 27*: 52-62. I conducted all data collection, data analysis, and was the primary author of the manuscript. This study was approved by UBC’s behavioral ethics board, ID number H11-02962.

The other studies’ ethics IDs are as follows:

Study 1 (Chapter 2) - H11-02962 (amended version)

Study 3 (Chapter 3) - H14-00425

Study 4 (Chapter 3) - H11-03094

Study 5 (Chapter 3) - H14-00281
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¹ Must pay own airfare. Sister not included in offer.
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mom, Valerie Sheppard. One day she said to me, “Why don’t you study competition between women at work?” And away I went.
Chapter 1: Introduction, Theory Development, and Propositions

When Marissa Mayer, CEO of Yahoo! and new mother, made the decision to eliminate Yahoo!’s work-from-home policy in February of 2013, the media was quick to criticize her decision as undermining the interests of fellow mothers in her organization. The concern was that Mayer’s decision would cause female employees at Yahoo! to experience more difficulty balancing their family and work demands, and that their careers might suffer as a result (Bamberger, 2013; McGee, 2013; Onstad, 2013). Her critics were similarly troubled by her earlier announcement that she would take only a two-week maternity leave, because they felt it put pressure on other women to take shorter maternity leaves (Belkin, 2012; Vennochi, 2013). Yahoo! is not the first company to scale back their work-from-home policies due to concerns about impeded innovation and collaboration. Indeed, Brian Moynihan of Bank of America made a similar decision the year before (Silverman, 2013). What is interesting, then, is that Mayer got all of the flack.

Perhaps, however, responses like this are not so surprising when one considers the plethora of news articles devoted to the topic of women undermining other women at work. From reading these articles, one gets the impression that society is quick to shed light on female behavior that is perceived as thwarting the progress and success of other women. For example, consider an article appearing online on USA TODAY that asked “Do Women Compete in Unhealthy Ways at Work?” and lamented women’s tendency to use indirect aggression to resolve workplace disagreements (Armour, 2005). The Wall Street Journal and TIME Business have also explored female same-sex conflict in articles touting provocative headlines like “The Real Reason Women Don’t Help Other Women at Work” (Tennery, 2012) and “When Women Derail Other Women in the Office” (Silverman, 2009). Curiously, the depiction of women as conniving, unsupportive, and backstabbing in these articles contrasts sharply with research demonstrating that adult men and women do not differ significantly in their use of indirect aggression (e.g., gossip, ostracism, social
undermining) at work (Archer, 2004; Forrest, Eatough, & Shevlin, 2005). And, in fact, when differences are found it appears that it is men who use indirect aggression more than women – at least among adults (Moroschan, Hurd, & Nicoladis, 2009). The female undermining perspective is also challenged by research demonstrating that female leaders are more likely than male leaders to adopt roles as mentors and mainly direct their assistance at other women (Catalyst, 2012).

Nevertheless, the notion that women have troublesome same-sex workplace relationships has spilled over into the management literature and underlies investigations into the queen bee syndrome (Staines, Tavris, & Jayaratne, 1974). The queen bee syndrome refers to the apparent tendency of women in senior organizational positions to dissociate from members of their own gender and thwart other women’s career progression (Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & de Groot, 2011; Derks, Van Laar, Ellemers, & de Groot, 2011). Since the introduction of this concept, the queen bee syndrome has been used by various researchers to explain tensions arising between female subordinates and their female supervisors, and to account for the negative evaluations and reactions that one elicits from the other (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010; Cooper, 1997; Ellemers, van den Heuvel, de Gilder, Maass, & Bonvini, 2004; Hersby, Ryan, & Jetten, 2009; Johnson & Mathur-Helm, 2011; Johnson & Gurung, 2011).

What is notable is that there has been considerably less research investigating whether processes similar to the queen bee syndrome occur among men or other groups. As a result, there is little direct evidence to conclude that same-sex tension, conflict, and obstructionist behavior is a uniquely female problem. Outside the academic literature (e.g., in the media), I also find an absence of discourse scrutinizing the pernicious or subversive behavior that men direct towards other men. Although such behavior is recognized and acknowledged, it is seldom denounced or condemned. In fact, it is the opposite behavior among men – expressions of male solidarity – that tends to incite rebuke. So-called old boys’ clubs are frequently criticized because they prevent the ascension of women and ethnic minorities while maintaining white, male-centered power at the top of
organizations (Ibarra, 1992; Kanter, 1977). The notion that same-sex conflict at work is perceived as a uniquely female problem receives empirical support in a recent study which found that the identical workplace conflict scenario was perceived as having more negative consequences when it involved two women than when it involved two men or a man and a woman (Sheppard & Aquino, 2013).

Why might it be that female same-sex conflict is viewed as uniquely problematic by the media, laypeople, and researchers? Is it the case that same-sex conflict at work truly is more common among females than males, or is it possible that female same-sex conflict, when it occurs, is more salient and negatively evaluated than male same-sex conflict, which then produces the belief that women have more dysfunctional same-sex workplace relationships? Or perhaps it is the case that both of these perspectives hold an element of truth.

The purpose of this paper is to propose a two-stage model to guide future research on the topic of female same-sex conflict and offers possible answers to the preceding questions. In the first stage of my model, I explicate theoretically defensible reasons why female same-sex may indeed occur more frequently than male same-sex conflict in the context of organizations. If it does, then a bona fide difference in conflict frequency may be the ultimate source of the belief that women have dysfunctional same-sex workplace relationships. In the second stage, I explain how and why third parties’ reactions to and interpretations of episodes of female same-sex conflict – regardless of their actual frequency relative to episodes of male same-sex conflict – can also produce and reproduce this belief. I refer to this second-stage process as the problematization of female same-sex conflict, which, I later argue, ultimately contributes to the legitimization of gender inequality in organizations. Both pathways are possible and therefore I treat them as complementary rather than competing explanations, though it will be possible for future research to determine which pathway receives more empirical support.
The theoretical contribution I make to the management literature is both important and timely. It is important because the increasing attention that the topic of female same-sex conflict/competition at work has received from pundits (Dellasega, 2007; Heim, Murphy, & Golant, 2003; Tanenbaum, 2002) and academic researchers (Derks et al., 2011; Duguid, 2011; Ely, 1994; Parks-Stamm, Heilman, & Hearn, 2008; Staines et al., 1974; Vaillancourt & Sharma, 2011) suggests to me that this phenomenon has captured the imagination of laypeople and scholars alike. However, the notion that women have unique same-sex difficulties at work could be a dangerous one if perpetuated without critical examination. Specifically, this assumption could become part of a hierarchy-legitimizing myth (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) that identifies the source of gender inequality in women’s own behavior, rather than a broader system of structural disadvantages, such as gender bias in hiring and promotion procedures. This, belief in turn, justifies and perpetuates the established gender hierarchy. My theory is timely because this epoch marks a period in human history when female participation in the modern workforce is at an all-time high. Thus, it seems prudent to advance new theoretical propositions and conduct empirical research that recognizes the increasingly relevant role that gender plays in shaping various types of workplace relationships and interactions. In the specific case of female same-sex conflict, the management literature lacks a coherent model that organizes existing studies, identifies potential mediating and moderating mechanisms, and lays out a roadmap for future research. The goal of my paper is to address these gaps.

It is crucial to note at the outset that one of my core assumptions is that both female same-sex conflict and what I refer to as its problematization occur within a context of persistent gender inequality in organizations, and can been viewed as both symptoms and sources of this inequality. For this reason, my model contributes more generally to the ongoing conversation about the conditions that give rise to and sustain gender inequality and what can be done to mitigate them.
Before turning to my model, I begin by defining workplace conflict and identifying some of my model’s boundary conditions.

Workplace conflict has been defined as emerging from a perceived incompatibility between the views, wishes, and interests held by two or more parties (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008; Jehn, 1992, 1997). I draw from Barki and Hartwick’s (2004) typology of interpersonal conflict for a more precise definition. They identified three properties that signal the presence of an interpersonal conflict, each of which can occur independently or simultaneously: disagreement, negative emotion, and interference. Disagreement occurs when two or more parties have an “incompatible difference of objective” (Dahrendorf, 1958, p. 135). For example, two employees who have different opinions about the timeline for a project would be having a disagreement, and therefore be involved in an interpersonal conflict. Negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, and threat, may be elicited during a disagreement or simply as a result of interpersonal animosity (Barki & Hartwick, 2004), and the presence of these emotions during interpersonal interactions is also indicative of interpersonal conflict. Lastly, interference occurs when one employee’s interests are being opposed or negatively impacted by another employee’s behavior, such as when women are perceived as undermining the success of other women.

1.1 Boundary Conditions

One boundary condition of my model is that it does not attempt to explain workplace conflict that is physically threatening, verbally threatening, or violent in nature. The majority of conflict in organizations takes less severe forms because organizational norms for professionalism and civility discourage the most extreme expressions of conflict behavior (Baron & Neuman, 1996). Since it is more difficult to predict behaviors that are rare compared to those that occur more frequently, my model emphasizes that latter to increase its explanatory power. Indeed, the
propositions that follow from my theorizing should be most applicable when workplace conflict is moderate in severity. I suspect that extremely mild and extremely severe conflict should not elicit different reactions as a function of the gender of the actors involved, since they involve little ambiguity and should therefore not trigger the sensemaking process that is a critical part of my theory (Sonenshein, 2007).

A second boundary condition of my model is that I have selected dyadic conflict as the interpersonal context for developing my propositions. I recognize that workplace conflict can and often does directly involve more than two organizational members, but for the sake of illustration, parsimony, and theoretical clarity, I believe it appropriate to begin a systematic analysis of same-sex conflict by focusing first on the dyad. As my understanding of this phenomenon matures and expands, I can then begin to theorize about how my model might be extended to more complex conflict episodes that directly involve three or more parties.

The final boundary condition of my model is that it cannot be extended without modification to other minority, marginalized, or otherwise disempowered groups. This boundary condition will become more obvious as I introduce my propositions, which are based on prescriptive gender stereotypes. I am proposing that negative reactions to female same-sex conflict stem from violations of prescriptive stereotypes that dictate the way that women should behave, and these stereotypes differ from those applied to racial minorities (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). This is not to say that I conceive of power as being absent from my theory; indeed, I assume that prescriptive gender stereotypes have emerged from the separate and unequal positions that men and women occupy in society (Eagly, 1987). What this third boundary condition of my model implies is that mine is not simply a theory about power or status in general, but is intended to be applied to explain the particular dynamics of female same-sex conflict relative to male same-sex conflict, of which power relations are only one component.
At this point I turn to the first stage of my model, the entirety of which is depicted in Figure 1. The propositions I make in this stage draw from past research to suggest possible reasons why women might have more frequent episodes of same-sex conflict than men. By doing so I am not making an empirical claim, but rather offering a theoretically and empirically justifiable account for why such differences could possibly emerge in organizational settings.

Figure 1 A model of female same-sex conflict and its problematization at work
1.2 Is Female Same-Sex Conflict at Work More Pervasive than Men’s?

1.2.1 Women’s Rejection of Agentic and Non-Communal Same-Sex Colleagues and its Implications for Female Same-Sex Conflict at Work

My rationale for why it is possible that women have more frequent same sex conflict than men hinges on the concept of prescriptive stereotypes and the evaluations that occur when women violate them. Prescriptive stereotypes are beliefs about the traits that men and women ought to have and the behavior that they ought to exhibit in social situations (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fiske & Stevens, 1993). These stereotypes have emerged as a result of social role differentiation in organizations and broader society (Eagly, 1987) and are reducible to two broad categories of traits – communion and agency – of which the former are desired for women and the latter for men (Eagly, 1987; Heilman, 2001). For example, the ideal woman has concern for the welfare of others and displays behaviors aimed at being kind, cooperative, helpful, sympathetic, gentle, and nurturing. Meanwhile, the ideal man is self-interested, competitive, independent, and dominant (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Research has revealed that prescriptive stereotypes are very resistant to change and remain active in cognition to inform individuals’ beliefs, even after they are presented with stereotype-inconsistent stimuli (Gill, 2004; Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001). Importantly, gender stereotyping often occurs implicitly, with individuals explicitly reporting stereotype-free attitudes while succumbing to stereotypes during implicit measures (Latu et al., 2011; Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Studies have shown that there are consistent social penalties when women violate prescriptive stereotypes of communality, a phenomenon that has come to be known as the backlash effect (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkin, 2004; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001). More specifically, women who occupy high-ranking positions,
engage in self-promotion, or seek power, they are perceived as more cold and unlikeable than non-agentic women and agentic men (Fiske, 2012; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rudman, 1998).

Presumably, agentic women are particularly salient to observers (relative to agentic men and non-agentic women) because of their norm-violating behavior, which then elicits an automatic attribution meant to explain the violation (e.g., She’s assertive so she must be cold.). This reasoning is consistent with research demonstrating that individuals are highly sensitive to norm violations and are compelled to attend to them (Ito, Larsen, Smith, & Cacioppo, 1998; Van Berkum, Holleman, Nieuwland, Otten, & Murre, 2009). Importantly, this effect hinges on the assumption that women who engage in agentic behavior are non-communal because when agentic women are also highly communal, they do not receive backlash in the form of social penalties (Amanatullah & Tinsely, 2013; Parks-Stamm et al., 2008). Therefore, it is a presumed or actual lack of communality that is the primary mechanism producing the backlash effect.

