Double Victimization in the Workplace: Why Observers Condemn Passive Victims of Sexual Harassment

Kristina A. Diekmann
David Eccles School of Business, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112,
mgtkd@business.utah.edu

Sheli D. Sillito Walker
Marriott School of Management, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602,
sheli.sillito@byu.edu

Adam D. Galinsky
Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois 60208,
agalinsky@kellogg.northwestern.edu

Ann E. Tenbrunsel
Mendoza School of Business, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556,
tenbrunsel.1@nd.edu

Five studies explore observers' condemnation of passive victims. Studies 1 and 2 examine the role of observers' behavioral forecasts in condemning passive victims of sexual harassment. Observers generally predicted that they would engage in greater confrontation than victims typically do. More importantly, the more confrontation participants predicted they would engage in, the more they condemned the passive victim, and the less willing they were to recommend the victim for a job and to work with her. Study 3 identifies the failure to consider important motivations likely experienced by victims—and that contribute to their passivity—as an important driver of behavioral forecasting errors. Having forecasters reflect on motivations normally experienced but not typically forecast produced behavioral predictions that were more consistent with the actual passive behavior of sexual harassment victims. Studies 4 and 5 reduce condemnation of passive sexual harassment victims by highlighting important motivations likely experienced by those victims (Study 4) and by having participants recall a past experience of not acting when being intimidated in the workplace, a situation related but distinct from sexual harassment (Study 5). The results from these studies add insights into the causes and consequences of victim condemnation and help explain why passivity in the face of harassment—the predominant response—is subject to so much scorn.

Key words: interpersonal condemnation; sexual harassment; forecasting; construal; social distancing
History: Published online in Articles in Advance June 15, 2012.

Introduction

In the 1991 Senate confirmation hearings regarding Clarence Thomas' appointment to the Supreme Court, Anita Hill testified that she had been sexually harassed by Thomas during his tenure as head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She testified that despite being harassed numerous times years before, at no point did she confront Thomas about his behavior or take any action against the harassment (see Fitzgerald et al. 1995). Her claim of repeated sexual harassment and perpetual inaction led to public suspicion with and condemnation of Anita Hill. Indeed, numerous polls of the general public conducted during the hearings found that the majority of respondents did not believe or trust Anita Hill; they simply could not imagine that someone would put up with such sustained harassment for so long and not say or do anything (see Fitzgerald et al. 1995).

In interpreting and evaluating Anita Hill's behavior, many people may have asked themselves one simple question: "How would I have behaved if I were in that situation?" That is, they may have forecasted what their own behavior would be like in that situation when forming an impression of Anita Hill (Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001, Balcetis and Dunning 2008). The problem with using this method to evaluate others, however, is that individuals are generally poor forecasters of what their behavior would be like: they tend to overestimate the extent to which they would act in a socially desirable manner. People typically predict more action and reaction than they actually engage in, especially when taking action is a socially acceptable response (Diekmann et al. 2003, Epley and Dunning 2000).

We argue that because people tend to forecast more action and reaction than they actually engage in, using

such forecasts when evaluating others often produces harsh evaluations of those who do not act against nefariousness. For example, when we hear about workers who failed to blow the whistle on their unscrupulous boss, it is easy to imagine that we would have swiftly and decisively acted and, as a result, condemn the workers for their failure to act. Similarly, we may believe that had we faced a situation similar to that of Anita Hill, we would have taken immediate action to put a stop to the harassment. And for those who do not act, just as Anita Hill stayed passive, we condemn their behavior as a result of our own behavioral forecasts.

The current research highlights the potential interpersonal and organizational consequences of relying on behavioral forecasts and the important role they play in producing interpersonal condemnation. This research also identifies one particular reason behavioral forecasts are inaccurate—namely, that people often fail to consider important motivations that are experienced in the actual situation when predicting their own behavior in such a situation. These results enhance and extend the behavioral forecasting literature and add insight into why sexual harassment persists in the workplace despite widespread denunciation of these behaviors in the abstract. Our results also shed light on potential methods to reduce condemnation of passive victims: having observers think about the predominant motivations most frequently experienced in the situation they are evaluating but typically ignored in their forecasts or having observers recall a situation when they themselves were passive victims of intimidation (related but distinct from sexual harassment) reduced condemnation of the passive sexual harassment victim.

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sex-related behavior that is perceived by the targets/victims to be offensive and threatening (Fitzgerald et al. 1997). According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, sexual harassment includes "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature... when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment."[1] According to various accounts, approximately 50% of women experience some form of sexual harassment in the workplace over their career (Fitzgerald et al. 1988, Schneider et al. 1997).

Sexual harassment has many potential costs to the victims, including reduced job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, and productivity and increased depression, anxiety, and work withdrawal because of the harassment (i.e., lateness, absenteeism,

neglectfulness), as well as lower immune responses (see Cortina and Magley 2003, Fitzgerald et al. 1997, Glomb et al. 1999, Schneider et al. 1997, Willness et al. 2007). Many of these aforementioned costs prove to be expensive for the organization as a whole even before one considers the costs due to litigation, negative publicity, and difficulty in hiring and retaining employees (Lengnick-Hall 1995).

One of the biggest impediments to reducing sexual harassment is that victims typically do not take action against such harassment (e.g., confronting the harasser or reporting the incident) (Fitzgerald et al. 1988, 1995). Without knowledge of such sexual harassment, it is difficult for organizations to rectify the problem when it exists. As Perry et al. (1997, p. 458) argue,

> Organizations generally do not act on sexual harassment until an employee actively responds to the harassment (e.g., confronts the harasser, reports the problem to an organizational representative).... If women do not actively respond to sexual harassment, the harassment may persist and their personal and professional lives may suffer (Crull 1982, Gutek and Koss 1993).

When no action is taken, organizational leaders are likely unaware of the behavior and thus do not take steps to stop the harassment. As a result, the harasser does not get feedback that the behavior is inappropriate, and the problem persists (Perry et al. 1997). Victim passivity can reduce awareness that there is a problem and prevent organizational action that could end the harassing situation and start the recovery process for the victim (Munson et al. 2000). Such passivity may also contribute to the perseverance of sexual harassment myths, defined as "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual harassment of women" (Lonsway et al. 2008, p. 600). These myths may include such beliefs that the harassment victim, when she eventually speaks up, may be making up or exaggerating her claims, or if the harassment is believed to have occurred, that the victim may have enjoyed it or was responsible for the harassment (Lonsway et al. 2008).

The Costs of Acting and the Incentives Toward Passivity

It is not surprising, though, that so few victims take action. Reporting sexual harassment often does not improve job, psychological, and health outcomes, and it may even prove harmful, possibly resulting in retaliation and even greater psychological distress and lower job satisfaction for the victim (Bergman et al. 2002). As Sbraga and O'Donohue (2000) argue, sexual harassment victims face a double bind or dilemma. On the one hand, assertive responses such as confronting the harasser or reporting the incident establish that the incident occurred and are consistent with what the general public views as appropriate responses

(Colatosti and Karg 1992). On the other hand, confronting the harasser or reporting the incident often leads to retaliation, public scrutiny, and negative psychological and physical symptoms.

The majority of female sexual harassment victims resolve this dilemma by staying passive. By doing so, however, they may unknowingly set themselves up for condemnation by others who perceive the victim's passive response to sexual harassment as weakness. Such condemnation adds to the victim's already heavy costs (psychological and physical harm). Passive victims become victims twice over, bearing the costs of the harassment as well as the costs of condemnation by coworkers who observe the harassment and the victim's passive response to it. Such condemnation and negative evaluation by coworkers can have an additional negative effect on the quality of the victims' interpersonal relationships in the workplace, their reputation, and their job satisfaction, commitment, and performance, and it may lead to greater experience of stress in the workplace (Duffy et al. 2002, Liden et al. 2000, Rook 1992).

Condemnation of passive victims can have direct, significant costs to the organization as well. Indeed, condemnation by coworkers and others in the organization is one aspect of social undermining in organizations (Vinokur and van Ryn 1993), which has been defined as "behavior intended to hinder, over time, the ability to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work-related success, and favorable reputation" (Duffy et al. 2002, p. 332). Duffy et al. (2002) demonstrated that social undermining is related to reduced organizational commitment, increased counterproductive behavior (e.g., theft, workplace sabotage, unnecessary absences, reduced effort), and decreased subjective well-being.

