

Should Chivalry Be Dead?  
Benevolent Sexism and Support Provision in Close Relationships

by

Adriana Colom Cruz

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of  
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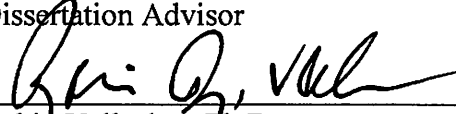
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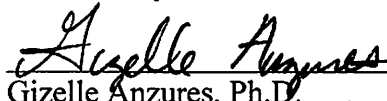
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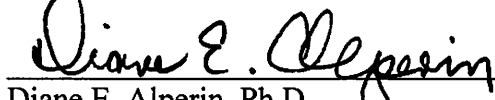
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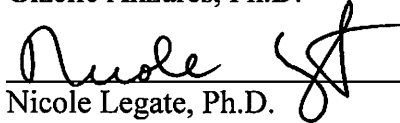
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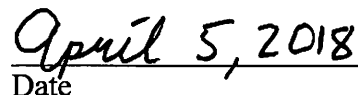
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## Abstract

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Three studies examined the effects of benevolent sexism and gender on support provision and relationship functioning across multiple contexts. Benevolent sexism refers to sexist attitudes towards women that are seemingly positive, but still stereotypical (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Study 1 examined benevolent sexism and dependency-oriented support in friendships by asking participants how they would respond to either a female or male acquaintance in hypothetical helping scenarios. Study 2 examined benevolent sexism and secure base support among individuals in heterosexual romantic relationships using an Internet-based survey. Secure base support differs from other forms of support in that it is not provided in order to help someone cope with adversity, but rather involves supporting a partner's exploration or personal goal pursuit in non-adverse scenarios. Study 3 used behavioral observation to examine benevolent sexism and secure base support among romantic couples participating in a videotaped exploration task. Multiple

regression and dyadic analyses were conducted to test for interactions between gender, benevolent sexism, and support provision. In both men and women in Study 1, benevolent sexism was associated with an increased likelihood of providing dependency-oriented help towards others, suggesting that men are not the only ones providing dependency-oriented support to women. However, men were more likely than women to provide dependency-oriented help towards women, regardless of their degree of benevolent sexism. In Studies 2 and 3, there were no significant main effects of benevolent sexism or gender on secure base support. In Study 2, women higher in benevolent sexism reported being more interfering towards their male partner's goal pursuit, suggesting that benevolent sexism may be harmful to men as well. In Study 3, women reported lower feelings of competence during the exploration task than men. For individuals with partners high in benevolent sexism, gender moderated their feelings of competence. Women with male partners high in benevolent sexism reported lower feelings of competence, whereas men with female partners high in benevolent sexism reported higher feelings of competence. The mixed results suggest that the effects of benevolent sexism on support exchanges may be more complex than current theoretical perspectives imply.

*Para Abuela Vilma.*

## Should Chivalry Be Dead?

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## Introduction

### **Defining Ambivalent Sexism: Hostility and Benevolence**

Ambivalent sexism, a term coined by Glick and Fiske (1996), is defined as the contradictory attitudes towards women which can be both hostile and benevolent. Hostile sexism refers to beliefs that women are inferior to men. Claiming that women are too easily offended or believing that feminists are trying to seek more power than men are two examples of hostile sexist beliefs. On the other hand, benevolent sexism is “a set of interrelated attitudes toward women that are sexist in terms of viewing women stereotypically and in restricted roles but that are subjectively positive in feeling tone” (Glick & Fiske, 1996, p. 491). In other words, being a gentleman, acting chivalrous, or refusing to split the bill on a date are specific behaviors considered to be benevolently sexist.

Hostile sexism and benevolent sexism are two different forms of stereotypes towards women, yet research has found that they are positively correlated. Individuals with hostile sexist attitudes are more likely to also have benevolent sexist attitudes (Glick et al., 2000, 2004). At a national level, countries with higher levels of benevolent sexism tend to also have higher levels of hostile sexism (Glick et al., 2000, 2004). Although these two types of sexism seem contradictory, they both work together in maintaining differentiated gender roles and are compatible in terms of reflecting traditional beliefs about gender. According to Glick (2013), “hostile sexism punishes women when they challenge male dominance, while [benevolent sexism] rewards women for conforming to

stereotypes...” (p. 4). Often, hostile sexism is more likely to be directed towards women that do not conform to traditional gender roles, such as feminists or lesbians. Benevolent sexism, on the other hand, is more likely to be directed towards women that do conform to traditional gender roles, such as housewives (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

**Hostile sexism and stereotype threat.** Hostile and benevolent sexism are examples of stereotypes in that they represent generalized beliefs about a group of people, such as the belief that men are generally better at math. To the extent that this is a generally held stereotype, women taking a math test face the threat of potentially confirming the stereotype. This is what is known as stereotype threat, and research shows that it often leads to declines in performance (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999).<sup>1</sup> Logel et al. (2009) hypothesized that stereotype threat occurs in environments or contexts in which negative stereotypes already persist. For example, female engineering students performed worse on engineering exams when interacting with a hostile sexist man versus a nonsexist man. However, the performance of female students was not affected when taking an English exam, regardless of whether they were interacting with a sexist or nonsexist man.

Schmader, Johns, and Forbes (2008) examined multiple mediators between stereotype threat and performance including vigilance, stress arousal, and memory. According to the researchers, stereotype threat leads to decreased levels of performance due to three main mechanisms: impairment to processes in the prefrontal cortex, performance monitoring, and the suppression of negative thoughts and emotions. Although stereotype threat affects many women in masculine-oriented tasks or situations,

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<sup>1</sup>Researchers, such as (Nguyen & Ryan, 2008), have recently questioned whether stereotype threat effects replicate and whether the literature may have been affected by publication bias.



individual differences in gender identification have been found to moderate stereotype threat effects on women's math performance. In other words, women low in gender identification performed as well as men do on a math test, regardless of whether gender identity is linked to their performance. However, women high in gender identification perform worse than men do when their identity as females is linked to their math performance (Schmader, 2002).

Sexism and its potential consequences have been widely studied by many researchers from different academic fields. The stereotype threat literature shows how stereotypes can affect performance, but generally with a focus on hostile sexism rather than benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism, especially, has been a large focus in the gender literature because of its direct nature and visible negative consequences (Hammond & Overall, 2015; 2017). Benevolent sexism, in contrast, is discussed less frequently in research, the media, and society, which is a reason why its negative consequences are not as well known.

**Benevolent sexism and its negative consequences.** To the outsider, benevolent sexism can seem positive and almost complementing of women since it places them on pedestals as the compassionate and nurturing sex. However, women who have high levels of benevolent sexism are more likely to exhibit hostile attitudes towards other women who do not practice traditional feminine gender norms (Glick, 2013). Additionally, research has shown that benevolent sexism justifies and reinforces gender inequality (Jost & Kay, 2005), undermines collective action for social change (Becker & Wright, 2016), can diminish women's overall performance by suggesting that they are the less competent sex (Dardenne, Dumont, & Bollier, 2007; Hammond & Overall, 2015), and influences

dynamics within close relationships (Hammond & Overall, 2014; Hammond & Overall, 2015; Shnabel et al., 2016).

Benevolence highlights the advantages of certain groups of people, such as women or racial minority groups, giving the illusion that society is equally beneficial to everyone (Jost & Kay, 2005). By characterizing femininity with communion and masculinity with agency, a complementary balance is perceived between the two genders resulting in system-justification and inaction to change the status quo (Becker & Wright, 2016; Jost & Kay, 2005). Becker and Wright (2016) found that when female college participants were primed with benevolent sexism, they were less likely to sign a petition for gender equality amongst faculty members than when they were primed with hostile sexism. When primed with hostile sexism, they were more likely to sign the petition for gender equality than when they were not primed at all. This suggests that hostile sexism, as detrimental as it is, may promote collective action for social change, while benevolent sexism, although seeming positive at face value, undermines collective action.

Suggesting that women are warmer than men indirectly implies they are less competent. People perceive warmth and competence in compensatory ways (Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashiima, 2005), which means individuals high on benevolent sexism will most likely perceive women to be high on warmth but low on competence. Therefore, benevolent sexism can potentially have detrimental effects on women by undermining their competence and efficacy (Hammond & Overall, 2015; 2017). In a study conducted by King et al. (2012), managers in England's National Health Service were more likely to give positive feedback to women, but gave less challenging tasks to them as well. Other researchers have found similar findings regarding benevolent sexism

in the workplace, like for example, women receive positivity in feedback and comments, yet intangible rewards, such as a raise or promotion (Vescio et al., 2005) and are given unchallenging tasks to complete (Biernat, Tocci & Williams, 2012). In addition, women who expect benevolent sexism in male-dominated workplaces tend to work less productively (Dardenne, Dumont, & Bollier, 2007). This limits the opportunities for women who work to develop their skills and prove themselves as capable in the workplace. For example, at the national level, there are fewer women in leadership positions in the government and the business industry in countries with higher levels of benevolent sexism (Glick, 2013).

*How benevolent sexism influences close relationship processes.* Previous research has documented several harmful effects of benevolent sexism towards changing the status quo (Jost & Kay, 2005), social change (Becker & Wright, 2016), and women's competence (Dardenne, Dumont, & Bollier, 2007; Hammond & Overall, 2015). Although fewer studies have examined the effects of benevolent sexism on close relationship functioning, there are hidden dangers that could potentially cause relationship dissolution (Hammond & Overall, 2014) and could influence the type of support partners provide each other (Shnabel et al., 2015; Hammond & Overall, 2015; 2017). Benevolent sexism defines and limits the way men and women should behave, such as implying that men should open the door for women, pay for dates, and "take care" of women. Men are the knights in shining armor and women are the damsels in distress. Unrealistic standards for both men and women may potentially be causing more break-ups. People higher in benevolent sexism are more willing to dissolve their relationships if their partner does not fit with their ideal image of what a partner should be (Hammond & Overall, 2014).

Additionally, Shnabel et al. (2015) studied how support provision differed between men and women in helping situations. Specifically, the researchers examined dependency-oriented and autonomous-oriented support. Dependency-oriented support can be defined as help that promotes dependency, while autonomous-oriented support refers to help that promotes autonomy. There is an old proverb that goes, “Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.” Giving someone a fish can be considered dependency-oriented help, since the support recipient will have to depend on the support provider for future meals. On the contrary, teaching someone how to fish can be considered autonomous-oriented help, since it promotes autonomy and gives the support recipient the necessary tools. Previous research has shown that men high in benevolent sexism tend to *teach* men how to fish and only *give* women a fish (Shnabel et al., 2015). Given the situation, this can be potentially harmful since it limits women from growth and learning opportunities.

Shnabel et al. (2015) found that men high on benevolent sexism are more likely to provide dependency-oriented support towards women rather than men. In addition, women high on benevolent sexism were more likely to seek dependency-oriented support from men rather than women. However, the researchers focused solely on men’s support provision and women’s support seeking, without considering how women provide support to others. Since some studies show that women endorse benevolent sexism more than men (Glick et al., 2000; 2004), it is important to study if gender moderates support provision in cross-gender and same-gender interactions.