Although experimental investigations into the backlash effect find that both male and female raters perceive agentic, non-communal females as cold and unlikeable, I propose that displays of agentic or non-communal female behavior has the potential to create unique problems between and among women at work, while having relatively less of an effect on cross-sex workplace relationships. A limitation of the backlash effect literature to date is that it has primarily examined reactions to hypothetical “paper people”, with a dearth of research examining reactions to female targets in real workplaces during real interactions, which might be more likely to reveal gender differences. Moreover, past research with ‘paper people’ has primarily examined the negative traits (e.g., coldness) that are ascribed to agentic women rather than assessing the potential threat that these women induce among colleagues. Lastly, researchers have largely failed to assess the behaviors that are elicited in response to agentic women via feelings of threat (for an exception see Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). Accordingly, I cannot confidently conclude from existing research that agentic females will elicit similar feelings of threat and behavior among men and women.
Indeed, there is good theoretical reason to suspect that agentic or non-communal females will elicit more negative emotions (e.g., feelings of threat) and behavior from female than male colleagues via two mechanisms: perceptions of competitive and collective threat. Competitive threat arises from challenges to one’s own status, whereas collective threat emerges from challenges to group status (Duguid, 2011; Duguid, Loyd, & Tolbert, 2012). Moreover, I propose that the combination of agency and communality that the colleague displays will determine whether female perceivers experience competitive threat, collective threat, or both.

I propose that women who are highly agentic, regardless of their communality, will induce greater feelings of competitive threat in their female colleagues than in their male colleagues. I make this prediction based on the following reasons. First, individuals perceive same-sex others as more similar to themselves relative to opposite-sex others because they tend to occupy similar positions and levels within organizations (Gibson & Lawrence, 2010). Similar others tend to be perceived as more appropriate targets for social comparison and therefore elicit more envy in observers (Duffy, Scott, Shaw, Tepper, & Aquino, 2012). Together, these patterns suggest that women will perceive themselves as competing mostly with other women and men with other men for access to valued organizational resources, and it explains why men will experience less competitive threat than women in response to non-communal females in organizations. As such, agentic women will pose a greater competitive threat to their female colleagues because they will be perceived as more formidable competitors for access to organizational resources, based on their tendency to self-promote and engage in other dominant behavior.

But the astute reader might ask why an agentic man would not generate similarly strong feelings of threat among other men. I am not claiming that agentic men are not threatening at all to other men, but rather that they will elicit relatively less competitive threat in same-sex colleagues because organizational power is not evenly distributed among men and women in most organizations. Hence, women will typically be competing with other women for organizational
resources that are generally less accessible to them than they are to men. For instance, few women relative to men attain the most powerful positions in organizations (Catalyst, 2012) and, when they do, they often hold token status (Kanter, 1977) thereby creating the perception that there is limited room for women at the top. A reliable finding across a variety of literatures in the social sciences is that when resources or opportunities are scarce, competitive behaviors and interpersonal hostility increases (Griskevicius et al., 2009; Hill et al., 2012), while relationship-maintaining (Booth, 1984) and altruistic behavior declines (Holland, Silva, & Mace, 2012). Thus, there is reason to suspect that when women are relegated to competing with one another for access to a smaller pie of organizational resources than men, their same-sex relations will be more strained than men’s.

Support for my assertion that agentic females will elicit more competitive threat in female than male colleagues comes from a study by Parks-Stamm et al. (2008) who found that although both male and female participants rated a powerful professional woman as cold and unlikeable, doing so was not crucial for maintaining males’ self-esteem in the same way that it was for female participants. That is, female participants who were ‘blocked’\(^2\) from rating the woman as cold and unlikeable later rated their own competence lower than female participants who were not blocked, but the same pattern did not emerge for blocked and non-blocked male participants. This finding suggests that the men’s negative evaluations were elicited primarily by the female target’s violation of prescriptive gender stereotypes, whereas the women’s negative evaluations stemmed primarily from their social comparison with the successful female target and the resultant need to distance themselves from the competitive threat she posed. When they were unable to distance themselves by rating the woman as interpersonally cold, they were also unable to maintain as positive of a self-image.

\(^2\) Participants in the blocked condition were instructed that the female target was, in fact, very generous and warm. Participants in the non-blocked condition received no information about her disposition.
I should note here as well that even when men do experience feelings of competitiveness in response to either an agentic female or male colleague’s behavior, this need not be a threat-invoking or otherwise negative event. Competition is prescribed for men and is perceived as a normal and healthy part of the male gender role (e.g., men should and do compete) (King, Miles, & Kniska, 1991; Kray, Thompson, & Galinsky, 2001; Ruble & Ruble, 1982). Indeed, competition offers men the opportunity to display their dominance and prowess and thereby conform to prescriptions for male behavior. Thus, competitive scenarios can be highly attractive to males. This might be why research has shown that, across the lifespan, males react more positively to competition than females, are more likely than females to pursue opportunities to compete (Nierderle & Vesterlund, 2006), and experience performance gains when they compete with same-sex others (Gneezy & Rustichini, 2004). In contrast, females shy away from opportunities to compete (Nierderle & Vesterlund, 2006) and experience performance losses when competing against other females but, interestingly, not when they are competing with males (Gneezy & Rustichini, 2004) – a finding which provides particularly compelling support for my assertion that intrasexual competition is especially threatening and aversive for women. Research has also demonstrated that while competitiveness increases the quality of male same-sex relationships (Schneider, Dixon, & Udvari, 2007) it decreases the quality of female same-sex relationships (Schneider, Woodburn, del Toro, & Udvari, 2005). Collectively, then, the research cited above lends credence to my argument that women will experience higher levels of competitive threat in response to agentic female colleagues relative to men in response to either agentic men or women. This is a crucial point because I argue later that it is these aversive emotions (e.g., threat) elicited in women in response to an agentic female colleague that set the stage for increased tension and workplace conflict among women.

I further contend that perceptions of collective threat will be produced in women in response to female colleagues who are low on communality, regardless of their level of agency.
More specifically, I argue that women are particularly inclined to hold themselves and other women to a high standard of feminine behavior and therefore react negatively to violations of this standard. Some support for this speculation comes from studies of ambivalent sexism, which demonstrate that stereotypes about women being warm and socially skilled instills pride and esteem in women (Glick & Fiske, 1996, 2001) and allows them to differentiate themselves favorably from men (Brewer, 1991). Being socially skilled is expected of and rewarded in women (Ridgeway & Erickson, 2000) and, as such, becomes part of women’s self-schemas (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Consequently, women will be motivated to distance themselves from female colleagues who stray from this schema, thereby reflecting poorly on women as a group and challenge the notion that women are warm and socially skilled.

The phenomenon of in-group distancing has been labeled the *black sheep effect* (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988). In a test of the black sheep effect, Khan and Lambert (1998) had male and female participants read a transcript of a conversation between a male and a female student that was either ambiguous (one person giving advice to the other) or negative (one person being condescending to the other) in tone. They discovered that participants rated same-sex targets who behaved negatively in conversation (e.g., implied that their conversation partner was not smart enough to succeed in his or her college major) less favorably than opposite-sex targets who behaved negatively, but that this effect was stronger for female than male participants. Since condescending behavior represents a violation of prescriptions for female communality, I interpret this finding as providing evidence that non-communal female behavior poses more of a collective threat than non-communal male behavior to same-sex others. I should note here that derogation and in-group distancing among women could also serve a competitive purpose. That is, women might anticipate that they will be treated more favorably by the dominant group (men) if they are perceived as policing other women’s behavior to compel compliance with dominant group interests and the status quo.
Another way in which non-communal women can pose a collective threat to their female colleagues is if they are perceived as violating an expectation for female solidarity or sisterhood by the female targets of their non-communal behavior. Female non-communal behavior in organizations might be construed as indicating that the actor is concerned only with her own success, while caring little about the outcomes of her female colleagues. Moreover, women who have reached leadership positions might be perceived as aligning themselves with their more powerful colleagues – who will most often be male – while ignoring the struggles of their female subordinates. Rather than interpreting this as a competitive threat, per se, certain women might instead feel disheartened by their same-sex colleagues’ apparent neglect. After all, if these senior women are unwilling to pave the path for their powerful female counterparts, who else can be counted on to do so? This belief is illustrated in a quote from a female participant interviewed by Ely (1994) who expressed disappointment at the lack of advocacy for other women on the part of her firm’s female partners because she expected “women partners to be nice to women because, gee, we’re all in this together” (p. 221). Or consider an oft-repeated statement from former U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, who warned, “There is a special place in hell reserved for women who don’t help other women” (Tennery, 2012). Similarly, Jo Swinson, a female Member of Parliament in the UK, went on record advising women that they need to be more supportive of one another when it comes to combating the constant pressure to lose weight (Sparrow, 2012).

Taken together, these anecdotes suggest that some women hold other women to an expectation of female solidarity and, as such, non-communal women who fail to be helpful or kind to other women will elicit feelings of collective threat in their female colleagues who believe themselves to be negatively affected by the non-communal woman’s behavior.

3 Tellingly, I was unable to find a comparable example of a man in a similarly prominent role advocating that men have an imperative to help members of their own sex.
Of course, this is a conjecture that requires a direct empirical test, but indirect evidence supporting it comes from meta-analytic research demonstrating that women consistently hold their same-sex friends to higher expectations of loyalty and solidarity than men (Hall, 2011). These findings could explain why women react more negatively than men when they feel betrayed by their friends’ actions (Felmlee, Sweet, & Sinclair, 2012). Although these studies investigated expectations of female friends rather than female colleagues, it is not inconceivable that similarly powerful expectations for female solidarity can spill over into workplace relationships. Indeed, research demonstrates that women tend to perceive and approach their same-sex workplace relationships in a manner similar to their same-sex friendships, viewing both as important sources of social and emotional support (Ibarra, 1992; Morrison, 2009). Men, on the other hand, tend to perceive workplace relationships as providing instrumental benefit only (Morrison, 2009), which might mean they are less personally offended and collectively threatened by male behavior that conveys self-interest.

To summarize, I posit that women who violated prescriptions for low agentic and/or high communal behavior will elicit feelings of competitive and/or collective threat in their female colleagues. I further argue that these feelings of threat can be the impetus for periodic eruptions of conflict episodes marked by high levels of tension and other negative emotions, distancing behavior, and/or social undermining. If future research supports these claims, they could offer a plausible explanation for the seemingly widespread belief that same-sex conflict at work is a uniquely female problem.

*Proposition 1: Women will experience more competitive threat in response to agentic female colleagues in the workplace relative to (1) men in response to agentic females, (2) men in response to agentic males, and (3) women in response to agentic males.*
Proposition 2: Women will experience more collective threat in response to non-communal female colleagues in the workplace relative to (1) men in response to non-communal females, (2) men in response to non-communal males, and (3) women in response to non-communal males

Proposition 3: As a result of these heightened feelings of competitive and/or collective threat, female same-sex conflict will occur more frequently relative to male same-sex and cross-sex conflict.

I propose that there are two potential moderators of Propositions 1 and 2. First, the extent to which women experience competitive threat in the presence of an agentic female will be moderated by the proportion of women relative to men at senior levels of the organization. In sex-integrated organizations where there are more or less equal numbers of women and men occupying all levels including the uppermost echelons, I anticipate that women will be less likely to perceive themselves as being in competition with other women for access to a scarce resource. Consequently, the competitive threat that agentic women elicit from their female colleagues should be somewhat mitigated. This argument is supported by experimental research indicating that women in high-status groups experience less competitive threat and are more likely to admit a high-performing female applicant into their group when there are already other women in the group (relative to when women hold token membership in the group) (Duguid, 2011). Moreover, Rudman (1998) discovered that agentic women were less likely to be selected by female relative to male participants for jobs or tasks that valued masculine characteristics, which suggests that in organizations that outwardly value masculinity (e.g., by having all male leadership), agentic women pose a particular threat to their female colleagues. Finally, this argument is also consistent with the themes that emerged in Ely’s (1994) work wherein female interviewees generally reported healthier
and more supportive relationships with their female colleagues when they worked for firms in which female partners were not such a rarity.

Proposition 4: Feelings of competitive threat among women in response to agentic female colleagues will weaken (strengthen) as the upper echelons of the organization become more (less) sex integrated.

Second, I propose that the extent to which non-communal women pose a collective threat to the female targets of their behavior will be moderated by the target’s gender identity. Gender identity is defined as an individual’s “self-definition on the dimensions of masculinity and femininity” (Berger & Krahe, 2013, p. 516), which is shaped, in part, by the internalization of societal beliefs about what constitute desirable male and female traits (Wood & Eagly, 2012). I suggest that women who identify strongly with feminine characteristics and weakly with masculine characteristics should experience particularly high levels of collective threat in response to non-communal women. For women who identify strongly with cultural expectations of the ideal woman, being kind, communal, and supportive of sisterhood should be especially valued traits. Thus, when interacting with women who fail to demonstrate their endorsement of these values, highly female gender-identified women should perceive a greater collective threat than women who do not identify as strongly with the feminine ideal and its attendant role-based expectations.

Proposition 5: Feelings of collective threat in response to non-communal female colleagues will be strongest among women who identify strongly with feminine characteristics and weakly with masculine characteristics, relative to women who identify weakly with feminine characteristics.
Having provided several reasons why female same-sex conflict might occur more frequently male same-sex conflict which, in turn, provides a rationally defensible basis for concluding that women have more dysfunctional same-sex workplace relationships than men, I turn to the second stage of my model. In the section that follows I argue that regardless of actual gender differences in frequency, female same-sex conflict is problematized relative to male same-sex conflict by third parties, who I define as individuals who observe or are aware of workplace conflict but are not directly involved in the conflict. I contend that this process of problematization contributes to the emergence of a generalized belief that women have more dysfunctional same-sex workplace relationships than men and to the legitimization of gender inequality in organizations.

