

BY ANY OTHER NAME: IS THE DARK TRIAD REALLY JUST A MEASURE OF
SEXISM?

By

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To my parents and my sister, Lauren

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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This study explores the relationship between sexism (both hostile and benevolent sexism) and the so-called dark triad personality traits of narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism, using a validated measure of sexism and two validated measures of the dark triad. It also assesses whether the genders differed in dark triad scores, as they have in other studies, and whether those gender differences are partly or fully mediated by sexism scores. Analyses revealed that sexism accounted for 12%-17% of dark triad scores and that sexism similarly predicted dark triad scores for men and women. Replicating earlier research, men had higher dark triad scores than women. These gender differences in dark triad scores were largely, though not completely, accounted for by sexism and mostly by hostile sexism. These findings demonstrated that sexist ideology was a substantial predictor of dark triad traits, which may provide insight into one possible cause of a host of socially undesirable behaviors, including interpersonal exploitation and manipulation, cheating, stealing, and lying. These findings, though not causal, are consistent with the idea that the dark triad is not simply a set of personality traits like other personality traits, but rather that they are at least partly a manifestation of socially-supported male power and privilege.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

At the start of the new millennium, a new trait theory emerged within the personality research literature. This new theory delves into the malevolent side of human nature and is rightfully named, the dark triad. According to Paulhus & Williams (2002), a constellation of three malevolent traits encompass what they first characterized as the “dark triad” (p. 557). These three interpersonally aversive traits are narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism. According to Paulhus and Williams, people who score high on these three traits exhibit the least desirable aspects of humanity.

Narcissism is comprised of grandiosity and a need for admiration as well as a sense of entitlement and self-admiration (Jonason, Slomski, & Partyka, 2012). Psychopathy is a group of antisocial behaviors and emotions, such as aggression, criminality, and a lack of empathy (Jonason et al., 2012). The last of the triad is Machiavellianism, which is characterized by manipulation of others, cynicism, and opportunism (Jonason et al., 2012). These three traits have existed as single entities in psychological research for the last forty years, but just 15 years ago, Paulhus and Williams (2002) linked together these three distinct, yet empirically overlapping variables, thus creating a new personality type.

The dark triad is most often used to describe a set of personality traits in males, as men consistently tend to score higher than women (Jonason, Li, Webster, & Schmitt, 2009; Jonason, Valentine, Li, & Harbeson, 2011). Research has been conducted on the reason for the greater presence of dark triad traits in males. Muris, Merckelbach, Otgaar, & Meijer (2017) conducted a meta-analysis in which they analyzed gender differences for the three traits across 50 studies that included a total of 25,930 participants. For all three of the traits, men generally scored higher on dark triad measures than women do (Muris et al., 2017).

This finding that such stable gender differences do exist among this set of traits illuminates a longer standing finding that increasingly transgressive, socially aversive behaviors are more prevalent among men than women. In a longitudinal study identifying gender differences in conduct disorder, delinquency, and violence, Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, and Silva (2001) found that young boys are more likely to have conduct problems and to display acts of violence than girls. This difference apparently extends into adulthood, where men are more often diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder and are more likely to engage in crime and deviant behavior than women.

With this finding of clear gender differences comes a finding that enforces cultural ideologies of conformity to a specific idea of masculinity. Those who possess dark triad traits have also been shown to exhibit a “fast-life” strategy, which is characterized by impulsivity, opportunism and selfishness (Jonason, Koenig, & Tost, 2010, p. 428; McDonald, Donnellan, & Navarrete, 2012). This fast-life strategy allows individuals to become successful in the workplace because they will do whatever is necessary to get ahead of, but not necessarily get along with, others (Hogan, 2007). Published research has also shown that dark triad traits predict specific relationship choices (Jonason, Luevano, & Adams, 2012). The dark triad was positively correlated with preferences for short-term relationships and negatively correlated with preferences for long-term relationships (Jonason et al., 2012). Jonason and Kavanagh (2010) found that those with these antisocial personality traits tended to be characterized as having a pragmatic style of love: Those with dark triad traits seek out romantic relationships that are easy and beneficial to them, rarely with any regard for their partners. Individuals who subscribe to the fast-life strategy are impulsive and will do what it takes to satisfy their own needs, even at the expense of others (McDonald et al., 2011).

