

Gender Gaps in Sociopolitical Attitudes: A Social Psychological Analysis

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This research examined the proposition that differential role occupancy by women and men fosters gender gaps in sociopolitical attitudes. Analyses of the General Social Survey (J. A. Davis & T. W. Smith, 1998) and a community sample showed that women, more than men, endorsed policies that are socially compassionate, traditionally moral, and supportive of equal rights for women and for gays and lesbians. To clarify the sources of these gaps, the research examined (a) similarities between gender gaps and gaps associated with other respondent attributes such as race and parenthood, (b) interactions between respondent sex and other attributes, (c) the temporal patterning of gender gaps, and (d) the mediation of attitudinal gender gaps by 3 ideological variables—commitment to equality, group-based dominance, and conservatism versus liberalism.

When it comes to social policies, women and men have somewhat different preferences on many issues (e.g., Manza & Brooks, 1999; Pratto, Stallworth, & Sidanius, 1997; Seltzer, Newman, & Leighton, 1997). This article focuses on achieving a systematic description of these attitudinal differences and understanding their likely causes. To approach this goal, we compared the attitudes of men and women in national survey data from the United States as well as in data that we collected to explore the ideological context of attitudinal gender gaps.

Gender Gaps in Attitudes: Their Incidence and Causes

Although many psychologists have studied sex differences and similarities in personality and social behavior,¹ few have given much attention to the attitudes of women and men, despite attitudes' importance in biasing perceptions and directing social behavior (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). In this article, we examine the sociopolitical attitudes of men and women within a theoretical framework that has been applied to many other sex differences,

namely, social role theory of sex differences and similarities (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000; Wood & Eagly, 2002). This theory assumes that to the extent that the men and women of a society are differently positioned in the social structure, a variety of mediating processes conspire to make the sexes psychologically different in ways that facilitate performance of their typical roles.

From a social role perspective, sex-related attitudinal differences emerge both from the direct effects of sex-typed occupational and family roles on individual occupants of these roles and from culturally shared expectations that apply to women and men in general. The roles that are typically occupied substantially more by one sex than the other produce these more diffuse, shared expectations, or *gender roles*, because the characteristics that are required to carry out sex-typical tasks become stereotypical of women and men. For example, the general expectation that women are and should be sensitive, warm, soft-hearted, and peaceable (Williams & Best, 1982) likely arises from their disproportionate occupancy of caring roles, even though a more specific demand for these qualities applies to individuals (primarily women) who actually occupy such roles. Moreover, gender roles are reflected in ideologies that legitimize male–female inequality as natural and inevitable (e.g., Major & Schmader, 2001). With respect to attitudes, we therefore hypothesize that gender gaps reflect not only the influences of sex-typed specific family and occupational roles on role occupants' attitudes but also the gender role influences that apply to individuals depending on their membership in the social category of men or women.

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¹ In this article, the terms *sex* and *sexes* denote the grouping of people into female and male categories. The terms *sex differences* and *similarities* are applied to describe the results of comparing these two groups. The term *gender* refers to the meanings that societies and individuals ascribe to these female and male categories.

Despite the plausibility of assuming that women and men differ at least somewhat in their attitudes on social and political issues, research did not provide much evidence of gender gaps until the last decades of the 20th century. The consensus view among political scientists, when reflecting on mid-20th century findings, was the following: "Despite stereotypes to the contrary, very few differences in opinion between men and women have been found in the past" (Sapiro, 1983, p. 150). The limited claims of sex differences based on these earlier data were that women, compared with men, were more in favor of peace and opposed to war (e.g., Gruberg, 1968) and more moralistic, particularly as supporters of prohibition (e.g., Green & Melnick, 1950). Also, women had been the primary activists supporting women's suffrage. Apparently dampening any wider pattern of sex-differentiated attitudes was wives' tendency to follow their husbands' lead on political issues and voting (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960). Accompanying this minimal evidence for attitudinal divergence was clear-cut evidence that men more often voted in elections and were more politically involved, knowledgeable, and vocal on public issues than women (Almond & Verba, 1963; Campbell et al., 1960; Lipset, 1960; Sapiro, 1983).

In contrast to these earlier decades, in the last quarter of the 20th century attitudinal data have shown greater gender differentiation, contrary to the idea that increasing gender equality would bring greater attitudinal similarity. Thus, women's greater support for social provision and their opposition to violence came to social scientists' attention by the 1980s (e.g., Goertzel, 1983; Shapiro & Mahajan, 1986; T. W. Smith, 1984). Also, when women increased their gender consciousness and political activism as the women's movement gained strength in the 1970s (Gurin, 1985; Gurin & Townsend, 1986), they became less approving of traditional gender relations (Harris & Firestone, 1998; Spence & Hahn, 1997; Twenge, 1997a).

Late in the 20th century, women also enlarged their political knowledge (Rapoport, 1982; Slevin & Aday, 1993) and began to vote in elections at a slightly higher rate than men (Jamieson, Shin, & Day, 2002) even though they have continued to show lesser political involvement than men on some indexes (Atkeson & Rapoport, 2003). When people gain expertise in politics and think about sociopolitical issues, they develop mental structures with more coherent and internally consistent attitudes (Lavine, Thomsen, & Gonzales, 1997; Lusk & Judd, 1988). A central thesis of this research is that women's increasing political expertise and participation have enabled them to develop policy preferences that reflect their distinctive social position. Presumably, men's attitudes have represented their social position over a much longer span of years, consistent with their historically greater political power and involvement.

Change and Stability in the Social Position of Women and Men

What specific changes might account for the divergence observed in the attitudes of women and men in the late decades of the 20th century? The most obvious shift is the rise in women's labor force participation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). This movement of women into paid employment strengthened their involvement with the public sphere, fostering a more elaborated political ideology and greater political participation. Nonetheless, men and women

tend to occupy different types of occupational roles (Reskin, McBrier, & Kmec, 1999), with women, compared with men, employed in jobs that entail less authority (R. A. Smith, 2002) and that have lower wages (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2003). Also, women have continued to have disproportionate responsibility for domestic work in the United States, including child care (Bianchi, 2000; Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000) and other caring responsibilities such as tending ill or disabled family members (Cancian & Olicker, 2000).

In view of these contemporary differences in the social position of women and men, the key to understanding gender gaps in attitudes in the last decades of the 20th century is the juxtaposition of women's political activation with the continuing differentiation of the sexes in many of their roles and responsibilities. These social role differences foster attitudinal sex differences (a) in part through the general influence of gender roles, which reflect the continuing aggregate differences in the specific roles occupied by men and women, and (b) in part through the influences on individual role occupants of the particular roles occupied more often by one sex than the other. To probe these issues, our first study examines the attitudes of women and men from the early 1970s to very recent years in nationally representative samples of respondents.

Gender-Centric Attitudes

The presence of attitudinal sex differences is in general accord with theories that emphasize the *group-centrism* of public opinion (Kinder, 1998). The concept of group-centrism follows from observations that social group memberships (e.g., race, gender, religion) are often associated with distinctive sociopolitical attitudes. Just as group membership can shape social behavior in general and produce in-group favoritism (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002), as maintained by social identity theorists (e.g., Tajfel, 1981), these memberships produce a shared social reality and therefore can shape attitudes (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Although racial groupings show particularly large attitudinal differences in the United States (Kinder & Sanders, 1996; Kluegel & Smith, 1986), gender groups also exert attitudinal influence. This argument is not meant to imply that women or men show political solidarity, given that political party identification and sympathy with feminist causes vary greatly within both sexes (Sears & Huddy, 1990). Despite differing political loyalties within each sex, gender identification may exert some influence on attitudes.

Consistent with social role theory (Eagly et al., 2000), this influence emerges in part through normative processes by which other people convey expectations based on gender. For example, if people expect women to be concerned with helping dependent others, extension of these expectations to sociopolitical issues could foster differing positions on welfare and other social provision issues. Such gender-role expectations gain power as they are instilled through socialization, elaborated in cultural products (e.g., film, advertising), and enacted in daily life.

Gender also influences attitudes through self-regulatory processes that follow from people deriving social identity from their gender group (Turner & Oakes, 1997). Attitudes thus may be gender-centric for women and men to the extent that their identification with their gender group produces gendered self-construals that impact on attitudes and behavior (e.g., Gardner & Gabriel,

2004). In particular, these self-related processes may direct women's attention, not merely to policies' implications for their caring responsibilities, but also to policies' implications for women's status. Vigilance about these implications would be fostered by the widespread feminist discourse on improving women's status, which delineated barriers that women face when their opportunities and responsibilities are defined by their gender rather than their individual qualifications. In the absence of a comparable social movement concerned with preserving or changing men's status, men's identification with their gender group may be weaker or at least less likely to direct their attention to policies' implications for men (Diekman, Eagly, & Kulesa, 2002). Nonetheless, on issues that directly challenge men's superior social power, their identification with their gender may foster distinctive attitudes that differ from those of women.

Our analysis has some similarity to the social dominance theory argument that attitudinal sex differences are explained by women's lesser social dominance, that is, by the weaker overall preference for social inequality among women than men (Pratto et al., 1997; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Women and members of other subordinated groups are presumed to favor policies that reduce the hierarchical differences by which they have lesser power and control, and men and members of other dominant groups to favor policies that maintain these differences. However, given the political activation of women in the women's movement, their attitudes may be more oriented to reducing hierarchical group differences than men's attitudes are to maintaining them. In line with this possibility, our earlier research showed that women's agreement with policy items on the General Social Survey (GSS; Davis & Smith, 1998) was correlated with the extent to which these items were rated as having positive implications for women, whereas men's agreement was unrelated to the items' implications for men (Diekman et al., 2002). We address these issues in our second study by examining the relations of gender-related ideological variables to gender gaps in attitudes.

Despite the orientation of women and men to somewhat different goals, there are likely restrictions on the amount of their attitudinal divergence, given their mutual dependence in families. To the extent that men share their resources with their wives and children, policies that favor women at the expense of men may receive a mixed reception from women. Similarly, men's typical dependence on their wives for both domestic work and wage labor can limit their support for policies that favor men at the expense of women. These considerations suggest that attitudinal gender gaps are unlikely to be large.

Policy Areas in Which the Attitudes of Women and Men Differ

Although other researchers have not attempted a comprehensive study of sex differences in sociopolitical attitudes with representative survey data, more limited studies have located various areas of attitudinal difference. Many analyses are confined to U.S. data, but similar findings have emerged in Western Europe (e.g., Ekehammar & Sidanius, 1982; Jelen, Thomas, & Wilcox, 1994), as well as in Canada (Kopinak, 1987) and South Africa (Furnham, 1985), but are not necessarily present in all countries (Sapiro, 2003).