1.3 The Problematization of Female Same-Sex Conflict (Relative to Male Same-Sex Conflict) at Work by Third Parties

The second stage of my model focuses on explaining why female same-sex conflict, once it has occurred, generates an interpretive process that leads third parties to conclude that it is more problematic than male same-sex conflict. I should note at the outset that I am making comparisons between perceptions of male and female same-sex conflict and therefore refrain from contrasting these to perceptions of cross-sex conflict. I view this emphasis as appropriate because both theory and empirical research strongly suggest that constructs closely related to workplace conflict, such as workplace mistreatment and harassment, occur most often between members of the same sex (Berdahl, 2007; Berdahl, Min, & Stuart, 2010; Lee & Brotheridge, 2011). There are two plausible reasons that why this pattern occurs. First, systematic power imbalances between men and women restrict the ways in which both can respond during emotionally-charged cross-sex interactions like workplace conflict. Previous research suggests that low-power individuals display greater sensitivity to potential threats and punishments, pay more attention to the behavior of high-power
others, and inhibit dominant behaviors in the presence of more powerful others (Fragale, Sumanth, Tiedens, & Northcraft, 2012; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Morand, 1996). It is conceivable that because women tend to have less power than men in organizations, they adapt their language and behavior to be more submissive when it is apparent that there is tension in their relationship with a male colleague compared to when similar tensions arise with a female colleague. Second, same-sex conflict might be more common than cross-sex conflict simply because many industries are sex-segregated, which means that individuals are more likely to work closely with same-sex others than with opposite-sex others (Shauman, 2006). Given fewer cross-sex interactions, the relative incidence of cross-sex conflict will be lower than the incidence of same-sex conflict simply because there are fewer situations in which the former can erupt relative to the latter. Therefore, there is sound justification for restricting my comparisons to female and male same-sex conflict given that I want to explain a type of conflict dynamic that is more likely to be prevalent in organizations.

1.3.1 Salience of Female and Male Same-Sex Conflict

I argue that same-sex conflict at work will be more salient to third parties to the extent that it violates norms for appropriate behavior. Importantly, the standard for appropriate behavior that conflict participants will be held to will differ according to their gender. Earlier I explained that agentic and competitive behavior is prescribed for men (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Gill, 2004), and that pursuing one’s goals at the expense of another’s or asserting dominance are means of conforming to this prescription. In fact, the examination of intrasexual competition often takes for granted that competition among males has a biological basis and is therefore a natural imperative governing male social behavior (Archer, 2009; McAndrew, 2009). Consequently, there is reason to suspect that third parties will generally not register male same-sex conflict as a violation of typical and
prescribed male behavior, and so when it occurs it will go largely overlooked. Female same-sex conflict, on the other hand, does violate prescriptive stereotypes that treat caring and cooperative behavior as natural imperatives for women, and will therefore be more salient to third parties. Due to the enhanced salience of female same-sex conflict relative to male same-sex conflict, the former will be perceived as occurring more frequently than the latter. Accordingly, I offer the following proposition:

*Proposition 6: Female same-sex conflict at work will be more salient to third parties than male same-sex conflict, due to its violation of gender stereotypes, and will therefore be perceived as more frequently occurring than male same-sex conflict.*

When third parties perceive female same-sex conflict as a violation of a prescriptive stereotype, I argue that it will lead them to engage in a sensemaking process that can culminate in the perception that female same-sex conflict, in addition to being more frequently occurring than male same-sex conflict, is more disruptive to organizations than male same-sex conflict. Before describing this process in more detail, I introduce an important moderator of the relationship stated in Proposition 6: the sex distribution of the organization.

By sex distribution, I refer to either the sex composition (overall proportions of men and women in the organization) or the sex integration of the organization (proportions of men and women at each level of the organization), which are not necessarily identical. For example, an organization can have an even sex composition and yet still be sex segregated. Both sex composition and the extent of sex segregation, however, will have the similar effect of activating gender stereotypes. Past research has shown that in organizations or groups in which the construct of gender is activated by uneven sex distributions, such as a male- or female-dominated workforce, individuals are more likely to rely on gender and gender stereotypes when categorizing another
individual’s behavior (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010). As a result, I expect target gender to play a more prominent role in determining how salient same-sex workplace conflict is in organizations that are sex-segregated and/or dominated by members of one gender. I suggest that in such organizations, given the salience of gender, gender stereotypes that prescribe communality for women and agency for men should be more readily activated, or brought into conscious or subconscious awareness. The result is that female same-sex conflict will be perceived by third parties as an even greater violation of prescriptive stereotypes, and therefore more salient, than male same-sex conflict.

*Proposition 7: Proposition 6 will be moderated by the sex distribution of the organization, such that it will be stronger (weaker) among third parties in organizations that are sex segregated/dominated by members of one sex (sex integrated).*

### 1.3.2 Attributions Regarding the Causes of Female and Male Same-Sex Conflict

It is widely acknowledged by management scholars that organizational events that deviate from prescribed patterns of interactions – of which I contend that female same-sex conflict is one – trigger sensemaking by third parties (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Sonenshein, 2007; Weick, 1995). Sensemaking can be understood as the “processes that people used to impose or derive structure or meaning when they experience complex, ambiguous, or stressful situations” (Volkema, Farquhar, & Bergmann, 1996, p. 1441). Based on the notion that people routinely engage in sensemaking in organizations, I consider the attributions that third parties make about the causes of female same-sex conflict once it has been construed as a norm-violating event as a critical precursor of its problematization.
There is a fair amount of evidence that third parties are motivated to make internal, or dispositional, rather than external, or situational, attributions for behavior that elicits a negative response (Geddes & Callister, 2007; Kelley, 1973; Vignovic & Thompson, 2010). In other words, individuals are more susceptible to committing the fundamental attribution error when they witness negative or unexpected behavior (Jones & Harris, 1967; Ross, 1977). For example, Vignovic and Thompson (2010) demonstrated experimentally that targets who sent e-mails that were terse in tone and devoid of any niceties, thereby violating etiquette norms, were perceived as being less agreeable and trustworthy individuals. Interestingly, this effect was not mitigated when a situational explanation (that the ‘sender’ was from a foreign country) was provided, which is suggestive of the strength of dispositional attributions invoked to explain norm-violating behavior.

One factor that can influence whether negative individual-level behavior is attributed to dispositional or situational factors is the gender of the individual who exhibits the behavior. Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) demonstrated that when a woman displays anger in organizational contexts, an emotion that violates the prototypical schema of the ideal female, she is perceived as being ‘an angry woman’. Meanwhile, the same study found that third parties are more likely to attribute men’s displays of anger at work to situational factors. This finding suggests that because men’s anger is not perceived as violating prescriptive male stereotypes, it does not elicit the same sensemaking process that ultimately attributes its cause to dispositional sources the way that women’s anger does.

What happens, however, when third parties witness norm-violating behavior in the form of a dyadic interaction rather than individual behavior? Only recently have management scholars conceptualized the nature of dispositional and situational attributions in the context of dyadic behavior. Eberly, Holley, Johnson, and Mitchell (2011) introduced the construct of relational attributions to capture these types of attributions. They proposed two types of relational attributions – relational person attributions and relational task attributions - that conceptually parallel the
constructs of relationship conflict and task conflict, respectively, that are widely used in the management and psychology literatures to distinguish different types of conflict (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, 1997). According to Eberly, et al. (2011), relational person attributions occur when third parties locate the source of a negative interaction (e.g., workplace conflict) in personal issues that are not directly associated with task performance concerns. An example is mutual dislike that arises from differing values or interpersonal styles of the two parties. Relational task attributions, meanwhile, occur when third parties identify the source of the negative interaction in issues related to task performance, such as exchange of information and coordination.

Based on Eberly et al.’s (2011) definition, I treat relational person attributions as being akin to dispositional than situational attributions because they identify the source of an event as stemming from factors that are internal to the actors involved. For example, if two individuals are perceived as experiencing tension because they have different interpersonal styles, this is ultimately a relational person attribution that isolates stable and dispositional sources for the conflict, and seemingly extends from the aggregation of two dispositional attributions (e.g., Marie is a blunt person whereas Sarah is more passive aggressive). Relational task attributions, on the other hand, correspond to situational attributions because they identify the cause of an event as being external to the actors being observed. Combining the concept of relational attributions with the empirical findings of Brescoll & Uhlmann (2008), I theorize that the dispositional attributions made in response to norm-violating female behavior at the individual level are analogous to relational person attributions at the dyadic level. Similarly, situational attributions made in response to the same male behavior (which is not norm-violating for men) at the individual level are analogous to a relational task attribution at the dyadic level.

To illustrate my argument concretely, consider the relational attribution that might be made by third parties who witness two women having a workplace conflict. Based on Brescoll and Uhlmann’s (2008) findings, I expect that each woman’s behavior would be perceived as originating
from dispositional attributes rather than being considered anomalous and attributable to frustrating situational elements of temporary duration. Next, drawing from Eberly et al.’s (2011) framework, I argue that these dispositional attributions allow third parties to construct an explanatory account that locates the immediate cause of the conflict as stemming from a dispositional mismatch, which is consistent with their definition of relational person attributions. For example, third parties might conclude that, *Marie is a blunt person whereas Sarah is more passive aggressive, and therefore they rub each other the wrong way.* This relational attribution is more intuitive than one that abruptly shifts from dispositional to situational causes, such as, *Marie is a blunt person whereas Sarah is more passive aggressive, and they each received different instructions from their mutual client.* Indeed, the latter half of this statement does not follow logically from the first half. Accordingly, I argue that dispositional (situational) attributions at the individual level lend themselves more easily to relational person (task) attributions at the dyadic level.

**Proposition 8:** Third parties will be more likely to make relational person (task) attributions than relational task (person) attributions when interpreting female (male) same-sex conflict.

One of the implications of Proposition 8 is that female same-sex conflict will more often be construed as stemming from interpersonal factors such as mutual dislike, mismatched personality traits, and/or envy than from performance-related issues, whereas male same-sex conflict will more often be attributed to performance-related issues or situational forces. Stated differently using terminology from the conflict literature, female same-sex conflict will be interpreted as relationship conflict whereas male same-sex conflict will be interpreted as task conflict.

A potential moderator of the relationship stated in Proposition 8 is the extent to which the women involved in conflict are known to be active supporters of other women within their organizations, perhaps through their participation in a women’s mentorship program, their
advocacy of women’s issues in public campaigns, or their expressed commitment to feminist principles. I suggest that when both parties in the conflict have such a reputation, it can block third parties from concluding that the conflict is the result of personal disliking or feelings of threat. This possibility is supported by research on moral credentialing which shows that doing a good deed later excuses ambiguous transgressions (e.g., transgressions that are not severe nor undoubtedly unethical) that occur within the same domain (Effron & Monin, 2010). Specifically, Effron and Monin (2010) discovered that participants were less likely to condemn a perpetrator in an ambiguous sexual harassment scenario when he had first been depicted as being a catalyst for the implementation of sexual harassment policies and victim support programs in his organization. Since workplace conflict is typically a complex and ambiguous social event subject to considerable interpretation, it is plausible that previous behavior (e.g., mentoring of female colleagues) can be used to construct attributions that discount interpersonal hostility as the primary cause of the conflict episode.

Based on my reasoning, I anticipate that third parties are most likely to make relational person attributions about female same-sex conflict when the women involved both have reputations of being unsupportive to female colleagues in the past. One wonders whether the media’s interpretation of Marissa Mayer’s leadership decisions as characteristically ‘queen bee’ would have occurred had she not first publicly distanced herself from women’s interests by declaring in a PBS documentary that she is not a feminist and, in fact, conceptualizes feminism as a militant movement (Greenfield, 2013).

**Proposition 9:** Proposition 8 will be moderated by the extent to which the women involved in the conflict scenario are generally acknowledged by third parties as being supporters of female colleagues, such that relational person attributions will be most likely when both
women are perceived as unsupportive and least likely when both women are perceived as supportive.

Once third parties have made relational person attributions about the cause of female same-sex conflict, I propose that they will be more likely to draw the conclusion that female same-sex conflict is more disruptive to organizational and workgroup performance than male same-sex conflict. Notably, third parties would have valid reasons to associate relationship conflict with negative outcomes. While it has been shown that under certain conditions a moderate amount of task conflict can actually be beneficial to group performance (De Dreu, 2006), relationship conflict has been consistently found to negatively impact group effectiveness (for a meta-analysis see de Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012). Moreover, whereas task conflict can often be addressed through impersonal means like reframing the problem or increasing role clarity/coordination, relationship conflict – having its source in personal incompatibilities and ongoing animosity – requires more extreme measures to resolve, such as minimizing or preventing interaction between conflicting parties. To the extent that such interventions alter the flow of regular work activities, consume employees’ time and resources, or require others to take on tasks that were once performed by the parties who are now unable to work together, then relationship conflict will indeed have an adverse effect on workgroup and organizational functioning. Hence, when female same-sex conflict is interpreted as relationship conflict – regardless of whether or not it actually is – it will also be perceived as having more adverse repercussions for the organization. In turn, the perception of female same-sex conflict as relationship conflict that impairs functioning will lead third parties to conclude that female same-sex workplace relationships in general are more dysfunctional (e.g., characterized by hostility, undermining, and conflict spirals) than male same-sex workplace relationships.
Proposition 10: Female (male) same-sex conflict, being more frequently interpreted as relationship (task) conflict than task (relationship) conflict, will be perceived by third parties as more (less) disruptive to personal and organizational functioning than male (female) same-sex conflict.

Proposition 11: Female same-sex workplace relationships will be perceived by third parties as being more prone to dysfunction than male same-sex workplace relationships.