Two theories have been used to describe the dark triad. The first of the two theories is the behavioral genetics theory, which posits that a biological component produces both psychopathy and narcissism, but not Machiavellianism (Petrides, Vernon, Schermer, & Veselka, 2011). In other words, according to this theory individuals do not learn these two traits, rather, they are inherent and likely genetic. Psychopathy and narcissism are DSM-5 personality disorders but in this theory of the dark triad, they are thought to manifest sub-clinically. This is consistent with research by Holtzman (2011), who documented that DSM-diagnosed psychopaths represent only 1% of the population, but a much larger percent of the population manifests subclinical psychopathic tendencies. This finding raises the question of how central a role genetics really plays. If they are determined by genetics, how come psychopathy and narcissism do not always manifest themselves as DSM-diagnosable disorders and why don't the two clinical personality disorders regularly co-occur (Petrides et al., 2011)?

The second theory is referred to as evolutionary theory. Evolutionary theory has been used to explain behaviors of predatory subgroups (Furnham, Richards, & Paulhus, 2013). This type of evolutionary behavior has been noted to predict both the development of dark triad personalities as well as the reinforcement of dark triad traits by others. This theory reflects the idea that individuals exhibit these negative traits because they have been continuously rewarded for doing so; displaying these traits has brought them success socially, romantically, and/or vocationally (Furnham et al., 2013). Evolution is often misunderstood as referring exclusively to biology. Right from the beginning of evolutionary thought, Herbert Spencer, a contemporary of Darwin, understood evolutionary processes to occur both socially and biologically (see for example Bergstrom, 2002, for details on social evolution). This evolutionary explanation of the dark triad reflects both social and biological elements. Evolutionary theory suggests that societal

reinforcement of these dark-triad behaviors—especially in males—may lead to their maintenance and perpetuation. Reinforcement of dark-triad behaviors advantages men over women and children because these behaviors are consistent with traditional conceptualizations of the male gender role, but inconsistent with the traditional female gender role and of the role of children. This theory implies that dark triad behaviors are learned and therefore subject to contingency-based modification or extinction.

From this evolutionary perspective, it is reasonable to explore whether there is a relationship between the dark triad and hegemonic masculinity. Both represent social norms that advantage one group over others and both confer advantage to men over women. Akin to evolutionary theory, hegemonic masculinity is a concept that has survived because of societal reinforcement of specific learned behaviors, primarily sexist behaviors. Hegemonic masculinity endorses the way in which society promotes and maintains a dominant social position of men over women (Connel & Messerschmidt, 2005).

Although dominance by means of power and control benefit men in the short-term, hegemonic masculinity and the sexism that fuels it, has significant costs, to men, to those around them, and to society in general (O’Neil, 2015). Sexism is a social condition that can be changed. One way to conceptualize the dark triad is that it is also a changeable, socially-produced condition, one that simply reflects the internalization of sexism and retains hegemonic masculinity. According to this perspective, society has evolved pathways by which men contribute to and maintain hegemonic masculinity, namely through adopting the dark triad traits, through which men find success financially, socially, and romantically in sexist society. Hegemonic masculinity promotes the subordination of women. My concern is that

scholars of the dark triad may be unwittingly justifying and validating male dominance through sexism that is recast and legitimized as a group of personality traits.