The most commonly noted difference is that women are more likely than men to endorse policies that support the provision of social services for deserving and disadvantaged groups (Goertzel, 1983; Schlesinger & Heldman, 2001; Shapiro & Mahajan, 1986), including housing, child care, educational opportunity, and financial support in the form of welfare. Women are also more opposed to violence, including warfare, the death penalty, and partner violence, and advocate protections from violence, such as gun control (Goertzel, 1983; Sapiro, 2003; T. W. Smith, 1984). In addition, women are more favorable than men toward equal rights for women (Swim, Aiken, Hall, & Hunter, 1995; Twenge, 1997a) and for gays and lesbians (Herek, 2002; Kite & Whitley, 1996). Women also advocate more restriction of many behaviors that are traditionally considered immoral (e.g., casual sex; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; consumption of pornography, Seltzer et al., 1997). In general, we expected attitudinal sex differences to be concentrated in these policy areas in our studies as well.

Evidence of sex differences in many sociopolitical attitudes is unlikely to be surprising to the general public. Our earlier research thus demonstrated moderate accuracy in people's beliefs about the attitudes of men and women on a wide range of specific sociopolitical issues (Diekman et al., 2002). This research found substantial correlations between beliefs about these attitudes and actual attitudes, as assessed in surveys. Specifically, participants' estimates of men's and women's attitudes were significantly related to the criterion attitudes of male and female GSS respondents as well as to sex differences in these criterion attitudes.

The range of attitudinal issues producing gender gaps is informative. Because not all of these gaps suggest that women are more liberal than men, conservative-liberal ideology is unlikely to fully account for these sex differences. Nonetheless, these known gaps have enough correspondence to our social role theory to encourage systematic exploration of the theory's ability to explain attitudinal sex differences. The themes of social provision, antiviolence, and personally conservative morality thus seem congruent with women's responsibilities as main family nurturer and with the consequent construal of femininity in terms of fostering others' well being. In addition, women's endorsements of equal rights and social provision may reflect their dissatisfaction with women's lower status and their sympathy for other disadvantaged groups.

To better understand these attitudinal gender gaps, our research goes beyond the description of sex differences at the level of specific issues (e.g., housing discrimination, welfare) to investigate the overall dimensionality of these issue-level differences. Description in terms of broader themes facilitates understanding of the likely social psychological causes of attitudinal gender gaps and promotes the integration of knowledge about attitudinal sex differences with knowledge about other sex differences in social behavior (Eagly et al., 2000).

Study 1

Our first study examined attitudes in the GSS, which is a personal interview survey that is conducted by the National Opinion Research Center and provides high-quality nationally representative data (Davis & Smith, 1998). This survey features an eclectic mix of attitudinal items and the replication of many of the same items across many years. These data allowed us to examine the stability of attitudinal gender gaps across time and to take into

account a large number of sociodemographic variables, such as labor force participation and race.

Effects of Controlling Gender Gaps on Other Sociodemographic Variables

Our argument that gender gaps follow in part from the effects of contemporaneous roles on role occupants suggests that controlling for role differences between the sexes would lessen attitudinal sex differences. To examine this possibility, we treated some sociodemographic variables as proxies for the specific roles that men and women differentially occupy. For example, if people who have lower income differ attitudinally from those who have higher income, controlling for income might reduce attitudinal sex differences because women have lower income than men. However, to the extent that inclusive gender roles that apply more categorically to men and women foster attitudinal gender gaps, such controls would not eliminate them.

Comparisons of Gender Gaps With the Effects of Other Sociodemographic Variables

The causes of gender gaps can be discerned by comparing them with the attitudinal effects of other social divisions or *cleavages* such as social class and race (Manza & Brooks, 1999). Therefore, to the extent that the causes implicated by social role theory in relation to gender also function for groupings such as race, these other groupings would be associated with attitudinal differences that resemble gender gaps. Thus, if women's status disadvantage underlies their attitudinal divergence from men, women's attitudes would differ from men's in patterns similar to those that differentiate other disadvantaged groups (e.g., racial minorities) from advantaged groups (e.g., Whites). In fact, if expectation states theorists are correct in arguing that gender and other status characteristics such as race have similar effects (e.g., Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004), survey data should reveal similar patterns of attitudinal differences across virtually all social cleavages marked by status differentials. However, to the extent that women's caring responsibilities underlie gender gaps, these gaps would also resemble those that distinguish other groups with caring responsibilities (e.g., parents).

Examining interactions between respondent sex and other variables is important, if researchers are to heed the advice of gender psychologists to place sex in a context of race, age, and other social category memberships to show the variable, contextualized effects of gender (e.g., LaFrance, Paluck, & Brescoll, 2004). However, in most research this advice is difficult to implement because of relatively small and nonrepresentative samples of participants. The GSS provides an unusual opportunity to examine whether sociodemographic characteristics moderate the impact of respondent sex on attitudes in patterns that are consistent with our reasoning. For example, consistent with our argument about status disadvantage, members of disadvantaged groups, especially racial minorities, show enhanced support for compassionate social policies (e.g., Cook & Barrett, 1992; Kinder & Sanders, 1996). Therefore, the attitudes of minority men and women on such issues may be more similar than those of majority men and women. In addition, according to our argument about the effects of currently occupied social roles, some attitudinal sex differences may be

larger for respondents who have more children because women generally have much more child-rearing responsibility than men.

Temporal Effects on Gender Gaps

Although the GSS allows exploration of attitudes only from the early 1970s onward, this period encompasses considerable shift by women into employment roles. Expectations about changes in gender gaps over this time period follow from our general argument that these gaps reflect the differing social position of the sexes, whereby social roles may exert direct influences on people's attitudes from their currently occupied roles and indirect influences through the diffuse gender-role expectations that emerge from the sexes' typical roles. By either the direct or indirect route, the increasing similarity of female and male labor force participation could foster greater male–female attitudinal similarity. However, to the extent that attitudinal gender gaps reflect not mainly labor force participation but the direct and indirect influence of the continuing differentiation of the sexes in terms of women's greater domestic responsibilities and lesser societal status, attitudinal differences should have remained largely intact since the early 1970s.

Predictions

In summary, our predictions about attitudinal gender gaps follow from social role theory's assumptions about the direct and indirect effects of the differing positioning of women and men in the social structure. The direct effects of respondents' current family and occupational roles on their attitudes would predict some lessening in the magnitude of gender gaps with statistical controls for the specific roles on which men and women differ. However, because sex differences follow in part from the indirect effects of role occupancy through diffuse gender roles that apply to all men and women, attitudinal sex differences should be maintained in survey data, despite some lessening in their magnitude with controls for these specific roles. Also, because temporal effects should reflect the continuing differences in the social position of the sexes, it is likely that gender gaps have remained largely intact over time.

This reasoning about attitudinal gender gaps gains plausibility from the thematic focus of known gender gaps on issues pertaining to social provision, antiviolenace, and morality (e.g., Goertzel, 1983; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; T. W. Smith, 1984). These areas of social policy should be of special relevance to people who have lower status and greater domestic responsibility. Therefore, we predict that attitudes in these policy areas are related, not only to sex, but also to status (e.g., minority status) and domestic responsibility (e.g., parental status). Therefore, to the extent that gender gaps reflect women's status disadvantage, these gaps should resemble gaps associated with other disadvantaged groups, such as African Americans. Also, to the extent that gender gaps reflect women's domestic responsibilities, these gaps should resemble gaps associated with other groups that have caring responsibilities, such as parents in general.

Method

Participants and Procedure

This research used GSS data for 1973–1998. The survey was conducted annually from 1972 to 1994 (except for 1979, 1981, and 1992) and

continued biennially since 1994. For each survey, approximately 1,700 respondents were interviewed individually for approximately 12 hr. Each survey is an independently drawn sample of English-speaking, noninstitutionalized persons 18 years of age or over, living in the United States (Davis & Smith, 1998). The oversampling of Black respondents in 1982 and 1987 was corrected by omitting the extra block of respondents.

The sample for these analyses was 56.4% women and 43.6% men.² The racial/ethnic composition was predominantly European American, with 11.8% African American, 4.3% Hispanic, and 1.2% Asian American. Educational attainment was high school diploma for 51.7% and bachelor's degree or higher for 12.8%. Median age was 42 years, ranging from 18 to 89 years. The median family income was \$21,659 (in constant 1986 dollars). The sample sizes available for our analyses ranged from 27,732 to 35,773, depending on missing data.

Attitudes

Developing attitudinal measures proceeded in two steps: First, we analyzed the GSS to identify sex-typed attitudinal domains; then we fully represented these domains by including all items that related to each domain. Specifically, we initially narrowed the entire set of attitudinal GSS items to items on which women and men differed at least very slightly in agreement. These items had to appear in identical form in at least 15 years and not fall below a 4% gender gap in endorsement in any year. All items that met these criteria were entered into a factor analysis.³ On the basis of inspection of the scree plot, we chose a four-factor solution, with the factors identified as Social Compassion, Traditional Morality, Civil Liberties, and Support for Established Institutions (e.g., business, military). We standardized the scores for the items that loaded .30 or higher on each factor. Within each resulting attitudinal variable, the standardized item scores were averaged to form a composite variable. These variables thus defined four sex-differentiated domains among the many issues included in the GSS.

We then added to each content domain those items that fell below a 4% endorsement difference but correlated .30 or more with the relevant attitudinal variable and that appeared in at least 15 years. We took this step to ensure that our method of choosing items did not constrict variability across the years. This expanded group of items was then factor-analyzed and again yielded the four-factor structure. Items that loaded .30 or higher on a factor in this new analysis were retained, with items loading on more than one factor assigned to the higher loading factor. Once again, we standardized the scores for the items included in each attitudinal variable and averaged them. Although the addition of items in this second step tended to lower the relations of these variables to respondent sex, it is important to represent each content area as completely as possible and to avoid artificially restricting variability across the years.

The overall sex difference in two of these variables proved to be very small, $r(31,384) = -.045$, for support for established institutions, and $r(29,539) = -.044$, for support for civil liberties (with greater male support in both areas).⁴ Therefore, analyses on these variables are not presented in this article.

The first retained variable, social compassion, included 10 items on police brutality, gun control, government spending for African Americans, racial discrimination in housing, reducing income differences between the rich and poor, the death penalty, and similar issues ($\alpha = .59$).⁵ The second retained variable, traditional morality, included 12 items on extramarital relationships, divorce, suicide, legalization of marijuana, abortion, and similar issues ($\alpha = .84$).⁶

To maintain the integrity of our attitudinal variables, we included data from a given year in each analysis only if at least half of the final items appeared in that survey. As a result, 1986 was dropped from the traditional morality analyses and 1972 from all analyses. With these omissions, social compassion was assessed on 21 data sets: 1973–1978, 1980, 1982–1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998. Traditional morality was assessed on 20 data sets 1973–1978, 1980, 1982–1985, 1987–1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998. Sample sizes vary accordingly.