Similar to Shnabel et al. (2015), Hammond and Overall (2015) studied benevolent sexism and close relationships by examining what type of support heterosexual couples

gave each other when discussing their own personal goals. They found that men high in benevolent sexism were more likely to give dependency-oriented support, such as giving direct solutions and plans, while women high in benevolent sexism were more likely to give relationship-oriented support, such as affection. This resulted in men feeling more intimate with their partners, but women feeling less competent and less independent. Although it is implied that effects should be strongest in cross-gender helping with men providing help to women or women seeking help from men, previous research has not directly examined the significance of same-gender interactions. This matter is addressed further in Study 1, in which gender is studied as a potential moderator.

### **Social Support and Close Relationships**

Beliefs about gender are also potentially informative for examining interactions in close relationships (e.g., social support). There exists a broad literature on social support and close relationships that examines a variety of topics such as the motivation behind social support and the characteristics of the most effective social support providers and recipients (Gleason & Iida, 2015). Mainly, positive and negative outcomes have been measured to determine the benefits and consequences of certain types of support (e.g., indirect/direct, emotional/instrumental), of receiving or providing support, and of perceiving support versus actually receiving it (Gleason & Iida, 2015; Howland & Simpson, 2010; Maisel & Gable, 2009). For example, perceiving that one has a support system leads to positive outcomes, while actually receiving support sometimes leads to negative outcomes (Maisel & Gable, 2009). What most of this research has in common is that social support is being studied within adverse contexts. Another form of support that has been studied in close relationships besides dependency-oriented, autonomous-

oriented, and relationship-oriented support, is secure base support. What distinguishes secure base support from the other types of support is that it is provided during learning opportunities in which the partner can benefit from personal growth.

**Secure base support: availability, non-interference, and encouragement.**

Feeney and Collins (2015) emphasized how social support is often studied in the context of coping with adversity, or someone needing help, instead of in the context of pursuing opportunities for growth. The researchers developed a model explaining how close relationships promote long-term thriving. This process is mediated by two distinct supportive pathways known as source of strength (SOS) support and relational catalyst (RC) support. Specifically, SOS support is provided in situations that require coping with adversity. On the other hand, RC support is provided for situations in which the partner can grow and pursue opportunities, like secure base support. Attachment theorists claim that attachment figures provide a secure base from which to explore the world during childhood (Bowlby, 1982; 1988). Feeney and Thrush (2010) applied the attachment theory to close relationships by viewing partners as attachment figures in adulthood.

According to Feeney & Thrush (2010), secure base support occurs when a relationship partner is available, non-intrusive, and encouraging of exploratory behavior. In prior research, individuals with secure attachment (low attachment anxiety and avoidance) were more likely to exhibit secure base support behavior, encouraging their partners to grow and strive for their goals (Feeney & Thrush, 2010). The tendency to behave in ways that support a partner's goal pursuit are likely related to other individual difference factors, such as individual differences in orientations toward self-regulation or self-regulatory mode (Kumashiro, Rusbult, Finkenauer, & Stocker, 2007) and personal

beliefs about gender roles (Hammond & Overall, 2015). However, benevolent sexism and support for a partner's personal growth is not as often studied in conjunction. Instead, there has been a focus on benevolent sexism and types of SOS support. Previous literature has generally examined benevolent sexism and support in the context of "helping" or dealing with adversity (Hammond & Overall, 2015; Shnabel et al., 2015), rather than in the context of promoting personal growth and exploration. For the present studies, it was expected for benevolent sexism to moderate the provision of secure base support. Men high in benevolent sexism were expected to be more interfering, less available, and less encouraging towards their partner than women high in benevolent sexism and participants low in benevolent sexism.

### **The Present Studies**

The three current studies build on prior research by examining different types of support and relationships across multiple helping scenarios or tasks. Generally, it was expected that benevolent sexism would predict the type of support provided across the different types of relationships (e.g., friendships and romantic relationships) and support contexts (e.g., adverse and non-adverse) studied. Study 1 examined benevolent sexism and dependency-oriented support in friendships and expanded on Shnabel et al's (2015) research by not only examining men's, but also women's, support provision. It was hypothesized that benevolent sexism would predict greater provision of dependency-oriented help, particularly when helping women. In other words, both men and women high in benevolent sexism were expected to be more likely to provide dependency-oriented support towards women.

Studies 2 and 3 examined benevolent sexism and secure base support in romantic relationships but used different recruitment methods and methodologies. Specifically, Study 2 examined support provision and reception by recruiting a diverse sample of individuals in romantic relationships from the Internet and an undergraduate participant pool. Lastly, Study 3 used observational methods to examine actual secure base support interactions among romantic couples in an exploration task conducted in the laboratory. These studies built on previous research by examining benevolent sexism and support in non-adverse contexts.

Since Studies 2 and 3 examined data from heterosexual couples, predictions focused on mixed-sex rather than same-sex contexts. Instead, it was hypothesized that there would also be a significant two-way interaction between benevolent sexism and the participant's gender on support provision. It was expected that for men, benevolent sexism would be negatively associated with the provision of secure base support to female relationship partners; in other words, they would be less encouraging, more interfering, and less available than men low in benevolent sexism.



## Study 1

Study 1 built on past research (Shnabel et al., 2015) by examining the effects of benevolent sexism on types of support in hypothetical scenarios. It was expected that participants (both men and women) with higher levels of benevolent sexism would provide more dependency-oriented support towards women and more autonomous-oriented support towards men. This study explored the associations between benevolent sexism and support provision, which could have broader implications for relationship functioning.

### **Method**

**Participants.** Participants (N = 410) were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and compensated \$0.50 each or via an undergraduate research participant pool and compensated with class credit. MTurk, is a website that can be used to conduct research by facilitating participant recruitment. It provides a method to recruit samples rapidly that are more diverse than undergraduate participant pools and with minimal resources (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011).

Data cleaning and participant exclusion decisions were finalized before conducting analyses. In order to minimize the effects of inattentive participants, participants who had a study completion time corresponding to fewer than two seconds per item were excluded from the analyses (Huang et al., 2012; Maniaci & Rogge, 2014). In addition, five attention check or directed questions were included (e.g., “I read instructions carefully. To show you that you are reading these instructions, please do not

answer this question.”) for participants recruited from the undergraduate participant pool. Participants who missed more than two out of the five directed questions were excluded (Maniaci & Rogge, 2014). These criteria resulted in excluding a total of 38 (9.3%) participants out of the 410 that completed the survey. The pattern of results for the primary regression analysis remains the same if these participants are retained.

After excluding inattentive participants, the final sample ( $N = 372$ , 64% female) included 72% White participants, 15% Black or African Americans, 4% Asians, 1% American Indian or Alaska Natives, and 9% other races. They ranged between 18 and 76 years of age and were an average of 29.9 years old ( $SD = 14.7$  years).

**Materials.** Two different scales measuring individual differences were used via self-report questionnaires. These include the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996) and the 60-item HEXACO personality scale (Ashton & Lee, 2009).

***Benevolent and hostile sexism.*** The ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996) consists of 22 items using a 6-point Likert scale (from “Strongly disagree” to “Agree strongly”), half of these measure hostile sexism (e.g., “When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against”) and the other half measure benevolent sexism (e.g., “Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility”). For both types of sexism, three separate facets are assessed. Protective paternalism, complementary gender differentiation, and heterosexual intimacy compose the 11 benevolent sexism ( $\alpha = .86$ ) items. Dominative paternalism, competitive gender differentiation, and heterosexual hostility compose the 11 hostile sexism ( $\alpha = .90$ ) items (see Appendix A for a copy of the scale). The overall benevolent sexism score, including all three facets, was used for statistical analyses.

**Personality.** The second scale used to measure individual differences was the 60-item HEXACO personality scale (Ashton & Lee, 2009), which measures six different personality traits using a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = “Strongly disagree” to 5 = “Strongly agree”). The subscales included honesty/humility ( $\alpha = .76$ ), emotionality ( $\alpha = .80$ ), extraversion ( $\alpha = .83$ ), agreeableness ( $\alpha = .80$ ), conscientiousness ( $\alpha = .81$ ), and openness to experience ( $\alpha = .79$ ). This scale was used in supplemental analyses to control for global personality traits.

**Dependency-oriented support provision.** In order to measure what type of support participants provided, nine hypothetical scenarios (e.g., “Your acquaintance is having difficulty parking her car”) with multiple ways to respond were given to each participant (adapted from Shnabel et al., 2016). For each of the nine scenarios, there were three courses of action (e.g., “(1) I will not intervene. (2) I will explain to her how to use the steering wheel and mirrors to get into the parking spot. (3) I will offer to swap with her and park the car for her.”) that could be potentially taken. Option 1 represented no help, Option 2 represented autonomous-oriented support (helping the recipient deal with the scenario independently), and Option 3 represented dependency-oriented support (solving the problem for the recipient). Participants had to indicate the probability (from 0 to 100%) that they would decide on each of the three options in percentage form, which means all three values were required to add up to 100% (see Appendix B for a copy of the hypothetical scenarios and response scale). Each response option had adequate internal consistency across scenarios (no help:  $\alpha = .83$ ; autonomous-oriented help:  $\alpha = .77$ ; dependency-oriented help:  $\alpha = .68$ ).

As in Shnabel et al. (2016), support provision was calculated by creating a new variable that reflected the odds that the participant would provide dependency-oriented support instead of the other two options (autonomous-oriented help or no help at all). The “no-help” and “autonomous-oriented help” responses were both contrasted with dependency-oriented support, since both options promote the support recipient’s autonomous coping. Each participant’s ratings were averaged across the nine hypothetical scenarios for each of the three response options. The odds of providing dependency-oriented support were calculated by taking the average percentage rating for the dependency-oriented response options divided by the sum of the average percentage ratings for the other two options.

**Procedure.** Participants accessed the survey on the Internet and read a consent paragraph before participating. After completing socio demographic questions, participants answered the ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996) and the HEXACO personality scale items (Ashton & Lee, 2009), and completed the nine hypothetical scenarios. They were randomly assigned to respond with a female or male friend as the target person in each scenario (Shnabel et al., 2016). The survey order was randomized, such that participants responded to the scenarios either before or after answering other self-report questions.

## **Results and Discussion**

**Main analyses.** Descriptive statistics of the main variables examined (e.g., benevolent sexism) as a function of gender can be found in Table 1 below. There were no significant gender differences. A multiple regression analysis tested whether the participant’s gender, benevolent sexism, and the target’s gender had any main effects or

interactive effects on the odds of providing dependency-oriented support. Gender of the participant and target person were both effect coded (-1 = male; 1 = female).

Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations on the Measures of Benevolent Sexism and Odds of Providing Dependency-Oriented Support as a Function of Gender*

Variables	Men		Women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Benevolent sexism	3.45	1.03	3.33	1.03
Hostile sexism	3.15	1.16	2.94	1.10
Odds of dependency-oriented support	.37	.28	.34	.28

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

There was a significant main effect for benevolent sexism,  $\beta = .18$ ,  $t = 3.51$ ,  $p < .001$ , on support provision. In other words, individuals high on benevolent sexism were more likely to provide dependency-oriented help to others, regardless of their own or the target person's gender (e.g., women helping women, women helping men, etc.).

However, there were no significant main effects for participant's gender,  $\beta = -.04$ ,  $t = -.75$ ,  $p = .45$ , or for the gender of the target,  $\beta = .012$ ,  $t = .24$ ,  $p = .811$ , on dependency-oriented help.