Ambivalent sexism creates and sustains male hegemony and gender inequality. There are two subcomponents of ambivalent sexism: hostile sexism and benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Hostile sexism reflects outwardly negative stereotypes about women, whereas benevolent sexism represents women in a way that may appear to be subjectively positive to individuals but is equally damaging and limiting to gender equality (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Because hostile sexism is more overt than benevolent sexism (e.g., women are inferior to men) those with higher dark triad scores are likely to endorse hostile sexism. The prediction is less obvious with benevolent sexism. In the last decade, studies have targeted the prevention and reduction of sexism in males (Becker, Zawadzki, & Shields, 2014; Good & Woodzicka, 2010; Kilmartin, Semelsberger, Dye, Boggs, & Kolar, 2015). These studies document that sexism is a set of learned behaviors. These findings suggest that the origins, or at least part of the origins of the dark triad may differ from the origins of traditional personality traits, such as the Big Five cluster of traits. This understanding may lead to the prevention or reduction of dark triad attitudes as well, thereby causing these attributes to be seen chosen behaviors rather than traits.

The current study was designed to assess the degree to which the dark triad is a manifestation of male power and privilege rather than a set of traditional personality traits. Evolutionary theory is consistent with this notion and enforces the idea that the dark triad is learned (Furnham et al., 2013). It may well be the case that male power and control behavior is being validated and misunderstood as a cluster of traits like any other cluster of traits, such as Eysenck's (1990) PEN (psychopathy, extraversion, neuroticism) cluster, which have much clearer biological underpinnings. By continuing to refer to the triad as a set of traits, scholars run

the risk of validating men's domination of women, as well as dysfunctional gender roles. This is a problem because dark triad individuals negatively impact those around them.

In the present study, I assess whether sexism will account for gender differences in dark triad scores. I hypothesize that: (1) hostile sexism will account for the majority of gender differences in dark triad scores, (2) benevolent sexism will account for gender differences in dark triad scores but not as much as hostile sexism, and (3) ambivalent sexism will account for more variance in gender differences in dark triad scores than hostile sexism. In the present study, gender will serve as the independent variable, dark triad scores will serve as the dependent variable, and hostile, benevolent, ambivalent sexism will serve as covariates. (4a) I hypothesize that ambivalent, hostile, and benevolent sexism will significantly predict dark triad scores for men. Men and women's scores will be analyzed separately. Though I am not making a formal prediction, there is no reason to believe the relationship will differ in magnitude for women, (4b) though women's mean scores on sexism and on dark triad are predicted to be lower than men's, consistent with prior research.

CHAPTER 2 METHOD

Participants

Participants were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk system. Mechanical Turk is an online market where "requesters" post job opportunities and "workers" choose which jobs they want to complete in exchange for pay. Research has indicated that MTurk is an invaluable resource to utilize when collecting data for survey research. Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling's (2011) study indicates that MTurk participants are slightly more diverse than student samples. When compensated fairly, data quality is not affected and the data obtained through this method are as reliable as those procured through more traditional research methods (Buhrmester et al., 2011). The participants in this study were rewarded small monetary compensation (\$0.40). The participants enrolled on Mechanical Turk and were then redirected to Qualtrics where the online survey instruments were located.

Present study included 295 males ($n = 164$) and females ($n = 131$) who averaged 37.17 ($SD = 12.12$, range 18-75) years of age. Participants were required to be 18 years of age or older, and their country of residence was restricted to the United States. Those who did not meet these requirements were not eligible to participate in the study. The sample was predominantly White (77.6%), heterosexual (81.0%), male (55.4%), college educated (33.6%), middle class (44.5%) and currently employed (85.3%). Ethnicities: 3.7% African American/Black, 0.7% American Indian, 6.8% Asian American, 8.1% Latinx, and 3.1% Biracial/Multiracial. Sexual Orientations: 2.0% gay/lesbian, 5.4% bisexual, 8.1% mostly heterosexual, 0.7% asexual, and 2.7% pansexual. Education: 2.0% some high school, 13.2% high school diploma, 23.7% some college, 11.5% AA degree, .7% tradesperson certificate, 4.1% some graduate school, 9.5% Master's degree, 1.7% Advanced degree (MD, DO, Ph.D., Ed.D, Psy.D, etc.). Socioeconomic Status: 18.2% lower

class, 29.1% lower middle class, 7.9% upper middle class, 0.3% upper class. Employment: 14.7% not currently employed.