Predictor Variables

The predictors of the attitudes are listed in Table 1. The years were dummy coded, with the earliest year serving as the reference category (Wooldridge, 2003). To retain all respondents in the analysis, we dummy coded labor force participation as participant (i.e., employed full-time) versus nonparticipant (i.e., all other respondents) and occupational prestige as above average versus below average for the respondent's current job or past job if he or she was not employed at the time of the survey. The Hispanic variable indicated respondents' designation of their heritage as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or another Spanish-speaking group. A single item (POLVIEWS in the GSS) assessed self-reported conservative–liberal ideology. Losses of respondents for missing data on the predictors were small. A correlation matrix of all of the predictor and attitudinal variables appears in Appendix A.

Regression Analyses

Using sequential (or setwise) regressions designed to answer the questions that we have raised, we entered the independent variables into six different models with all continuous variables centered to facilitate the interpretation of interactions (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). Exploratory analyses entered all continuous variables in their linear and quadratic forms, and the quadratic terms were retained if they were significant on either compassion or morality attitudes. Interactions between sex and other variables were evaluated in regression equations that included sex, the other variables, and the interactions (Cohen et al., 2003). All interactions that proved to be significant predictors of social compassion or traditional morality attitudes were retained. In models not examining interactions, sex was entered last to evaluate its incremental effect once other variables were controlled.

To provide a baseline for interpreting the observed sex differences, Model 1 included only sex of respondent. Model 2 entered in addition each of the survey years (e.g., 1973, 1974, 1975) as a separate dummy-coded variable. To examine the stability of the sex differences over time, Model 3 also entered the Year \times Sex interactions.

To determine whether controlling for sociodemographic sex differences would reduce the attitudinal sex differences, Model 4 entered the year variables as a first step and then as a second step entered the sociodemographic variables such as education, age, employment, and race. Sex of respondent was added last to examine its incremental effect given these controls. Then to determine whether attitudinal sex differences varied in magnitude across demographic groups, Model 5 entered (after sex of

² The higher percentage of women than men reflects their greater longevity and the exclusion of institutionalized respondents (e.g., incarcerated criminals, military personnel).

³ Oblique promax rotation and orthogonal varimax rotation produced very similar solutions in the first and second phase of the factor analyses.

⁴ For civil liberties, 8 of the 18 items were added in the second scaling step; for support for established institutions, 4 of the 9 items were added in the second scaling step.

⁵ The GSS items were CAPPUN (82), EQWLTH (72), GUNLAW (86), HITROBBR (231E), HITCHILD (231C), NATCITY (65D), NATRACE (65H), POLESCAP (232C), POLHITOK (232), RACOPEN (128), and NATFARE (65K). Of these items, only 1 was added in the second scaling step. The factor analysis did not support separating these items into two factors (e.g., one pertaining to interpersonal violence and the other to compassion for disadvantaged groups).

⁶ The GSS items were ABNOMORE (206), DIVLAW (215A), GRASS (95), PREMARSX (217), SUICIDE4 (227D), XMARSEX (218), ABANY (106G), ABDEFECT (206A), ABPOOR (206D), ABRAPE (206F), and ABSINGLE (206F). Of these items, five were added in the second scaling step.

Table 1
Study 1 Independent Variables

Variable	Coding
Sex	0 = male; 1 = female
Year	0 = not target year, 1 = target year, dummy coded for each year
Age ^a	18 = 18 years to 89 = 89 years
Marital status	0 = not married; 1 = married
Total children ^a	0 = no children to 8 = eight or more
Child in home	0 = no; 1 = yes
Years of education ^a	0 = 0 years to 20 = 20 years
Labor force participation	0 = nonparticipant; 1 = participant
Occupational prestige	0 = below average; 1 = above average
Household income ^a	Scaled to constant 1986 dollars
African American	0 = not African American; 1 = African American
Hispanic	0 = not Hispanic; 1 = Hispanic
Conservatism ^a	1 = extremely liberal to 7 = extremely conservative

^a Continuous variable.

respondent, the year variables, and the sociodemographic variables) the interactions between sex and the sociodemographic variables. These interactions were retained in the model if they were significant on either compassion or morality attitudes.

To ascertain whether controlling for sex differences in conservative-liberal ideology would reduce the attitudinal sex differences, Model 6's first steps of entering the year variables and the sociodemographic variables were followed by the entry of conservatism. Then sex of respondent was added to examine its incremental effect given these controls.

Because of the very large sample sizes available for these analyses, we interpreted as significant only those effects that reached a probability level of .001. Also, because initial analyses revealed heteroskedasticity in relation to some of the independent variables, heteroskedasticity-robust error terms were used for these regressions (Wooldridge, 2003).

Results

As shown in Table 2, Model 1 indicated that women's attitudes were more socially compassionate and traditionally moral than men's attitudes when other variables were not controlled. In Model

2, which entered in addition the dummy-coded year variables, the significant cumulative effects of the year variables indicated variation over time in both compassion and morality attitudes (see Figures 1 and 2). In Model 3, which examined the cumulated Year \times Sex interactions, these interaction terms were not significant. The sex difference in both of these attitudes thus appears to have been generally stable over time.

Model 4 displays the effect of entering sociodemographic variables as a block after the year variables (see Table 3). For each attitude, these variables had a significant composite effect, but the residual sex of respondent effect remained significant and only slightly smaller than the Model 1 sex effect.

For socially compassionate attitudes, these sociodemographic predictors indicated greater endorsement for respondents who (a) were younger; (b) were unmarried; and (c) had fewer children, with the quadratic trend showing that the negative relation between number of children and compassion reversed because respondents with three or more children became increasingly compassionate. Attitudes were also more compassionate for respondents who (a) were more educated, with the quadratic trend reflecting increased compassion among respondents with the lowest and highest levels of education; (b) were not in the labor force; (c) had a low-prestige occupation; (d) had less household income, with the quadratic trend reflecting a relatively sharp gain in compassion as incomes became very low; (e) were African American; and (f) were Hispanic.

For traditionally moral attitudes, the sociodemographic predictors indicated greater endorsement for respondents who (a) were older, with the quadratic trend reflecting less support with increasing age among younger respondents followed by a rise in support among older respondents; (b) were married; (c) had more children; and (d) had a child in the home. Attitudes were also more traditionally moral for respondents who (a) were less educated, with the smaller quadratic trend reflecting a small rise at the lowest educational level and a steeper fall at the highest levels; (b) had less household income; and (c) were Hispanic.

To examine the stability of the sex differences across other sociodemographic variables, Model 5 included the interactions between sex and these variables (see Table 4). For socially com-

Table 2
Study 1 Sequential Regression Results for Models 1, 2, and 3: Sex, Years, and Interactions Between Sex and Years

Variable	Social compassion					Traditional morality				
	Model 1		Model 2	Model 3	Model 1		Model 2	Model 3		
	R^2	B	β	R^2	R^2	R^2	B	β	R^2	R^2
Sex	.026**	.164	.160	.026**	.026**	.007**	.107	.081	.007**	.007**
Years ^a				.039**	.039**				.010**	.010**
Years \times Sex ^a					.039					.011

Note. N s were 35,773 for social compassion and 34,282 for traditional morality. For R^2 , asterisks indicate significance of R^2 change when the block was entered into the model. Higher attitude scores indicate greater endorsement of socially compassionate or traditionally moral policies.

^a Pooled over dummy-coded year variables for each survey year.

** $p < .0001$.

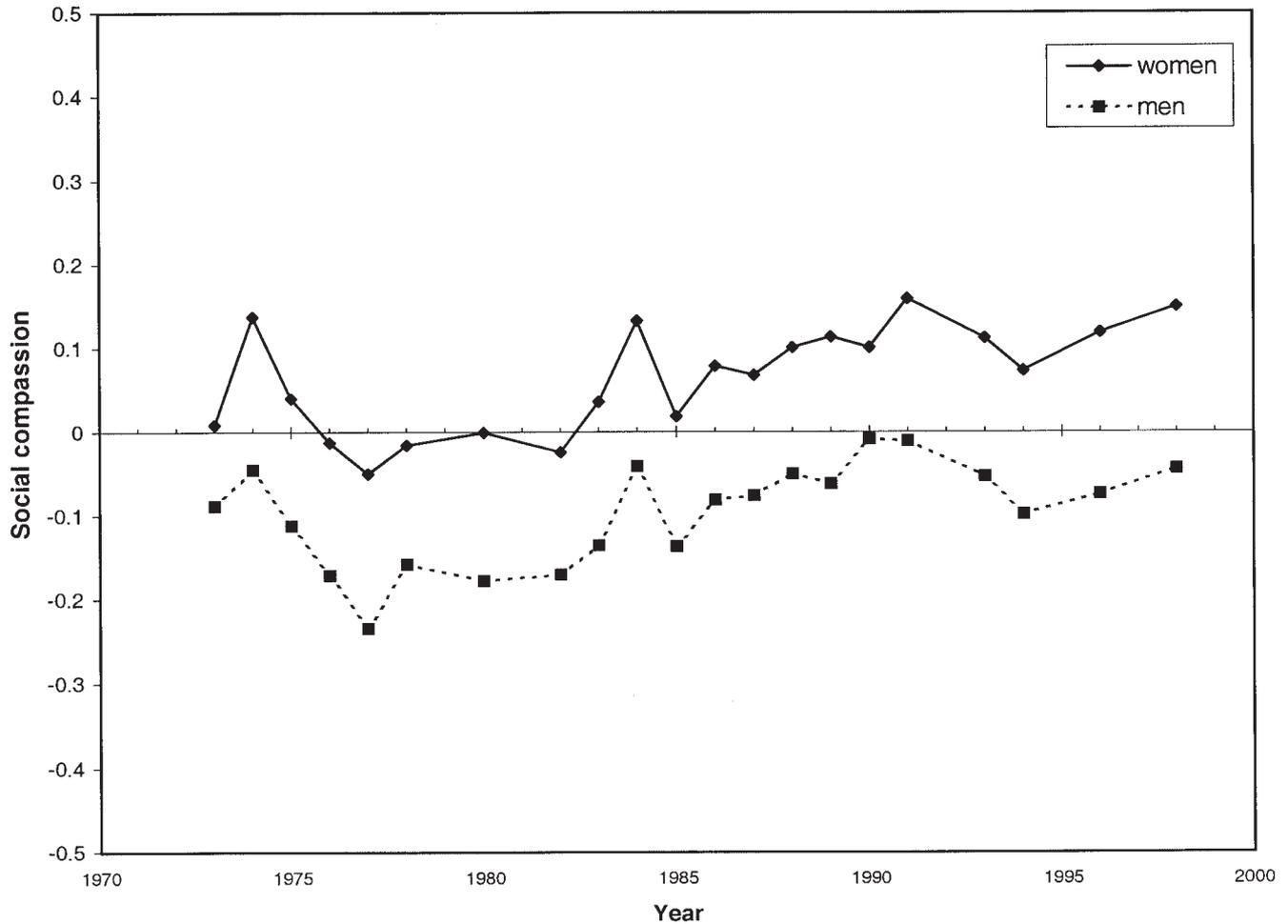


Figure 1. The effects of year and sex on social compassion attitudes in Study 1. The attitude scores are standardized, with higher values indicating greater endorsement of socially compassionate policies.

passionate attitudes, the Total Children \times Sex interaction reflected the larger magnitude of the sex difference among respondents with more children. Both the African American \times Sex and the Hispanic \times Sex interactions reflected the smaller size of the compassionate sex difference among respondents from these minority groups. For traditionally moral attitudes, the Age \times Sex, Child in Home \times Sex, and Labor Force Participation \times Sex interactions reflected the greater magnitude of the traditional morality sex difference among respondents who were older, did not have a child in the home, or were not full-time participants in the labor force. Despite these interactions, women's attitudes remained more compassionate and traditionally moral than men's at all levels of these moderating variables.