It is this condemnation by others of a victim's passive response to sexual harassment on which we focus in this paper. In the next two sections, we discuss the role of behavioral forecasts and forecasting errors in the condemnation process and how reducing such forecasting errors can reduce condemnation of passive victims of sexual harassment.

Forecasting Errors

Research on behavioral forecasting suggests that people are not very accurate in predicting their future behaviors. People are only moderately accurate in predicting their future choices and decisions (Diekmann et al. 2003, Vallone et al. 1990), from staying up all night to going to the dentist (Osberg and Shrauger 1986). People also tend to be overconfident in their self-predictions (Griffin et al. 1990). Indeed, in one study, Vallone et al. (1990) found that when people were 100% certain that they would engage in a behavior, they actually engaged in that behavior only 77% of the time.

Our forecasts are often overly optimistic, from predicting how quickly we can accomplish goals and tasks (Buehler et al. 1994, 1997; Newby-Clark et al. 2000) to forecasting success in achieving desired outcomes (Gilovich et al. 1993). This optimistic bias is most clearly evident when people make predictions about engaging in socially desirable behaviors or situations that have moral overtones (Balcetis and Dunning 2008, Epley and Dunning 2000, Tenbrunsel et al. 2010). For instance, Epley and Dunning (2000) found that participants overestimated how likely they were to buy daffodils to benefit the American Cancer Society, to cooperate in a social dilemma, or to donate money to various charitable organizations. These participants overestimated how strongly their behavior would be influenced by moral sentiments (i.e., their best of intentions) and underestimated how influenced they would be by self-interested concerns. Indeed, going back to the Milgram (1974) and Asch (1951) studies on obedience and conformity, many observers believed that they themselves would never bend to the social pressures embedded in the experiments, when in fact a substantial proportion of actual participants were obedient to experimenters and conformed to the invalid judgments of their peers. What is particularly pernicious about this optimistic bias in self-prediction is that people are generally unaware that they are susceptible to or even are making these errors (Epley and Dunning 2006).

Such behavioral forecasting errors also occur in interpersonal conflict situations. Diekmann et al. (2003) found that when forecasting, negotiators faced with a competitive versus noncompetitive negotiation opponent overestimated how competitive they would be. Negotiators who imagined facing a very competitive opponent predicted that they would counter this with their own competitive ferocity, but people actually negotiating against a very competitive opponent became timid and concessionary.

Particularly germane to the current investigation, Woodzicka and LaFrance (2001) examined reactions to real versus imagined sexual harassment in a job interview context. They found that women who were asked to imagine a situation where a male interviewer asked sexually harassing questions predicted they would directly confront the harasser by telling the interviewer it was none of his business, refusing to answer the questions, getting up and leaving, or even reporting the incident. However, in actuality, *not one* of the women who experienced this harassing behavior took any of these actions against the harasser. Whereas research using hypothetical harassment situations has found that women believe they would report or confront the harasser (Baker et al. 1990), evidence suggests that in actual sexual harassment cases, women tend not to do so (Fitzgerald et al. 1995, Gruber and Bjorn 1982, Gutek 1985).

Why are people inaccurate when forecasting what they would do in certain situations? Various related explanations for these forecasting errors have been identified. Forecasting errors may result from how people perceive their future or imagined self (Sherman 1980). Desirability concerns dominate predictions, but at the time of the decision, reality sets in, and beliefs and perceptions are influenced more by feasibility concerns. Thus, from a distance, people predict that they will engage in socially desirable actions such as confronting a sexual harasser, but as the event becomes closer in time, feasibility concerns, such as getting or keeping one's job, dominate (Knapp et al. 1997). Forecasting errors may also occur because people misconstrue the situation. When one is forecasting from a distance, high-level construals (which are more abstract and decontextualized) compared to low-level construals (which are more detailed and concrete) are elicited (Trope and Liberman 2000, 2003). From afar, people see the "big picture," but as the actual situation approaches, people see the details (Trope and Liberman 2003). Extending these explanations, we contend that when people forecast their behavioral responses to future or imagined situations, they overlook the motivations that are likely to occur in those situations. In making behavioral forecasts, individuals focus on the offending behavior and their desirable reaction to it while ignoring important motivations that will actually be present in the situation (Diekmann et al. 2003).

Interpersonal Consequences of Behavioral Forecasting

Although forecasting errors can result in negative consequences for the self, from the failure to fulfill expectations (Osberg and Shrauger 1986) to leaving individuals wholly unprepared for the forecast situations, there are interpersonal consequences as well. In line with Van Boven and Loewenstein (2005), we suggest that individuals will use their forecasts of what they would do in a situation to evaluate others. Basing evaluations of others on forecasts of one's behavior is problematic, however, because as we noted above, individuals who actually experience a situation react with more passivity and less valor than most observers forecast they would behave (Balcetis and Dunning 2008). Going back to the Anita Hill controversy, many people, in evaluating Anita Hill and interpreting her behavior, may have forecasted what their own behavior would be like in that situation to form an impression of her (Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001). Because most people predict more action than actually occurs when facing a sexually harassing situation, the impression formed of Anita Hill, who did not take action at the time the harassment occurred, was likely to be negative.

Given the tendency to misconstrue a future or hypothetical situation, individuals are likely to fall victim to an egocentric empathy gap whereby they do not anticipate how much their psychological distance influences their construal of a situation (Van Boven et al. 2000). At a distance, they likely will be less emotionally aroused (i.e., less fearful and anxious) than if they were in the actual harassing situation. For instance, Van Boven et al. (2005) found that people overestimated their own and others' willingness to engage in an embarrassing public performance such as dancing for money. Participants who faced a hypothetical performance predicted that they would be much more likely to choose to dance (31%) than participants who actually chose to dance (8%). Participants making predictions were in an unaroused state and underestimated the impact that fear and anxiety would have on the decision to dance in front of others (Van Boven et al. 2005).

There is some suggestive evidence that this empathy gap can affect interpersonal evaluations. Van Boven et al. (2000) examined the classic endowment effect (the tendency to value an object more when one owns it than when one does not own it) and found an egocentric empathy gap between owners of a mug and buyers. Both sides overestimated the similarity between their own valuation of the mug and the valuation of the other party—owners overestimated the buyer's valuation of the mug and buyers underestimated the owner's valuation. Estimates of the other party's valuation of the mug were positively correlated with their own valuation. Moreover, participants attributed the "greedy" behavior of the other party to a "greedy" disposition rather than to situational forces such as the endowment effect.

This finding and many studies on the fundamental attribution error (Heider 1958, Jones and Davis 1965, Ross 1977) and correspondence bias (Gilbert and Malone 1995) reveal that people misattribute causes of other's behavior to dispositions and discount the role of situational factors, often resulting in negative evaluations of others. When we look at the behavior of others, we see their dispositions dancing before us and focus on them as the cause of their behavior. People focus on the observable behavior and do not appreciate the transient motivations inspired by the specific situation. Thus, the situation melts away, and all the constraints that bind action are psychologically minimized in evaluations. In essence, observers make strong inferences because the behavior itself, even when it involves nonaction, is the most salient information available to them.

The fundamental attribution error provides insight into why passive victims are often interpersonally condemned. Indeed, in the case of sexual harassment, victims are often blamed for their circumstances, and it is common for observers to attribute responsibility for the behavior to the victim (De Judicibus and McCabe 2001, Kenig and Ryan 1986, Valentine-French and Radtke 1989). One important reason for these attributions is that victims often remain passive and do not take action

against the harassment (Fitzgerald et al. 1995). Indeed, research has shown that victims are held more responsible for the sexual harassment, particularly by female observers, when the victim acquiesced to the harasser's demands than when the victim resisted (Smirles 2004).