To check for random responding, five validation check items were included throughout the survey (i.e. “Please select ‘strongly disagree’ for this item”). Of the people who completed the survey, a total of five participants failed the validation checks by responding incorrectly to two or more of them. These individuals were eliminated from the study.

Measures

The study included three psychological inventories (Short Dark Triad (“Appendix B”), The Dirty Dozen (“Appendix C”), and The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (“Appendix D”), and a demographic survey (“Appendix E”). Analyses of the two measures of the dark triad were conducted separately, to provide the most information in the exploratory research effort.

Dark Triad

Dark triad personality traits were measured using two scales: The Dirty Dozen (Jonason & Webster, 2010) and the Short Dark Triad (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). The Dirty Dozen and the Short Dark Triad were both used in this study because research has indicated that each has proven to efficiently and validly measure the dark triad (Maples, Lamkin, & Miller, 2014). The present study found that the Dirty Dozen and the Short Dark Triad were substantially correlated ($r=.77$) and that both measures achieved significant results.

The Short Dark Triad is a 27-item scale that serves to measure prevalence of dark triad traits. The scale is measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree). The scale is broken down into three subscales in order to measure each member of the triad: Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism. Sample items from each subscale include: “It’s not wise to tell your secrets” (Machiavellianism), “Avoid direct conflict with others because they may be useful in the future” (Machiavellianism), “Many group activities tend to be dull without

me” (Narcissism), “I insist on getting the respect I deserve” (Narcissism), “People who mess with me always regret it” (Psychopathy), and “I’ll say anything to get what I want” (Psychopathy). After recoding the reversed scored items (indicated with “R” in Appendix 1), each subscale score was calculated by averaging scores from the items and an overall score of the dark triad was calculated by averaging those subscale scores.

The Dirty Dozen is a 12-item measure of the dark triad. The scale is measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Despite the measure’s brevity, it is also broken down into three subscales to measure each trait: Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism. Sample items for each subscale include: “I tend to lack remorse” (Psychopathy), “I tend to be callous or insensitive” (Psychopathy), “I tend to want others to admire me” (Narcissism), “I tend to want others to pay attention to me” (Narcissism), “I tend to be unconcerned with the morality of my actions” (Machiavellianism), and “I tend to exploit others toward my own end” (Machiavellianism). Each subscale was formed by averaging the items within it. An overall score of the dark triad was calculated by averaging the subscale scores.

Sexism

The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996) is a 22-item questionnaire that contains a series of statements regarding men and women’s roles in society. Participants are asked to rate the degree to which they either agree or disagree with the statements. The scale is measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1= disagree strongly, 5= agree strongly ^[1]. For scoring purposes, the ambivalent sexism is broken down into two subscales including hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. Sample items from each subscale include: “Women seek to gain power by

¹ Clerical error led to the use of a 5-point scale rather than a 6-point scale. A 6-point Likert scale has been used and deemed valid and reliable by previous research so comparing the present study to a study that uses a 6-point scale may be ill-advised.

getting control over men” (Hostile), “Women are too easily offended” (Hostile), “Many women have a purity that few men possess” (Benevolent), and “A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man” (Benevolent). Scoring of both hostile and benevolent sexism required the averaging of items from each individual subscale, respectively. An overall score of sexism is obtained by averaging scores from the two subscales.