Model 6's inclusion of conservatism versus liberalism showed that more conservative respondents had less compassionate attitudes and more traditionally moral attitudes (see Table 5). Yet, both sex residuals remained significant and very close to their values in Model 4.

We also explored a religiosity predictor, composed of strength of religious identification and frequency of attendance

at religious services. Although the entry of this variable had minimal impact on social compassion attitudes, its entry did reduce the traditional morality gender gap to nonsignificance, consistent with women's greater religiosity and the positive relation of religiosity to traditionally moral attitudes. However, because religiosity is itself a proxy for traditionally moral attitudes, we have not included it in our reported analyses.

Discussion

Our analysis of attitudes on a wide range of issues found temporally stable gender gaps in two broad areas of social and political debate. The largest sex difference occurred on social compassion issues, whereby women were more supportive than men of social provision and opposed to harsh policies across a fairly wide spectrum of issues. In addition, a gender gap on traditional morality issues took the form of women's greater dis-

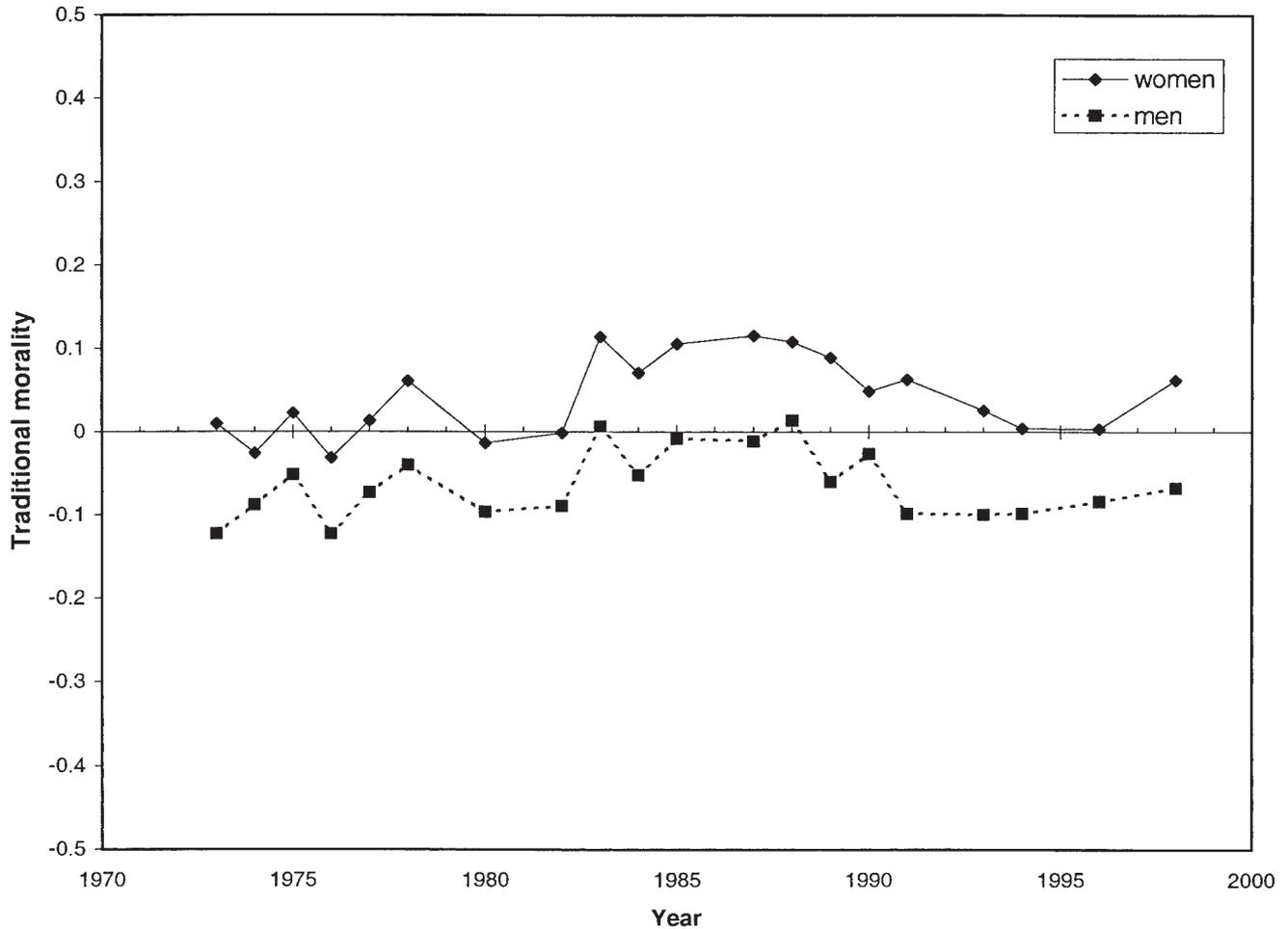


Figure 2. The effects of year and sex on traditional morality attitudes in Study 1. The attitude scores are standardized, with higher values indicating greater endorsement of traditionally moral policies.

approval of behavior that violates conventional moral norms in domains such as sexuality, drug use, suicide, and family life.⁷

These attitudinal gender gaps were not a consequence of a conservative-liberal ideological sex difference, although, consistent with other studies (e.g., Cook & Barrett, 1992; Feldman, 1988; Poole & Zeigler, 1985; Sapiro, 1983), liberal identity was associated with approval of socially compassionate policies and conservative identity with approval of traditionally moral policies. Women can thus be regarded as more liberal than men in social compassion and more conservative in traditional morality. Moreover, entering conservatism into the regression equations had little effect on the ability of sex to predict attitudes, consistent with the very small tendency for men to be more conservative than women, $r(31,724) = -.02, p < .0001$.

In general, the gender gaps proved to be interpretable from our social role perspective. This interpretation emerges from (a) examining the effects on these gaps of controlling for sociodemographic variables, (b) comparing these gaps to differences associated with other social categories such as racial groups, and (c) examining the temporal patterning of the gender gaps.

Effects of Controlling Gender Gaps for the Effects of Other Sociodemographic Variables

The gender gaps in both attitudinal domains persisted even when we introduced controls for a large number of sociodemographic variables. Therefore, only a small portion of the gender gaps appeared to reflect the direct influence of differences in the specific social positioning of the female and male respondents in terms of the sociodemographic variables we assessed—for example, the lesser likelihood that the female respondents were employed and their lower household income (see Appendix A). Moreover, despite some interactions with sociodemographic variables such as race, whereby the sex differences varied in magnitude, under all conditions women's attitudes remained more socially compassionate and traditionally moral than men's attitudes.

⁷ The true relationships between sex and these attitudes are no doubt somewhat stronger than our statistics indicated. Corrected for unreliability (Cronbach, 1990), the correlation between sex and socially compassionate attitudes was .21 and between sex and traditionally moral attitudes was .09.

Table 3
Study 1 Sequential Regression Results for Model 4: Sociodemographic Variables

Variable	Social compassion			Traditional morality		
	R ²	B	β	R ²	B	β
Years ^a	.013**			.004**		
Sociodemographic	.160**			.105**		
Age		-.002**	-.068		.004**	.092
Age ²		.000	.007		.000**	.042
Marital status		-.055**	-.053		.173**	.130
Total children		-.006	-.023		.030**	.082
Total children ²		.003**	.037		.002	.018
Child in home		.017	.017		.075**	.056
Years of education		.013**	.080		-.032**	-.151
Years of education ²		.002**	.071		-.001*	-.019
Labor force participation		-.087**	-.086		-.001	.000
Occupational prestige		-.040**	-.040		-.012	-.009
Household income		-.000**	-.112		-.000**	-.102
Household income ²		.000**	.065		.000	.019
African American		.475**	.299		.003	.002
Hispanic		.253**	.103		.065*	.020
Sex residual	.177**	.138**	.136	.108**	.076**	.058

Note. Ns ranged from 32,325 to 35,773 for social compassion and from 30,977 to 34,282 for traditional morality. Squared terms test quadratic trends. For R², asterisks indicate significance of R² change when the block was entered into the model. Higher attitude scores indicate greater endorsement of socially compassionate or traditionally moral policies.

^a Pooled over dummy-coded year variables for each survey year.

* p < .001. ** p < .0001.

Interpretation of these gender gaps is aided by comparing them with the effects of other sociodemographic variables within each attitudinal domain.

Comparison of Gender Gaps With the Effects of Other Sociodemographic Variables

Socially compassionate attitudes. Many of the effects of other sociodemographic predictors of these attitudes are consistent with the conclusion that social disadvantage enhances support for com-

passionate policies. Specifically, Hispanics and especially African Americans had more compassionate attitudes than other respondents. Therefore, as expected, the gender gaps in these attitudes were somewhat smaller among African American or Hispanic respondents than majority respondents. Moreover, the more compassionate attitudes of respondents who were younger or not employed or had a low-prestige occupation further confirmed the general pattern of greater support for compassionate policies among less-advantaged respondents. Also, respondents with less

Table 4
Study 1 Sequential Regression Results for Model 5: Interactions of Sociodemographic Variables and Sex

Variable	Social compassion			Traditional morality		
	R ²	B	β	R ²	B	β
Sex	.026**			.007**		
Years ^a	.039**			.010**		
Sociodemographic	.177**			.108**		
Interactions of sociodemographic variables and sex	.179**			.112**		
Age × Sex		-.001	-.021		.002**	.043
Total Children × Sex		.013*	.035		.003	.006
Child in Home × Sex		.010	.009		-.067**	-.044
Labor Force Participation × Sex		.028	.023		-.084**	-.053
African American × Sex		-.076**	-.038		.012	.005
Hispanic × Sex		-.114**	-.036		-.008	-.002

Note. Ns ranged from 32,325 to 35,773 for social compassion and from 30,977 to 34,282 for traditional morality. For R², asterisks indicate significance of R² change when each block was entered into the model. Higher attitude scores indicate greater endorsement of socially compassionate or traditionally moral policies.

^a Pooled over dummy-coded year variables for each survey year.

* p < .001. ** p < .0001.