Understanding how the fundamental attribution error can contribute to the interpersonal condemnation of passive victims also provides pathways for preventing this condemnation. People focus on the offending behavior and ignore the situational constraints and hidden motivations that help to determine behavior. For example, making situational factors visually salient causes people to see the situational constraints and to incorporate them into their social inferences (Storms 1973). Because normally the passive behavior itself is salient, it leads to strong dispositional inferences and condemning judgments of this passivity. However, if people can turn their attention to focus on the situation *and* the motivations likely activated by this situation, they should make less strong dispositional inferences because they will appreciate how the situation and its motivations created passivity. Therefore, interpersonal condemnation should decrease.

The present research contributes to this research by examining an important mechanism underlying interpersonal condemnation. Specifically, we examine whether highlighting the important motivations likely experienced in the actual situation may help improve the accuracy of forecasters' construals of the situation and, as a result, align forecasts more with actual behavior and consequently reduce interpersonal condemnation. By doing so, we identify one method whereby organizations may be able to mitigate some of the costs of sexual harassment and the condemnation passive sexual harassment victims face in the workplace. We also show that when people have information about the situation they are evaluating, such as when they recall a past experience of intimidation in the workplace and why they remained passive, they are less likely to condemn the passive sexual harassment victim.

The Present Research

The present research seeks to accomplish three goals. First, Studies 1 and 2 explore the interpersonal and judgmental consequences of behavioral forecasts in a sexual harassment context. Second, Study 3 examines a possible method to align behavioral forecasts with actual behavior, thereby shedding light on an important possible cause of behavioral forecasting errors: the failure to consider important motivations likely experienced in the actual situation. Third, Studies 4 and 5 examine methods to reduce condemnation of passive victims. Specifically, Study 4 explores whether having observers of sexual harassment reflect on important motivations likely experienced in the actual situation, but not typically considered in forecasts, reduces derogation of

the passive sexual harassment victim. Finally, Study 5 investigates whether recalling an experience when one was a passive victim of intimidation—related, but not identical to sexual harassment—would reduce derogation of a passive sexual harassment victim. We studied female participants across our studies because they provide a conservative test of our hypotheses—women are likely to have a better understanding of and appreciation for the experience faced by the sexual harassment victim.

Study 1: Behavioral Forecasting Errors and Interpersonal Condemnation

Study 1 presents participants with a target of sexual harassment who behaved exactly as the vast majority of participants behaved when actually faced with the sexual harasser in the study by Woodzicka and LaFrance (2001), with that behavior exhibiting much less action or confrontation than the behavior predicted by forecasters in the same study. We predicted that observers' forecasts of confrontation would underlie a punitive, condemning reaction to victims who did not confront the harasser.

Method

Participants. Participants were 47 female undergraduates enrolled in a business course. The mean age of participants was 21.3 years, and they had an average of six months of full-time work experience.

Procedure. Participants read a scenario about a job interview. The scenario, which was adapted from Woodzicka and LaFrance (2001), described a situation wherein a female student being interviewed for a job on campus was asked three sexually harassing questions by a male interviewer, questions most women considered to be sexually harassing during a job interview (see Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001). Specifically, participants were asked to read the following:

> A female student named Karen was being interviewed for a research assistant position on campus. She was being interviewed by a male (age 32) in an office on campus. During the course of the interview, the male interviewer asked Karen the following questions:
> (1) Do you have a boyfriend?
> (2) Do people find you desirable?
> (3) Do you think it is important for women to wear bras to work?

Participants then were told that the female candidate (Karen) answered all three questions. By doing so, she responded passively and did not directly confront the harasser (see Gruber 1989, Knapp et al. 1997).

Behavioral Forecasting Measure. After reading the scenario, participants were asked the open-ended question, "If you had been the candidate, how specifically would you have responded if you were asked these same three questions during the interview?" and were provided space to write their responses.

Interpersonal Evaluation and Recommendation. Participants were asked to provide their overall impression of the candidate (1 = very unfavorable, 7 = very favorable). They were also asked to make a recommendation. Specifically, they were told, "You have been asked to make a recommendation on whether or not to hire [the candidate] for the research assistant position. Please indicate how strongly and positively you would recommend [the candidate]" (1 = not at all, 7 = very).

Results and Discussion

For the open-ended forecast question, "If you had been the candidate, how specifically would you have responded if you were asked these same three questions during the interview?" two raters coded responses (Cohen's kappa = 0.73; remaining differences were resolved through discussion) using a modified version of Woodzicka and LaFrance's (2001) classification scheme (see also Gruber 1989, Gutek 1993). This classification scheme included 13 different responses that were based on responses of a separate group of participants ($N = 20$) who were given the same sexual harassment scenario and rated the degree of confrontation of each of the 13 responses using a seven-point scale (1 = not at all confrontational, 7 = very confrontational). The order of responses is listed in Table 1. Telling the interviewer off was rated the most confrontational (mean = 6.40, SD = 1.14), and answering all the questions (as in our scenario) was rated the least confrontational (mean = 1.90, SD = 1.71).

Table 1 reports the percentage of participants who indicated they would engage in each of the 13 responses; because participants could indicate whether they would engage in more than one of these behaviors, we report the behavior with the highest-rated confrontation. Eighty-three percent of all participants predicted they would confront the interviewer more than the candidate did in the scenario; that is, only 8 of 47 participants (17%) predicted they would behave as the candidate did, i.e., by answering all the questions and thus doing nothing against the harassment. Indeed, this is how the majority of participants acted who actually faced this harassment in the Woodzicka and LaFrance (2001) study.

Analyses revealed a significant negative relationship between these open-ended forecasts and overall impression of the candidate ($B = -0.11$, SE = 0.05, $t = -2.27$, $p = 0.03$). We also found a significant negative relationship between these open-ended forecasts and their recommendation of the candidate for the research

Table 1 Percentage of Forecasted Responses to Sexually Harassing Interview Questions Described in Open-Ended Question (Study 1)

Categories of responses	Percentage
(13) Tell the interviewer off	2
(12) Take legal action	0
(11) Tell interviewer it's "None of your business"	2
(10) State the questions are against the law	4
(9) Ask why and do not answer	4
(8) File a complaint with the organization	2
(7) State questions are irrelevant or inappropriate	30
(6) Report incident to the supervisor	2
(5) Get up and leave interview	4
(4) Refuse to answer the questions	17
(3) Ask why and then answer the questions	11
(2) Refocus	4
(1) **Answer the questions (as in our scenario)**	17

Notes. These categories are a modified version of Woodzicka and LaFrance's (2001) categories. Because participants could indicate whether they would engage in more than one of these behaviors, we report the behavior with the highest-rated confrontation. The responses are listed in the order of rated degree of confrontation (based on an independent sample of participants' ratings), where 13 indicates the highest degree of confrontation and 1 indicates the lowest degree of confrontation.

assistant position ($B = -0.11$, SE = 0.05, $t = -2.14$, $p = 0.04$).

The more confrontation participants forecast for themselves, the more they condemned the candidate: they evaluated her more negatively and were less likely to recommend her for the position. These results suggest that observers have negative impressions of victims who do not behave as they imagine they themselves would behave, despite the fact that their actual behavior would likely be a far cry from those forecasts. These results shed light on an important consequence of erroneous behavioral forecasts—a contemptuous view of others.

Study 2: Social Distancing

Study 2 focuses on the organizational consequences of passive victim condemnation. Specifically, we anticipated that observers' contempt of a passive victim may result in social distancing from and reduced cooperation with such coworkers (Melwani and Barsade 2011). Study 2 examines observers' willingness to work with the passive victim and whether their overall impression of the victim mediates the relationship between their forecasts and (1) their recommendation and (2) their willingness to work with her.

Method

Participants. Participants were 81 women collected from an online subject pool. The mean age of participants was 35 years, and they had an average of 98 months of full-time work experience.

Procedure. Participants were presented the same sexual harassment job interview scenario that was used in Study 1.

Behavioral Forecasting Measure. As in Study 1, after reading the scenario, participants were asked the open-ended question, "If you had been the candidate, how specifically would you have responded if you were asked these same three questions during the interview?" and were provided space to write their responses. Responses were coded as in Study 1.