The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory has been used for vast amounts of research and has been replicated numerous times since its development (Glick & Fiske, 2014). Past research has indicated that the inventory is both empirically reliable and valid. The inventory successfully measures polarized attitudes toward women on two different dimensions which can each be activated concurrently (Glick & Fiske, 2014). Reliability analyses of the total ambivalent sexism scores as well as the subscale scores yielded significant and appropriate alpha coefficients across a series of six studies (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

Demographic Information

Participants completed a 10-item demographic measure whose results have already been reported. The questionnaire included: age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, education level, current social class, family social class, employment status, household income, and ability to speak English. Participants could also choose “other” to describe their own identity for any of the demographic questions.

Procedure

Prior to beginning the survey, all participants read and signed an informed consent document (“Appendix A”), in which the potential risks of the study were clearly laid out. Once surveys were completed, statistical analyses were conducted using a recent version of SPSS/PASW.

Participants completed the dark triad assessments and the measure of sexism, and finally they provided their demographic information. With the exception of demographic information, which was always asked last, the order in which the measures were administered was randomized for each participant in order to avoid order effects. The participants had the option to leave any question blank if they felt uncomfortable answering it.

Once the survey was completed, participants read through a debriefing form and were compensated for their participation in the study. The debriefing form (“Appendix F”) included researcher contact information if participants needed further assistance at the culmination of the study. No one contacted the researcher.

CHAPTER 3 RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

The results were normally distributed for each measure. Reports of skewness for each measure are as follows: Dirty Dozen = .169, Short Dark Triad = .021, Ambivalent Sexism = -.266, Benevolent Sexism = .016, Hostile Sexism = -.018. Correlational analysis indicated a strong, positive correlation between the Short Dark Triad ($M = 2.61$, $SD = .52$), and the Dirty Dozen ($M = 2.41$, $SD = .71$), $r = .77$, $p < .001$ (see Table 1 for the means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha of each of the measures and their inter-correlations). Preliminary analyses were also conducted using each demographic variable. No significant relationships other than gender were uncovered.

Main Analyses

To test the hypothesis that sexism (hostile, benevolent, ambivalent) accounts for differences in dark triad scores between genders, three sets of analyses were conducted. First an analysis of variance was conducted with gender (male, female) as the fixed factor and with the Short Dark Triad as the dependent variable. An ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of gender on dark triad scores. There is a significant effect of gender on dark triad score [$F(1, 295) = 25.68$, $p < .001$] and this is a medium to large-sized effect and closer to medium-sized (Cohen's $d = 0.59$).

Next, an ANOVA was conducted with gender (male, female) as the fixed factor, with the Dirty Dozen serving as the dependent variable. An ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of gender on dark triad scores. There was also a significant effect of gender on dark triad score [$F(1, 295) = 12.90$, $p < .01$]. This is a small to medium-sized effect and closer to medium-sized (Cohen's $d = 0.42$).

Hypothesis 1: Hostile sexism will account for gender differences in dark triad scores.

An analysis of covariance was conducted with gender as the fixed factor, Short Dark Triad as the dependent variable, and hostile sexism as the covariate. A one-way ANCOVA was conducted to determine a statistically significant difference between gender on dark triad scores while controlling for hostile sexism, specifically. There was a significant effect of gender on dark triad scores after controlling for hostile sexism [$F(1, 295) = 14.00, p < .01$, a drop from 25.68 (Cohen's $d = 0.44$, a small to medium-sized effect)].

Next, an analysis of covariance was conducted with gender as the fixed factor, Dirty Dozen as the dependent variable, and hostile sexism scores serving as the covariate. A one-way ANCOVA was conducted to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between gender on dark triad scores while controlling for hostile sexism, specifically. There remains a significant effect of gender on dark triad scores after controlling for hostile sexism [$F(1, 295) = 5.60, p < .02$ (Cohen's $d = 0.28$, a small to medium-sized effect, and closer to a small effect)], but the magnitude of the effect dropped from 12.90, which indicates evidence of substantial partial mediation of hostile sexism on differences between men and women's Dirty Dozen scores.

Hypothesis 2: Benevolent sexism will account for gender differences in dark triad scores but not as much as hostile sexism.