1.4 Overview of Dissertation Studies

I tested portions of my theory across five studies. First, I explored whether female same-sex conflict is problematized relative to male same-sex conflict via two scenario studies (Chapter 2). In Study 1, a sample of undergraduate students read scenarios depicting workplace conflicts that differed in terms of the gender of the individuals involved, and were asked to indicate what they perceived the source of the conflict to be. The findings revealed that participants provided more relational person attributions (e.g., interpersonal disliking, threat) when the conflict was female same-sex than when it was male same-sex or cross-sex. Next, Study 2 demonstrated that an online sample of working adults regarded female same-sex conflict as being more problematic for the individuals involved than male same-sex or cross-sex conflict.

In Chapter 3, I switched from third party to first party perceptions. Study 3 provided partial support for the first stage of my model, such that female participants reacted the worst to a non-communal female target, in terms of devaluing her communality and experiencing feelings of collective threat. I conducted Study 4, a field study utilizing Parking Enforcement Officers and a general working sample, to investigate whether female same-sex conflict is more frequently occurring than male same-sex conflict. I also sought to examine whether female and male same-sex
conflict does indeed differ in its nature (e.g., whether female same-sex conflict appears more person-related than male same-sex conflict), which could explain the perceptions revealed in Study 1. It was discovered, however, that my male and female participants did not report that the nature, nor frequency, of their same-sex workplace conflict differed in any meaningful way. Finally, I conducted Study 5 as a follow-up study to the findings of Study 2, in order to determine whether female same-sex conflict indeed produces more negative implications for the individuals involved. I did not, however, find that female participants reported more negative outcomes than male participants as a result of their same-sex conflict.

Taken together, the results uncovered across five studies are more suggestive of a generalized problematization of female same-sex conflict scenarios than they are of a generalized dysfunction in female same-sex workplace relationships.
Chapter 2: Third Party Perceptions of, and Attributions about, Same-Sex and Cross-Sex Conflict at Work

In this chapter, I was interested in determining whether women’s same-sex conflict at work is problematized relative to men’s same-sex conflict at work. In Study 1, I investigated whether third parties are more likely to attribute female same-sex conflict relative to male same-sex conflict to relational person causes. In Study 2, I tested whether women’s same-sex conflict was perceived by third parties as having more negative personal and work-related implications for the actors involved than men’s same-sex conflict.

2.1 Study 1: Third Party Attributions about the Causes of Female and Male Same-Sex Conflict

Study 1 was conducted in order to determine whether third parties have a tendency to attribute female same-sex conflict to relational person causes and male same-sex or cross-sex conflict to relational task causes. Based on the theory development in Chapter 1, I made the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Women’s same-sex conflict scenarios will be more likely to be attributed to relational person causes than men’s same-sex conflict and cross-sex conflict scenarios.

2.1.1 Method

2.1.1.1 Participants
One-hundred and fifty-four undergraduate students participated in this study for course credit (61% female; average age = 20 years, SD = 2.28).

### 2.1.1.2 Materials and Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in this 2 (senior person gender) X 2 (junior person gender) experiment. Participants read a scenario depicting a workplace conflict scenario in which a more senior organizational member is undermining the interests of a junior organizational member. The senior and junior individuals were either depicted as male (senior) and female (junior), both male, both female, or female (senior) and male (junior). The scenario appears below:

Janet/Jeffrey is a partner at the law firm McKeachie & Donnelly, which specializes in corporate law. One day the partners are having a meeting and discussing who among the associates is on track to become a partner in the firm. The name of an associate, Helen/Brad, comes up. Janet/Jeffrey expresses her/his hesitation about making Helen/Brad a partner, saying that “Helen/Brad just doesn’t work hard enough or seem as committed to her/his cases. I only give her/him another few years in this profession before she/he realizes she/he can’t make it.”

After reading this scenario, participants were asked, “Why did Janet/Jeffrey say this about Helen/Brad? Participants were provided with an empty text box in which they could indicate their response to this question. I first coded each response by summarizing it in one or two words that were used by the participant. I then determined whether these words fit into a person-related category (e.g., threat, envy, disliking) or a task-related category (e.g., poor performance, not
meeting expectations). Though the bulk of responses fit into either one of these two categories, two other categories emerged for responses that did not fit into either: sexism and miscellaneous. After developing these four categories, I employed the help of a research assistant to go through the initial response and categorize them into one of the four categories I had developed. Our initial agreement however was high, with a Kappa of .81, however together we came to an agreement on the coding for those items on which we initially disagreed. The table below presents examples of the written responses that participants provided by category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Example response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person-related</td>
<td>“She is jealous of Helen.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“He is threatened by Helen.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-related</td>
<td>“Because he really believes he doesn't have what it takes and is too inexperienced.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Because Helen is not showing potential.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>“He does not see women as equals.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Because he doesn’t think she is as capable as a man.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>“I don’t know.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Because she wanted to.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Study 1 Example attributions

2.1.2  **Results**

Below is a frequency table of how many cases fell into each of the four categories as a function of the gender of the individuals depicted in the scenario.
I next conducted a binomial logistic regression to determine whether the interaction between partner gender and associate gender influenced whether relational person attributions about the cause of the conflict scenario were made. I also investigated the role of participant gender, since presumably men and women might view conflict scenarios differently as a function of the gender of the individuals involved. Relational person attributions were coded as 1 and all other attributions were coded as 0. The variables of participant gender, partner gender, and associate gender were entered in the Step 1. In Step 2, I entered in the two-way interactions between each of these variables. Finally, Step 3 included the three-way interaction between these variables. Below is the table of results of Step 3 with all variables entered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Female associate</th>
<th>Male associate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female partner</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-related</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-related</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Misc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male partner</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-related</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-related</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Study 1 Attribution frequencies as a function of partner and associate gender
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>10.21**</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>12.12**</td>
<td>9.42</td>
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**Note.** N = 154. OR = odds ratio, LL = log likelihood.

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

Table 3 Study 1 Binomial Regression Analysis of the Effect of Partner and Associate Gender on Relational Person Attributions
The results revealed that there was a significant main effect of partner gender and associate gender. As predicted there was also a significant interaction between partner gender and associate gender. The results of these analyses appear below in Figures 2, 3, and 4. As Figure 4 depicts, participants were more likely to make relational person attributions when the conflict scenario involved a female partner and a female associate, relative to when it involved a female partner and male associate, male partner and male associate, and male partner female associate. As such, I found support for Hypothesis 1.

Figure 2 Study 1 Main effect of associate gender on attribution type
Figure 3 Study 1 Main effect of partner gender on attribution type

Figure 4 Study 1 Interaction between partner and associate gender on attribution type
2.1.3 Discussion

The results of this study found support for my assertion that third parties have a tendency to make relational person attributions when interpreting female same-sex conflict relative to male same-sex or cross-sex conflict. This finding has significant implications for women in organizations. Since I established that female same-sex conflict is perceived as more person- than task-related, and more person-related than male same-sex conflict, it would be interesting for future research to determine what implications this has for women embroiled in same-sex conflict at work. For example, it would be interesting for future research to determine whether individuals working in organizations indicate that female same-sex conflict causes more relationship problems than male same-sex conflict in their workplaces. If this were the case, it might also mean that women are perceived as generally more disruptive to the functioning of organizations, as I will investigate in Study 2, which has implications for their perceived hireability and promotability.

A rather serious implication of Study 1 is that even a minor conflict scenario, like the one studied, is evaluated differently as a function of the gender of the individuals involved. This suggests that the problematization of female same-sex conflict is a pervasive and robust phenomenon. The findings also have significant implications for the legitimacy bestowed on women who are providing negative performance evaluations of other women at work. If these women are perceived as interpersonally hostile or jealous, it could cause third parties to dismiss their opinions, which ultimately leaves the poor performer’s work unimproved and the performance of the organization diminished.

I next conducted Study 2 to determine whether female same-sex conflict, as a result of being attributed to relational person causes (Study 1), is perceived as more problematic for relationship quality and work-related attitudes, and more disruptive to organizations.
2.2 Study 2: Third Parties’ Problematization of Female Same-Sex Conflict Relative to Male Same-Sex and Cross-Sex Conflict

Study 2 was conducted to test my proposition that female same-sex conflict would be perceived as being more disruptive to individuals and organizations than male same-sex and cross-sex conflict, and as producing more dysfunctional female same-sex relationships. Based on the theoretical development and associated proposition developed in Chapter 1 and the findings of Study 1, I made the following hypothesis to test in Study 2:

*Hypothesis 1: Women’s same-sex conflict will be perceived as having more negative personal and work-related consequences for those involved than men’s same-sex conflict and cross-sex conflict.*

2.2.1 Methods

2.2.1.1 Participants

I conducted an experiment involving a sample of 144 employed adult participants (47% female; average age = 28.39 years, SD = 9.88) who were recruited from Amazon.com’s online participant pool, Mechanical Turk.

2.2.1.2 Materials and Procedure

Each participant was randomly assigned to read about one of three workplace *conflict types* – one involving two women (Sarah and Anna), two men (Steven and Adam), or one woman (Sarah)
and one man (Adam). The content of each scenario was identical across conflict types with only the names of the individuals involved differing from one condition to the next. The male-male version of this scenario appears below:

Adam and Steven both work as account managers at a consulting firm. There are ten other account managers working in the same department as Adam and Steven. Last week some tension developed between Adam and Steven. Adam got upset when he saw one of Steven’s interns handling documents that he felt were too sensitive and confidential. Rather than approaching Steven, Adam told the intern to give him the documents and to refrain from handling the same types of documents in the future. Steven’s intern told him about the incident later that day. Rather than approaching Adam, Steven complained to their supervisor, who then told Adam that Steven’s intern was free to handle whichever documents Steven entrusted to him. Adam later went into Steven’s office to confront him and was visibly upset that Steven had “ratted” on him to their supervisor before discussing it with him.

For those participants who read the male-female version of this scenario, the gender of the instigator of the conflict (Adam, in the example above) was counterbalanced across scenarios. Thus, for half of these participants Sarah was the instigator and Adam the responder, and for the other half Adam was the instigator and Sarah the responder.

I was interested in determining whether, holding all else constant, the same conflict would be evaluated differently depending on the gender composition of the individuals involved. To investigate this question, participants provided a variety of ratings after reading one of the three versions of the scenario on scales that assessed the degree to which they perceived that the conflict would create long-term problems for the individuals involved, as well as for the rest of the
organization. Finding significant differences in these ratings would suggest that conflict is perceived and perhaps treated differently by third parties depending on the gender of the individuals involved in the conflict. Of course, any differences that exist could be partly attributable to participants’ previous observations of, or experiences with, male same-sex, female same-sex, and/or cross-sex conflict, so I controlled for these experiences in my analyses to rule them out as possible alternative explanations for my results.

2.2.1.3 Dependent Variables

After reading the version of the scenario to which they were assigned, participants indicated their agreement with a series of items on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). The first set of items asked participants to indicate the likelihood that the individuals involved would be able to repair their relationship going forward. These items were adapted from three sources: Wade’s (1989) reconciliation subscale (e.g., “These individuals will try to make amends”), the Aquino, Tripp, & Bies (2006) forgiveness scale (e.g., “These individuals will let go of any resentment”), and the Aquino, et al (2001) revenge scale, reverse coded (e.g., “These individuals will keep getting even”). I combined the items into a single scale labeled relationship repair (α = .90).

Next, I assessed participants’ perceptions of the personal consequences that they imagined would stem from the conflict. Three dependent variables that are frequently measured by management researchers were assessed: job satisfaction (three items, adapted from Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983), affective commitment (five items, adapted from a scale developed by Meyer & Allen, 1997), and turnover intentions (two items, adapted from Kelloway, Gottlied, & Barham, 1999). An exploratory principal components factor analysis with Varimax rotation revealed that the items from the affective commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover
intentions scales loaded onto the same factor, so I averaged these items to form a composite scale labeled *personal implications* (*α* = .95). Higher scores on this composite measure indicated *more negative* evaluations.

I was also interested in determining whether participants perceived that there would be different organizational-level consequences as a function of the gender breakdown of the individuals involved in the conflict. I created an 8-item scale to assess this perception. Higher scores reflected *more* negative organizational implications. A principal components factor analysis with Varimax rotation revealed that all items had very high loadings on a single factor (.60 or higher), thus they were averaged to form an *organizational implications* scale (*α* = .92).

I asked each participant to indicate their gender since it is possible that female participants might evaluate a female same-sex conflict differently than male participants, for example. I treated this variable as an independent variable because I was interested in the effects it might produce. As control variables, I included three items that assessed individuals previous experience either being involved in or observing each of cross-sex, female same-sex, and male same-sex conflict at work (e.g., “Please indicate how often you have been involved in OR witnessed a workplace conflict involving all women”). Participants responded to each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (All of the Time). Interestingly, the frequency for female same-sex (*M* = 2.76, *SD* = 1.19) was significantly higher than the frequencies for both cross-sex conflict (*M* = 2.60, *SD* = .96), *t*(143) = 1.95, *p* = .05 and male same-sex conflict (*M* = 2.37, *SD* = .97), *t*(143) = 3.69, *p* < .01. This might suggest that female same-sex conflict is, in fact, more prevalent in organizations, or perhaps this finding is indicative of a recall bias. All items used to form the dependent variables can be viewed in Appendix A.
2.2.2 Results

A multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted with conflict type (male same-sex, female same-sex, cross-sex) and participant gender treated as categorical independent variables and with my three items assessing past experience with workplace conflict as continuous control variables. This analysis revealed that the conflict type had significant effects the dependent variables as a set after controlling for participants’ past experience with female same-sex, male same-sex, and cross-sex conflict, Wilk’s Lambda $F(6, 264) = 3.58, p = .001$. Inspection of univariate effects showed two of the three dependent variables differed significantly as a function of conflict type: relationship repair, $F(2, 134) = 3.16, p = .045$, and personal implications, $F(2, 134) = 6.79, p = .002$. The means of the variables in each conflict type condition are presented in Figures 1 and 2. There was no effect of conflict type on organizational implications, nor was there any effect of the interaction between participant gender and conflict type on any of the dependent variables.