Table 5
Study 1 Sequential Regression Results for Model 6: Conservatism Versus Liberalism

Variable	Social compassion			Traditional morality		
	R^2	B	β	R^2	B	β
Years ^a	.013**			.004**		
Sociodemographic	.160**			.105**		
Conservatism	.197**	-.076**	-.202	.145**	.107**	.220
Sex residual	.213**	.135**	.134	.148**	.080**	.061

Note. N s ranged from 29,024 to 35,773 for social compassion and from 27,732 to 34,282 for traditional morality. Data from the year 1973 were omitted from these models because conservatism was not collected. For R^2 , asterisks indicate significance of R^2 change when the block was entered into the model. Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of socially compassionate or traditionally moral policies or conservatism.

^a Pooled over dummy-coded year variables for each survey year.

** $p < .0001$.

income held more compassionate attitudes, although this trend reversed somewhat for persons at high income levels. Contrasting with these effects associating disadvantage with compassionate attitudes was an overall trend toward greater compassion among more educated respondents. However, those who were least educated (and presumably disadvantaged) also showed relatively strong endorsement of compassionate policies.

The relation of family responsibility to compassionate attitudes proved to be somewhat complex. Although the unmarried respondents were relatively compassionate, so were those with no or few children but also with larger numbers of children. Also, the sex difference in these attitudes increased somewhat for respondents who had more children. Because child-care responsibilities fall disproportionately on women, the presence of children may especially increase women's endorsement of compassionate policies that support families and communities.

Traditional morality attitudes. Many of the relations of these attitudes to other sociodemographic variables were different from those of compassionate attitudes. Traditional morality attitudes were thus associated with indicators of family responsibility—specifically, being married and having more children or a child in the home. These findings suggest that respondents may view traditional morality as protecting children and families. Traditional morality attitudes were not associated with most indicators of social disadvantage, such as being younger, African American, or not employed or having a low-prestige occupation. However, less-educated respondents showed stronger endorsement, as did those who had less household income or were Hispanic. Reflecting generational shift, traditional morality was also associated with being older, with a larger gender gap among older adults. Also notable is the lessening of the gender gap in traditional morality among labor force participants, suggesting that the role similarity engendered by employment reduced this attitudinal difference. This result recalls Franke, Crown, and Spake's (1997) meta-analytic finding that the greater concern of women than men with ethical decision making in business settings eroded with greater work experience.

Implications of contrasting prediction of social compassion attitudes and traditional morality attitudes. In social compassion attitudes, women differed from men in the same way that most other lower status groups differed from higher status groups. However, in their traditional morality attitudes, lower status

groups did not consistently differ from higher status groups even though women differed from men. In resembling other groups with family responsibilities—that is, people who are married and those who have children—women have traditional morality attitudes that appear to be marked by their role obligations in terms of caring activities. In general, these data suggest that, consistent with expectation states theory (Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004), gender functions as a status characteristic, but, consistent with social role theory, it has effects beyond those of general status. These effects derive from the specific tasks and obligations that differentiate women from men but do not necessarily differentiate other lower status groups from their higher status counterparts. The contrasting predictions in these two attitudinal domains by sociodemographic variables other than sex thus reveal the limitations of arguing that the effects of gender on social behavior are solely a manifestation of women's lower societal status (e.g., Conway, Pizzamiglio, & Mount, 1996).

Temporal Effects on Gender Gaps

The stability over time that we observed in male–female differences in socially compassionate and traditionally moral attitudes has implications for the causes of these gaps. If these attitudes were mainly affected by employment, women's attitudes in these areas should have become more similar to men's as they entered the paid labor force in greater numbers and became better represented in many occupations from the early 1970s onward. Instead, the constancy of the gender gaps suggests that they reflect features of the division of labor that have shown less change in the last decades, specifically women's lower status relative to men (especially in effects on social compassion attitudes) and their continuing domestic responsibilities (especially in effects on traditional morality attitudes).

Study 2

Although Study 1 suggested that attitudinal sex differences occur mainly in two areas of social policy, the generalizability of these findings is limited by the particular items consistently included in the GSS. Therefore, one purpose of the new study is to determine whether a wider array of sex-typed items would yield general factors similar to those produced in Study 1 and perhaps

yield additional factors. Adopting a different strategy for examining attitudinal sex differences, we developed a large battery of items assessing sociopolitical attitudes that tend to be differentiated by sex according to past research (e.g., Pratto et al., 1997; Seltzer et al., 1997). The inclusion of many topic areas allowed us to go beyond the limited set of items in the GSS.

In addition to conceptually replicating Study 1 with a different method of selecting attitudinal items, Study 2 represented gender roles more fully in the form most relevant to understanding sociopolitical attitudes—namely, ideological differences between the sexes. Ideologies provide broader themes that characterize interdependent clusters of attitudes and beliefs; attitudes on specific issues can be derived from ideologies (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). Political ideologies are important to understanding intergroup relations because they provide justifications for social practices that enhance, maintain, or reduce social inequality (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Conservatism versus liberalism is one such ideological variable, with conservatism associated with resistance to social change and justification of inequality and liberalism with openness to change and challenges to inequality (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003).

Our arguments about the influence of culturally shared gender roles on attitudes are consistent with the presence of ideological differences between the sexes, at least during recent decades, in which women in the United States have experienced increased political empowerment. In terms of our arguments about the importance of differences in the social position of women and men, ideological sex differences should reflect differences in the social position of women and men. Such an argument emerged from Pratto et al.'s (1997) research on the extent to which social dominance orientation, defined as a general preference for group inequality, accounted for attitudinal sex differences (see also Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Their research examined the relations of social dominance orientation and conservatism versus liberalism to attitudes on several specific issues pertaining to social compassion, women's and gay/lesbian rights, and the military, although not to traditional morality. These studies showed that, for most issues, controlling for social dominance and conservatism reduced the magnitude of the sex effect. However, some of these reductions were not large, and for some issues, the sex difference remained significant.

Our understanding of the ideological context of gender gap attitudes benefited from Jost and Thompson's (2000) demonstration that social dominance orientation can be decomposed into two ideological factors, one that assesses opposition versus support for group-based dominance and the other that assesses opposition versus support for social equality. This distinction is relevant to our argument that the gender gaps in attitudes arose when women's increasing political activation made salient their interest in eliminating their subordination. Therefore, we predict that women are more favorable to social equality than men, as other researchers have found (e.g., Dio, Saragovi, & Koestner, 1996). Consistent with Jost and Thompson's (2000) finding that commitment to equality but not to group-based dominance was associated with support for affirmative action, we predict that equality ideology accounts for many attitudinal sex differences. Whereas men are more committed than women to group-based dominance, this commitment may be relevant primarily on issues that directly threaten men's higher social status. Conservatism versus liberalism

was expected to be relatively insufficient to represent ideological differences between the sexes because controlling for this aspect of political ideology in Study 1 had little impact on the attitudinal gender gaps that the study uncovered.

We state our hypotheses for Study 2 in terms of support for social dominance and equality rather than opposition to social dominance and equality because of evidence that the structure of many attitudes and ideologies is unipolar, varying from strong endorsement of relevant concepts to indifference (Cacioppo, Gardner, & Berntson, 1997; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). In making this point, Kerlinger (1984) demonstrated that conservative-liberal ideology is organized by positive goals whereby each ideological group favors ideas to which the other group is more indifferent than opposed. For example, liberals favor ideas such as participatory social equality, and conservatives are generally indifferent rather than opposed to these ideas. We thus assume that group-based dominance and equality ideologies are organized mainly in terms of support for these ideologies rather than opposition.

In a community sample, we assessed group-based dominance and equality ideologies as well as conservatism-liberalism and examined the extent to which controlling for these ideological variables reduced attitudinal sex differences. We also treated ideologies as mediators of the relation between respondent sex and attitudes. The specific attitudes that we examined reflected a wide range of sociopolitical issues, chosen to expand on the item selection of the GSS and to allow another investigation of dimensionality of sex-differentiated attitudinal issues.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 137 men and 124 women recruited from a large metropolitan airport. Surveyors (2 men, 2 women) asked every 5th person who was sitting in a departure lounge and appeared to be at least 18 years old if they would be willing to complete a short questionnaire on attitudes on various social issues. Among the 64.5% who consented, the median age was 38 years with a range of 16 to 68 years and 87.0% were identified by the surveyors as European American, 5.0% African American, 3.1% Hispanic, 1.9% Asian American, and 3.1% other or unreported. In this sample, 61.0% held at least a bachelor's degree and 84.3% were employed. Of those who were employed, 65.5% reported a managerial or professional job; 22.9% a technical, sales, or administrative support position; and 6.7% a service position. Excluded were 35 individuals who were citizens of foreign countries, did not report their sex, or did not follow the directions.

For measure construction, 112 men and 119 women from a private Midwestern university participated in small groups in a lab setting. They had a median age of 19 years and were 56.7% European American, 19.0% Asian American, 4.5% African American, 3.7% Hispanic, and 16.0% other or unreported.

Attitudes

On the basis of general reviews of attitudinal sex differences (e.g., Seltzer et al., 1997), Pratto et al.'s (1997) study, and our Study 1 analyses of the GSS, we identified 12 policy areas in which researchers had established attitudinal gender gaps. In the student pretesting sample, each policy area was represented by 8 items. The main study included the 2 items with the highest item-total score correlations in the pretesting sample, creating 24 items. Participants responded to the attitude (and ideology) items on 7-point scales ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.

The policy areas were the following: (a) provision for disadvantaged groups (e.g., "The government should *not* be responsible for helping blacks or other minorities improve their living standard," reverse scored; $\alpha = .69$); (b) provision for children and education (e.g., "More government funding should be available to hire more teachers in public schools so that class sizes can be reduced;" $\alpha = .54$); (c) government regulation (e.g., "The country needs a strong federal government to handle the complex problems that it faces;" $\alpha = .64$); (d) government social programs (e.g., "The government should guarantee jobs for all;" $\alpha = .84$); (e) religious commitment (e.g., "It is best *not* to be bound by any religious beliefs," reverse scored; $\alpha = .66$); (f) sexual conservatism (e.g., "It is alright for men to have sex with many partners," reverse scored; $\alpha = .97$); (g) women's rights (e.g., "There are at least a few types of jobs that women should *not* be allowed to hold," reverse scored; $\alpha = .70$); (h) gay/lesbian rights (e.g., "It is sometimes necessary to violate the civil rights of gays and lesbians to protect the morals of the country," reverse scored; $\alpha = .78$); (i) nontraditional division of labor (e.g., "A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after home and family," reverse scored; $\alpha = .78$); (j) civil liberties (e.g., "There are groups that should *not* be allowed to hold public meetings because their views are too dangerous to other citizens," reverse scored; $\alpha = .83$); (k) law and order (e.g., "The courts should take harsher measures against criminals;" $\alpha = .71$); and (l) strong military (e.g., "It is sometimes necessary to use war to protect our country's interests;" $\alpha = .74$).