Interpersonal Evaluation and Behaviors. Participants were asked to provide their overall impression of the candidate (1 = very unfavorable, 7 = very favorable). They were also asked to make a recommendation and were told that their recommendation would determine whether or not the candidate would be hired. Finally, participants were asked about their willingness to work with the candidate. Specifically, they were asked, "You have been asked the extent to which you would be willing to work on an important work project together with [the candidate] if she is hired, where your joint performance would affect your own annual performance evaluation. How willing are you to work with [the candidate]?" (1 = not at all, 7 = very).

Results and Discussion

There was a significant negative relationship between participants' open-ended forecasts and their overall impression of the candidate ($B = -0.14$, SE = 0.06, $t = -2.61$, $p = 0.01$). The more confrontation participants forecast for themselves, the more negative their evaluation of the candidate. There was also a significant negative relationship between these forecasts and their recommendation of the candidate for the research assistant position ($B = -0.15$, SE = 0.06, $t = -2.49$, $p = 0.02$) and their willingness to work with the candidate ($B = -0.14$, SE = 0.07, $t = -1.99$, $p = 0.05$).

Next, we tested whether overall impression mediated the relationship between participant's forecasts and their behaviors (recommendation of and willingness to work with the candidate). For recommendation of the candidate for the job, when overall impression was added to the regression, the effect for overall impression was significant ($B = 0.74$, SE = 0.09, $t = 8.06$, $p = 0.001$), whereas the effect for participant's forecast became nonsignificant ($B = -0.04$, SE = 0.05, $t = -0.95$, n.s.), indicating that overall impression mediated the relationship between forecasts and recommendation. We found the same mediating relationship for willingness to work with the candidate. When overall impression was added to the regression, the effect for overall impression was significant ($B = 0.69$, SE = 0.12, $t = 5.78$, $p = 0.001$), whereas the effect for participant's forecasts became nonsignificant ($B = -0.04$, SE = 0.06, $t = -0.64$, n.s.),

indicating that overall impression mediated the relationship between forecasts and willingness to work with the candidate if hired.

The results of Study 2 support and extend the results of Study 1 by demonstrating that the more confrontation participants forecast for themselves, the more they condemned the passive victim by evaluating her more negatively and the more they excluded her socially, as measured by their willingness to work with the victim if hired.

Study 3: Reducing Behavioral Forecasting Errors

One question that arises from the results of Studies 1 and 2 is whether and how the condemnation driven by behavioral forecasts can be attenuated. We believe reducing behavioral forecasting errors may be one way to help reduce the interpersonal condemnation exhibited in Studies 1 and 2. Aligning forecast with actual behavior could also provide a more supportive climate for passive victims. If people truly realize that they would likely do nothing after being asked sexually harassing questions in a job interview instead of their unrealistic predictions of engaging in more socially desirable confrontation, they may be less likely to condemn the passive victim.

Study 3 explores whether making salient the likely motivations experienced by the harassment victim would lead people's forecasts to be more similar to the behaviors of individuals who actually face that situation. By highlighting important motivations that are likely experienced in the actual situation, observers may be better able to construe accurately the actual situation.

In a job interview context in which sexually harassing questions are asked, forecasters are likely to overlook the important motivations of getting the job (a context-specific motivation) and getting along with others (a more general motivation argued to be important in most social interactions; see Baumeister and Leary 1995) that are likely present in the actual situation. Actually confronting a harasser in this context can be difficult both because applicants want to get offered the job and because confronting someone for their bad behavior causes a breach in typical social decorum that could negatively affect their reputation and/or social status in the work group (O'Leary-Kelly et al. 2000). This is consistent with Swim and Hyers (1999), who examined predicted versus actual responses to sexist remarks and who argued that people do not accurately anticipate the costs of confronting and taking action against such comments (e.g., social censure for being impolite and possible retaliation). We argue, however, that these social costs become more apparent in the actual situation. Indeed, a separate group of 18 individuals was asked to predict what their motivations would be if faced with the sexual harassment job interview situation, using the exact

same scenario used by Woodzicka and LaFrance (2001); only 4 of 18 (22%) individuals indicated that getting the job would be an important motivation, and only 2 (11%) indicated that getting along would be an important motivation.

We predicted that individuals asked to reflect on either a context-specific motivation (need to get the job) or general motivation (need to get along with others) will be less likely to predict that they would confront a sexual harasser; that is, their predictions will be more in line with the actual behavior of individuals in this situation than individuals who are not asked to reflect on these motivations.

Method

Participants and Design. Fifty-nine female undergraduate business majors participated in the study. The design of the study was a single-factor, between-participants design with three levels of the manipulated variable: specific motivation (getting a job) reflection, general motivation (getting along) reflection, and no motivation reflection baseline.

Procedure. All participants read the same basic scenario from Study 1, but this time they were asked to imagine that they were being interviewed for a job and were asked the three sexually harassing questions during the interview. Prior to reading or knowing about the scenario, approximately two-thirds of the participants received an experimental manipulation that highlighted a particular motivation by asking participants to complete a reflection task. All participants then read the harassment scenario and were asked how they would respond to being asked the harassing questions.

We manipulated the motivation reflection participants received prior to reading the scenario (specific, general, or no reflection). Participants in the *no reflection* condition (analogous to that faced by participants in the Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001 study) did not complete the reflection task and were simply asked to read the job interview scenario (see below) and complete the questions concerning their predicted behaviors. Participants in the *specific motivation reflection* condition were first asked to imagine that they were interviewing for a research assistant position and to spend two minutes thinking about how important it was for them to get the job. Participants in the *general motivation reflection* condition were first asked to imagine that they were interviewing for a research assistant position and to spend two minutes thinking about how important it was for them to get along with others. Those participants who were asked to reflect on a particular motivation were then given space to provide some written thoughts.

Sexual Harassment Scenario. Next, participants were given the same scenario used by Woodzicka and

LaFrance (2001) that mirrored the observer version used in Study 1. Participants were asked to read the following:

> Imagine that you are interviewing for a research assistant position. You are being interviewed by a male (age 32) in an office on campus. Below are several of the questions that he asks you during the course of the interview. Please read each question and indicate how you would respond and feel. *Write how you think you would react, not how you think you should react.* Indicate how you would actually behave, think, and/or feel.

Participants were asked to anticipate what actions they would take when asked the three sexually harassing questions during the interview: (1) Do you have a boyfriend? (2) Do people find you desirable? (3) Do you think it is important for women to wear bras to work?

Behavioral Forecasts. Participants were asked how likely they would be to take the following actions (some of the actions identified by forecasters in the Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001 study): ignore the question and do nothing against the harassment, tell the interviewer it is none of his business, get up and leave the interview, and report the incident to the supervisor. Ignoring the harassing nature of the questions and doing nothing against the harassment is the most common response by actual sexual harassment victims (see Gruber 1989, Gutek 1993, Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001). Telling the interviewer it is none of his business, getting up and leaving the interview, and reporting the incident to the supervisor are all behaviors that confront the interviewer/harasser and are behaviors in which actual sexual harassment victims rarely engage (Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001). Responses to these behavioral forecasting questions were made on a five-point Likert scale anchored at 1 (not at all likely) and 5 (extremely likely).

Results and Discussion

Table 2 reports means and standard deviations. Results reveal significant effects of motivation reflection for two of the predicted actions: (1) tell the interviewer that it is none of his business ($F_{2,56} = 4.56$, $p = 0.02$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.14$) and (2) get up and leave the interview ($F_{2,56} = 6.00$, $p = 0.004$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.18$). Planned contrast analyses revealed that participants who received the specific motivation or general motivation reflections were significantly less likely to predict they would directly confront the interviewer by telling him it was none of his business ($t_{56} = 2.90$, $p = 0.005$) and less likely to get up and leave the interview ($t_{56} = 3.46$, $p = 0.001$) than those who received no reflection manipulation. There were no significant effects for ignoring the questions and doing nothing ($F_{2,56} = 1.00$) or reporting the incident to the supervisor ($F_{2,56} < 1$), although the results were in the predicted direction.