There was a significant two-way interaction,  $\beta = -.11$ ,  $t = -2.06$ ,  $p = .04$ , between participant's gender and the target's gender. As depicted in Figure 1, men were more likely to provide dependency-oriented support towards women, independent of their degree of benevolent sexism. Simple effects were evaluated to see if there were significant gender differences in the odds of providing dependency-oriented support when the target acquaintance was male and when the target was female. When the target acquaintance was male, there was not a significant simple effect of participant gender ( $b = .02$ ,  $t = .84$ ,  $p = .40$ ) such that both men and women had similar odds of providing

dependency-oriented support to male targets. When the target acquaintance was female, male participants had significantly higher odds of providing dependency-oriented support than female participants ( $b = -.05$ ,  $t = -2.02$   $p = .04$ ).

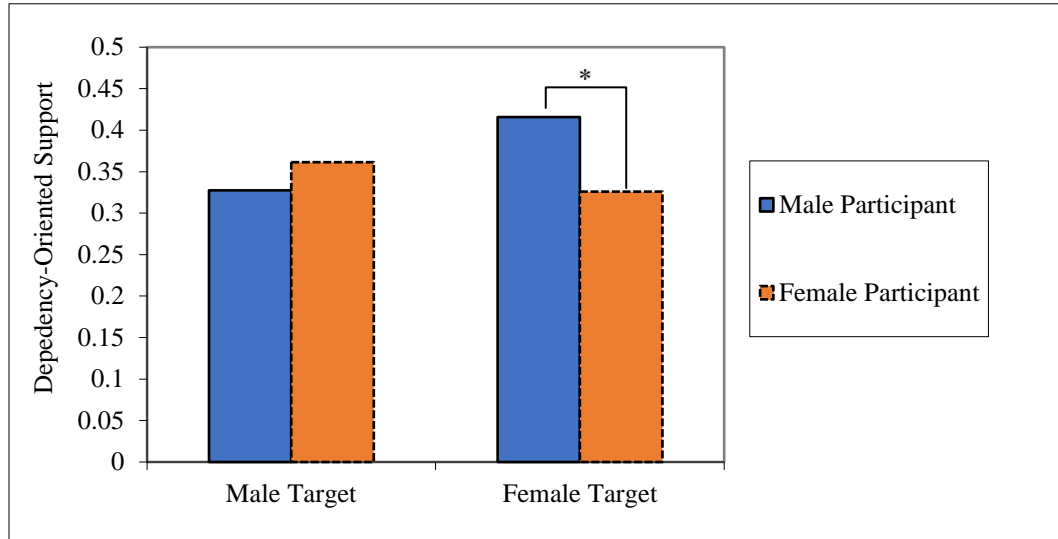


Figure 1. The two-way interaction between the participant's gender and the target's gender on dependency-oriented support

The other 2-way and 3-way interactions between benevolent sexism, participant gender, and target gender were not significant, all  $|\beta|$ s  $< .05$ , all  $ps > .33$ .

**Supplemental analyses.** Exploratory regression analyses examined the effects after controlling individually for hostile sexism, age, and the HEXACO personality traits (honesty/humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience). The general pattern of results for benevolent sexism and gender remained after controlling for all variables independently. Age,  $\beta = -.22$ ,  $t = -4.42$ ,  $p < .001$ , predicted the odds of providing dependency-oriented help, indicating that younger participants were more likely to provide dependency-oriented help than older participants. Additionally, honesty/humility,  $\beta = -.18$ ,  $t = -3.11$ ,  $p = .002$ , was the only personality trait to significantly predict the odds of providing dependency-oriented help.

Participants high in honesty/humility were less likely to provide dependency-oriented help.

Supplemental analyses were also conducted to determine if similar results would be obtained predicting the odds of providing autonomous-oriented (rather than dependency-oriented) help. Odds of providing autonomous-oriented help were calculated as the average percentage rating for autonomous-oriented response options divided by the sum of the average percentage ratings for the other two options. The odds of providing autonomous oriented help were not significantly related to benevolent sexism,  $\beta = .00$ ,  $t = -.001$ ,  $p = .99$ , participant gender,  $\beta = .04$ ,  $t = .82$ ,  $p = .42$ , target gender,  $\beta = -.04$ ,  $t = -.76$ ,  $p = .45$ , or any of the interactions among the predictors (all  $|\beta|$ 's  $< .04$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .46$ ). These supplemental analyses suggest that the pattern of results is unique to dependency-oriented help and do not generalize to other forms of support.

Although the interactions between benevolent sexism and gender were not significant, supplemental analyses examined the association between benevolent sexism and dependency-oriented support separately across groups to more directly compare the pattern of results to those of Shnabel et al. (2016). As can be seen in Table 2, the strongest association occurred for men helping women, such that men's benevolent

sexism predicted their provision of dependency-oriented help to women. However, the gender differences in these effects were not significant in the overall regression analysis.

Table 2

*Correlations Between Benevolent Sexism and Dependency-Oriented Support as a Function of Condition*

Condition	Correlation		
	N	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Men helping men	77	.18	.11
Men helping women	55	.31	.02
Women helping men	115	.19	.05
Women helping women	124	.13	.16



## Study 2

This study builds on Study 1 by examining secure base support provision which focuses on support for personal growth and exploration in non-adverse settings rather than support for coping with adversity. In addition, Study 2 examined supportive behavior within romantic relationships, rather than friendships. Study 2 aimed to examine the degree to which secure base support for a close relationship partner's exploration and goal pursuit was related to benevolent sexism and gender, which has not been studied previously by researchers. Participants completed an Internet-based questionnaire with questions about their own provision of secure base support, the perception of secure base support they receive from their partner, and measures of individual differences in personality and related factors.

### **Method**

**Participants.** Participants (N = 134) were individuals who were at least 18 years of age and in a romantic relationship for a duration of at least one month. Recruitment methods included social media, research recruitment websites and the undergraduate research participant pool, in which participants were granted credit toward a course requirement as compensation. Participants recruited via social media and other sources were offered feedback about their scores on the HEXACO personality dimensions after completing the study. Brief descriptions were provided for each of their six HEXACO dimension scores relative to typical scores.

To ensure that the participant sample consisted of eligible and attentive participants, four attention check or directed questions were included (e.g., “Please choose ‘Agree Strongly’ as your response to this item.”). Ten participants (7.5%) that missed more than two out of the four directed questions were excluded (Maniaci & Rogge, 2014). In addition, five individuals in same-sex relationships were excluded, since hypotheses focused on gender and sexism in the context of heterosexual relationships. Regardless of participant exclusion, the pattern of results for the primary hypothesis tests did not change. Although the strategy used for addressing inattentive responding varied across studies, all decisions about data cleaning and exclusions were completed before conducting any analyses.

After these 15 participants were excluded, the participant sample ( $N = 119$ ; 76% female) included 74% identifying themselves as White, 16% as Black or African American, and 11% selecting multiple or other response options. A total of 34% of participants identified as Hispanic or Latinos. Participants ranged from 18 to 56 years old, with an average age of 23.45 years ( $SD = 8.92$  years). Most participants were in a committed dating relationship (67%), with 15% either married or engaged, and 19% in a casual dating relationship. Participants reported an average relationship length of 3.6 years ( $SD = 6.4$  years), ranging from 2 months to 34 years.

**Materials.** Like Study 1, Study 2 utilized the 22-item ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996) and the 60-item HEXACO personality scale (Ashton & Lee, 2009). Benevolent sexism had adequate internal consistent reliability ( $\alpha = .84$ ), as did hostile sexism ( $\alpha = .88$ ). HEXACO scales ranged from Cronbach’s alphas of .73 to .79. Additionally, Study 2 included the following self-report measures: Secure Base Characteristics Scale (SBCS;

Feeney & Thrush, 2010), Support in Intimate Relationships Rating Scale (SIRRS; Dehle, Larsen, & Landers, 2001), the Ambivalence Toward Men Inventory (AMI; Glick & Fiske, 1999), and the Experiences in Close Relationships – 12 short form (ECR-12 short form; Lafontaine, Brassard, Lussier, Valois, Shaver, & Johnson, 2016).

***Secure base support.*** The Secure Base Characteristics Scale (SBCS; Feeney & Thrush, 2010) is a 15-item measure using a 6-point Likert scale (from 0 = “Strongly disagree” to 5 = “Strongly agree”) containing 5 items for each subscale measured including self-reported availability ( $\alpha = .60$ ), interference ( $\alpha = .49$ ), and encouragement ( $\alpha = .68$ ). Participants completed two versions of this scale (see Appendix C for a copy of the full scale) in order to measure how the participant provides secure base support to their partner (e.g., “When my partner is facing a challenging or difficult situation, I try to make myself available to him/her in case he/she needs me”) and how the participant perceives their partner’s secure base support (e.g., “When I am facing a challenging or difficult situation, my partner tries to make him/herself available to me in case I need him/her”).

Composite scores representing overall secure base support were calculated by reverse-scoring interference items, then calculating an overall composite across all items. One of the reverse-scored interference items was negatively correlated with the other fourteen items and seemed to measure both interference and availability (“When my partner is exploring a new activity [for example; working on a new and challenging task]), I usually try to get involved and do it with or for him/her.”). This problematic interference item was dropped, and all main analyses used a 14-item secure base support composite (self-report:  $\alpha = .71$ ; perceived partner:  $\alpha = .85$ ).

***Emotional support.*** The SIRRS (Dehle, Larsen, & Landers, 2001) is a 6-item scale measuring the extent to which (from 0 = “Never” to 5 = “Almost always”) the individual has provided various forms of emotional support to their partner in the past week (e.g., “I told my partner everything would be OK”). Like the HEXACO scale, this scale was used in supplemental analyses to control for global emotional support and had adequate internal consistency reliability ( $\alpha = .79$ ). This scale was only answered by a subset of participants ( $N = 81$ ), as it was removed part-way through data collection to increase participation rates with a shorter version of the study.

***Benevolence towards men.*** The 20-item AMI (Glick & Fiske, 1999) complements the ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996) by examining ambivalent attitudes towards men instead of women using a 6-point Likert scale (from 0 = “Disagree strongly” to 5 = “Strongly agree”). This measure consists of two subscales called Hostility toward Men (e.g., “Most men are really like children”) and Benevolence toward Men (e.g., “Even if both work, woman should take care of man at home”). The 10-item Benevolence toward Men subscale ( $\alpha = .89$ ) was completed by a subset of participants ( $N = 76$ ) and measured for use as a control variable in supplemental analyses. As with the emotional support scale, this measure was removed part-way through data collection to increase participation rates.

***Attachment styles.*** The ECR-12 short form (Lafontaine et al., 2016) is a 12-item scale measuring attachment styles on a 7-point Likert scale (from “Disagree strongly” to “Strongly agree”). Originally developed as a 36-item scale by Brennan & Shaver (1998), this measure consists of two subscales that measure avoidant and anxious attachment

styles within close relationships. Both subscales were used as control variables in supplemental analyses (avoidant attachment:  $\alpha = .73$ ; anxious attachment:  $\alpha = .83$ ).