These 12 attitude measures were then factor analyzed with promax oblique rotation. Inspection of the eigenvalues and scree plot revealed three factors, which encompassed 9 of the 12 attitudes. Factor analysis at the level of the 24 items yielded a very similar solution. To produce three composite attitudinal variables, we averaged respondents' scores across the relevant component attitude measures. The resulting variables and coefficient alphas at the level of the component attitude measures and the individual items, respectively, were (a) social compassion, which encompassed provision for disadvantaged groups, provision for children and education, government regulation, and government social programs, $\alpha = .69, .78$; (b) traditional morality, which encompassed religious commitment and sexual conservatism, $\alpha = .58, .80$; and (c) women's and gay/lesbian rights, which encompassed women's rights, gay/lesbian rights, and nontraditional division of labor, $\alpha = .72, .81$.

Predictor Variables

Sociopolitical ideologies. After pretesting in the student sample with 16 social dominance orientation items (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) and 12 new items written to more fully express egalitarian concerns, a factor analysis with oblique promax rotation produced two factors: an equality-focused first factor and a group-based dominance-focused second factor. For administration in the public airport setting, these variables encompassed five items for equality ($\alpha = .67$) and four items for group-based dominance ($\alpha = .70$). Examples of the equality items are "All citizens should have an equal claim on basic resources, including access to food, housing, and health care" and "There should be equality for everyone because we are all human beings." Examples of the group-based dominance items are "If certain groups stayed in their place we would have fewer problems" and "It is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom." The equality and dominance variables were negatively correlated, $r(260) = -.34, p < .001$. Consistent with the GSS, one item assessed self-reported conservatism versus liberalism on a 7-point scale ranging from *very conservative* to *very liberal*.

Sociodemographic variables. On the basis of responses to the last items in the questionnaire, we defined the following variables consistently with Study 1 (see Table 1): age, marital status, total children, years of education, and labor force participation. The surveyors classified the respondents by their visible minority or majority status, yielding measures of African American and Hispanic ethnicities in the regression models.

Regression Analyses

Following the analysis strategy of Study 1, sequential regression analyses predicted participants' responses on the composite attitude variables of social compassion, traditional morality, and women's and gay/lesbian rights. Model 1 entered sex as the only predictor. To determine whether controlling for sociodemographic sex differences would reduce the attitudinal differences, Model 2 entered these sociodemographic variables as a first step and then as a second step entered sex to examine its incremental effect given these controls. Model 3 entered (after the sociodemographic variables) the ideological variables of equality, group-based dominance, and conservatism, followed by sex of respondent. Preliminary analyses examining quadratic effects of the continuous variables, interactions between sex and the demographic and ideological variables yielded only one significant effect (see Footnote 8). Also, preliminary analyses on each of the attitudinal components of the composite attitudinal variables showed effects similar to those that we report for the composite variables.

Because we hypothesize that differences in the sociopolitical ideologies of women and men mediate sex differences in attitudes on specific issues, we also performed appropriate path analyses (Kenny, Kashy, & Bolger, 1998). We examined each of the ideological variables in a simple mediational model in relation to each attitudinal composite variable. Although our sample size was small for examining path models with more variables (Kline, 1998), we also calculated models that entered all of the ideological variables as predictors of each attitudinal composite.

Because of the modest sample size of this study, we interpreted as significant those effects that reached a probability level of .05. A correlation matrix of the predictor and attitudinal variables appears in Appendix B.

Results

Sex Comparisons

As shown in Table 6, women were less likely than men to endorse conservatism and group-based dominance and more likely to endorse equality. The largest difference occurred for equality. In general, endorsement of the items was much lower for group-based dominance than equality because of the more positive, politically correct wording of the equality items.

Replicating Study 1's attitudinal findings, women were more likely than men to support socially compassionate policies and traditionally moral policies. Also, women were more likely than men to endorse policies supporting women's and gay/lesbian rights. Within each of these three composite attitudinal variables, all sex differences on the individual attitudes were also significant and consistent with the direction of the composite. On the three attitudes not included in these composite variables, men were more likely than women to support civil liberties, $r(258) = -.12, p = .05$, and a strong military, $r(259) = -.17, p = .006$; the sexes did not differ in support for law and order, $r(259) = -.07, p = .24$.

Prediction of Attitudes

Sequential regressions. The sequential regressions for the attitudinal composite variables appear in Table 7. Model 1 shows that women were more socially compassionate, traditionally moral, and supportive of women's and gay/lesbian rights than men without other variables controlled. Model 2 displays the significant cumulative effects of the sociodemographic variables. Similar to the Study 1 results, attitudes were more socially compassionate among African American and Hispanic respondents and more

Table 6
Study 2 Sex Comparisons

Variable	Men		Women		<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>r</i> ^a
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Sociopolitical ideology							
Conservatism	4.39	1.50	3.91	1.70	5.44*	236	-.15
Group-based dominance	2.45	1.22	1.92	0.95	14.99***	259	-.23
Equality	5.51	1.10	6.08	0.85	21.61***	259	.28
Attitude							
Social compassion composite	3.85	1.16	4.46	1.12	19.21***	259	.26
Provision for disadvantaged groups	3.86	1.76	4.59	1.65	11.71***	256	.21
Provision for children and education	5.05	1.66	5.49	1.41	5.17*	259	.14
Government regulation	4.14	1.63	4.75	1.51	9.93**	259	.19
Government social programs	2.30	1.47	3.03	1.77	13.00***	258	.22
Traditional morality composite	5.05	1.48	5.67	1.43	11.89***	259	.21
Religious commitment	5.52	1.38	5.88	1.30	4.80*	259	.13
Sexual conservatism	4.60	2.10	5.45	2.00	11.12**	257	.20
Women's and gay/lesbian rights composite	5.21	1.27	5.85	1.35	15.75***	259	.24
Women's rights	4.84	1.74	5.59	1.80	11.70***	259	.21
Gay/lesbian rights	5.28	1.65	5.99	1.57	12.30***	257	.21
Nontraditional division of labor	5.51	1.55	5.98	1.56	5.79*	257	.15

Note. The *n*s ranged from 127 to 137 men and 111 to 124 women. On scales anchored by 1 and 7, higher numbers indicate greater endorsement of each policy or ideology.

^a A positive correlation indicates women had a higher mean, and a negative correlation indicates men had a higher mean.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

traditionally moral among respondents with more children and less education. For support of women's and gay/lesbian rights, attitudes were more favorable among respondents with fewer children and more education. However, after the entry of the sociodemographic variables, the sex residuals remained significant and of nearly identical magnitude as the Model 1 sex effects.

Model 3's inclusion of the ideological variables produced a significant cumulative effect for all three attitudes. More favorable social compassion attitudes were associated with lesser conservatism and greater commitment to equality and group-based dominance (although the zero-order correlation for group-based dominance was nonsignificantly negative, see Appendix B). With these ideological variables controlled, the sex residual was smaller in magnitude, although significant. More favorable traditional morality attitudes were associated with greater conservatism and commitment to equality. Despite the entry of the ideological variables, the sex residual remained significant and unchanged in magnitude because only one of these two ideological predictors (equality) was consonant with women's greater endorsement of traditionally moral attitudes. More favorable rights attitudes were associated with lesser conservatism and less commitment to group-based dominance. Although equality ideology was not significant in this regression, its zero-order correlation with rights attitudes was positive and significant (see Appendix B). After the entry of these ideological variables, the sex residual became nonsignificant.⁸

Mediational analyses. Additional analyses examined each of the ideological variables as a potential mediator of the sex difference for each attitudinal composite variable. For social compassion, the requirements for showing mediation were successfully met for equality and conservatism ideologies (Kenny et al., 1998):

(a) Sex was significantly related to the social compassion outcome variable and each of the potential mediators, and (b) each potential mediator was significantly related to social compassion attitudes when the effect of sex on social compassion was controlled. Moreover, as an index of the success of the mediational models, we calculated the *Z* statistic for the Sobel–Goodman test, which assessed the significance of the reduction in the strength of the relation between respondent sex and social compassion attitudes from taking the indirect, mediational path into account (see Kenny et al., 1998, p. 260). These *Z* statistics were 3.83, $p < .001$, for equality and 2.21, $p = .03$, for conservatism. Nevertheless, the direct relation between respondent sex and social compassion remained significant in both analyses, suggesting partial mediation.

For traditional morality, the requirements for showing mediation were met (on a marginal basis) only for equality, $Z = 1.75$, $p = .08$, and the direct relation between respondent sex and these attitudes remained significant. For women's and gay/lesbian rights, the requirements for showing mediation were successfully met for all three ideologies: $Z = 3.33$, $p < .001$, for group-based dominance; $Z = 2.21$, $p = .03$, for conservatism, and $Z = 2.08$, $p = .04$, for equality. However, the direct relation between respondent sex and these attitudes remained significant for all three ideologies, suggesting partial mediation.

⁸ The Social Dominance \times Sex interaction was significant on women's and gay/lesbian rights attitudes, $p = .03$. The negative relation between social dominance and support for these rights was significant for both sexes but stronger among women than men.

Table 7
Study 2 Sequential Regression Results for Models 1, 2, and 3

Variable	Social compassion			Traditional morality			Women's and gay/lesbian rights		
	R^2	B	β	R^2	B	β	R^2	B	β
Model 1									
Sex	.07***	0.62***	0.26	.04***	0.62***	0.21	.06***	0.64***	0.24
Model 2									
Sociodemographic	.09*			.13***			.13***		
Age		-0.00	-0.06		0.01	0.08		0.00	0.02
Marital status		0.02	0.01		0.03	0.01		-0.10	-0.04
Total children		-0.08	-0.11		0.21*	0.22		-0.24**	-0.27
Years of education		0.03	0.06		-0.16***	-0.23		0.15***	0.23
Labor force participation		-0.13	-0.05		-0.06	-0.02		-0.17	-0.05
African American		1.14**	0.22		0.30	0.05		0.37	0.06
Hispanic		1.20*	0.14		1.21	0.11		-0.61	-0.06
Sex residual	.14***	0.57***	0.24	.18**	0.66**	0.22	.19***	0.71***	0.26
Model 3									
Sociodemographic	.09*			.13***			.13***		
Ideological	.37***			.21***			.38***		
Conservatism		-0.30***	-0.40		0.21**	0.23		-0.30***	-0.34
Group-based dominance		0.15*	0.14		-0.06	-0.05		-0.38***	-0.32
Equality		0.42***	0.36		0.31**	0.21		0.01	0.01
Sex residual	.39*	0.30*	0.13	.24**	0.63**	0.21	.39	0.34	0.12

Note. N s ranged from 211 to 261. For R^2 , asterisks indicate significance of R^2 change when the block was entered into the model. Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of each ideology or policy.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

We also calculated path models that entered all three ideologies as mediators. For each attitudinal composite, the relative strength of the mediational relations was consistent with Model 3 of the regressions (see Table 7). With all three ideological variables entered, the direct path between respondent sex and attitude was reduced to nonsignificance only for women's and gay/lesbian rights, suggesting complete mediation by the joint effect of the ideologies.