As predicted, forecasters who were asked to think about motivations that are likely salient at the time

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations for Predicted Actions (Study 3)

Predicted action	Specific motivation reflection	General motivation reflection	No motivation reflection
Ignore the question and do nothing	1.91 (1.15)	1.88 (0.99)	1.53 (0.51)
Tell the interviewer it is none of his business	3.36 (1.29)	3.00 (1.03)	4.11 (1.05)
Get up and leave the interview	2.73 (1.32)	2.56 (1.34)	3.89 (1.24)
Report the incident to the supervisor	3.59 (1.40)	3.44 (1.54)	3.95 (1.51)

of the interview were less likely to predict that they would confront the harasser, and these predictions were more in line with the actual behavioral responses of real sexual harassment victims (see Fitzgerald et al. 1995, Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001). These results suggest that having individuals think about the underlying motivations that may be salient during the interview may help reduce behavioral forecasting errors. Overall, the results support our argument that one reason for such errors is the failure to consider one's specific and general motivations that are salient in the actual situation.

Study 4: Reducing Interpersonal Condemnation

The next study tests whether highlighting the specific motivation from Study 3—getting the job—would decrease derogation of passive victims. We predicted that contemplating an actual motivation that is likely to occur will not only increase the accuracy of behavioral forecasts as demonstrated in Study 3 but also improve observer's evaluations of the passive victim of the harassment. Instead of just focusing on the passive behavior and drawing dispositional and condemning inferences, turning attention to the situation and the motivations it activates will likely decrease interpersonal condemnation.

In addition to manipulating motivation reflection, we also manipulated the behavioral response of the victim, whether the victim did nothing against the harassment or confronted the harasser by refusing to answer the questions. We included this manipulation to vary the level of alignment between the typical observed behavior and the typical behavioral forecast. We predicted that reflecting on an important motivation would have a greater effect on evaluations when the victim took no action (a more typical observed behavior) than when she confronted the harasser (a more typical forecasted response).

Method

Participants and Design. Participants were 52 female undergraduates who were paid $10. The design of the

study was a 2 (candidate's behavioral response: confronted the male interviewer versus did not confront the male interviewer) × 2 (motivation reflection: importance of getting a job reflection versus no reflection) between-participants design.

Procedure. As in Study 3, the first task for the participants in the motivation reflection condition involved thinking about their motivations in a job interview. Because Study 3 found no difference between the specific motivation (i.e., getting the job) and the general motivation (i.e., getting along with others), only the specific motivation reflection from Study 3 was used. The manipulation of reflection consisted of two levels. Participants in the *motivation reflection* condition were asked to imagine that they were interviewing for a research assistant position and to think about how important it was for them to get the job. They did this before reading or knowing about the harassment scenario. Participants in the *no reflection* condition did not complete a reflection task prior to reading the harassment scenario.

Participants then read the same scenario used in Study 1, but we varied whether the job candidate took any action. The manipulation of behavioral response consisted of two levels: participants were told that the female candidate either "refused to answer any of the three questions" (*confronted*) or "answered all three questions" (*not confronted*).

Dependent Measures. As in Studies 1 and 2, after reading the sexual harassment scenario, participants were asked to provide their overall impression of the candidate using a seven-point scale (1 = very unfavorable, 7 = very favorable).

Results and Discussion

Results revealed a significant main effect for behavioral response ($F_{1,48} = 32.60$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.40$). Participants in the confronted condition had a significantly more positive overall impression of the candidate (mean = 5.33, SD = 0.87) than those in the not confronted condition (mean = 3.68, SD = 1.41). There was also a significant main effect for motivation reflection ($F_{1,48} = 6.64$, $p = 0.01$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.12$). Participants who considered the importance of getting a job prior to reading or learning about the sexual harassment scenario had a significantly more positive overall impression of the candidate (mean = 4.89, SD = 1.09) than those who were not asked to reflect on this motivation (mean = 4.16, SD = 1.65). Having participants reflect on an important motivation that they would likely experience in the actual situation (i.e., getting the job) led participants to derogate the candidate less than participants who were not asked to reflect on this motivation.

As predicted, these main effects were qualified by a significant behavioral response × reflection interaction

($F_{1,48} = 5.80$, $p = 0.02$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.11$). Reflecting on an important motivation (versus no reflection) prior to learning about the sexual harassment scenario affected evaluations of the victim more when the victim took no action, the typical response in reality (mean = 4.38, SD = 1.12 versus mean = 2.92, SD = 1.31), than when she confronted the harasser, the typical forecasted response (mean = 5.36, SD = 0.84 versus mean = 5.31, SD = 0.95).

Study 4 replicated the effects of Studies 1 and 2 by showing that passive victims of sexual harassment are punished by observers. But when observers first reflected on a motivation likely experienced in the situation but ignored in forecasts, they were less likely to derogate the victim who stayed passive. These results suggest that observers are more understanding toward victims who fail to confront their harassers when they consider the motivations that they themselves, similar to the victim, would likely experience in the actual situation.

Study 5: Recalling Past Experiences of Being Intimidated and Judgmental Generosity

In the final study, we examine whether recalling a past experience of being personally intimidated—a similar but different experience than sexual harassment—also reduces condemnation of the victim. In particular, we examine whether recalling an instance when one experienced intimidation in the workplace and did nothing about it (i.e., took no action) and the motivations they experienced would reduce condemnation of the passive sexual harassment victim compared to recalling an instance when one experienced intimidation and took action and to a baseline condition that did not recall a past experience.

The current research complements and goes beyond the findings of Balcetis and Dunning (2008) by showing that recalling a past situation of intimidation and the motivations experienced can lead to less condemnation of passive sexual harassment victims and more sympathy by observers even though the situation is not the same as that experienced by the sexual harassment victim. This is an important extension because identical experiences can be difficult to replicate (i.e., not everyone is the victim of sexual harassment). The experience of a more general intimidation situation is more common and thus may be a more useful tool in reducing the negative consequences of behavioral forecasting errors. We predicted that recalling a situation where they were intimidated and remained passive, just like the sexual harassment victim they would later evaluate, would help people better understand the situational forces experienced by the passive victim and lead them to condemn the victim less.

Method

Participants and Design. Participants were 101 women collected from an online subject pool. The mean age of the participants was 42.6 years, and they had an average of 193 months full-time work experience. The design of the study was a single-factor, between-participants design with three levels of the manipulated variable: the no action recall versus the action recall versus the no recall control condition.

Procedure. Participants in the two recall conditions recalled an incident in the workplace where someone intimidated them (adapted from Baumeister et al. 1990). Participants in the *action recall* condition recalled an incidence of intimidation when they took action against the intimidation. Participants in the *no action recall* condition recalled an incidence of intimidation when they took no action against it. Specifically, participants were asked the following (manipulation in brackets):

> Describe an incident in which someone did something to you in the workplace that intimidated you, an occurrence in which someone really upset you, where you [did something about it (i.e., took action)/did nothing about it (i.e., took no action)]. Nearly everyone has experienced such things more than once; please choose an especially important and memorable event. Please spend 5–10 minutes thinking and writing about this experience below. Please be thorough and provide the full story. Also, describe the motivations you were experiencing which led you to [take/not take any] action.

Participants were given space to describe this experience in writing. Only 3 out of 101 participants recalled a sexually harassing situation, and dropping them from the analysis did not change the pattern of results.

Following this recall task, participants were given a filler sentence completion task wherein they were given a series of five words and had to form four-word, grammatically correct sentences. An example included "talked we her the with," which could form the sentence "We talked with her." Participants in the no recall control condition began their study with this filler task.

Upon completion of the filler task, participants were presented the sexual harassment job interview scenario used in Study 1 and were asked to evaluate the passive victim in terms of overall impression (1 = very unfavorable, 7 = very favorable), the extent to which the candidate would make an excellent research assistant (1 = not at all, 7 = very), and how strongly and positively they would recommend the candidate for the research assistant position (1 = not at all, 7 = very).