![Graph showing relationship repair by gender composition of dyad](image)

Figure 5 Study 2 Mean perceived relationship repair by gender composition of dyad
I tested my hypothesis that female-female conflict would be problematized relative to the other conflict types by conducting contrasts with personal implications and relationship repair as the dependent variables. The results of these analyses revealed that participants perceived there would be less relationship repair for the women depicted in the female same-sex conflict \((M = 3.61, SD = 1.18)\) than for the individuals involved in the cross-sex conflict \((M = 4.05, SD = 1.17)\), \(t(96) = 1.86, p = .033\) (one-tailed), \(d = .38\), and for the men depicted in the male same-sex conflict \((M = 4.20, SD = 1.24)\), \(t(94) = 2.39, p = .005\) (one-tailed), \(d = .49\). Similarly, for the dependent variable of personal implications, participants perceived that there would be more negative personal consequences for the women depicted in the female same-sex conflict \((M = 4.94, SD = 1.20)\) than for the individuals in the cross-sex conflict \((M = 4.04, SD = 1.19)\), \(t(96) = 3.70, p = .000\) (one-tailed), \(d = .75\), and for the men in the male same-sex conflict \((M = 4.47, SD = 1.26)\), \(t(94) = 1.87, p = .03\) (one-tailed), \(d = .38\).

**Figure 6 Study 2 Mean perceived personal implications by gender composition of dyad**
2.2.3 Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that, when all else is equal and controlling for participants’ past experience with male same-sex, female same-sex, and cross-sex conflict, female same-sex conflict is generally perceived as having more negative implications for the individuals involved (i.e., less relationship repair, lower job satisfaction, lower affective commitment, and higher turnover intentions) than male-male or male-female conflicts. These results support my hypothesis that third parties generally view female same-sex conflict as more problematic than male same-sex and cross-sex conflict.

The findings of this study have implications for the way that female same-sex conflict at work is evaluated, and perhaps treated, relative to cross-sex and male same-sex conflict. For example, the finding that women involved in female same-sex conflict are perceived as being less likely to achieve relationship repair and work together productively in the future suggests that third parties might be inclined to believe that women hold grudges against one another and struggle to move on from past transgressions. This perception casts female same-sex conflict in a particularly shameful and petty light, and could have serious implications for women’s work-related outcomes. For example, a manager might decide against assigning two female subordinates to a task that requires them to work together if he or she suspects that they cannot set their interpersonal difficulties aside. This might result in lost opportunities for female employees, given the ever-increasing implementation and importance of teamwork in organizational settings (Hackman, 2002). Women who have had interpersonal difficulties with female coworkers in the past might be overlooked for future career development opportunities as a result.
Meanwhile, the finding that female same-sex conflict is expected to have more serious personal implications (i.e., lower organizational commitment and job satisfaction, as well as higher likelihood of turnover) suggests that third parties are inclined to believe that women who experience interpersonal difficulties with same-sex coworkers are more likely to withdraw from and become dissatisfied with their organizations than men who experience interpersonal difficulties with same-sex coworkers (and more so than women who experience interpersonal difficulties with opposite-sex coworkers). Once again, this could have serious work-related consequences for women, in that their commitment to the organization might be questioned after a work-related conflict with a female colleague.

The aforementioned implications are magnified when I recognize that the effects were not moderated by gender. That is, female participants were just as likely as male participants to problematize female-female conflict. Since the experience of female-female conflict will most relevant to women, this suggests that these perceptions and expectations could be carried into the workplace to create self-fulfilling prophecies.

Clearly, there are many future research opportunities in this domain. It would be fruitful for future research to determine whether individuals in managerial positions evaluate and handle female same-sex conflict differently than male same-sex conflict (and cross-sex conflict) when it occurs in their organizations. This is a particularly important consideration because the way that upper management deals with female same-sex conflict likely has significant implications for relationship repair and reconciliation. For example, if management fails to intervene in a constructive way or to provide support for female employees having interpersonal difficulties with same-sex colleagues, the conflict could unnecessarily be perpetuated over time.
As I have alluded, the problematization of female-female conflict could have several negative work-related consequences for women. As such, another important avenue for future research is to determine whether the problematization of female-female conflict is linked to women’s outcomes at work. For example, are women who have an interpersonal difficulty with a female coworker perceived in a more negative light by their coworkers and superiors than men who have a disagreement with a male colleague? If so, what implications does this have for these women? Are they less likely to be promoted or to be selected for positions that involve frequent teamwork and collaboration? Future research might examine managers’ reactions to same-sex and opposite-sex conflict at work and the manner with which it is dealt. Indeed, this issue could play an important role in perpetuating gender inequality at work.

In Chapter 3, I was interested in determining why third parties are inclined to problematize workplace conflict when it occurs between or among women. One reasonable assumption is that female same-sex conflict truly is more frequent, person-related, and intense than male same-sex conflict, which produces more negative outcomes for the women involved in such conflict. In investigating this assertion, I was testing Stage 1 of my model depicted in Figure 1.
Chapter 3: The Nature Workplace Conflict as a Function of Gender

I recognized that the findings of Studies 1 and 2 could not completely rule out that female same-sex is indeed more frequent, intense, problematic and/or person-related in nature than male same-sex conflict. It could be the case that women react more negatively to non-communal behavior when its source is female, which produces female same-sex tension. Perhaps women are more prone to same-sex conflict at work than men, or express their same-sex conflict via more person-related means than men. Finally, women might react more negatively to their same-sex workplace conflict than men and third parties witness these differential reactions in organizations, which then produces the assumption that female same-sex conflict is more problematic than male same-sex conflict. Studies 3, 4, and 5 were conducted to explore these possibilities.

3.1 Study 3: Reactions to Non-communal and/or Agentic Targets and the Role of Collective Threat

In Study 3, I tested a portion of Stage 1 in my model, depicted in Figure 1. That is, I assessed women’s and men’s reactions to non-communal male and female targets and assessed emotions associated with collective threat. I was interested in determining whether the most negative reactions would be produced in female participants in response to a non-communal female. In terms of reactions, I assessed the degree to which participants devalued the communality of agentic targets and experienced collective threat in response to the target. Based on my theorizing in Chapter 1 and established work on the backlash effect (Rudman, 1998), I made the following hypotheses:
Hypothesis 1: Participants will devalue the communality of a non-communal female target more than a non-communal male target.

Hypothesis 2: There will be an interaction between participant and target gender, such that female participants will devalue the communality of a non-communal female target more than a non-communal male target, and more than male participants in response to either a non-communal male or female target.

Hypothesis 3: The moderated effect outlined in Hypothesis 2 will mediate the relationship between target gender and collective threat, such that female participants will experience collective threat in response to a non-communal female target, via their decreased perceptions of her communality.

Figure 7 below depicts the model being tested in Study 3.

Figure 7 Study 3 model
3.1.1 Method

3.1.1.1 Participants

Two-hundred undergraduate students, all of whom were working either part time or full time at the time of the study, participated for course credit. The sample was 49% female, with an average age of 19.72 ($SD = 1.41$). I restricted the sample to working individuals because this study required participants to imagine a work-related mentorship situation. I reasoned that participants would be more likely to imagine themselves in the scenario, and therefore experience the emotions I was attempting to induce, if they could relate the scenario to their own work-related situations. Excluded participants did not differ greatly in terms of demographics from included participants, however, they were slightly younger ($M = 19.03$ years) and were less likely to be Caucasian than included participants.

3.1.1.2 Materials and Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: male (coded 0) or female target (coded 1). They were asked to imagine that they were working as a graduate research assistant and had attended a conference during the past summer months where they briefly met a professor from a different university who was conducting similar research. They were asked to imagine that they wanted to reach out to this individual to ask about a survey measure, and in hopes that they might reconnect and develop a mentor relationship with this individual. After sending a very friendly e-mail, they received a rather terse, non-communal e-mail in return (The entire script
appears in Appendix B). They were then asked to indicate how they felt about this with the following measures.

*Perceptions of communality (α = .96).* I was interested in the extent to which participants devalued the communality of the target by perceiving him or her as cold, unfriendly, unsupportive, unhelpful, uncaring, and insensitive. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with each of these descriptors as being characteristic of the target on a 7-point likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). Higher scores on this scale reflected greater devaluation of the target’s communality.

*Feelings of collective threat (α = .74).* Participants indicated the extent to which they experienced feelings that could reasonably be expected to be associated with collective threat. Specifically, these were three items that assessed the extent to which participants imagined they would feel discouraged, let down, and disappointed. They responded on a 7-point likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).

Participants also provided demographic information, such as their age and gender (1=male, 2=female).

3.1.2 **Results**

I used Hayes’s (2013) PROCESS model 7 to test a conditional indirect effects model. Target gender was entered as the independent variable, participant gender as the moderator, perceptions of communality as the mediator, and feelings of collective threat as the dependent variable.

First, there was a main effect of target gender on perceptions of communality, such that participants devalued the communality of the female target ($M = 5.51$, $SD = 1.47$) in the scenario more than the male target ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.41$), $b = 1.60$, $t(198) = 2.55$, $p = .012$, CI$_{95}$[.36, 2.84].
Hypothesis 1 was supported. Next, there was a significant effect of the interaction between target gender and participant gender on perceptions of communality, $b = -1.19$, $t(196) = -3.02$, $p = .003$, CI$_{95}$[-1.97, -.42], such that female participants devalued the communality of the female target ($M = 6.02$, $SD = 1.39$) to a greater extent than the male target ($M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.57$), $t(99) = 2.68$, $p = .009$, and to a greater extent than male participants devalued the communality of both the female ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.31$), $t(94) = 4.10$, $p = .000$, and male targets ($M = 5.29$, $SD = 1.28$), $t(107) = 2.85$, $p = .005$. As such, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Finally, there was a significant conditional indirect effect of target gender on collective threat via perceptions of communality, such that female participants devalued the female target’s communality more, which then led them to experience more collective threat, $d = -.23$, CI$_{95}$ [-.48, -.07].

3.1.3 Discussion

The results of this study provided partial support for Stage 1 of my model, wherein I argued that female participants would react worse than male participants to a non-communal female target and experience greater collective threat. Notably, I only examined one aspect of collective threat (violated expectations for solidarity behavior) in order to keep my study concise, but future research should investigate whether this effect can be replicated with collective threat that arises when women feel as though a non-communal female target reflects poorly on women as a group. Moreover, future research should also determine whether female participants react with heightened feelings of competitive threat relative to male participants in response to an agentic or non-communal female target, though this might prove difficult if many participants do not want to admit
that they feel competitively threatened by the target. As such, this particular research question might be best investigated with implicit measures of competitive threat.

In Chapter 1, I argued that the process uncovered in Study 3 could lead to episodes of female same-sex conflict that are more frequently occurring than male same-sex conflict, which might explain why female same-sex conflict seems to be problematized relative to male same-sex conflict. However, the design of Study 3 did not allow me to investigate whether female same-sex conflict is more frequently occurring than male same-sex conflict, so I conducted Study 4 to address this limitation.

3.2 Study 4: The Frequency and Nature of Same-Sex Conflict in Organizations

In this study, I investigated whether the frequency of female same-sex conflict differs from that of male same-sex conflict. I also tested whether the nature of same-sex conflict differs as a function of gender in actual organizations because I wanted to determine whether the perceptions uncovered in Study 1 – in which third parties tended to make more relational person attributions about female same-sex conflict (relative to male same-sex and cross-sex conflict) – are a reflection of the actual nature of female same-sex conflict. That is, I sought to discover whether female same-sex conflict in organizations appears more person-related in form, and whether male same-sex conflict in organizations takes more task-related forms. I investigated this question by operationalizing conflict as workplace incivility, because this allowed me to use the Negative Acts Questionnaire (Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009), which includes reliable and validated task-related and person-related subscales of incivility that mapped onto my constructs of interest. Acts of workplace incivility, which inherently undermine the interests of another, also fall within the Barki and Hartwick (2004) typology that I am basing my definition of workplace conflict on.
In Study 4 I also investigated whether female same-sex incivility was linked to worse or better person outcomes than male same-sex incivility, in terms of well-being and work attitudes, which could serve as an alternative explanation for the findings of Study 2, wherein third parties assumed female-same sex conflict would have more severe outcomes for the individuals involved relative to male same-sex conflict. Based on my original theoretical propositions and the findings of Studies 1, 2, and 3, I made the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1:** Female same-sex incivility at work will take on more person-related forms than male same-sex incivility, and male same-sex incivility at work will take on more task-related forms than female same-sex incivility.

**Hypothesis 2:** Female same-sex incivility at work will result in more negative outcomes in terms of job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and emotional exhaustion, than male same-sex incivility.

**Hypothesis 3:** Female same-sex incivility will be more frequently occurring than male same-sex incivility.

3.2.1 **Method**

3.2.1.1 **Participants**

One hundred and fifty-eight Parking Enforcement Officers (PEO) employed in two large cities in the Pacific Northwest were participated in this study. Because workplace incivility is a low
base-rate behavior, I recruited an additional 152 employed individuals working across a variety of industries from Mechanical Turk to give my analyses greater power. Fifty-three percent of the sample was male. The average age of participants was 40 years of age, with a standard deviation of 13 years. Sixty-three percent of the sample identified as Caucasian, 14 percent as Asian or Middle-Eastern, 10 percent as African American, three percent as Native, five percent as Hispanic, and five percent as other or not indicated.

3.2.1.2 Materials and Procedure

*Emotional exhaustion* (α = .85). A six-item scale developed by Wharton (1993) was used to assess job-related emotional exhaustion. A sample item is, “I feel used up at the end of the workday.” Participants indicated how frequently they felt this way at work, ranging from 0 (Never) to 6 (Every day).