Discussion

Using a different method of selecting attitudinal items that are differentially endorsed by men and women, this study replicated Study 1 by identifying the policy areas of social compassion and traditional morality. In addition, this study identified a third area, women's and gay/lesbian rights, which was not well represented in the GSS over the years of the survey and thus did not emerge in Study 1. These attitudes were all endorsed more by female than male respondents. Although the social compassion gap was the largest of the three gaps, they did not differ significantly from one another. Also, analyses of the sociopolitical ideologies revealed that men were more oriented than women to group-based dominance and conservatism and women were more oriented than men to equality and liberalism.

Prediction of social compassion and traditional morality attitudes from the sociodemographic variables replicated several of the Study 1 effects, although not all, given that the new study included fewer such variables and had a smaller and less representative sample.

The significant relations in the regressions were between (a) social compassion attitudes and minority status as African American or Hispanic, (b) traditional morality attitudes and having more children and less education, and (c) rights attitudes and having fewer children and more education. Also consistent with Study 1, control of sociodemographic variables had little impact on the gender gaps in social compassion and traditional morality attitudes. This control also had little effect on the gender gap in attitudes toward women's and gay/lesbian rights.

The most important findings of Study 2 pertained to the ideological variables. For social compassion attitudes, commitment to equality was the strongest mediator of the gender gap, with equality-focused respondents favoring socially compassionate policies. Also, liberal-conservative ideology served as a mediator. For traditional morality, commitment to equality was the only mediator of the sex difference, with equality-focused respondents favoring traditionally moral policies. For women's and gay/lesbian rights attitudes, the issues that pertain most directly to intergroup relations, a different pattern emerged: Group-based dominance was the strongest mediator of this gender gap, with dominance-focused respondents opposing these rights. Conservatives were also more opposed and equality-focused respondents more favorable, and both of these variables also served as mediators of this attitudinal gender gap.

In summary, our ideological variables had considerable success in accounting for attitudinal gender gaps. Whereas commitment to equality was most consequential for socially compassionate and traditionally moral attitudes, group-based dominance was most

important for women's and gay/lesbian rights. Although conservative-liberal self-identification predicted all three attitudes, group-based dominance and equality accounted for additional variability, demonstrating the value of taking these other aspects of ideology into account.

Although Pratto et al. (1997) showed that social dominance orientation accounted for many attitudinal sex differences, our partition of this ideological variable into support for group-based dominance and commitment to equality (Jost & Thompson, 2000) permits a more refined description of the ideologies underlying these gender gaps. Consistent with our view that the attitudinal divergences of the sexes are accounted for at least as much by women's quest for equality as by men's desire to maintain their superior status, commitment to equality was a stronger correlate of compassion and morality attitudes than commitment to group-based dominance and a stronger mediator of the sex differences in these attitudes. This association between commitment to group equality and social compassion attitudes makes sense in terms of the capacity for social provision to improve groups' status (see Feldman, 1988). The association between commitment to group equality and traditional morality attitudes makes sense in terms of the potential for at least some moral norms to protect vulnerable groups, especially women and children.

The contrasting pattern was obtained for policies supporting equal rights for women and gay and lesbian people, which would directly threaten the traditional hegemony of heterosexual men. For these attitudes, which most obviously pertain to the maintenance versus dissolution of traditional hierarchical relations, support for group-based dominance was a stronger correlate and mediator of the gender gap than commitment to equality.

With one exception (see Footnote 8), the ideologies did not predict attitudes more effectively in one sex than the other, even though the sexes differed in their endorsement of the ideologies. However, women's ideologies were more uniform than men's on group-based dominance and equality, as shown by a comparison of the variances in the male and female samples, $F(136, 123) = 1.65$, $p = .002$, for group-based dominance and $F(136, 123) = 1.68$, $p = .002$, for equality (see Table 6). This greater ideological consensus among women is consistent with our view that women are more politically aware than men in relation to gender issues (Diekman et al., 2002).

One possible interpretation of the mediation of attitudinal gender gaps by ideological variables is that the important cause of sex differences in sociopolitical attitudes is ideology, not gender. Nonetheless, ideology varied by gender, as did the attitudes we identified, reflecting the social position of women and men. Moreover, the direction of the attitudinal gender gaps did not reverse under any circumstances, despite variation in their magnitude across certain other sociodemographic variables.

General Discussion

Sources of Attitudinal Sex Differences

The prediction of sociopolitical attitudes from sex and other variables proved to be generally consistent with our social role theory assumptions. As we argued in the beginning of this article, the persistence of women's greater domestic responsibilities and generally lower status relative to men maintains gender roles,

which then influence attitudes by means of self-regulatory influences and the impact of others' expectations. Given some political activation of women and men as social groups, these culturally shared beliefs about gender foster sex-differentiated policy preferences in the domains of social compassion, morality, and the rights of women and gay men and lesbian women. In contrast, an overly simple view would be that controlling for sociodemographic sex differences would entirely eliminate attitudinal gender gaps because the sex differences in current roles produce the attitudinal differences. Contrary to this logic, the sex effect was diminished only slightly by these sociodemographic controls.

Social role theory (Eagly et al., 2000) allows for the direct influence of the currently occupied, specific social roles of women and men on their attitudes and for the indirect influence of their differing typical role occupancies by means of shared beliefs about women and men. These diffuse, culturally shared gender roles have some general impact on the social identities, ideologies, and attitudes of individual men and women, regardless of their placement in specific occupational and family roles. For example, female gender-role expectations may foster support for policies that favor children and education, even among childless women or women whose children are adults. It is therefore not surprising that attitudinal differences persisted in the data, despite controls for sociodemographic variables.

Evidence consistent with our arguments about women's status disadvantage and family obligations emerged from findings pertaining to demographic variables other than sex that are also associated with social disadvantage or family obligations. Such variables should, like sex, be correlated with higher endorsement of the attitudes that we investigated. In general, these patterns held, with social disadvantage relating more consistently to compassion attitudes than morality attitudes, and family responsibilities relating more consistently to morality attitudes than compassion attitudes. For rights attitudes, the strongest demographic correlate was number of children, an index of family obligations that related negatively to these attitudes.

Ideological Mediation of Attitudinal Sex Differences

Importance of Commitment to Equality and Group-Based Dominance

The Study 2 findings concerning ideological differences between men and women are also supportive of our general argument about the importance of culturally shared expectations about women and men. As we argued early in this article, women's political activation in the last decades of the 20th century made salient to women that they might improve their status through social policies that would help them gain equitable access to public sphere opportunities (e.g., jobs) and that would support and transform their private sphere responsibilities. Therefore, at the level of broad ideologies, women tend to be ideologically committed to social equality, as Study 2 found, and this commitment frames the sex differences in social compassion attitudes and (to a lesser extent) in traditional morality attitudes. These findings are congruent with the social identity argument that, when societies have clear-cut group boundaries that are perceived as illegitimate or unstable, lower status groups such as women seek to change status-quo relationships (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However, on

rights issues, group-based dominance appeared to be a more important ideological frame, presumably because these issues directly challenge traditional expectations that men are dominant over women and heterosexual people over gay men and lesbian women (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

Choice of Ideologies as Mediators of Gender Gaps

Our examination of ideological mediators of the effects of sex on attitudes raises certain questions about the design of this research. A first question is why we did not represent gender roles in other ways, especially by obtaining respondents' self-ratings on gender-stereotypic personality traits (e.g., Bem, 1974). However, self-ratings on traits such as warmth and assertiveness are likely more relevant to styles of social interaction than to sociopolitical attitudes. Broad trait-level self-descriptions have limited utility for accounting for the specifics of sex-differentiated behaviors and attitudes (Koestner & Aube, 1995). Our theory of gender gaps is thus more subtle than an approach based on sex-differentiated self-construals on traits. As we argued in the introduction of this article, women's social identity as women had to be combined with some degree of political efficacy and awareness of disadvantage before their attitudes differentiated from those of men. Under such circumstances, women enlarged their identities to include a commitment to greater social equality. On the basis of this insight and considerable evidence that ideologies frame and account for policy attitudes (Feldman, 2003; Pratto et al., 1997), we represented gender roles as political ideologies rather than personality traits.

A second issue about the design of our research is that it might have represented ideologies differently in view of the debates about the degree to which people's attitudes are constrained by higher order ideological principles. Although many social scientists have argued that individual attitudes are organized in terms of such principles, especially liberalism-conservatism (e.g., Judd, Krosnick, & Milburn, 1981; Milburn, 1987; Nie, Verba, & Petrocik, 1979), others have argued that people who are not political experts generally organize their attitudes on narrower and more idiosyncratic bases (Conover & Feldman, 1984; Converse, 1964; Lavine et al., 1997; Skitka & Mullen, 2002).

In recognition of both sides of this debate about political ideology, our research included conservatism-liberalism and added ideological specificity by investigating two narrower ideological themes, commitment to group-based dominance and equality, which also provide structures within which individual attitudes can be organized (Jost & Thompson, 2000; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Supportive of this reasoning, Study 2 found that gender gaps in these narrower ideologies, in addition to liberalism-conservatism, were associated with and accounted for attitudinal gender gaps. Moreover, the three ideological variables that we investigated showed contrasting predictive patterns across the attitudinal domains—for example, group-based dominance was important in relation to women's and gay/lesbian rights attitudes but less important in relation to socially compassionate and traditionally moral attitudes.

Comparison of Our Assumptions About Ideology With Other Researchers' Assumptions

In the study of the ideological roots of public opinion, some social psychologists have assumed, as we do, that group interest is

a meaningful force, with both disadvantaged and advantaged groups favoring policies that serve their groups' interests (Kinder, 1998). Social dominance theorists thus assume that ideologies favored by dominant groups justify inequalities, whereas ideologies favored by subordinate groups challenge inequalities (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). In relation to attitudinal gender gaps, we have made a stronger case for these assumptions than Pratto et al. (1997) by partitioning social dominance orientation into commitment to equality and group-based dominance (Jost & Thompson, 2000) and examining both variables' ability to account for attitudinal sex differences.

In contrast, other theorists have claimed that members of subordinated groups commonly cooperate in their subordination by accepting the ideologies of the dominant group. This assumption is critical to system justification theory (e.g., Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001), which argues that, even for members of disadvantaged groups, political ideologies often justify the status quo (Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Sullivan, 2003). Similarly, Glick and Fiske (2001) have argued that women cooperate in their subordination by showing relatively high endorsement of paternalistic, benevolently sexist ideas. Our data suggest that these ideas, although useful to some extent (e.g., Jost et al., 2003), have an imperfect fit to the overall patterning of sex-related policy attitudes, which are marked by women's greater commitment to equality and social provision.

Our studies suggest a basis for reconciling theories that emphasize group interest with those that emphasize groups' cooperation in their own subordination. Because the sex differences that our research has revealed are not large, women do not appear to be ideological and attitudinal rebels but instead merely progressive moderates. This moderation may come about in part because, consistent with social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), the ideologies of socially dominant groups enjoy greater social consensus than those of subordinate groups, restraining subordinates' advocacy of radical policies that could overturn status relations. In addition, as we noted in the introduction of this article, women's political moderation may follow from the close alliance of women and men in families, with men usually having the more powerful position as main family provider and women gaining from men's sharing of their resources with their families. Attitudinal sex differences thus are relatively small, although they are interpretable in terms of the divergent group interests of women and men. Racial differences are typically larger, as our data showed, reflecting greater status differences by race than by sex as well as a lesser degree of cooperative interdependence between races than the sexes.