Results and Discussion

Results revealed a significant effect of recall for two out of the three evaluation items: overall impression ($F_{2,98} = 3.30$, $p = 0.04$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.06$) and extent to which

Table 3   Means and Standard Deviations for Evaluation of Passive Candidate (Study 5)

	Recall no action	Recall action	No recall control
Overall impression	3.97 (1.64)	2.92 (1.44)	3.38 (1.57)
Extent to which candidate makes excellent RA	4.31 (1.56)	3.27 (1.22)	3.61 (1.51)
Recommendation for job	4.14 (1.53)	3.58 (1.39)	3.41 (1.65)

Note. RA, research assistant.

the candidate would make an excellent research assistant ($F_{2,98} = 3.76$, $p = 0.03$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.07$). Planned contrasts revealed that participants who had earlier recalled and written about an experience when they were intimidated in the workplace and took no action evaluated the candidate overall more positively than those in the control condition who did not recall a prior experience and those who had recalled an experience when they were intimidated and took action ($t_{98} = 2.46$, $p = 0.02$). A similar pattern was found with ratings of the extent to which they thought the candidate would make an excellent research assistant ($t_{98} = 2.62$, $p = 0.01$). There was also a similar marginally significant contrast for recommendation ($t_{98} = 1.90$, $p = 0.07$) (see Table 3).

Study 5 demonstrates that recalling a personal situation of intimidation affected condemnation of a passive sexual harassment victim. More specifically, our results show that people who recalled an experience of being intimidated in the workplace when they took no action against the intimidation evaluated the passive sexual harassment victim more positively even though the recalled situation was not the same as that experienced by the victim.

General Discussion

The current studies extend research and theory. First, we highlight that interpersonal evaluations and behaviors are affected by behavioral forecasts. Second, we identify the failure to consider underlying motivations in the imagined situation as an important factor in producing faulty forecasts and interpersonal condemnation of passive victims. We further demonstrate that we can align those forecasts with actual behavior by considering these motivations, and this can, in turn, minimize the condemnation of passive victims.

Theoretical Implications

Studies 1 and 2 reveal that behavioral forecasts are often associated with interpersonal condemnation. Specifically, observers evaluated passive victims of sexual harassment more harshly to the extent that they forecasted that they themselves would take action against or confront the harasser. These evaluations have significant organizational consequences because observers

were also less likely to recommend the victim for a job or, if hired, work with that victim. The link between forecasting errors and interpersonal condemnation is problematic because forecasts tend to be overly optimistic, predicated on the false assumption that one would confront the harasser more than one actually does (Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001). Our studies establish a relationship between forecasts on the one hand and interpersonal evaluations and behaviors on the other.

In an attempt to identify how the negative interpersonal effects of behavioral forecasts can be attenuated, we first examined why behavioral forecasts are often inaccurate. We argued that behavioral forecasting errors occur in part because forecasters ignore important motivations that will be experienced in the actual situation. Study 3 explored whether having forecasters reflect on these motivations would align their predictions more with actual behaviors. The results demonstrate that individuals who reflected on both context-specific and general motivations that are salient during the actual experience of a job interview but not during forecasting led to predictions that were more similar to the behaviors of actual sexual harassment victims (Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001). These findings support our notion that one possible cause of behavioral forecasting errors is the failure to consider the likely motivations experienced in the actual situation. Hence, this research contributes to the literature on behavioral forecasting by identifying another cause of behavioral forecasting errors.

Study 4 demonstrated how the findings from Study 3 might offer hope for reducing forecasting-induced interpersonal condemnations. In this study, observers who were asked to reflect on an important motivation experienced in the actual sexually harassing situation but not forecast to be important—desire to get the job for which one is interviewing—derogated the passive sexual harassment victim less than baseline participants. Finally, Study 5 demonstrated that recalling a situation when one was intimidated and took no action and reflecting on one's motivations similarly reduced derogation of the passive sexual harassment victim. Our results go beyond previous findings by demonstrating that even simply imagining the motivations without directly experiencing them (Study 4) and recalling a personal experience of intimidation and remaining passive in the workplace that was not the same as that of the observed passive victim (Study 5) can also produce less bias and condemnation.

Our results also demonstrate that perspective taking, or adopting the perspective of the other person (Davis 1983), without attending to the situational motivations is not a panacea. Imagining one's own behavior in a certain situation is, in essence, a behavioral forecast, and given the biases inherent and endemic to these forecasts (Diekmann et al. 2003, Epley and Dunning 2006), perspective taking may at times increase rather

than decrease condemnation (see also Van Boven and Loewenstein 2005). Our results also support the distinction between two types of perspective taking: imagining oneself in another person's shoes versus focusing on and imagining what that person experienced (Batson et al. 1997). Imagining oneself in another person's shoes does not always increase empathy nor produce sympathetic understanding to the same degree as imagining what that person herself experienced, including her likely motivations for responding the way she did.

Organizational Implications

Overall, our findings have important implications for organizations. Judging others against the standard of one's own biased forecasts rather than the standard of one's actual behavior can produce negative interpersonal consequences: we may condemn others for not standing up to harassing miscreants. Mispredicting that we would confront a sexual harasser may not only make us less sympathetic and more likely to blame actual victims of harassment who have done nothing to rail against their harasser, but such attitudes and beliefs may lead to feelings of shame or guilt by the actual harassment victims (Woodzicka and LaFrance 2001) and other negative psychological and physical costs discussed previously (Liden et al. 2000, Rook 1992), further increasing the costs to both the passive victim and the organization.

Unrestrained incivility in the work environment can become the defining characteristic of the workplace and can permeate every aspect of the organization (Andersson and Pearson 1999, Pearson et al. 2001). As has been argued previously, reducing sexual harassment and other forms of intimidation is a cost-effective strategy for organizations (Faley et al. 1999). We argue that it is also important for organizations to mitigate the condemnation of passive victims by coworkers in the organization because these forms of social undermining have been shown to negatively affect organizational commitment and subjective well-being and increase counterproductive behavior (Duffy et al. 2002).

Aside from these economic benefits to the organization, we believe that it is important from a human sustainability perspective (Pfeffer 2010), wherein employees' health and well-being are improved by reducing such condemnation. Whereas other researchers have focused on specific policies to minimize sexual harassment (Fitzgerald et al. 1995, 1997; Neuman and Baron 1998), it seems equally important that managers recognize the psychological processes affecting the organizational response to the victim (including those from coworkers, human resource administrators, and the managers themselves). Greater recognition of the motivations victims experience in the face of harassment can allow people to recognize that they would similarly take less action and remain more passive if they were in the same or a similar situation and consequently be less likely to condemn those individuals who remained passive in the face of actual harassment.

Our research shows that the key to reducing such condemnation is for coworkers and managers to truly realize what the victim is likely experiencing; only then will they understand why the victim remains passive. When this happens, observers are more likely to empathize with the passive victim, show compassion rather than condemnation, and possibly even take action themselves to stop the offending behavior. Observers in Study 4 who were asked to reflect on an important motivation likely experienced in the situation were less likely to evaluate the passive victim negatively. As such, we encourage people who are evaluating others to think about the motivations they are likely to experience if faced with the same situation, possibly thinking back to a related personal experience (e.g., interviewing for a job) and the motivations that influenced them (e.g., desire to get the job). Observers in Study 5 who were asked to recall an experience where they were intimidated in the workplace and remained passive were less likely to evaluate the passive sexual harassment victim negatively. These results suggest that when evaluating others, people should think about similar experiences they have had in the workplace to develop a better understanding of the situational forces likely affecting the person they are evaluating.

These findings have important implications for the design of sexual harassment training programs. Specifically, we recommend that such training include discussion of the typical experiences and motivations of sexual harassment victims, in addition to learning what behaviors constitute sexual harassment and why victims often remain passive. This will give employees a better understanding of the situation and motivations experienced by the victim, enabling them to "see" and "feel" the situation as it really is and to truly understand why victims remain passive. Discussion should also include information on forecasting errors and people's general tendency to predict more action than they actually engage in as well as the consequences of such errors. These types of discussions will make employees aware of their general tendency to mispredict what they would do in similar situations and the consequences of their erroneous predictions.