An analysis of covariance was conducted with gender as the fixed factor, Short Dark Triad as the dependent variable, and benevolent sexism as the covariate. A one-way ANCOVA was conducted to determine whether a statistically significant difference would remain between the genders on dark triad scores while controlling for benevolent sexism. There remained a significant effect of gender on dark triad scores after controlling for benevolent sexism [$F(1,$

295)= 23.48, $p < .001$] (Cohen's $d = 0.56$, a medium-sized effect), and only a small drop in the size of the effect from 25.68 to 23.48, suggesting little mediation by benevolent sexism.

Next, an analysis of covariance was conducted with gender as the fixed factor, Dirty Dozen as the dependent variable, and benevolent sexism as the covariate. A one-way ANCOVA was conducted to determine whether a statistically significant difference remained between genders on dark triad scores when controlling for benevolent sexism. There is a significant effect of gender on dark triad scores after controlling for benevolent sexism [$F(1, 295) = 12.31$, $p < .01$] (Cohen's $d = 0.41$, a small to medium-sized effect), with only a very small drop from 12.90 to 12.31, suggesting little if any mediation by benevolent sexism on gender differences in Dirty Dozen scores.

Hypothesis 3: Ambivalent sexism will account for gender differences in dark triad scores but not as much as hostile sexism.

Next, an analysis of covariance was conducted with gender as the fixed factor, Short dark triad as the dependent variable, and ambivalent sexism (the combination of hostile and benevolent sexism) as the covariate. A one-way ANCOVA was conducted to determine a statistically significant difference between gender on dark triad scores while controlling for ambivalent sexism, specifically. There is a significant effect of gender on dark triad scores after controlling for ambivalent sexism [$F(1, 295) = 15.98$, $p < .01$, (Cohen's $d = 0.47$, just short of a medium-sized effect)] and a drop from 25.68 to 15.98, suggesting that ambivalent sexism substantially mediated, but did not completely mediate the relationship between gender and dark triad scores.

Next, an analysis of covariance was conducted with gender as the fixed factor, Dirty Dozen as the dependent variable, and ambivalent sexism as the covariate. A one-way ANCOVA was conducted to determine whether a statistically significant difference between genders

remained on dark triad scores when controlling for ambivalent sexism. There remains a significant effect of gender on dark triad scores after controlling for hostile sexism [$F(1, 295) = 7.38, p < .007$, (Cohen's $d = 0.32$, a small to medium-sized effect), but a substantial drop the F value from 12.90 to 7.38, suggesting a substantial, albeit partial mediation, as was the case with Short Dark Triad scores.

Hypothesis 4: Ambivalent, hostile, and benevolent sexism will significantly predict dark triad scores for men.

Last, the fourth hypothesis has two parts. The first part is that men's scores on the two measures of the dark triad will be significantly predicted by their sexism scores. Table 2 provides partial support for this prediction. Ambivalent sexism and especially hostile sexism predict both Short Dark Triad and Dirty Dozen scores, with correlations ranging from .22-.36. Benevolent sexism failed to predict dark triad scores. Parenthetically, for women only, ambivalent, hostile, and benevolent sexism all predicted both Short Dark Triad and Dirty Dozen scores, with correlations ranging from .22-.40. So the predictive power of sexism was not limited to men in the sample.

The second part of Hypothesis 4 predicted significantly lower scores for women than men on all measures of sexism and dark triad, consistent with prior research. This prediction was clearly and consistently supported. Three independent samples t -tests were run to compare male and female sexist beliefs. Men scored higher on hostile sexism ($M = 2.72, SD = .74$) than women ($M = 2.37, SD = .75, t(1) = 4.01, p < .001$). Men scored higher on benevolent sexism ($M = 2.80, SD = .65$) than women ($M = 2.62, SD = .63, t(1) = 2.38, p < .05$). Last, men scored higher on ambivalent sexism ($M = 2.76, SD = .53$) than women ($M = 2.50, SD = .61, t(1) = 3.96, p < .001$). Two independent samples t -tests were run to compare male and female dark triad scores. Men scored higher on Short Dark Triad scores ($M = 2.74, SD = .50$) than women ($M = 2.44, SD =$

.50, $t(1) = 5.07$, $p < .01$), as well as on Dirty Dozen scores, men ($M = 2.54$, $SD = .67$) and women ($M = 2.25$, $SD = .73$, $t(1) = 3.59$, $p < .01$).