Puzzle of Sex Differences in Conservative-Liberal Ideologies and Attitudes

These findings are thought-provoking from the perspective of conservatism-liberalism. One puzzle is that the attitudinal sex differences suggest that women are more liberal than men on social compassion and rights issues but more conservative on traditional morality issues. Policies promoting social compassion and equal rights thus challenge inequality, but traditionally moral policies resist at least certain types of social change. Women are thus ideologically split in terms of conservatism's core principles of resistance to social change and acceptance of inequality (Jost et

al., 2003). This paradoxical alignment of support for liberal and conservative policies reflects the specifics of the social position of women and men, with women resisting the hegemony of White men yet opposing change that could destabilize family and marital relationships, which constitute women's traditional source of power and support.

A second puzzle is the presence of a larger sex difference in self-reported ideological conservatism-liberalism in Study 2 than Study 1. This discrepancy likely reflects the higher educational level of Study 2's sample and its greater recency. To show that the conservatism gender gap is larger in more educated samples, we predicted conservatism in the GSS data from a regression entering respondent sex, years of education, and the Sex \times Years of Education interaction as predictors. The interaction was significant, $B(31,801) = -.030, p < .001, \beta = -.049$. Decomposition of this interaction showed that the greater conservatism of men than women was significant at the higher levels of education but non-significant at the lower levels. Also, to show that the conservatism gender gap became larger in more recent years, we also analyzed the GSS data separately by decade. The greater conservatism of men than women was present in the 1990s, $B(12,633) = -.121, p < .001, \beta = -.044$; weaker in the 1980s, $B(12,135) = -.072, p = .003, \beta = -.027$; and extremely weak in the 1970s, $B(7,094) = .042, p = .181, \beta = .016$. Men became increasingly conservative over time, whereas women's attitudes remained relatively stable (see also Seltzer et al., 1997). Despite these differences in mean levels of conservatism, this variable did not differentially predict attitudes in Study 1, depending on education or decade.

In general, our findings suggest caution about labeling either sex as more liberal or conservative than the other sex. The ideological alignments of the sexes as liberal or conservative depend on the particular attitudinal domain, educational level, and time period examined. Nonetheless, the overall tendency for men to regard themselves as more conservative than women is consistent with our demonstration that men have more conservative attitudes than women in two of the three main areas of gender gaps (social provision, women's and gay/lesbian rights).

Other Sex Difference Findings Consistent With Attitudinal Findings

If our argument about gender roles is valid, sex differences analogous to those that we found for sociopolitical attitudes should exist in other domains of attitudes and behaviors. Our thematic description of attitudinal gender gaps can reveal these analogies more effectively than description at the level of specific policies. In particular, our social compassion findings are consistent with the communal theme that many psychologists have identified with the female stereotype (see Eagly et al., 2000) and with the caring, compassionate tendencies of women manifested on personality tests (Feingold, 1994). Also, findings consistent with women's traditionally moral attitudes are their greater religiosity (e.g., Kelley & DeGraaf, 1997; Walter & Davie, 1998) and disapproval of academic dishonesty (Whitley, Nelson, & Jones, 1999) and of unethical business practices (Franke et al., 1997). Finally, women's greater commitment to women's and gay/lesbian rights is consistent with other attitudinal data (e.g., Herek, 2002; Kite & Whitley, 1996; Swim et al., 1995; Twenge, 1997a) and the polit-

ical activation of women in the context of the women's movement (e.g., Gurin, 1985).

The stability that we observed in the compassion and morality gender gaps also resembles other findings. Specifically, the tendency of women to describe themselves as more communal (i.e., feminine) than men proved to be relatively constant from 1973 to 1993 when meta-analytically summarized, despite erosion in the tendency for women to describe themselves as less agentic (i.e., masculine) than men (Twenge, 1997b; see also Twenge, 2001). Similarly, social perceivers view the sex difference in feminine, communal qualities as remaining relatively constant over time even though they view the sex difference in masculine, agentic qualities as eroding as women adopt these qualities (Diekman & Eagly, 2000). These changes in agentic, masculine qualities are consistent with the increasing labor force participation of women. In contrast, the lack of change in communal, feminine qualities likely reflects the relative stability of women's greater family responsibility and lower status relative to men, factors that we argue also underlie the observed stability of socially compassionate and traditionally moral attitudes (see Eagly & Diekman, 2004).

Because some researchers have not taken into account these asymmetries in the convergence of the sexes, they have reasoned too simply from the perspective of social role theory. Specifically, they have maintained that this theory predicts that increasing similarity in the social roles of the sexes causes men and women to become generally similar in their psychological attributes (e.g., Costa, Terracciano, & McCrae, 2001; Fischer & Manstead, 2000; Lueptow, Garovich-Szabo, & Lueptow, 2001). On the contrary, psychological convergence should follow from occupancy of more similar roles only on attributes that facilitate performance of the new roles. Employment roles should thus typically foster agentic characteristics but not necessarily communal ones; this logic was supported by findings that women's career success related positively to their self-reported agency but was unrelated to their self-reported communion (Abele, 2003). Viewing our attitudinal findings in this context thus suggests that the attitudes that we have studied are aligned psychologically with the communal theme that psychologists have associated with women's traditional domestic role and their status disadvantage relative to men (Eagly et al., 2000; Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004).

Consequences of Attitudinal Sex Differences

The attitudinal gender gaps we have examined are consequential, even though they are relatively small. The consequences for voting are most readily demonstrated. A greater preference for women than men for Democratic candidates has been apparent in most presidential elections since the early 1970s and in congressional elections since the early 1980s (Seltzer et al., 1997). Analyses of the correlational relations between attitudes and these voting gender gaps in the United States are largely consistent with the claim that attitudinal differences underlie these gaps (e.g., Chaney, Alvarez, & Nagler, 1998; Kaufmann & Petrocik, 1999; Manza & Brooks, 1998, 1999; Seltzer et al., 1997; Studlar, McAllister, & Hayes, 1998). In addition, our experimental tests portraying candidates as differing in their issue stances have shown that attitudinal sex differences can account for voting gender gaps (Eagly, Diekman, Schneider, & Kulesa, 2003). These experiments showed that, regardless of candidates' sex, participants of each sex

reported greater likelihood, compared with participants of the other sex, of voting for the candidate who endorsed positions typically favored more by their own sex than the other sex.

The particular policy attitudes generally implicated as responsible for voting gender gaps are variants of socially compassionate attitudes (e.g., attitudes on compassion issues and the use of force in Chaney et al., 1998; attitudes toward social services spending in Manza & Brooks, 1998, 1999). The impact on voting of women's more traditionally moral attitudes and greater approval for women's and gay/lesbian rights is less clear. In general, moral and rights issues, except perhaps for abortion and candidate integrity, are not among the issues that voters consider most important in recent elections (e.g., Gallup Poll, 2004), although it is possible that moral considerations can influence perceptions of candidates' character, which in turn influences voting (Kinder, 1998).

The generality of the gender gaps that we observed across time and other sociodemographic variables suggests that, as women gain political power, their attitudinal priorities will have more influence on these social policies. This view is consistent with research demonstrating sex differences in the attitudes and beliefs of judges and attorneys on issues such as domestic violence and property rights of wives after divorce (Martin, Reynolds, & Keith, 2002). Also, research on Congressional voting patterns has shown that female legislators, more than male legislators, vote for policies such as family leave, birth control education, and improved public education, many of which fit within the social compassion cluster of issues (e.g., Panczer, 2002). In state legislatures, female representatives, more than male representatives, provide effective advocacy on issues pertaining to women, children, families, and education (e.g., Thomas, 1994). Given our findings, female legislators, judges, and attorneys would be expected to favor such policies more than their male counterparts, despite the positioning of these men and women in the same professional role. Women's increasing political power may thus put a kinder face on public policy. However, this power could eventually erode one of the causes of gender gaps—namely, women's status disadvantage relative to men.

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(Appendixes follow)

Appendix A

Study 1 Correlations Among Independent and Dependent Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Social compassion	—	-.02*	.16**	-.06**	-.14**	-.01	.02**	-.02*	-.08**	-.10**	-.13**	.33**	.10**	-.24**
2. Traditional morality		—	.08**	.18**	.11**	.19**	.03**	-.23**	-.11**	-.10**	-.12**	.01	.03**	.25**
3. Sex			—	.04**	-.09**	.08**	.05**	-.05**	-.26**	-.06**	-.10**	.04**	.01	-.02**
4. Age				—	.02	.35**	-.40**	-.27**	-.32**	.01	-.08**	-.04**	-.10**	.12**
5. Marital status					—	.22**	.25**	.03**	.05**	.10**	.31**	-.14**	-.01	.10**
6. Total children						—	.19**	-.25**	-.14**	-.08**	-.01	.08**	.02*	.09**
7. Child in home							—	.04**	.10**	-.02**	.11**	.06**	.09**	-.01
8. Years of education								—	.26**	.40**	.37**	-.11**	-.07**	-.04**
9. Labor force participation									—	.18**	.24**	-.01	.02	-.02
10. Occupational prestige										—	.29**	-.13**	-.06**	.03**
11. Household income											—	-.14**	-.05**	.05**
12. African American												—	-.05**	-.08**
13. Hispanic													—	-.03**
14. Conservatism														—

Note. Sample sizes ranged from 29,037 to 35,773, depending on missing data.

* $p < .001$. ** $p < .0001$.

Appendix B

Study 2 Correlations Among Independent and Dependent Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Social compassion	—	.04	.22***	.26***	-.08	-.12	-.15*	.04	-.02	.21***	.16*	-.46***	-.07	.44***
2. Traditional morality		—	-.18**	.21***	.15*	.10	.23***	-.16*	-.00	.05	.05	.24***	-.08	.17
3. Women & gay/lesbian rights			—	.24***	-.09	-.10	-.22**	.19**	-.03	.05	-.02	-.46***	-.42***	.20**
4. Sex				—	-.03	-.13*	-.05	-.13*	-.20**	.13*	.01	-.15*	-.23***	.28***
5. Age					—	.49***	.57***	.17**	.14*	.02	-.08	.10	-.16*	.15*
6. Marital status						—	.42***	.09	.08	.02	-.15*	.16*	-.10	.05
7. Total children							—	-.00	-.12	.01	-.07	.16*	-.06	.00
8. Years of education								—	.17**	.06	-.02	-.14*	-.25***	.07
9. Labor force participation									—	.05	.04	.09	.05	-.04
10. African American										—	-.04	-.10	-.10	.09
11. Hispanic											—	-.08	.06	.08
12. Conservatism												—	.25***	-.21**
13. Group-based dominance													—	-.34***
14. Equality														—

Note. Sample sizes ranged from 213 to 261, depending on missing data.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

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