*Job satisfaction* (α = .88). Participants completed a three-item measure of job satisfaction developed by Dunham, Smith, and Blackburn (1977). A sample item is, “All in all, I am satisfied with my job.” Participants indicated their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

*Turnover intentions* (α = .89). Participants indicated whether they often thought about quitting their jobs with three items taken from Cammann et al. (1983). A sample item is “I often think about quitting.” Participants indicated their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

*Workplace incivility.* Participants completed the Negative Acts Questionnaire, a 20-item scale of workplace incivility that is reported from the target’s perspective (Einarsen et al., 2009). Participants indicated the frequency with which they have been targeted by each act in the past six
months [ranging from 1 (Never) to 6 (Daily)], the typical identity of the perpetrator [1 (Member of the public), 2 (coworker), 3 (supervisor), 4 (other)], which I will refer to as the source, the typical gender of the perpetrator [1 (A man/men), 2 (Mostly a man/men), 3 (Men and women equally), 4 (Mostly a woman/women), 5 (A woman/women)], and how the experience made them feel [ranging from 1 (Not at all negative) to 5 (Extremely negative)]. For my purposes, I used the two subscales of: person-related (12 items) and task-related incivility (5 items). The task-related subscale reflects acts that are not clearly malicious or due to interpersonal disliking, but rather are disguised in task-related interactions that could reasonably reflect something other than disliking (e.g., low trust in ability). The person-related subscale assessed acts that are obviously intended to signal interpersonal hostility or disliking. The matrix reliabilities for each of the subscales were as follows: person-related frequency = .68, person-related source (of incivility) = .86, person-related gender (of typical perpetrator) = .93, person-related evaluation = .86, task-related frequency = .94, task-related source = .98, task-related gender = .96, and task-related evaluation = .92, all of which were acceptable.

Finally, participants provided relevant demographic information, such as their gender (0 = female, 1 = male), their age, their tenure with the organization, and their ethnicity.

All scales appear in Appendix C.

3.2.2 Results

Correlations, means, and standard deviations of the variables of interest appear in Table 3. I first investigated whether I could replicate the past finding that incivility is more likely to occur within same-sex as opposed to cross-sex dyads (Berdahl et al., 2010; Lee & Brotheridge, 2011). Indeed, regression analyses (controlling for age, tenure, ethnicity, and source, frequency, and
evaluation of incivility) revealed that for person-related incivility, women were more likely to be targeted by other women and men were more likely to be targeted by other men, $B = .259, p = .000$. Likewise, for task-related incivility, women were more likely to be targeted by other women and men were more likely to be targeted by other men, $B = .231, p = .001$.

Next, I tested Hypotheses 1 and 3 by determining whether the interaction between participant gender and perpetrator gender had an effect on person- and task-related incivility frequencies. Table 5 below displays the percentage of person- and task-related incivility events that occurred for male and female participants as a function of the gender of the perpetrator. For female participants, there were 208 person-related events and 113 task-related events. For male participants, there were 209 person-related events and 143 task-related events. Moreover, female participants had 18 person-related and 6 task-related acts of incivility directed at them from women, while male participants had 37 person-related and 40 task-related acts of incivility directed at them from men.
<table>
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<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
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<td>.50</td>
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<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>(.86)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.09</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.86)</td>
</tr>
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<td>.52</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>(.68)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>(.96)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. TR evaluation</td>
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<td>.95</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.44**</td>
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<td>(.92)</td>
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<td>-.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.85**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>(.98)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>.69</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.81**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>(.94)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Satisfaction</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>-.52**</td>
<td>(.88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Turnover intentions</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>-.62**</td>
<td>(.89)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Emotional exhaustion</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>-.17*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.58**</td>
<td>-.67**</td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td>(.85)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 310. PR = person-related, TR = task-related.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 4 Study 4 Correlation matrix with means and standard deviations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of incivility</th>
<th>Gender of perpetrator for females</th>
<th>N of events</th>
<th>Gender of perpetrator for males</th>
<th>N of events</th>
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<td>Person-related</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually men</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Usually men</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually women</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Usually women</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-related</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>Usually men</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually women</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Usually women</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 Study 4 Person- and task-related incivility frequencies

An initial review of this table suggests that neither of Hypotheses 1 and 3 would not be supported. The particular areas of interest are shaded. From scanning these frequencies, it did not appear that female same-sex incivility took person-related forms more than male same-sex incivility, nor did it appear that female same-sex incivility was more frequently occurring than male same-sex incivility. However, it did appear that female same-sex incivility was more likely to take person-related than task-related forms, whereas male same-sex incivility took equally person- and task-related forms.

To more formally test my hypotheses, I conducted a series of hierarchical regressions. In the first two regressions, I tested Hypothesis 1 with the frequency of person-related incivility and task-related incivility.
related incivility entered as each of the dependent variables. In the first regression, I was interested in determining whether the interaction between participant gender and typical gender of the perpetrator of person-related incivility influenced the frequency of person-related incivility. Likewise, in the second regression I was interested in determining whether the interaction between participant gender and typical gender of the perpetrator of task-related incivility influenced the frequency of task-related incivility. Control variables and main effects were entered in Steps 1 and 2, respectively. The results of these two regressions appear below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.034</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.025</td>
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<td>.007</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>.007</td>
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<td>.014</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.051</td>
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<td>.034</td>
<td>.135**</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.133**</td>
<td>.036</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main effects</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>.076</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>.076</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender of perpetrator</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way interaction</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant gender X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-.051</td>
<td>.067</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender of perpetrator</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td></td>
<td>.101</td>
<td></td>
<td>.104</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>.096**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.006</td>
<td></td>
<td>.003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $N=310$. Dependent variable = Frequency of person-related incivility. Job level and gender of perpetrator and evaluation of incivility are all limited to the person-related incivility subscale. *$p<.05. **p<.01.

Table 6 Study 4 Hierarchical regression analysis of the effect of gender on person-related incivility
# Table 7  Study 4 Hierarchical regression analysis of the effect of gender on task-related incivility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control variables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data source</td>
<td>-0.065</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>-0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.004</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.026</td>
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<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Evaluation of incivility</td>
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<td>0.355**</td>
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<td>Main effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender of perpetrator</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant gender X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>0.318**</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.023*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. $N = 310$. Dependent variable = Frequency of task-related incivility. Job level and gender of perpetrator and evaluation of incivility are all limited to the task-related incivility subscale. $^*p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$.  

Table 7 Study 4 Hierarchical regression analysis of the effect of gender on task-related incivility
The results of these analyses reveal that the frequencies of person- and task-related incivility did not differ as a function of the interaction between participant gender and typical gender of the perpetrator. As such, I could not conclude that women were more likely to be targeted by other women (as opposed to by men) by person-related incivility, and/or that men were more likely to be targeted by other men (as opposed to by women) by task-related incivility. Moreover, I could not conclude that the general frequencies of female same-sex incivility and male same-sex incivility differed significantly. As such, I found no support for Hypotheses 1 or 3.

Next, I tested Hypothesis 2 to determine whether female same-sex incivility was evaluated more negatively by its recipients (victims) than male same-sex incivility. Again, I conducted regressions separately for the two separate subscales of person- and task-related incivility. The results of these analyses appear below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
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<td>.050</td>
<td>-.063</td>
<td>.050</td>
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<td>-.005</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.015</td>
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<td>.277</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.287**</td>
<td>.102</td>
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<td>.156</td>
<td>.552**</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.547**</td>
<td>.149</td>
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<td>.318**</td>
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<td>.111**</td>
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<td>.001</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $N=310$. Dependent variable = Evaluation of person-related incivility. Job level and gender of perpetrator and frequency of incivility are all limited to the person-related incivility subscale. *p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 8 Study 4 Hierarchical regression analysis of the effect of gender on person-related incivility evaluation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
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<td><strong>Control variables</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>.006</td>
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<td>-.015</td>
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<td>.084</td>
<td>.771**</td>
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</tr>
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<td>.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender of perpetrator</td>
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<td>.311</td>
<td>.308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job level and gender of perpetrator and frequency of incivility are all limited to the task-related incivility subscale.
*p < .05, **p < .01.

**Table 9 Study 4 Hierarchical regression analysis of the effect of gender on task-related incivility evaluation**
Neither of these analyses demonstrated that the interaction between participant gender and typical gender of the perpetrator had an effect on the evaluation of the incivility. However, as can be seen in the bolded line in the above table, the typical gender of the perpetrator of person-related incivility had a main effect on the evaluation of the incivility, such that person-related incivility was evaluated more negatively by recipients (victims) when it was perpetrated by a woman or women. I discuss the implications of this in the Discussion section.

I was further interested in determining whether participants’ more negative evaluation of person-related incivility perpetrated by a woman (women) was linked to more negative personal outcomes in terms of job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intentions. In order to determine this, I tested four models (for each of the four personal outcomes as dependent variables) using the PROCESS indirect effects model (Model 4) designed by Hayes (2013). These analyses revealed that negative evaluations mediated the relationship between person-related incivility perpetrated by a woman (women) and emotional exhaustion, $d = .13, CI_{95} [.05, .25]$. The indirect effects model was not significant for any of the other three personal outcomes.

3.2.3 **Discussion**

The results of this study did not provide support for Hypotheses 1 or 2. As such, I cannot conclude the third party perceptions revealed in Studies 2 and 3 reflect the actual state of affairs in organizations. I did, however, find that person-related incivility that was perpetrated by a woman or women was evaluated by recipients (victims), regardless of their gender, more negatively than when it was perpetrated by a man or men. This more negative evaluation, in turn, led to increased emotional exhaustion. This could be evidence of a backlash effect (Rudman, 1998), whereby
female perpetrators of person-related incivility were in greater violation of their gender role than male perpetrators and, as such, their uncivil behavior was perceived more negatively. Alternatively, this finding could mean that the person-related incivility enacted by the women in this combined sample was indeed more severe. Indeed, this is difficult to tease apart, but future research might start by having a sample of employed participants document a few examples of their past experiences with workplace incivility, while also indicating the gender of the perpetrator and how negative each episode was for them. Next, each scenario could be assigned to three raters taken from a separate sample of individuals who are blind to the gender of the perpetrators. These individuals could then rate their assigned scenario on how negative and severe the incivility is. Such a study would provide initial insight into whether the gender of perpetrator influences the victim’s interpretation of how severe and negative the incivility was, or whether it is simply the case the incivility is more or less negative or severe as function of perpetrator gender.

Notably, if it is discovered by future research that incivility perpetrated by women is indeed more severe than incivility perpetrated by men, this could help explain the belief that women’s same-sex workplace relationships are more dysfunctional than men’s -- since past research and the current study revealed that incivility is typically directed by perpetrators at same-sex targets (Berdahl et al., 2010; Lee & Brotheridge, 2011).

Study 4 was limited in that it relied on participants’ general recollections of the typical nature of the incivility they had experienced in the six months prior to the survey, which means that some precision in assessment was likely sacrificed. Moreover, I assessed person outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction) that were far removed from the construct of interest – workplace conflict – and could be influenced by a variety of other factors (e.g., organizational justice, salary). I reasoned that by assessing outcomes that stem more directly from a given episode of workplace conflict, such as venting or revenge behavior, I might obtain more nuanced insight into whether the outcomes that
are most observable to third parties in the hours proceeding an episode of workplace conflict differ as a function of the gender of the parties involved in the conflict. If so, this would suggest that the findings uncovered in Study 2 (that third parties are inclined to perceive episodes of female same-sex conflict as having more negative personal outcomes) are not simply the result of bias. This was the impetus for Study 5.

3.3 Study 5: First Parties’ Perceptions of Workplace Conflict

Study 5 followed up on the findings of Study 2, such that it tested whether female same-sex does, in fact, result in more negative implications for those involved. Moreover, I was able to expand on the findings of Study 4 by investigating additional negative outcomes of workplace conflict. I assessed first parties’ perceptions of the implications stemming immediately from their most recent workplace conflict in the hours, days, and weeks immediately following the episode. The implications I assessed focused on the experience of negative affect, engagement in venting and rumination, sleep problems, desire for relationship repair, reconciliation, and revenge, and job-related attitudes.

Beyond the third party perceptions uncovered in Study 2, there are both theoretical and empirical reasons to suspect that women might suffer more negative outcomes as a result of their same-sex conflict, particularly if one makes the assumption that same-sex conflict is particularly distressing for women. As I discussed earlier, research on women’s same-sex relationships outside of the workplace tend to reveal that women have higher expectations than men of their same-sex friendships in the domains of loyalty, genuineness, self-disclosure, and solidarity (Hall, 2011). Women also rate their same-sex friendships as having higher levels of self-disclosure (Camarena,
Sarigiani, & Petersen, 1990) and report that they have more friends to turn to in times of difficulty (Burda, Vaux, & Schill, 1984). Given that women’s personal relationships seem to be of utmost importance to them, it might be particularly distressing when they experience conflict that threatens the quality of their female same-sex workplace relationships. Based on this reasoning and the findings of Study 2, I made the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1:* Participants will report experiencing more negative affect, more rumination, venting, revenge, and less reconciliation behaviors, and will experience more sleep problems and negative job-related affect (satisfaction and commitment) after their involvement in episodes of female same-sex conflict, relative to cross-sex and male same-sex conflict.