**Procedure.** Participants accessed an Internet-based survey designed to take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey included all of the self-report measures previously discussed, along with additional measures not relevant to the proposed analyses. At the end of the survey, participants were asked to copy a unique link that they could optionally choose to share with their partner. Some participants recruited from the undergraduate participant pool completed the survey in a laboratory session. An insufficient number of dyads completed the survey to permit dyadic analyses, so analyses focused on individuals.

## **Results and Discussion**

**Preliminary analyses.** Regression analyses were used to examine if self-reported benevolent sexism predicted self-reported support provision within close relationships. Participants' gender was also studied as a potential moderator. Before the main analyses were conducted, descriptive statistics of the primary self-reported variables were examined (see Table 2). These included the measures of benevolent and hostile sexism, secure base support, and its three facets: availability, interference, and encouragement. Independent sample *t*-tests showed no differences (all  $|t|$ 's  $< .95$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .35$ ) between men and women on any of the variables in Table 3. As can be seen in Table 3, benevolent sexism had a positive relationship with the self-reported 4-item interference composite, indicating that those high in benevolent sexism were more likely to report interfering with their partner's exploration.

Table 3

*Correlations Between the Self-Reported Measures of Benevolent Sexism, Secure Base Support, and its Three Facets*

Variables	1	2	3	4	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Benevolent sexism	-				3.38	.96
2. Availability	.001	-			5.26	.69
3. Interference	.212*	-.200*	-		2.54	.85
4. Encouragement	-.073	.326**	-.375**	-	5.54	.55
5. Secure base support	-.131	.720**	-.732**	.735**	5.13	.50

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

Table 4 shows the correlations separated by gender. When observing correlations amongst the same variables as a function of gender, benevolent sexism is significantly positively correlated with the 4-item composite of interference only for women ( $r = .29$ ,  $p < .001$ ), but not for men ( $r = -.09$ ,  $p = .65$ ). This shows that women, but not men, high in benevolent sexism are more likely to report themselves as interfering with their partners' exploration.

Table 4

*Correlations Between the Self-Reported Measures of Benevolent Sexism, Secure Base Support, and its Three Facets as a Function of Gender*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
Benevolent sexism	-	-.007	.290**	-.101	-.184 <sup>†</sup>
Availability	.025	-	-.197 <sup>†</sup>	.291**	.701**
Interference	-.091	-.228	-	-.408**	-.747*
Encouragement	.013	.443*	-.250	-	.737**
Secure base support	.060	.789**	-.680**	.726**	-

*Note.* Coefficients below the diagonal represent correlations for men; coefficients above the diagonal represent correlations for women.

<sup>†</sup>  $p < .10$  \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

**Main analyses.** Regression models were used to test the hypothesis that men high in benevolent sexism would self-report providing less secure base support. As can be

seen in Table 5 the hypotheses were not supported. There was no significant main effect of benevolent sexism or gender on self-reported secure base support. Moderation analyses showed no significant gender differences, or interaction with gender.

Table 5

*Estimates of the Effects of Benevolent Sexism and Gender on Self-Report Measures of Secure Base Support*

Variables	$\beta$	$t$	$p$
Benevolent sexism (BS)	-.070	-.670	.504
Gender	.076	.810	.419
BS x gender	-.122	-1.170	.245

A separate regression analyses evaluated perceived partner secure base support. As seen in Table 6, there were no significant main or interactive effects of benevolent sexism or gender on perceived partner secure base support.

Table 6

*Estimates of the Effects of Benevolent Sexism and Gender on Perceived Partner Secure Base Support*

Variables	$\beta$	$t$	$p$
Benevolent sexism (BS)	.003	.026	.979
Gender	.025	.269	.788
BS x gender	-.038	-.362	.718

**Supplemental analyses.** When examining the three individual facets of secure base support, there was a significant effect for benevolent sexism,  $\beta = .202$ ,  $t = 2.19$ ,  $p = .031$ , on the interference facet of secure base support indicating that individuals high in benevolent sexism were more likely to interfere with their partners' exploration. However, this effect becomes nonsignificant ( $p = .265$ ) when the interaction term (BS x gender) is included in the model. Instead, there is a marginally significant interaction between benevolent sexism and gender,  $\beta = .191$ ,  $t = 1.86$ ,  $p = .065$ , predicting interference. This marginally significant interaction was decomposed by evaluating the

simple slopes for benevolent sexism separately for men and women. As can be seen in Figure 2, women who were high in benevolent sexism were more likely to interfere with their partners exploration task than women who were low in benevolent sexism ( $b = .27, t = 2.86, p = .005$ ). Benevolent sexism was not significantly associated with interference for men ( $b = -.07, t = -.44, p = .66$ ). There were no significant main effects or interactions for benevolent sexism and gender when examining self-reported availability (all  $|\beta|$ 's  $< .09$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .33$ ) or encouragement (all  $|\beta|$ 's  $< .07$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .43$ ).

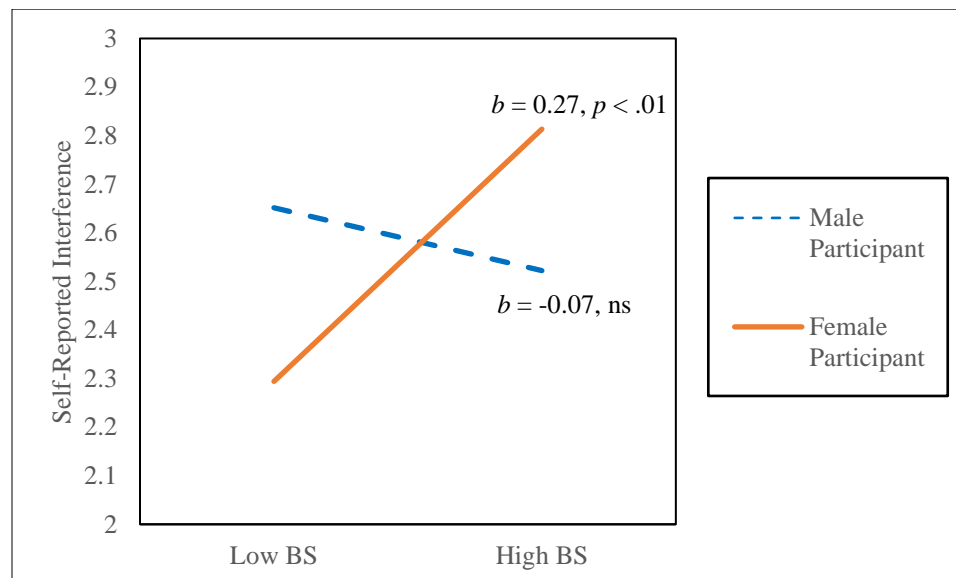


Figure 2. Interference between the participant's benevolent sexism and gender on their self-reported interference

Exploratory analyses examined the main and interactive effects of benevolent sexism and gender predicting overall secure base support after controlling individually for hostile sexism, age, relationship length, the six HEXACO personality traits, self-reported emotional support, benevolence towards men, and attachment styles. There were no significant main effects or interactions for benevolent sexism and gender after controlling for any of the variables. Agreeableness predicted the participant's self-reported secure base support,  $\beta = .237, t = 2.57, p = .012$ , showing that participants high



in agreeableness were more likely to provide their partners secure base support. Honesty/Humility was also associated with greater provision of secure base support,  $\beta = .191$ ,  $t = 1.99$ ,  $p = .049$ . Emotional support was positively associated with secure base support,  $\beta = .297$ ,  $t = 2.77$ ,  $p = .007$ , indicating that those high in emotional support also tended to be high in secure base support. Consistent with the findings of Feeney & Thrush's (2010) study, attachment avoidance,  $\beta = -.217$ ,  $t = -2.49$ ,  $p = .014$ , and anxiety,  $\beta = -.310$ ,  $t = -3.55$ ,  $p < .001$ , both predicted overall secure base support. Those who were high in either avoidant or anxious attachment were less likely to provide secure base support. Overall, results seem to indicate that benevolent sexism and gender do not interact in predicting overall secure base support. However, women high in benevolent sexism reported being more interfering with their partner's explorative behavior.

### Study 3

Study 3 examined the relationship between secure base support (i.e., support for a partner's exploration and goal pursuit) and benevolent sexism in romantic relationships. Couples were brought to an observation lab where they completed several activities and answered questionnaires about their relationship, their own and their partner's support behavior, and measures of individual differences in personality, personal attitudes, and related factors. Collecting dyadic data allowed for the examination of both actor and partner effects, which did not occur in Study 2. Unlike Study 2's self-report methodology, Study 3 also used observational methods, in addition to collecting self-report and partner perception data. The study allowed for observation of actual support exchanges within close relationships to see how benevolent sexism and gender influence the provision of secure base support by observing actual behavior while one partner engaged in an exploration task in the laboratory.

#### **Method**

**Participants.** Participants (N = 238 individuals in 119 dyads) were at least 18 years of age and in a romantic relationship for a duration of at least a month. These 119 dyads were recruited via the undergraduate research participant pool and on-campus flyers. They received either class credit or \$10 gift cards as incentives for their participation.

To ensure that the participant sample consisted of eligible and attentive participants, dyads were removed if they did not complete the behavioral observation task

correctly, or if one dyad member was excessively inattentive while answering self-report questionnaires. Six same-sex couples were excluded, as the primary hypotheses focused on interactions with gender in the context of heterosexual relationships. Five couples were excluded because they did not follow the instructions or complete the task correctly. Lastly, two couples were eliminated due to inattentive or problematic responses to self-report questionnaires by at least one partner. One individual provided highly inattentive self-report data based on selecting the same response option for 22 consecutive items across multiple pages of the survey a long-string index score more than 11 *SDs* above the mean, Maniaci & Rogge, 2014). Another individual was excluded due to poor English comprehension and an extremely atypical pattern of responding based on a significant ( $p < .001$ ) Mahalanobis distance calculated across the 60 HEXACO items (Maniaci & Rogge, 2014). The pattern of results for the primary hypotheses tests remained the same if these participants are retained.

After these 13 dyads were excluded, the participant sample decreased to  $N = 212$  individuals (106 couples) and included 64% identifying as White, 15% as Black or African American, 5% as Asian, and 17% selecting other or multiple options. A total of 40% of participants identified as Hispanic or Latinos. They ranged from 18 – 28 years of age and were an average of 19.84 years old ( $SD = 2.19$  years). Most participants (79.7%) were in a committed relationship, with 3.7% either engaged or married, and 16.5% dating casually. Relationships ranged from 1 to 76 months in duration ( $M = 15.9$  months,  $SD = 16.4$ ).

**Materials.** Study 3 used the self-report scales used in Study 2 that measure individual differences and close relationship constructs. These included benevolent and

hostile sexism using the ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996), the HEXACO personality scale (Ashton & Lee, 2009), emotional support using the SIRRS (Dehle, Larsen, & Landers, 2001), benevolence towards men using the AMI (Glick & Fiske, 1999), attachment styles using the ECR – 12 Short Form (Lafontaine et al., 2016), and secure base support characteristics using the SBCS (Feeney & Thrush, 2010). The benevolent sexism ( $\alpha = .76$ ), hostile sexism ( $\alpha = .80$ ), emotional support ( $\alpha = .76$ ), benevolence towards men ( $\alpha = .85$ ), anxiety attachment ( $\alpha = .81$ ), and avoidant attachment ( $\alpha = .82$ ) scales and subscales had strong internal consistency reliability. In addition, HEXACO scales ranged from  $\alpha = .70$  to  $.79$ . Table 7 shows the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients for the self-report and perceived partner measures of the three facets of secure base support, separated by gender.