Table 3-1. Correlation Matrix With Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach's Alpha Levels for Dark Triad (Short Dark Triad, Dirty Dozen) and Sexism (Benevolent, Hostile, Ambivalent) Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
M	2.61	2.41	2.72	2.56	2.64
SD	.52	.71	.64	.76	.59
Cronbach's alpha	.87	.87	.80	.86	.86
1.Short Dark Triad	—	.77**	.11	.41**	.33**
2.Dirty Dozen		—	.05	.35**	.26**
3.Benevolent Sexism		.05	—	.38**	.80**
4.Hostile Sexism				—	.86**
5.Ambivalent Sexism					—

**p < .05

Table 3-2. Correlation Matrix for Dark Triad (Short Dark Triad, Dirty Dozen) and Sexism (Benevolent, Hostile, Ambivalent) Variables for Males

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1.Short Dark Triad	—	.75**	-.05	.36**	.22**
2.Dirty Dozen		—	-.03	.34**	.22**
3.Benevolent Sexism			—	.17**	.73**
4.Hostile Sexism				—	.86**
5.Ambivalent Sexism					—

**p < .05

Table 3-3. Correlation Matrix for Dark Triad (Short Dark Triad, Dirty Dozen) and Sexism (Benevolent, Hostile, Ambivalent) Variables for Females

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1.Short Dark Triad	—	.77**	.24**	.40**	.36**
2.Dirty Dozen		—	.07	.30**	.22**
3.Benevolent Sexism			—	.60**	.87**
4.Hostile Sexism				—	.92**
5.Ambivalent Sexism					—

**p < .05

CHAPTER 4 DISCUSSION

In support of the hypotheses, findings from this study demonstrate that regardless of which way dark triad was measured, dark triad scores differ between men and women and that difference is largely, though not completely, attributable to sexism. The hypotheses predicted that sexism would account for differences in dark triad scores between genders. Results indicated that sexist beliefs served as a partial mediator in dark triad differences between men and women. Overall, the study indicates that hostile sexism, as opposed to benevolent sexism, accounts for most of the sex difference, approximately 10 percent. It is important to note that the findings do not support the idea of a simple equivalence between sexism and dark triad. Sexism did not full account for dark triad scores or for the differences between men's and women's dark triad scores. There remains important unexplained variance in predicting dark triad scores, variance that may be situational or linked to particular experiences (such as experiences with parents) or to other individual difference variables, such as social dominance orientation, conscientiousness, or political conservatism. That unexplained variance may also be captured by person by situation interactions. Nonetheless, these results constitute an important addition to the current personality psychology literature on dark triad trait theory.

Independent samples t-tests revealed significant differences in sexism and dark triad scores between men and women. For all three measures of sexism and both measures of the dark triad, men scored significantly higher than women. This is consistent with previous research that has explored possible explanations for these gender differences (Jonason, Li, & Buss, 2010; Semanya & Honey, 2015). Semanya & Honey (2015) found that the desire for dominance--and the strategies that one may implement to be dominant--mediate sex differences in dark triad scores. Additionally, Jonason, Li and Buss (2010) replicated the finding that there are significant

gender differences in dark triad scores and they also found that these differences also indicated that men who were high on dark triad traits also scored higher for mate-poaching. The replication of gender difference findings in the present study reinforces the stability of this effect and thereby affirms the importance of this research. Moffitt et al.'s (2001) longitudinal research on gender differences in conduct disorder from childhood through adulthood supported the claim that men demonstrate antisocial personality traits to a greater extent than women, again, consistent with my findings.