3.3.1 Method

3.3.1.1 Participants

I conducted a survey involving 287 employed adult participants recruited from Mechanical Turk (52% female; average age = 35.76 years, SD = 11.70), spanning a wide variety of industries. The average tenure of participants was 4.8 years with a standard deviation of 10.67 years. Participants were about 75% Caucasian, 11% African American, 5% Hispanic, and 9% of the sample consisted of ‘other’ or not indicated ethnicities.
3.3.1.2 Materials and Procedures

Participants first were asked to think of their most recent workplace conflict, involving only themselves and one other individual. They were asked to indicate several details about the conflict, such as the job level and gender of their co-party in the conflict, how long ago the conflict occurred, and a few sentences to indicate what the conflict was about.

Implications of conflict. I next assessed a variety of implications that could reasonably occur in the hours, days, and weeks following an episode of workplace conflict. Participants were first asked to assess how they felt during and immediately following the conflict in relation to 20 emotions, such as angry, worried, guilty, anxious, frustrated, neutral (see Appendix D for the full list). Some emotions (e.g., distress, guilty) were taken from the PANAS scale of emotions, and others I added because they seemed to capture how one might reasonably feel after engaging in workplace conflict (e.g., angry, tense, frustrated, lonely, sad). Participants indicated their agreement on a 7-point likert scale that ranged from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). Emotions that did not cleanly load onto one of two factors were excluded. The first factor consisted of angry, upset, tense, frustrated, mad, and the reverse-coded versions of neutral (non-neutral), calm (agitated), happy (unhappy), satisfied (dissatisfied), and content (malcontent) (α = .92). These seemed to map onto what Larsen and Diener (1992) have conceptualized as activated unpleasant emotions, and so I labeled this factor as such. The second factor consisted of sad, afraid, lonely, guilty, worried (α = .80), which map onto what Larsen and Diener (1992) refer to as unactivated unpleasant emotions, so I labeled it as such.

Next, participants were asked to indicate how they felt and behaved in the one to 24 hours following the conflict. To assess this, I included an 8-item rumination scale (McCullough, Bono, & Root, 2007; α = .97), a 2-item venting scale (Carver, 1997; α = .89), and a 4-item insomnia scale.
(Jenkins, Stanton, Neimcryk, & Rose, 1988; α = .96), which was adapted to reflect sleep problems
the night of the conflict rather than generalized insomnia. Participants indicated their agreement
with each of these items on a 7-point likert scale that ranged from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7
(Strongly agree).

Third, participants were asked to indicate how they behaved toward their co-party in the
conflict in the days following the conflict. To assess this, I used the reconciliation and forgiveness
items (7 items; α = .91) and revenge subscales (4 items; α = .93) taken from Aquino, Tripp, and
Bies (2006). Participants indicated their agreement on a 7-point likert scale ranging from 1
(Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).

Participants next indicated the extent to which the workplace conflict interfered with their
affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997; 5 items; α = .98) and job satisfaction (Cammann et
al., 1983; one item). Participants indicated their agreement on a 7-point likert scale ranging from 1
(Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

Finally, participants provided a variety of demographic information, such as their gender,
age, job tenure, job level, gender breakdown of their workplace, and ethnicity.

All measures appear in Appendix D.

3.3.2 Results

A multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted with two dummy coded
variables (male same-sex or other, cross-sex conflict or other) entered as fixed factors, which left
female same-sex conflict as the reference category. The dependent variables were rumination,
venting, sleep problems, unactivated unpleasant emotions, activated unpleasant emotions,
commitment/satisfaction/turnover intentions (these three scales loaded on one factor and will be
referred to as job-related attitudes), reconciliation/forgiveness, and revenge. I controlled for the effects of participants’ age, tenure, job level, the job level of their co-party in conflict, the gender breakdown of their organizations, and how long ago the conflict occurred. The correlation matrix with means and standard deviations of the dependent variables appear in Table 10, and the results of the MANOVA appear in Table 11.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Activated unpleasant</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>(.92)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Unactivated unpleasant</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>(.80)</td>
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<td>emotions</td>
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<td>3. Rumination</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>(.97)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4. Venting</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>(.89)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Insomnia</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>(.96)</td>
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<td>6. Forgiveness</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.34**</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>(.91)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Revenge</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.20**</td>
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<td>(.93)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Job-related attitudes</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>(.98)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 287.
* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Table 10 Study 5 Correlation matrix with means and standard deviations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dummy code: Malesame-sex = 1</td>
<td>Activated unpleasant</td>
<td>8.482</td>
<td>6.692</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unactivated unpleasant</td>
<td>2.809</td>
<td>1.697</td>
<td>.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rumination</td>
<td>7.354</td>
<td>2.690</td>
<td>.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Venting</td>
<td>10.116</td>
<td>3.260</td>
<td>.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Insomnia</strong></td>
<td>12.026</td>
<td>4.002</td>
<td>.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Revenge</strong></td>
<td>10.675</td>
<td>8.315</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job-related attitudes</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Dummy code: Cross-sex = 1      | Activated unpleasant     | .484        | .386 | .535  |
|                                | Unactivated unpleasant   | 1.298       | .784 | .377  |
|                                | Rumination               | 3.609       | 1.320| .252  |
|                                | Venting                  | .002        | .001 | .979  |
|                                | Insomnia                 | .053        | .018 | .894  |
|                                | Forgiveness              | .171        | .085 | .771  |
|                                | Revenge                  | 2.532       | 1.973| .161  |
|                                | Job-related attitudes    | 1.562       | .443 | .506  |

*Note. N=287.*

Table 11 Study 5 Test of between-subjects effects of gender on outcomes of workplace conflict

As can be viewed in Table 11, it appeared that male same-sex conflict differed from female same-sex conflict in terms of activated unpleasant emotions, insomnia, and revenge. Meanwhile, cross-sex conflict did not produce different outcomes from female same-sex conflict. I investigated that nature of the significant differences between female and male same-sex conflict on the outcomes of activated unpleasant emotions, insomnia, and revenge in three separate hierarchical regressions, with the same control variables as the MANOVA.

In terms of activated unpleasant emotions, the results of the regression revealed that participants engaged in an episode of male same-sex conflict experienced less activated unpleasant emotions, \( t(274) = -2.53, p = .012 \), less insomnia, \( t(274) = -1.99, p = .047 \), and more revenge, \( t(274) = 2.88, p = .004 \), than participants engaged in an episode of female same-sex conflict.
However, I could not conclude that female same-sex conflict differed meaningfully in terms of the outcomes it produced relative to cross-sex conflict. As such, I found only partial support for Hypothesis 1.

3.3.3 Discussion

The results uncovered in Study 4 did not provide complete support for my speculation that perhaps the reason that third parties perceive female same-sex conflict as having more negative implications for the individuals involved (Study 2) is because women tend to react more negatively than men to same-sex conflict scenarios, and more negatively than they do to cross-sex conflict scenarios. Although I did find that women reported more activated unpleasant emotions and more sleep problems than men following their same-sex conflict, men reported engaging in more vengeful behaviors than women following their same-sex conflict, which, presumably, would result in more ongoing relationship difficulties. Moreover, female same-sex conflict did not differ meaningfully from cross-sex conflict, which does not suggest that there is something particularly unique about female same-sex conflict.

This study, like Study 4, was still limited in that it relied on participants’ recall of their most recent workplace conflict. Future research should attempt to employ a diary methodology, whereby participants record the ‘who’, ‘what’, and ‘where’ of their workplace conflict immediately after an episode occurs, and document their feelings about the conflict over the following hours, days, and weeks. Beyond allowing me to determine gender differences in the emotions that occur during and immediately after conflict, this methodology would also provide insight into how workplace relationships are impacted over time by instances of conflict, and the role that organizational third parties play in shaping the outcomes of conflict.
Chapter 4: Conclusion

For my dissertation I proposed and tested portions of a two-stage model that locates the source of what appears to be a widely held belief that women have more dysfunctional same-sex relationships and more frequent same-sex conflict at work than men. The contribution of my work is that it provides a framework for systematically investigating a) the validity of the belief that female and male same-sex conflict at work differ from one another in significant ways; b) the processes that might lead to the pervasiveness and acceptance of this belief; c) the social psychological dynamics that could lead to actual differences in the frequency of female and male same-sex conflict; and d) the problematization of female same-sex conflict and its consequences for gender equality.

I tested several aspects of my model across five studies. Generally speaking, I found more support for the problematization of female same-sex conflict by third parties than I did for the notion that female same-sex differs from male same-sex conflict in meaningful ways, in terms of its nature (person-related versus task-related), its frequency, and its intensity. However, I did find support for the notion that women react more negatively than men to agentic female targets (and more negatively than men to agentic male targets), which could provide insight into why female same-sex workplace relationships are problematized by third parties relative to male same-sex workplace relationships.

My model and the results of the studies I conducted have a number of implications for future research into the effects of gender and its associated stereotypes on workplace conflict, the dynamics of intragroup conflict for groups other than women, and the impact of stereotypes on how people label conflict.
4.1 Implications for Theory and Future Research

4.1.1 Gender Stereotypes and Workplace Conflict

Mine is the first model that I am aware of that considers how workplace conflict is produced, perceived, and shaped as a function of the gender of the individuals involved. I hope my dissertation opens new avenues of empirical and theoretical research aimed at understanding how gender influences the emergence, progression, and perception of conflict in organizations. I have made the case in this paper that a significant number of people appear to accept the belief that women have unique difficulties with one another at work. Yet previous research examining female same-sex conflict has seldom made relevant comparisons with male same-sex conflict in order to justify this assumption. To rectify this omission, I advocate for future research that is explicitly designed to compare and contrast the same-sex conflict dynamics of women and men to determine whether perceived differences are real in an empirical sense or largely a product of violated expectations of how women and men ought to behave.

As noted previously, my model focused primarily on same-sex conflict. Future research can therefore extend my theoretical arguments and empirical findings by giving more consideration to cross-sex conflict. For example, I expect that while cross-sex conflict occurs less frequently than same-sex conflict, it may generate a qualitatively different set of problems for employees than same-sex conflict when it is perceived as emanating from sexism, for example. Consideration of this possibility was beyond the scope of my model, but based on my claim that third parties’ interpretation of dyadic conflict is socially constructed, there are legitimate reasons for assuming that many factors I identified in my model (e.g., prescriptive gender stereotypes, attributions, social
construction processes) may play important roles in the labeling of cross-sex workplace conflict as sexist or sex-based harassment.

In order to address the portions of my model that I was unable to test, researchers might investigate whether women react with enhanced feelings of competitive threat to an agentic women’s behavior, relative to men. It would also be particularly interesting for future research to investigate circumstances in which men experience competitive and/or collective threat in response to other men. Perhaps in organizations with female-centered power there are less organizational resources accessible to men, which then could induce more competitive threat and intrasexual competition among men. Future research should also investigate my claim that the problematization of female same-sex conflict ultimately legitimizes the existing gender hierarchy. For example, support for this assertion could come from research demonstrating that individuals who are high on social dominance orientation and therefore believe in the intractability of social hierarchy (Pratto et al., 1994) are particularly likely to problematize women’s same-sex workplace conflict/relationships. Finally, it would be beneficial for future research to test my claims about mechanisms that might mitigate both the incidence of female same-sex conflict and its problematization, such as women’s past intragroup behavior and the sex integration of the organization.

4.1.2 Intragroup Conflict in Other Disadvantaged Groups

I stated in the introduction that mine is a model restricted to explaining the dynamics of gender and workplace conflict, but I also stated that my model could be adapted to conflict among members of other relatively powerless or disadvantaged groups. For example, I can envision how future studies could apply my model with relatively little modification to explain conflict and its
problematization among other minority groups (relative to majority groups) for whom agency is proscribed regardless of target gender, such as Asians (Berdahl & Min, 2012). However, the model would require somewhat more modification to be applicable to Black individuals, since agency is actually less prohibited for Black women than it is for Black men (Hall et al., 2012). Indeed, research has demonstrated that agentic Black women do not elicit as much backlash as agentic White women and Black men do (Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012), presumably because they are subject to different descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes than Black men and White women. By comparing the nature of intragroup conflict and its problematization by third parties across different minority groups, it is possible to ascertain which specific stereotype content, when violated, produces the outcomes I have described in my model.

4.1.3 The Social Construction of Workplace Conflict and Other Interactions

While there have been many studies examining the antecedents and consequences of task and relationship conflict, to my knowledge there has been no previous attempt to predict the labeling of conflicts as relationship or task as a function of the gender of the actors involved. My social constructionist account of how same-sex conflict is interpreted by third parties describes how this labeling process might unfold and what consequences result from it. My theory does this by drawing on the established mechanisms of social influence, sensemaking, and the use of stereotypes to inform the interpretation of ambiguous organizational events, of which conflict is one. An assumption of my theory is that conflict is defined by the meanings that people assign to it. This assumption situates my model within a venerable group of other social science theories (e.g., Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Blumer, 1962; Garfinkel, 1967; Schutz, 1967) and philosophical writings (Camus, 1955; Frankl, 1946; Sartre, 1943) that conceive of human beings as meaning-
makers who define social reality by drawing from the schemas they have acquired through experience and the information they receive from others during everyday interaction. Consequently, the processes I have described can be generalized to other forms of same-sex interactions at work that do not necessarily involve conflict. For example, familiar organizational concepts such as leader-member exchange (Graen & Cashman, 1975), abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000), and psychological contracts (Morrison & Robinson, 1997) can be analyzed from a sensemaking perspective that takes into account the gender of the parties involved to explain how dyadic relationships are construed and labeled by others and the actors themselves.