Table 7

*Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) on the Self-Report and Perceived Partner Measures of the Three Secure Base Support facets as a Function of Gender*

Variables	Self-Report		Perceived Partner	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Availability	.52	.62	.68	.71
Interference (4-item)	.60	.44	.37	.53
Encouragement	.54	.78	.70	.84
Secure base support (14-item)	.59	.76	.74	.80

As in Study 2, one of the items meant to measure interference was negatively correlated with the other fourteen items. For this reason, the problematic interference item was excluded from the composite scores used in all analyses. An overall 14-item secure base support composite was used for the primary analyses, rather than the three separate facets.

**Exploration task.** In addition to using self-report measures, Study 3 utilized a puzzle card game called Brick-by-Brick (Feeney & Thrush, 2010) which one participants in each couple (the “explorer”) tried to solve during a videotaped task. The purpose of the game consists of having to arrange five brick pieces into a particular pattern, matching an image on the front of each card. The solutions are placed on the back of each card. This task was developed and validated by Feeney and Thrush (2010) as a behavioral observation paradigm used to evaluate support for exploration in a laboratory setting.

**Post-exploration task measures.** After completing the exploration task, participants answered questions regarding their experience and behavior during the task. The “explorer” (the partner who completed the puzzle task) answered questions about their own enjoyment of the task (2-item composite;  $\alpha = .91$ ), their experience of psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) during the task, and their perception of their partner’s secure base supportive behavior during the task (three 2-item composite subscales). The other partner also answered questions about their own self-reported secure base supportive behavior during the task (three 2-item composite subscales).

The explorer’s experience of psychological need satisfaction consisted of three separate 3-item composites, all beginning with the stem “*During the activity...* ”: competence (e.g., “*I felt like a competent person*”;  $\alpha = .74$ ), autonomy (e.g., “*I felt controlled and pressured to be certain ways*” [reversed];  $\alpha = .58$ ), and relatedness (e.g., “*I felt a lot of closeness and intimacy with my partner.*”;  $\alpha = .75$ ). The explorer’s perception of the partner’s supportive behavior during the task (as opposed to their overall secure base support behavior measured before the task) and the partner’s self-

reported supportive behavior during the task were both assessed using 2-item composites for each of the three facets of secure base support: availability (perceived by explorer:  $\alpha = .71$ ; reported by partner:  $\alpha = .84$ ), interference (perceived by explorer:  $\alpha = .78$ ; reported by partner:  $\alpha = .71$ ), and encouragement (perceived by explorer:  $\alpha = .58$ ; reported by partner:  $\alpha = .44$ ).

**Procedure.** Couples were welcomed into the Close Relationships Laboratory at Florida Atlantic University in order to participate in a one-hour long session. After the participants signed the consent forms, they were taken into separate rooms to complete the self-report measures previously discussed, along with additional measures not relevant to the proposed analyses.

Once all measures were completed, participants were randomly assigned to either act as the ‘explorer’ or the ‘partner’ during a 10-minute videotaped task. The ‘explorer’ engaged in a novel puzzle task, while the ‘observer’ sat nearby and completed a brief questionnaire at the beginning of the 10-minute observation period. Participants were given the following set of instructions, adapted from Feeney and Thrush (2010):

We’d like for you to try an activity called Brick by Brick. This is an activity that you’ve probably never tried before – and that you’ve probably never even heard of before. We’d just like for you to try it out and see what you think. It doesn’t matter if you solve the puzzles or not – we just want you to have fun with it and tell us what you think about it afterwards. The objective is to arrange these bricks into patterns illustrated on this stack of cards. The solution is on the back of each card in case you get stuck. Again, just check it out and have fun with it. (p. 63).

While the “explorer” worked on the puzzle task, the other partner was asked to complete a brief one-page questionnaire (including items assessing mood that were not recorded or used in analyses), then wait for the experimenter to return. It was expected that the partner would interact with the explorer and take part in the Brick-by-Brick task since the questionnaire was designed to take less than a minute to fill out. After the videotaped session was completed, the participants were taken to separate rooms once again in order to fill out another short set of post-task measures, including activity ratings and their own and their partner’s behavior during the activity. At the end of the couple’s session, a debriefing statement was read to the participants.

***Coding the support provider’s behavior.*** The couples’ videotapes were coded for secure base support (interference, availability, and encouragement) by multiple coders in order to ensure accuracy. Each video was independently coded by two or three undergraduate research assistants. All coders were blind to hypotheses and to characteristics of participants. Like Feeney and Thrush (2010), a 5-point (from 1 = “not at all” to 5 = “consistent and highest quality”) rating scale was used to rate the partner’s behavior. Two of the partner’s behaviors for each of the three facets (availability, interference, and encouragement) of secure base support were rated.

Table 8

*Behavioral Coding the Support Provider’s Secure Base Support During the Task*

Availability	Interference	Encouragement
Attentiveness	Intrusive support	Encouragement of exploration
Avoidance/dismissive behaviors (reverse coded)	Controlling support	Confidence in explorer’s ability

Because videos were coded by different pairs of coders (such that no individual coder evaluated all videos) and the number of coders varied between two and three, interrater reliability was assessed using a version of the one-way random effects intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) with average scores adapted from the formula in McGraw & Wong (1996). Because the number of coders varied across couples, the ICC was estimated using a multilevel model with restricted maximum likelihood, then adjusted based on the average number of coders (2.78).

As seen in Table 8, for *availability*, coders rated (1) how attentive ( $ICC = .80$ ) the partner was and (2) how avoidant ( $ICC = .69$ ) or dismissive the partner was while the explorer completed the puzzle task. For *interference*, coders rated for the partner's (3) intrusive support ( $ICC = .68$ ), or how often the partner offered unsolicited advice, and their (4) controlling support ( $ICC = .70$ ), or how dominant and bossy the partner was with the explorer. For *encouragement*, coders rated the partner's (5) encouragement of exploration ( $ICC = .70$ ) and the partner's (6) confidence ( $ICC = .38$ ) in the explorer's ability to complete the task. Due to the low reliability for confidence in the explorer's ability, encouragement of exploration was solely used to represent the encouragement facet of secure base support.

***Coding the explorer's performance and behavior.*** In addition, a different set of independent coders analyzed the explorer's behavior during the exploration task on a 5-point (from 1 = "not at all" to 5 = "consistent and highest quality") rating scale. Each video was coded twice, by research assistants who were not involved in the support provider's behavioral coding or any of Study 3's data collection and were blind to hypotheses and to characteristics of participants. The following four behaviors were



rated: how often the explorer (1) sought out advice ( $ICC = .64$ ) from their partner, how (2) persistent ( $ICC = .63$ ) or focused they appeared throughout the task, how (3) enthusiastic ( $ICC = .63$ ) they appeared throughout the task, and the explorer's (4) overall performance ( $ICC = .86$ ) based on the number of puzzle cards that were successfully completed (2 points if completed on their own, 1 point if completed with the partner's assistance or using the back of the card, and 0 points if the partner completed the card or if the card was skipped; Feeney & Thrush, 2010).

## **Results and Discussion**

**Self-report measures of the partner's general secure base support.** Before any regression analyses were conducted, the means and standard deviations of the main measures of self-reported variables were examined (see Table 8). These included benevolent sexism and general secure base support (along with its three individual facets: availability, interference, and encouragement) measured before the exploration task.

A series of mixed models with gender as a fixed effect was used to examine gender differences amongst the main self-reported variables examined. Gender had a significant main effect on benevolent sexism ( $t = -4.58, p < .001$ ). As can be seen in Table 9, men ( $M = 4.12, SD = .72$ ) had higher levels of benevolent sexism than women ( $M = 3.65, SD = .87$ ). There were no other significant gender differences (all  $p$ 's  $> .11$ ).

Table 9

*Means and Standard Deviations on the Measures of Benevolent Sexism and Self-Report Secure Base Support as a Function of Gender*

Variables	Men		Women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Benevolent sexism	4.12	.72	3.65	.87
Availability	5.30	.61	5.32	.67
Interference	2.71	.95	2.51	.76
Encouragement	5.50	.50	5.57	.63
Secure base support	5.08	.44	5.17	.52

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

As can be seen in Table 10, the 14-item secure base support composite was positively correlated with the 5-item availability and encouragement facets, for both men and women. In addition, secure base support was negatively correlated with the 4-item interference facet. Although not depicted in Table 10, like the self-report measures, perceived partner's secure base support was positively correlated to the availability,  $r = .810$ ,  $p < .001$ , and encouragement,  $r = .832$ ,  $p < .001$ , facets. Perceived partner's secure base support was also negatively correlated to interference,  $r = -.674$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggests that the 14-item composites of secure base support can be used for main analyses.

Table 10

*Correlations of Self-Reported Measures of Benevolent Sexism, Secure Base Support, and its Three Facets as a Function of Gender*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Benevolent sexism	-	.051	.098	-.041	-.029
2. SBS: Availability	.047	-	-.099	.626**	.773**
3. SBS: Interference	.109	.095	-	-.375**	-.627**
4. SBS: Encouragement	-.113	.264**	-.316**	-	.879**
5. Secure base support	-.091	.541**	-.701**	.734**	-

*Note.* Coefficients below the diagonal represent correlations for the male participants; coefficients above the diagonal represent correlations for the female participants. “SBS” refers to the Secure Base Support Scale measured before the exploration task.

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

***Examining actor and partner effects in self-report data.*** Multi-level modeling and dyadic data analysis were utilized to evaluate associations between benevolent sexism, gender, and self-reported secure base support and to avoid statistical complications due to nonindependence arising from collecting data from individuals nested in dyads (Kenny, 1986). An Actor Partner Interaction Model (APIM) with multilevel analysis was used to test for both actor and partner effects, with compound symmetry. Unlike what was predicted, neither benevolent sexism,  $b = -.036$ ,  $t(205) = -.852$ ,  $p = .395$ , or gender,  $b = .037$ ,  $t(103) = 1.08$ ,  $p = .282$ , had a significant actor effect on secure base support provision. There were also no significant partner effects (i.e., the partner’s benevolent sexism was not a significant predictor of one’s own secure base support) or interactions with gender (see Table 11).

To test for actor and partner effects predicting perceived partner behavior, multi-level modeling and dyadic data analysis were used to evaluate associations between benevolent sexism, gender, and the perceived partner’s secure base support behavior. A

similar pattern of nonsignificant results was seen for benevolent sexism and for gender regarding perceived partner support provision (see Table 12). There were no significant actor effects, partner effects, or interactions with gender predicting perceived partner secure base support.