Awareness training, however, is often not enough. Research by Patricia Devine on reducing implicit bias (see her interview with Murray-Law 2011) suggests that reducing bias is similar to breaking any habit and identifies another step beyond just awareness of one's bias (in our case, the tendency to mispredict) and simply understanding the consequences of that bias (condemnation of passive victims)—namely, learning to replace the biased behavior with nonbiased behavior. One way of learning to replace the biased behavior is through skill-based training. Research has shown that skill-based

training is critical for attitudinal and behavioral change with regard to diversity issues such as sexual harassment (Perry et al. 2009). One skill-based approach that has been suggested in the construal literature is to rehearse or practice for future events (Trope and Liberman 2003). According to construal theory, the problem with our forecasts is that when we are forecasting, we are psychologically distant from the event, and we do not see the concrete details of the situation (i.e., lower-level construal), but rather have a more abstract and decontextualized view of the situation (i.e., higher-level construal). By role-playing being both a victim and observer of harassment, we may not only be better able to fully understand the likely experiences and motivations of real victims (through a lower-level construal) but also to practice our responses so that if and when an actual harassing situation occurs, we will be prepared to deal with it either as a victim or observer. By doing so, both as future potential victims and observers of sexual harassment, organizational members may be better able to plan and possibly identify ways to change their future behavior. Those who become victims in the future may be better prepared by having previously identified how they could successfully respond against the sexual harassment and have a plan in place. Similarly, those who become observers of sexual harassment in the future may have previously identified how they could support the victim rather than condemn her (Gentile 2010, Tenbrunsel et al. 2010). Indeed, this notion of practicing, in terms of "implementation intentions" (Gollwitzer 1999, Gollwitzer and Sheeran 2006, Nickerson and Rogers 2010) and "scripting" (Gentile 2010), has been shown to be critical in attitudinal and behavioral change.

The erroneous behavioral forecasts and the condemnation of passive victims of harassment by observers that we have identified here can prevent real advances in public and organizational policies. Passive responders belie the need for organizational redress or protective policies because false behavioral forecasts can blind organizational leaders and others to these necessary changes. Given the significant individual and organizational costs of sexual harassment, institutions need to find ways to prevent such behavior and, when it occurs, to identify ways to help victims cope (Cortina and Wasti 2005). By incorporating the psychological process of victims and observers of sexual harassment into organizational practices and policies, organizational leaders can increase their understanding of the reactions of victims and others in the organization. Doing so should help them better manage those reactions and possibly even minimize the occurrence of harassment in the future.

Conclusion

Recognizing the psychological barriers that we have in predicting how we would feel and behave in imagined situations and understanding why these errors occur is important not only for our own personal self-interest but also for others who are affected by our judgments of them. Learning why people mispredict their behavior is important because only then can solutions be identified to increase predictive accuracy and minimize the negative consequences to both the individual victims of sexual harassment and the organization as a whole that may arise from such behavioral forecasting errors and condemnation. We hope this research is a step in that direction.

Acknowledgments

Endnote

[1]U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Facts about sexual harassment. Accessed May 14, 2012, http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/fs-sex.cfm.

References

Andersson LM, Pearson CM (1999) Tit for tat? The spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace. *Acad. Management Rev.* 24:452–471.

Asch SE (1951) Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgments. Guetzkow H, ed. *Groups, Leadership, and Men: Research in Human Relations* (Carnegie Press, Pittsburgh), 177–190.

Baker DD, Terpstra DE, Larntz K (1990) The influence of individual characteristics and severity of harassing behavior on reactions to sexual harassment. *Sex Roles* 22:305–325.

Balcetis E, Dunning DA (2008) A mile in moccasins: How situational experience diminishes dispositionism in social inference. *Personality Soc. Psych. Bull.* 34:102–114.

Batson CD, Early S, Salvarani G (1997) Perspective taking: Imagining how another feels versus imagining how you would feel. *Personality Soc. Psych. Bull.* 23:751–758.

Baumeister RF, Leary MR (1995) The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psych. Bull.* 117:497–529.

Baumeister RF, Stillwell A, Wotman SR (1990) Victim and perpetrator accounts of interpersonal conflict: Autobiographical narratives about anger. *J. Personality Soc. Psych* 59:994–1005.

Bergman ME, Langhout RD, Palmieri PA, Cortina LM, Fitzgerald LF (2002) The (un)reasonableness of reporting: Antecedents and consequences of reporting sexual harassment. *J. Appl. Psych.* 87:230–242.

Buehler R, Griffin D, MacDonald H (1997) The role of motivated reasoning in optimistic time predictions. *Personality Soc. Psych. Bull* 23:238–247.

Buehler R, Griffin D, Ross M (1994) Exploring the "planning fallacy": Why people underestimate their task completion times. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 67:366–381.

Colatosti C, Karg E (1992) *Stopping Sexual Harassment: A Handbook for Union and Workplace Activists* (Labor Education and Research Project, Detroit).

Cortina LM, Magley VJ (2003) Raising voice, risking retaliation: Events following interpersonal mistreatment in the workplace. *J. Occupational Health Psych.* 8:247–265.

Cortina LM, Wasti SA (2005) Profiles in coping: Responses to sexual harassment across persons, organizations, and cultures. *J. Appl. Psych.* 90:182–192.

Crull P (1982) Stress effects of sexual harassment on the job: Implications for counseling. *Amer. J. Orthopsychiatry* 52:539–544.

Davis MH (1983) Measuring individual differences in empathy: Evidence from a multidimensional approach. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 44:113–126.

De Judicibus M, McCabe MP (2001) Blaming the target of sexual harassment: Impact of gender role, sexist attitudes, and work role. *Sex Roles* 44:401–428.

Diekmann KA, Tenbrunsel AE, Galinsky AD (2003) From self-prediction to self-defeat: Behavioral forecasting, self-fulfilling prophecies, and the effect of competitive expectations. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 85:672–683.

Duffy MK, Ganster DC, Pagon M (2002) Social undermining in the workplace. *Acad. Management J.* 45:331–351.

Epley N, Dunning D (2000) Feeling "holier than thou": Are self-serving assessments produced by errors in self- or social prediction? *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 79:861–875.

Epley N, Dunning D (2006) The mixed blessings of self-knowledge in behavioral predictions: Enhanced discrimination but exacerbated bias. *Personality Soc. Psych. Bull.* 32:641–655.

Faley RH, Knapp DE, Kustis GA, Dubois CLZ (1999) Estimating the organizational costs of sexual harassment: The case of the U.S. Army. *J. Bus. Psych.* 13:461–484.

Fitzgerald LF, Swan S, Fischer K (1995) Why didn't she just report him? The psychological and legal implications of women's responses to sexual harassment. *J. Soc. Issues* 51:117–138.

Fitzgerald LF, Swan S, Magley VJ (1997) But was it really sexual harassment? Legal, behavioral, and psychological definitions of the workplace victimization of women. O'Donohue W, ed. *Sexual Harassment: Theory, Research, and Treatment* (Allyn & Bacon, Needham Heights, MA), 5–28.

Fitzgerald LF, Drasgow F, Hulin CL, Gelfand MJ, Magley VJ (1997) Antecedents and consequences of sexual harassment in organizations: A test of an integrated model. *J. Appl. Psych.* 82:578–589.

Fitzgerald LF, Shullman S, Bailey N, Richards M, Swecker J, Gold Y, Ormerod M, Weitzman C (1988) The incidence and dimensions of sexual harassment in academia and the workplace. *J. Vocational Behav.* 32:152–175.

Gentile MC (2010) *Giving Voice to Values: How to Speak Your Mind When You Know What's Right* (Yale University Press, New Haven, CT).

Gilbert DT, Malone PS (1995) The correspondence bias. *Psych. Bull.* 117:21–38.

Gilovich T, Kerr M, Medvec VH (1993) Effect of temporal perspective on subjective confidence. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 64:552–560.

Glomb TM, Munson LJ, Hulin CL, Bergman ME, Drasgow F (1999) Structural equation models of sexual harassment: Longitudinal explorations and cross-sectional generalizations. *J. Appl. Psych.* 84:14–28.

Gollwitzer PM (1999) Implementation intentions: Strong effects of simple plans. *Amer. Psych.* 54:493–503.

Gollwitzer PM, Sheeran P (2006) Implementation intentions and goal achievement: A meta-analysis of effects and processes. *Adv. Experiment. Soc. Psych.* 38:69–119.