4.2 Practical Implications

4.2.1 Implications for Women’s Same-Sex Workplace Relationships

Perhaps the most significant practical implications of my model, if it proves valid in its entirety, is that I believe third parties’ problematization of female same-sex relationships could actually heighten tension and foment conflict among women, producing a self-fulfilling prophecy (Merton, 1968). Past research shows that third parties’ interpretations of events are an integral component of actors’ sensemaking process (Louis, 1980). The possibility that women’s interpretations of their own same-sex conflict could be directly influenced by others’ interpretations is consistent with Sonenshein’s (2007) argument that people often rely on what he refers to as ‘social anchors’, or interlocutors in the local environment, to test their interpretations of social stimuli. Indeed, studies have shown that social cues provided by third parties are influential in convincing terminated employees that their treatment by the organization was unjustified and that they should pursue legal proceedings (Goldman, 2001; Groth, Goldman, Gilliland, & Bies, 2002). This suggests to me that third party interpretations of female same-sex conflict can mold actors’
interpretations in meaningful ways, which could include introducing doubt into each actor’s understanding of the quality of her relationship her co-party in conflict. For example, a workplace conflict that might have been interpreted by the women involved as a minor task-related disagreement could, due to third parties’ relational person attributions, cause the women involved to wonder whether the other does, in fact, have it out for her. This will imbue tension and suspicion into women’s same-sex relationships, which could exacerbate conflict and reduce relationship quality over time.

### 4.2.2 Implications for Organizations

Beyond personal implications, I assert that female same-sex conflict and its problematization can have significant practical implications for workgroups and organizations. I see these implications as primarily affecting gender equality, workgroup climate, and individual, workgroup, and organizational performance.

In terms of gender equality, I believe that the problematization of female same-sex conflict and female same-sex relationships is that it will allow third parties – consciously or subconsciously – to rationalize existing gender inequalities in organizations. In this way, the notion that female same-sex workplace relationships are dysfunctional can be viewed as a hierarchy-legitimizing myth that justifies the status quo (Pratto et al., 1994). System justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994) suggests that individuals want to view the worlds as a fair and predictable place, and so are consciously or subconsciously motivated to accept ideologies that justify the existing social hierarchy (Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Sullivan, 2003). I argue that the problematization of female same-sex workplace conflict/relationships deflects third parties’ attention away from the structural disadvantages that women face and toward women’s alleged deficiencies, to ultimately provide
justification for women’s subordinate status relative to men. First, when third parties conclude that women have the tendency to “derail” each other at work (Silverman, 2009) or that they find it difficult to work together effectively, it suggests that women are somehow less capable than men of dealing with the challenges of organizational life. This belief could then sustain other beliefs that can be logically deduced from it, such as women will not be as effective in leadership roles because they will have a hard time managing and working with other women.

Second, the notion that women are prone to episodes of same-sex conflict erroneously identifies the source of gender inequality in women’s collective behavior (e.g., *Women would get ahead if only they could support and cooperate with one another*). What follows from this assumption is that the onus is on women to engage in collective action if they want to improve their group’s status. Indeed, I see the subtle influences of this belief on the media and academic attention devoted to female same-sex conflict (Duguid, 2011; Tennery, 2012), which has largely emerged from a place of bewilderment at why women do not always go out of their way to help and support one another at work— as though they must be expected to do so for the sake of gender equality.

As a result of these processes, the problematization of female same-sex workplace conflict/relationships can ultimately lead to and reinforce the belief that it is women’s own deficiencies that are responsible for their status in the gender hierarchy. This, in turn, legitimizes the typical gender hierarchy in organizations, in which women are not as highly represented as men in the most demanding, prestigious, and critical leadership roles in organizations.

Female same-sex conflict and its problematization may also facilitate the emergence of a workgroup climate that is detrimental to optimal levels of individual and group performance in a couple of ways. First, my finding that women are particularly inclined to experience collective threat in response to a non-communal female target (Study 3) could also mean that these women may have difficulty working cooperatively with them. This could be particularly true for women
who tend to expect support and solidarity from their female coworkers, given women’s general disadvantage relative to men in organizations. When women experience threat and/or negative affect in response to agentic women, they might find it particularly difficult to collectively build and sustain the kind of affirming and supportive work climate in which they are most likely to thrive.

Second, it is possible that the problematization of female same-sex conflict could cause women to avoid expressing legitimate reservations about certain organizational decisions, policies, or goals, the result of which is that personal and workgroup performance will suffer. Fearing the ‘catfight’ label, women might refrain from criticizing or challenging the ideas of female coworkers in situations in which disagreement over substantive issues can be both constructive and necessary for improving group decision making and fostering innovation.

4.3 Practical Recommendations

Based on my model and empirical findings, I can offer practical recommendations for both managers and women in organizations. First, given that my model predicts that female same-sex conflict and its problematization could be lessened in organizations with a proportionate sex distribution, there are practical reasons to strive for enhanced sex integration at each organizational level. I acknowledge that achieving sex integration is easier said than done, and that managers are often limited by the sex composition of applicant pools. Due to the changing nature of work, however, successful organizations are often those that recognize the need to recruit individuals from a variety of different educational and technical backgrounds, which can drastically widen and diversify one’s applicant pool. For example, Google is known for seeking individuals with a start-up mentality, characterized by intellect, learning agility, and innovation, among other things, with
relatively less attention paid to exact education and experience (Wang, 2011). By doing so, they attract individuals from a wide variety of disciplines, a potential result of which is enhanced sex integration.

Still, achieving sex integration is neither a quick nor simple solution. Fortunately there are other strategies available to managers if they wish to avoid the negative implications I have outlined in my model, such as finding ways to reduce the likelihood of relationship conflict in general. This might be done by creating an environment that is characterized by fairness, collaboration, interdependence, and the celebration of one another’s successes. Encouraging cooperation and eliminating factors that are known to generate resentment and counterproductive workplace behaviors, such as organizational injustice (Bobocel, 2013; Rahim, Magner, & Shapiro, 2000), can alleviate feelings of threat and frustration among all employees. Managers might also minimize relationship conflict by providing opportunities for employees to participate in activities that create superordinate goals or identities that bind organizational members more closely to one another (Kesebir, 2012; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). Finally, managers are advised to find ways of increasing interdependence within workgroups, since teams appear to function most effectively under conditions of high task interdependence (Ramamoorthy & Flood, 2004). When employees know that the input and expertise of their fellow team members is essential for the purpose of completing a project, they might be more inclined to overlook interpersonal incompatibilities and cooperate for the sake of the task. Creating a work environment in which employees perceive that there is a general sense of interpersonal harmony can provide a powerful counter-narrative to combat the assumption that female employees are particularly prone to episodes of same-sex conflict.
4.4 Conclusion

The purpose of my dissertation was to propose and test portions of a two-stage model that proposes why and how women’s same-sex conflict at work has come to be perceived as more problematic than men’s. It is my hope that my model and empirical findings will contribute to the broader literature on the role of gender, third parties, and stereotypes in producing and shaping workplace conflict. I also hope that my work stimulates future empirical research that seeks to determine how female same-sex conflict at work and third parties’ problematization of such conflict might be mitigated, with the overarching goal of eliminating the negative belief that women are often one another’s worst enemies at work.
Bibliography


Appendices

Appendix A

Participants responded to each item below on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

Relationship Repair:
These individuals will be able to let go of any negative feelings.
These individuals will be able to put aside any negative feelings in order to work together effectively.
The relationship between these two individuals will always be strained.
These individuals will eventually make amends.
These individuals will have a new start—a renewed relationship.
These individuals will let go of any resentment.
These individuals will keep getting revenge.

Affective Personal Implications:
Because of this disagreement, ONE or BOTH of these individuals might...
…be less happy to spend the rest of their career with the organization.
…feel less like “part of the family” at the organization.
…feel less “emotionally attached” to the organization.
…feel as if the organization has less personal meaning.
…feel a weak sense of belonging to the organization.
…feel less satisfied with their job, overall.
…not like their job, in general.
…not like working there, in general.
...start thinking about leaving their job(s).
...start actively searching for other jobs.

Organizational Implications:
This disagreement reflects poorly on the whole organization.
This disagreement could damage the reputation of the organization if outsiders were aware of it.
This disagreement could interrupt the productivity of employees in the immediate work group.
This disagreement could interrupt the productivity of the organization's other employees.
This disagreement could have negative repercussions for the entire organization.
The disagreement reflects poorly on the upper management within the organization.
This disagreement could hurt the performance of the entire organization.
This disagreement could tarnish the image of the organization.
This disagreement could negatively impact the morale of uninvolved employees.
This disagreement will be a source of gossip around the office.
Appendix B

We now would like you to engage in a short thought experiment. Imagine for a moment that you are a graduate research assistant at your university. You are researching employee motivation, with a focus on what types of motivators (e.g., money, benefits, recognition) work best in different contexts. This past summer you attended a conference where you met and spoke with a Professor from a different university who does very similar research to you.

You are starting a new study for which you need a measure of Organizational Motivational Practices, and you cannot find this scale in its full published form. You know, however, that the Professor you met at the conference has published with this scale, so you decide to contact him/her, both in the interest of obtaining the scale and also maintaining the connection you developed at the conference. You hope he/she remembers you. He/She is someone you admire and would love to have the support of.

You send the following e-mail to the Professor:

"Dear Dr. Anne/Andrew Gordon,
I don't know if you remember me but we met at the ORG conference this summer and had an interesting discussion about our shared research interests. It was nice meeting you! I hope the rest of your summer was enjoyable?
I am starting a new project and would like to use Corbin's measure of Organizational Motivational Practices, but I cannot find it in its complete published form. I see that you have used it in the past and was wondering if you might send it to me?
Thank you kindly and I would love to hear more about what you've been working on. Take care!
Warm regards,
Your Name"

You wait to hear back from Dr. Gordon. About a week later you receive the following email from Dr. Gordon:

"Hello,
Not being the creator of this measure, I don't feel it's my place to distribute it. The creator is now a retired professor at University of Illinois. I don't know if he still responds to email requests like this."
Appendix C

Job Satisfaction:
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.
In general, I don't like my job.
Generally speaking, I like working here.

Turnover Intentions:
I often think about quitting my job.
It is very likely that I will actively look for a new job in the near future.
I am starting to ask my friends / contacts about other job possibilities.

Emotional Exhaustion:
I feel emotionally drained from my work.
I feel used up at the end of the work day.
I dread getting up in the morning and having to face another day on the job.
I feel burned out from my work.
I feel frustrated by my job.
I feel I’m working too hard on my job.

Negative Acts (the first 5 items are task-related and the remainder are person-related):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(A) Below are a variety of incidences that might have happened to you AT WORK in the past 6 months. Please think about whether each has happened to you.</th>
<th>(B) How frequently has this happened?</th>
<th>(C) Typically, who is the source(s)?</th>
<th>(D) Typically, what is the gender of the source(s)?</th>
<th>(E) How negative was this experience for you?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did a colleague…</td>
<td>1= Never</td>
<td>1= Co-worker(s)</td>
<td>1= Always male</td>
<td>1= Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2= Now and then</td>
<td>2= Supervisor(s)</td>
<td>2= Usually male</td>
<td>2= Slightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3= Monthly</td>
<td>3= Someone from the ‘sworn side’</td>
<td>3= Male and female equally</td>
<td>3= Somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4= Weekly</td>
<td>4= Upper-level management</td>
<td>4= Usually female</td>
<td>4= Quite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5= Daily</td>
<td>5= Always female</td>
<td>5= Extremely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Withhold information that affects your performance.
Order you to do work below your level of competence.
Ignore your opinions.
Excessively monitor your work.
Expose you to an unmanageable workload.
Humiliate or ridicule you in connection with your work.
Remove or replace your key areas of responsibility with more trivial or unpleasant tasks.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spread gossip and rumours about you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore or exclude you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make insulting or offensive remarks about your person, attitudes, or your private life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint or signal that you should quit your job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat reminders of your errors or mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>React in a hostile way when you approached.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistently criticize your errors or mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry out a practical joke against you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make allegations against you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessively tease you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Participants responded to each item below on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements about how you felt during and immediately after this conflict.
During and immediately after this conflict, I felt...

Angry
Upset *
Sad
Distressed *
Tense
Neutral
Calm
Happy
Content
Satisfied
Frustrated
Resentful
Jealous
Lonely
Afraid *
Guilty *
Numb
Excited
Confused
Worried

*- taken from the PANAS

Rumination:
I couldn't stop thinking about what he/she did to me.
I brooded about how he/she hurt me.
Images of the conflict kept coming back to me.
Thoughts and feelings about how he/she hurt me kept running through my head.
Strong feelings about what this person did to me kept bubbling up.
I found it difficult not to think about the hurt he/she caused me.
I felt myself playing the conflict over and over again in my head.
Even when I was engaged in other tasks, I thought about how he/she hurt me.
Even when I was engaged in other tasks, I thought about the conflict.
I couldn't stop thinking about the conflict.
Venting:
I said things to coworkers, friends, or family to let my negative feelings escape.
I expressed my negative feelings to coworkers, friends, or family.

Sleeping Problems:
I had difficulty falling asleep that night.
I woke up several times that night.
I had difficulty staying asleep that night.
I woke up the next day feeling tired and worn out.

Reconciliation and Forgiveness:
I made an effort to be more friendly and concerned.
I gave them a new start -- a renewed relationship.
I tried to make amends.
I let go of any negative feelings I had against them.
I let go of any hate and desire for vengeance.
I let go of any hurt and pain.
I let go of any resentment I felt toward them.

Revenge:
I tried to make something bad happen to them.
I did something to make them get what they deserve.
I tried to hurt them.
I got even with them.

Commitment, Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions (Job-related attitudes):
Please indicate the extent to which you experienced each of the following feelings in the 2 weeks to one month after this conflict.
Because of this conflict, I felt...

…less happy to spend the rest of my career with my organization.
…less like “part of the family” at my organization.
…less “emotionally attached” to my organization.
…as though the organization had less personal meaning.
…a weak sense of belonging to my organization.
…less satisfied with my job, overall.
...started thinking about leaving my job.
...started actively searching for other jobs.
...quit my job.