Table 11

*Actor and Partner Effects for Benevolent Sexism and Gender on Self-Reported Secure Base Support*

Variables	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Benevolent sexism (actor effect)	-.036	-.852	.395
Gender	.037	1.082	.282
BS x gender	.017	.404	.687
Partner's BS (partner effect)	.001	.033	.973
Partner's BS x gender	.018	.421	.674

*Note.* "BS" refers to benevolent sexism

Table 12

*Actor and Partner Effects for Benevolent Sexism and Gender on Perceived Partner's Secure Base Support*

Variables	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Benevolent sexism (actor effect)	.017	.344	.731
Gender	.033	.936	.351
BS x gender	-.055	-1.073	.285
Partner's BS (partner effect)	-.005	-.097	.923
Partner's BS x gender	-.006	-.116	.908

*Note.* "BS" refers to benevolent sexism

**Supplemental analyses.** When examining the three individual facets of secure base support reported before the exploration task, there were no significant main effects or interactions for benevolent sexism and gender predicting self-reported availability (all  $|b|$ 's < .09, all  $|t|$ 's < 1.51, all  $p$ 's > .13), interference (all  $|b|$ 's < .13, all  $|t|$ 's < 1.61, all  $p$ 's > .10) or encouragement (all  $|b|$ 's < .06, all  $|t|$ 's < 1.02, all  $p$ 's > .30). Similarly, there were no significant main effects or interactions for benevolent sexism or gender predicting perceived partner availability, interference, or encouragement (all  $|b|$ 's < .12, all  $|t|$ 's < 1.59, all  $p$ 's > .11).

As in Study 2, supplemental analyses were conducted while controlling for personality, emotional support, benevolence towards men, and attachment styles in separate analyses. The main and interactive effects for benevolent sexism were still nonsignificant even with these sets of control variables. Extraversion, one of the six HEXACO personality traits, predicted secure base support provision,  $b = .083$ ,  $t = 2.09$ ,  $p = .037$ . In other words, extraverted participants were more likely to report higher levels of secure base support provision. Emotional support was positively associated with secure base support,  $b = .145$ ,  $t = 3.78$ ,  $p < .001$ , and perceived partner secure base support,  $b = .244$ ,  $t = 6.55$ ,  $p < .001$ , as well. Benevolence towards men had no significant effect ( $p = .16$ ) on self-reported secure base support provision.

Like Feeney and Thrush's (2010) study on attachment styles and secure base support, avoidance predicted self-report,  $b = -.080$ ,  $t = 2.54$ ,  $p = .012$ , and perceived partner secure base support,  $b = -.176$ ,  $t = 5.02$ ,  $p < .001$ . Anxiety marginally predicted self-report secure base support,  $b = -.044$ ,  $t(195) = -1.72$ ,  $p = .087$ , and significantly predicted perceived partner secure base support,  $b = -.056$ ,  $t(197) = -2.02$ ,  $p = .044$ . Participants high in avoidance or anxiety were less likely to provide secure base support or to perceive support from their partners.

**Observational measures of the partner's general secure base support.** Similar to the self-report data, descriptive statistics were examined before running any regression analyses (see Table 13). Observed availability was positively correlated with observed encouragement. However, unlike the self-report data, availability was positively correlated with observed interference indicating that those high in availability were also high in interference. Although a negative correlation was expected, it makes sense that in

order to be interfering in a specific situation, one needs to be available as well. In addition, there was no significant correlation between encouragement and interference,  $r = .03, p = .75$ . For this reason, the analyses using observational coding were conducted using the three separate facets of secure base support, instead of secure base support as one single composite.

Table 13

*Correlations of Observed Availability, Interference, and Encouragement*

Variables	1	2	3
1. The partner's benevolent sexism	-		
2. Observed (coded) availability	.030	-	
3. Observed (coded) interference	.149	.498**	-
4. Observed (coded) encouragement	-.036	.346**	.031

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

***Examining main analyses on observed secure base support behavior.***

Regression analyses were used to evaluate the relationships between benevolent sexism, gender, and observed secure base support behavior. The 'explorer' role was randomly assigned to the male partner for 62 couples and to the female partner for 44 couples. In other words, 62 men were assigned to play the puzzle card game for 10 minutes. Rather than multilevel modeling, a regression analysis was used since only predictions of one partner's behavior was being examined. The regression used couple as the unit of analysis and predicted behavior. There were no actor effects (i.e., the observer's benevolent sexism predicting their observed secure base support behavior) for any of the outcomes (see Table 14). There were also no significant partner effects (i.e., the explorer's benevolent sexism predicting their partner's behavior) for the same outcomes, and no significant interactions with gender.

Table 14

*Actor and Partner Effects for Benevolent Sexism and Gender on Observed Availability, Interference, and Encouragement*

Secure Base Support Facet	Variables	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Availability				
	Partner's BS (actor effect)	.040	.465	.643
	Gender	.006	.085	.933
	Partner's BS x gender	-.050	-.573	.568
	Explorer's BS (partner effect)	.024	.329	.743
	Explorer's BS x gender	-.001	-.013	.990
Interference				
	Partner's BS (actor effect)	.108	.753	.453
	Gender	-.147	-1.301	.196
	Partner's BS x gender	-.004	-.029	.977
	Explorer's BS (partner effect)	.018	.151	.881
	Explorer's BS x gender	.127	1.036	.303
Encouragement				
	Partner's BS (actor effect)	-.016	-.123	.902
	Gender	.002	.019	.985
	Partner's BS x gender	-.038	-.294	.769
	Explorer's BS (partner effect)	.037	.336	.737
	Explorer's BS x gender	-.085	-.767	.445

*Note.* "BS" refers to benevolent sexism.

The pattern of nonsignificant results predicting observed secure base support did not change after including the following set of control variables in separate analyses: personality, emotional support, benevolence towards men, and attachment styles. The honesty/humility,  $b = .172$ ,  $p = .026$ , and openness to experience,  $b = .143$ ,  $p = .032$ , HEXACO personality traits both predicted observed availability. Those partners that were high in the honesty/humility and the openness to experience scales are more likely to be available to their partners. The honesty/humility HEXACO trait predicted observed encouragement,  $b = .283$ ,  $p = .019$ , indicating that those high in honesty/humility are more likely to encourage their partners. Emotional support (all  $|b|$ 's  $< .14$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .16$ ), benevolence towards men (all  $|b|$ 's  $< .14$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .17$ ), and attachment styles (all  $|b|$ 's  $< .14$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .17$ ), and attachment styles (all  $|b|$ 's  $< .14$ , all  $p$ 's  $> .17$ ).

.14, all  $p$ 's > .16) had no effects on any of the three observed facets of secure base support.

**Self-report and perceived partner measures of the partner's secure base support after the task.** The prior analyses focused on general secure base support tendencies measured before the exploration task. The primary focus of Study 3 was examining how benevolent sexism and gender influence secure base support in a specific laboratory observation task involving one partner's exploration. After the Brick-by-Brick game, both partners answered a brief self-report questionnaire regarding the explorer's competence, enjoyment, autonomy, and relatedness. In addition, they answered questions on the perception of the partner's secure base supportive behavior during the task and the partner's self-reported supportive behavior during the task.

As self-reported by the partner or support provider after the task, the partner's benevolent sexism and gender had no significant effects on self-report availability (all  $|\beta|$ 's < .19, all  $p$ 's > .07) or self-reported encouragement (all  $|\beta|$ 's < .16, all  $p$ 's > .14). However, as can be seen in Figure 3, there was an interaction between the partner's benevolent sexism and the explorer's gender on self-report interference,  $\beta = -.281$ ,  $t = -2.77$ ,  $p = .007$ , indicating that for male partners, higher benevolent sexism was associated with more self-reported interference. Simple slopes were evaluated to see if there were significant gender differences in self-reporting interference during the exploration task when partner was low or high in benevolent sexism. There was not a significant simple effect when the partner was female ( $b = -.25$ ,  $p = .23$ ), such that female partners reported similar levels of interference, regardless of benevolent sexism. However, there was a significant effect when the partner was male ( $b = .74$ ,  $p = .013$ ), such that male partners



high in benevolent sexism reported higher levels of interference than men low in benevolent sexism.

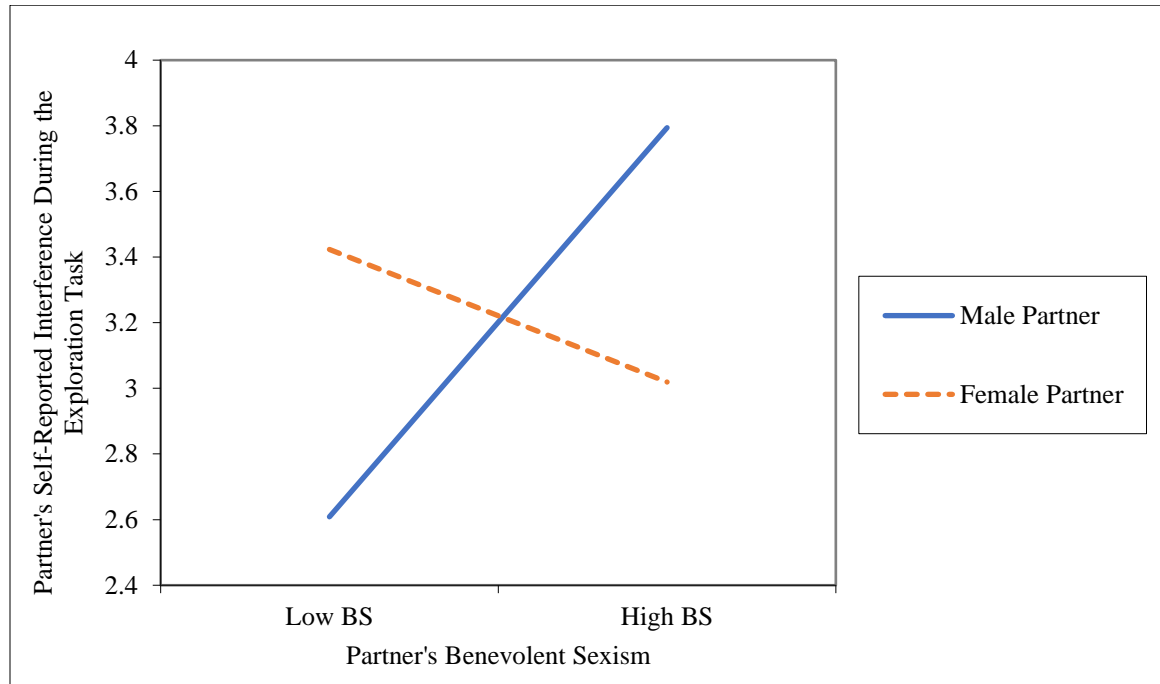


Figure 3. Interaction between the partner's benevolent sexism and the explorer's gender on the partner's self-reported interference during the task

Regarding the immediate secure base supportive behavior experienced during the task, the explorer's gender and the partner's benevolent sexism had no significant effects on the explorer's perceived partner interference (all  $|\beta|$ 's < .14, all  $p$ 's > .22), or perceived partner encouragement (all  $|\beta|$ 's < .15, all  $p$ 's > .17). There was an interaction between the partner's benevolent sexism and the explorer's gender on perceived partner availability,  $\beta = .232$ ,  $t = 2.29$ ,  $p = .024$ , indicating that for female explorers, higher partner benevolent sexism was associated with more perceived partner availability. Simple slopes analyses showed that there was not a significant simple effect when the explorer was male ( $b = -.19$ ,  $p = .24$ ). However, there was a marginally significant effect

when the explorer was female ( $b = .43, p = .053$ ), such that female explorers perceived greater availability if their partners were higher in benevolent sexism.

**Explorer's Self-Reported Experience of the Task.** Since these outcomes (e.g. competency, autonomy, and relatedness) were only measured for one partner, a multiple regression analyses using “couple” as the level of analyses and predicting outcomes from the partner's benevolent sexism was conducted.