Griffin DW, Dunning D, Ross L (1990) The role of construal processes in overconfident predictions about the self and others. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 59:1128–1139.

Gruber JE (1989) How women handle sexual harassment: A literature review. *Sociol. Soc. Res.* 4:3–9.

Gruber JE, Bjorn L (1982) Blue-collar blues: The sexual harassment of women autoworkers. *Work Occupations* 9:271–298.

Gutek BA (1985) *Sex and the Workplace: Impact of Sexual Behavior and Harassment on Women, Men, and Organizations* (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco).

Gutek BA, Koss MP (1993) Changed women and changed organizations: Consequences of and coping with sexual harassment. *J. Vocational Behav.* 42:28–48.

Heider F (1958) *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations* (John Wiley & Sons, New York).

Jones EE, Davis KE (1965) From acts to dispositions: The attribution process in person perception. Berkowitz L, ed. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 2 (Academic Press, New York), 220–266.

Kenig S, Ryan J (1986) Sex differences in levels of tolerance and attribution of blame for sexual harassment on a university campus. *Sex Roles* 15:535–549.

Knapp DE, Faley RH, Ekeberg SE, Dubois CLZ (1997) Determinants of target responses to sexual harassment: A conceptual framework. *Acad. Management Rev.* 22:687–729.

Lengnick-Hall ML (1995) Sexual harassment research: A methodological critique. *Personnel Psych.* 48:155–169.

Liden RC, Wayne SJ, Sparrowe RT (2000) An examination of the mediating role of psychological empowerment on the relations between the job, the relationships, and work outcomes. *J. Appl. Psych.* 85:407–416.

Lonsway KA, Cortina LM, Magley VJ (2008) Sexual harassment mythology: Definition, conceptualization, and measurement. *Sex Roles* 58:599–615.

Melwani S, Barsade SG (2011) Held in contempt: The psychological, interpersonal, and performance consequences of contempt in a work context. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 101:503–520.

Milgram S (1974) *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (Harper & Row, New York).

Munson LJ, Hulin CL, Drasgow F (2000) Longitudinal analysis of dispositional influences and sexual harassment: Effects on job and psychological outcomes. *Personnel Psych.* 53:21–46.

Murray-Law B (2011) Retraining the biased brain: Is it possible to break people of unconscious prejudice? One researcher's work suggests it is. *Monitor Psych.* 42:42–43.

Neuman JH, Baron RA (1998) Workplace violence and workplace aggression: Evidence concerning specific forms, potential causes, and preferred targets. *J. Management* 24:391–419.

Newby-Clark IR, Ross M, Buehler R, Koehler DJ, Griffin D (2000) People focus on optimistic scenarios and disregard pessimistic scenarios while predicting task completion times. *J. Experiment. Psych.: Appl.* 6:171–182.

Nickerson DW, Rogers T (2010) Do you have a voting plan? Implementation intentions, voter turnout, and organic plan making. *Psych. Sci.* 21:194–199.

O'Leary-Kelly AM, Paetzold RL, Griffin RW (2000) Sexual harassment as aggressive behavior: An actor-based perspective. *Acad. Management Rev.* 25:372–388.

Osberg TM, Shrauger JS (1986) Self-prediction: Exploring the parameters of accuracy. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 51:1044–1057.

Pearson CM, Andersson LM, Wegner JW (2001) When workers flout convention: A study of workplace incivility. *Human Relations* 54:1387–1419.

Perry EL, Kulik CT, Field MP (2009) Sexual harassment training: Recommendations to address gaps between the practitioner and research literatures. *Human Resource Management* 48:817–837.

Perry EL, Kulik CT, Schmidtke JM (1997) Blowing the whistle: Determinants of responses to sexual harassment. *Basic Appl. Soc. Psych.* 19:457–482.

Pfeffer J (2010) Building sustainable organizations: The human factor. *Acad. Management Perspect.* 24:34–45.

Rook KC (1992) Detrimental aspects of social relationships: Taking stock of an emerging literature. Veil H, Baumann U, eds. *The Meaning and Measurement of Social Support* (Hemisphere, New York), 157–169.

Ross L (1977) The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings: Distortions in the attribution process. Berkowitz L, ed. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 10 (Academic Press, New York), 174–221.

Sbraga TP, O'Donohue W (2000) Sexual harassment. *Annual Rev. Sex Res.* 11:258–286.

Schneider KT, Swan S, Fitzgerald LF (1997) Job-related and psychological effects of sexual harassment in the workplace: Empirical evidence from two organizations. *J. Appl. Psych.* 82:401–415.

Sherman SJ (1980) On the self-erasing nature of errors of prediction. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 39:211–221.

Smirles KE (2004) Attributions of responsibility in cases of sexual harassment: The person and the situation. *J. Appl. Soc. Psych* 34:342–365.

Storms MD (1973) Videotape and the attribution process: Reversing actors' and observers' points of view. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 27:165–175.

Swim JK, Hyers LL (1999) Excuse me—What did you just say?! Women's public and private responses to sexist remarks. *J. Experiment. Soc. Psych.* 35:68–88.

Tenbrunsel AE, Diekmann KA, Wade-Benzoni KA, Bazerman MH (2010) The ethical mirage: A temporal explanation as to why we aren't as ethical as we think we are. *Res. Organ. Behav.* 30:153–173.

Trope Y, Liberman N (2000) Temporal construal and time-dependent changes in preference. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 79:876–889.

Trope Y, Liberman N (2003) Temporal construal. *Psych. Rev.* 110:403–421.

Valentine-French S, Radtke HL (1989) Attributions of responsibility for an incident of sexual harassment in a university setting. *Sex Roles* 21:545–555.

Vallone RP, Griffin DW, Lin S, Ross L (1990) Overconfident prediction of future actions and outcomes by self and others. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 58:582–592.

Van Boven L, Loewenstein G (2005) Cross-situational projection. Alicke MD, Dunning DA, Krueger J, eds. *The Self in Social Judgment* (Psychology Press, New York), 43–64.

Van Boven L, Dunning D, Loewenstein G (2000) Egocentric empathy gaps between owners and buyers: Misperception of the endowment effect. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 79:66–76.

Van Boven L, Loewenstein G, Dunning D (2005) The illusion of courage in social predictions: Underestimating the impact of fear of embarrassment on other people. *Organ. Behav. Human Decision Processes* 96:130–141.

Vinokur AD, van Ryn M (1993) Social support and undermining in close relationships: Their independent effects on the mental health of unemployed persons. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 65:350–359.

Willness CR, Steel P, Lee K (2007) A meta-analysis of the antecedents and consequences of workplace sexual harassment. *Personnel Psych.* 60:128–162.

Woodzicka JA, LaFrance M (2001) Real versus imagined gender harassment. *J. Soc. Issues* 57:15–30.

Kristina A. Diekmann is the Bill Daniels Professor of Business Ethics in the David Eccles School of Business at the University of Utah. She received M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in organizational behavior from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University and an A.B. degree in psychology from Harvard College. Her research focuses on fairness and ethics, negotiation, intrapersonal and interpersonal perception, cognitive biases, and impression management.

Sheli D. Sillito Walker is an assistant professor in the Marriott School of Management at Brigham Young University. She received her Ph.D. in organizational behavior from the University of Utah. Her research investigates how individuals behave in organizations, with a focus on conflict management, including issues of fairness, social perception, impression management, negotiation, and sexual harassment.

Adam D. Galinsky is the Morris and Alice Kaplan Professor of Ethics and Decision in Management at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University. He received his Ph.D. from Princeton University in social psychology and his A.B. from Harvard College. He has published more than 130 scientific articles, chapters, and teaching cases in the fields of management and social psychology. His research and teaching focus on leadership, power, negotiations, decision making, diversity, and ethics.

Ann E. Tenbrunsel is the Rex and Alice A. Martin Professor of Business Ethics in the Mendoza College of Business at the University of Notre Dame. She received her Ph.D. and MBA from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University and her B.S. in industrial and operations engineering from the University of Michigan. Her recent research interests focus on the psychology of ethical decision making, examining the situational and organizational contributors to unethical behavior.