As self-reported by the explorer, the explorer's gender significantly predicted whether the explorer felt competent,  $\beta = -.258, t = -2.61, p = .011$ , and whether the explorer enjoyed the task,  $\beta = -.318, t = -3.17, p = .002$ . As seen in Table 15, men, on average, felt more competent during the task than women when they were in the ‘explorer’ roles, and enjoyed the puzzle game more than women, regardless of their partner's degree of benevolent sexism.

Table 15

*Means and Standard Deviations of Explorer Post-Task Self-Report Measures as a Function of Gender*

Outcomes	Men		Women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Enjoyment	4.70	1.13	3.85	1.44
Competency	4.64	.97	3.98	1.21
Autonomy	5.39	.73	5.21	.88
Relatedness	5.08	.93	4.80	1.00

There was a marginally significant interaction between the partner's benevolent sexism and the explorer's gender on predicting feelings of competence,  $\beta = -.194, t = 1.97, p = .052$ . There were no significant simple effects for either male ( $b = .18, p = .29$ ) or female ( $b = -.39, p = .10$ ) explorers. However, the general trend shows that the explorer's gender moderated the effect of competency when explorers had a partner high in benevolent sexism, such that men felt more competent than women (see Figure 4).

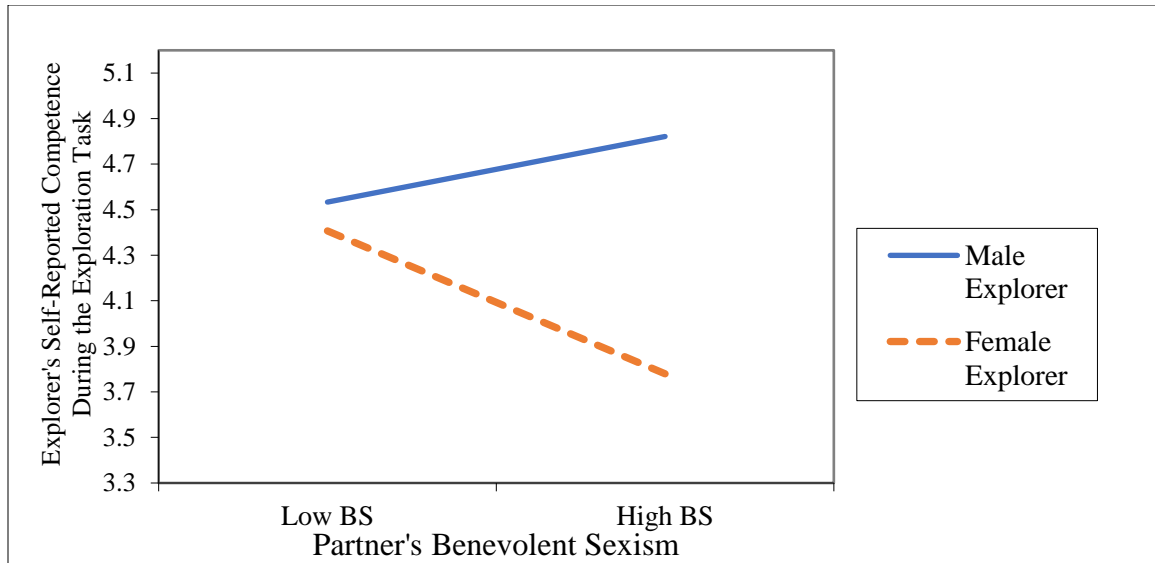


Figure 4. Interaction between the partner's benevolent sexism and the explorer's gender on how competent the explorer felt

The explorer's gender and the partner's benevolent sexism had no significant main effects or interaction predicting the explorer's feelings of autonomy (all  $|\beta|$ 's < .12, all  $p$ 's > .30) reported after the task. There was a marginally significant interaction between explorer's gender and partner's benevolent sexism predicting relatedness ( $\beta = .190$ ,  $t = 1.868$ ,  $p = .065$ ). Simple slopes analyses showed that there was not a significant simple effect when the explorer was female ( $b = .17$ ,  $p = .41$ ). However, there was a significant effect when the explorer was male ( $b = -.31$ ,  $p = .041$ ), such that male explorers reported lower relatedness when their partners were higher in benevolent sexism.

**Explorer's Observed Experience of the Task.** Regression analyses using couple as the level of analysis predicting outcomes for just the explorer examined how both partners' benevolent sexism predicted the explorer's behavior, rather than the partner's behavior. These analyses focused on the following behavioral outcomes coded based on

the explorer's behavior during the exploration task: (1) advice seeking. (2) persistence, and (3) enthusiasm towards the task, and the explorer's (4) overall performance.

The explorer's gender,  $\beta = .27$ ,  $t = 2.48$ ,  $p = .02$ , predicted how much the explorer sought out task assistance. As can be seen in Figure 5, female explorers ( $M = 2.45$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ) sought out more task assistance than male explorers ( $M = 1.92$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ). The partner's benevolent sexism,  $\beta = -.202$ ,  $t = -1.88$ ,  $p = .063$ , marginally predicted persistence, showing that explorers were less persistent when they had partners that were high in benevolent sexism. There were no effects for benevolent sexism or gender on enthusiasm ( $p > .29$ ) or performance ( $p > .13$ ).

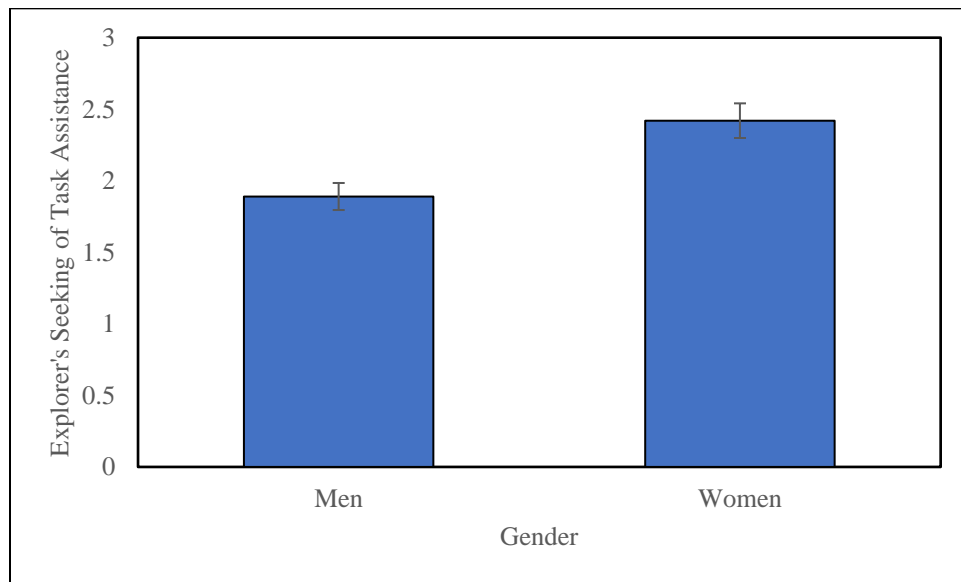


Figure 5. Gender differences in the explorer's seeking of task assistance throughout the puzzle task

## General Discussion

In conjunction, the three studies examined the effects of benevolent sexism and gender on different types of support (e.g., dependency-oriented and secure base support) and relationships (e.g., friendships and close romantic relationships) across multiple helping scenarios or tasks. As seen in Table 16, Study 1 examined benevolent sexism and dependency-oriented support amongst friends in both same- and cross-gender helping scenarios. On the other hand, Studies 2 and 3 examined benevolent sexism and secure base support in close romantic relationships in a non-adverse context. However, Study 2 recruited mainly individuals in heterosexual romantic relationships and was conducted in an online setting; whereas Study 3 recruited dyads and was conducted in a laboratory setting using observational methodology.

Table 16

*Summaries of the three current studies*

Study	Participant Sample	Relationship Type	Support Provision	Context	Data collection
1	Individuals	Friendships	Dependency-oriented Support	Adverse	Self-report, online
2	Individuals in relationships	Romantic Relationships	Secure Base Support	Non-adverse	Self-report, online
3	Dyads	Romantic Relationships	Secure Base Support	Non-adverse	Self-report, observational

Study 1 did not fully support the hypothesis that both men and women high in benevolent sexism would provide dependency-oriented help towards women. Instead, it showed that both men and women high in benevolent sexism were more likely to provide dependency-oriented support towards their acquaintance, regardless of the target's gender. These results suggest that the effects of benevolent sexism on dependency-

oriented support may not be constrained to men's cross-gender support provision behaviors. Shnabel et al. (2016) examined benevolent sexism in specific combinations of cross-gendered helping (i.e., men helping women and women helping men), implying that the effects would be weaker for other combinations. Besides being nonsignificant, the two-way and three-way interactions with benevolent sexism were very small in magnitude. If the parameter estimates for these interactions are accurate, it would require a sample larger than 3,000 participants to have .80 power to detect one of those interactions.

Shnabel et al.'s (2016) results in which men's benevolent sexism was positively correlated with dependency-oriented support towards women were replicated. The addition of females and lack of gender moderation in the current study suggests that men are not the only ones to provide dependency-oriented support to women. However, women's dependency-oriented support provision was not limited to female targets.

A potential explanation for why women high in benevolent sexism would give dependency-oriented support towards men, as well as women, is that the hypothetical scenarios used in the study were mostly stereotypically-masculine. For example, most scenarios were related to automotive, financial, or technological issues. If a man struggled with these types of problems, then they might be perceived as effeminate to someone who endorses benevolent sexism. Men high in benevolent sexism might empathize with them, which explains why they might be less likely to give men dependency-oriented support. On the other hand, women high in benevolent sexism might think of the man as incompetent and will be more likely to do the task for them. According to the Implicit Inversion Theory (Kite & Deaux, 1987), there exists a "bipolar

model of gender stereotyping, in which masculinity and femininity are assumed to be in opposition” (p. 83). They found that male homosexuals were perceived similarly to female heterosexuals, and female homosexuals were perceived similarly to male heterosexuals. This suggests that the female participants in the current study that were high in benevolent sexism could have potentially perceived their male acquaintance as effeminate for needing help during a stereotypically-male scenario, and therefore provided them with dependency-oriented support.

Perhaps, women high in benevolent sexism would not be more likely to provide both men and women with dependency-oriented support if the tasks were either stereotypically-feminine or gender neutral. In either of these two cases, it would be expected for women high in benevolent sexism to be more likely to provide dependency-oriented support mainly towards other women, rather than men. The nature of the task (i.e., stereotypically-masculine, stereotypically-feminine, or gender neutral) may moderate the relationship between benevolent sexism, gender, and the provision of dependency-oriented support. Further examination is needed.

For Studies 2 and 3, it was expected for both gender and benevolent sexism to influence secure base support provision. Men high in benevolent sexism were expected to provide less secure base support towards women in close relationships. In other words, men would be less encouraging, more interfering, and less available towards women. However, there were no significant main effects of gender or benevolent sexism on secure base support. There are potential moderators that could be further studied in the future, such as relationship length and age. Unlike the participant sample recruited by Feeney and Thrush (2010), the participant sample recruited in the present study was

younger and had a shorter average relationship length. There may be a generational effect in which benevolent sexism effects appear in older romantic couples. On the other hand, benevolent sexism effects may appear in relationships that have lasted longer, due to the partners having shared more experiences together.

Inconsistent with patterns found in previous research (Hammond & Overall, 2015), women high in benevolent sexism were more likely to report being interfering towards their male partner's goal pursuit in Study 2. Hammond and Overall (2015) found that women high in benevolent sexism provided more relationship-oriented support towards men, which affects men positively. These results seem to suggest that benevolent sexism was harmful towards men too, since women high in benevolent sexism interfered with their male partner's goal pursuit. However, in Study 3, men high in benevolent sexism reported being more interfering. Also, female explorers reported feeling less competent during the gender-neutral exploration task than male explorers. When explorers had partners that were high in benevolent sexism, men felt relatively more competent, whereas women felt relatively less competent than others with partners low in benevolent sexism. These results suggest that benevolent sexism was more harmful towards women than men.

Benevolent sexism may be harmful during helping scenarios because dependency-oriented support is provided, but there might be some potential evidence that points towards benevolent sexism having minor negative or no effects on support provision during exploration scenarios. This suggests that the situation or context (i.e., adverse vs. non-adverse) may serve as a moderator to the relationship between benevolent sexism and gender on support provision behaviors (e.g., interference) and



particular outcomes (e.g., feelings of competency) within close relationships.

Additionally, besides using the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996) to measure hostile and benevolent sexism, other scales measuring masculinity, femininity, androgyny, or related constructs could be incorporated in future research. Conformity to traditional gender roles may also moderate the effects of benevolent sexism on supportive behaviors within close relationships.

The mixed results suggest that the effects of benevolent sexism on support exchanges may be more complex than current theoretical perspectives imply. Although many of the benevolent sexism and gender effects on secure base support were nonsignificant or inconsistent with predictions, more research in the field is needed to examine when and how benevolent sexism affects support provision.

## **Limitations**

**Measuring secure base support.** Although the reliability for the 14-item composite of secure base support for Studies 2 and 3 was high, the Cronbach Alpha's for the three individual facets of secure base support were unsatisfactory. At times, there seemed to have been an overlap between the availability and interference facets, which were, in theory, meant to have been negatively correlated. There have been inconsistencies in how secure base support was measured and coded (with behavioral observation) across studies (Feeney et al., 2013; Hadden & Knee, 2015; Tomlinson et al., 2016). More work is needed to refine measures of these constructs.

**Power and sample size.** In Study 1, post hoc power analyses tests indicated that a sample larger than 3,000 participants would be required to have a .80 power to detect one of the benevolent sexism, participant's gender, or target's gender interactions. Shnabel et

al. (2016) examined benevolent sexism in specific combinations of cross-gendered helping (i.e., men helping women and women helping men), implying that the effects would be weaker for other combinations. Besides being nonsignificant, the two-way and three-way interactions with benevolent sexism were very small in magnitude.

In Studies 2 and 3, power may not have been the issue for lack of significant effects. Some of the non-significant effects were in a direction inconsistent with the hypothesis, so larger sample size would not have necessarily increased the likelihood of finding significant effects consistent with these hypotheses. The size of the nonsignificant interactions between gender and benevolent sexism were also small would be trivial even if significant in a larger sample of participants. There may be moderating factors that have not been considered, in terms of relationship characteristics or interaction contexts, or other factors that may interact with benevolent sexism to influence support provision and helping.

### **Future directions**

**The inclusion of stereotypically-feminine scenarios.** Including additional stereotypically-feminine scenarios to Study 1's nine hypothetical scenarios could introduce the possibility of examining gendered tasks as a moderator. Study 1 only explored helping scenarios that were stereotypically masculine such as topics including autos, technology, and math. This could potentially trigger stereotype threat in women (Logel et al., 2009). For this reason, I would like to explore two more scenarios as potential moderators: scenarios that are stereotypically-feminine and scenarios that are gender neutral. Instead of men high in benevolent sexism providing dependency-oriented support towards women, I would expect women high in benevolent sexism to provide

more dependency-oriented support towards men, especially in stereotypically-feminine scenarios.

**Using observational methods to examine support in helping scenarios.** Study 3 was the only one that utilized observational methodology to analyze support provision. Like Study 2, Study 3 was specifically examining secure base support, which occurs in thriving or non-adverse contexts. In order to further Study 1's findings, observational methods could be implemented to study dependency-oriented support provision in adverse contexts.

### Conclusion

These three studies explored the effects of benevolent sexism and gender on support provision (e.g., dependency-oriented and secure base support) and relationships (e.g., friendships and close romantic relationships) across multiple helping scenarios or tasks (e.g. adverse and non-adverse). In Study 1, both men and women high in benevolent sexism were more likely to provide dependency-oriented support towards their acquaintance, regardless of the target's gender. This suggests that the effects of benevolent sexism on dependency-oriented support may not be limited to men's cross-gender support provision in adverse situations. In Studies 2 and 3, men high in benevolent sexism reported being less interfering with their female partners and contributed to the explorer's higher feelings of competency than men low in benevolent sexism, suggesting that the context (i.e. adverse or non-adverse) serves as a potential moderator to the relationship between benevolent sexism and gender on support provision behaviors and outcomes (e.g. feelings of competency) within close relationships. The mixed results suggest that the effects of benevolent sexism on support

exchanges within close relationships may be more complex than current theoretical perspectives imply.

## Appendices

## Appendix A

### The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory

Below is a series of statements, developed by Glick and Fiske (1996), concerning men and women and their relationships in contemporary society. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale:

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Strongly	Somewhat	Slightly	Slightly	Somewhat	Strongly

#### Hostile Sexism:

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. There are actually very few women who get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Women are too easily offended.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Feminists are making entirely reasonable demands of men.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Feminists are not seeking for women to have more power than men.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Women exaggerate problems they have at work.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.

\_\_\_\_\_10. Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them.

\_\_\_\_\_11. Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.

#### Benevolent Sexism

\_\_\_\_\_12. Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.

\_\_\_\_\_13. Men are complete without women.

\_\_\_\_\_14. Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.

\_\_\_\_\_15. In a disaster, women ought not necessarily be rescued before men.

\_\_\_\_\_16. Women should be cherished and protected by men.

\_\_\_\_\_17. A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.

\_\_\_\_\_18. No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman.

\_\_\_\_\_19. Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.

\_\_\_\_\_20. Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.

\_\_\_\_\_21. People are often truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex.

\_\_\_\_\_22. Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste.

## Appendix B

### Hypothetical Scenarios for Dependency-Oriented Support Provision

Below are several scenarios that developed by Shnabel et al. (2015) which describe a situation in which a woman/man you are acquainted with has problems doing a particular task. For each scenario there are three courses of action: the first is not to intervene and let her/him handle the difficulty by herself/himself; the second is to provide her/him with tools for independent coping with the difficulty by explaining to her/him how to approach the task; the third is to provide her/him with immediate, direct assistance, namely doing the task for her/him. In all the scenarios, please assume that you have the skills and knowledge needed to do the task. Opposite each course of action, you will be asked to indicate the chances (in percentage form) that you will decide on this option. Note that the percentage for the three courses of action should add up to 100%. If the percentages do not add up to 100% you will be asked by the computer to correct your response.

Note: there are no right or wrong answers, or answers that present you in a more positive light than others. Therefore, please answer the questions sincerely, as you believe that you will actually behave in reality.

Your acquaintance:

- **is having difficulty parking her/his car:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him how to use the steering wheel and mirrors to get into the parking spot



\_\_\_\_\_ I will offer to swap with her/him and park the car for her/him

- **fails to carry out a certain computer function:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him what needs to be done in order to carry out this function

\_\_\_\_\_ I will carry out the function for her/him

- **is interested in fixing a little common malfunction in an electrical device of hers/his:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him how to fix this type of malfunctions

\_\_\_\_\_ I will fix it for her/him

- **needs to buy a car but she/he is not familiar with the car market:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him about the criteria for choosing a car (safety ranking, fuel efficiency, etc.) and how they can be examined

\_\_\_\_\_ I will tell her/him what car would be the best purchase for her/him

- **is having hard time solving a math exercise:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him how to approach the exercise (i.e., what are the general principles for the solution)

\_\_\_\_\_ I will solve it for her/him

- **needs to fill out complex bureaucratic documents (requests for a visa to enter the U.S., refund of income tax, etc.):**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him how to fill out the documents

\_\_\_\_\_ I will fill out the documents for her/him

- **wants to invest her/his extra money in the stock market:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him about the principles for choosing stocks or stock trading companies (e.g., inspecting annual reports)

\_\_\_\_\_ I will recommend her/him an attractive stock or a good stock trading company

- **needs to drive to a distant location and doesn't know how to operate her/his GPS device:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will explain to her/him how to use the device

\_\_\_\_\_ I will operate the device for her/him (i.e., enter the required address for her/him)

- **is facing financial issues:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not intervene

\_\_\_\_\_ I will help her/him find ways to get out of the trouble (e.g., give her/him tips on how to save money or find a job)

\_\_\_\_\_ I will give her/him a certain amount of money

## Appendix C

### The Secure Base Characteristics Scale

Below is a series of statements, developed by Feeney and Thrush (2015) concerning your relationship. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale:

0	1	2	3	4	5
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Strongly	Somewhat	Slightly	Slightly	Somewhat	Strongly

#### Availability:

\_\_\_\_\_1. My partner does not generally count on me to be available to help out if he/she runs into trouble when pursuing personal goals. (reverse coded)

\_\_\_\_\_2. My partner is usually willing to take risks and try new things because he/she knows I'll be available to help and comfort him/her if things don't turn out well.

\_\_\_\_\_3. I do not usually go out of my way to make myself available to my partner when he/she is facing a challenging or difficult situation. (reverse coded)

\_\_\_\_\_4. When my partner is facing a challenging or difficult situation, I try to make myself available to him/her in case he/she needs me.

\_\_\_\_\_5. When my partner is feeling stressed about a new or unknown situation, I find ways to let him/her know that I will be available to help him/her if he/she needs me.

#### Intrusiveness:

\_\_\_\_\_1. I sometimes interfere with my partner's activities when he/she is exploring a challenging activity or task.

\_\_\_\_\_2. When my partner is exploring a new activity (for example, working on a new and challenging task), I usually try to get involved and do it with or for him/her.

\_\_\_\_\_3. I sometimes interfere with my partner's ability to accomplish his/her personal goals.

\_\_\_\_\_4. I'm usually very careful not to interfere in my partner's activities when he/she is trying something new and challenging. (reverse coded)

\_\_\_\_\_5. When my partner is working on something difficult or challenging, I sometimes try to take over and do it for him/her.

#### Encouragement:

\_\_\_\_\_1. When my partner tells me about something new that he/she would like to try, I usually encourage him/her to do it.

\_\_\_\_\_2. I sometimes discourage my partner from pursuing his/her personal goals and plans – especially if the things my partner wants do not match my preferences and interests. (reverse coded)

\_\_\_\_\_3. I usually encourage my partner to accept challenges and try new things.

\_\_\_\_\_4. I encourage my partner to do independent things that will help him/her grow as a person and develop new competencies.

\_\_\_\_\_5. I usually encourage my partner to do the things he/she needs to do to achieve his/her personal goals.

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