Additionally, research has found that individuals who exhibit darker personality traits may also subscribe to traditional male gender norms. Furnham et al. (2013) found that those with higher dark triad scores tend to have a fast life history strategy. This strategy leads to more selfish and exploitative behaviors especially vocationally and romantically (Furnham et al., 2013; Jonason et al., 2009). The notions of “toxic leadership” (Spain, Harms, & Libreton, 2013, p. 47) and “snakes in suits” (Hare & Babiak, 2006, p. 5) reinforce the idea that those who are the most callous and manipulative make their way to the top of various hierarchies because their darker behaviors allow them to ignore social norms and to do whatever is required to be successful. Those who are high on the dark triad also tend to choose romantic relationships that are more personally beneficial to them (Jonason et al., 2012). This may look different for different dark-triad individuals, however generally the romantic preference for dark triad individuals is for short-term relationships that focus on immediate gratification (Jonason et al., 2012).

O’Neil (1981, 2015) discussed the impact of gender role conflict on both men and women. Men are socialized from a young age to engage in activities that promote competition and power. This socialization creates a “fear of femininity,” or alternatively “precarious

manhood” (Vandello & Bosson, 2013, p. 101), which reinforces traditional masculinity (O’Neil, 1981, p. 205). The fast life strategy is so appealing to men specifically because it allows them to focus their energy on behaving in ways that adhere to a traditional code of masculinity, and thereby preserve male hegemony. This may entail emotional unavailability in romantic relationships and ignoring family to become obsessed with financial and work-related success (Furnham et al., 2013; O’Neil, 1981). Traditional masculinity and the sexism that accompanies it are so closely associated with competition, wealth, and power that those high in traditional masculinity will associate femininity with the opposite: cooperation, selflessness, and team play. Belief that a feminine person differs markedly from a masculine person has been linked with sexist beliefs in males, starting in childhood (Bigler, 1999). Gender role conformity, traditional masculinity, and sexism mirror the characteristics of the dark triad. Sexism and stereotypical gender norms promote the behaviors that those high in dark triad traits exhibit. One concern about conceptualizing these behaviors as simply a constellation of personality traits, no different from any other set of traits, is that at best it ignores and at worst it validates the gender inequalities that appear to represent a substantial portion of the variance in dark triad measures. Sexism appears to drive a substantial portion of dark triad variance. If future studies replicate that finding, that fact should be made clear in the scholarship on the dark triad.

Research on the dark triad has begun to include international samples, allowing for some cautious cross-cultural comparisons. For example, in a study examining the relationship between relationship history and dark triad traits, Jonason, Li, and Czarna (2013) assessed participants from Singapore, Poland and the United States. The authors found that in each sample, dark triad traits were highly associated with negative outcomes. They also found that the dark triad-negative outcomes relationship was stronger in the Singaporean and Polish samples than the US

sample. Additionally, research on a combined American (70%) and international (30%, from Europe, Britain, and the Middle East) sample found that the dark triad partially mediated gender differences in the adoption of a “game playing” or “ludus” (p. 606) romantic relationship style, which men reported engaging in more than women (Jonason & Kavanagh, 2010). No separate analyses were reported by nation.

Taken together, these are only two studies and they oversample Western and developed nations. Nevertheless, these findings with non-US samples are consistent with findings from this study and other dark triad studies conducted on US samples. Additional research on non-US samples, and especially in Eastern and developing nations, are sorely needed to increase confidence in the conclusion that dark triad effects generalize beyond the US.

There are limitations in this study that are important to consider when interpreting the results. The first is the use of Mechanical Turk to recruit participants. Although the online site provides a varied sample--more varied than typical collegiate samples, it is important to acknowledge that the use of a nationally-representative sample would be an improvement to the current study and increase its generalizability. Secondly, because the study relied on self-report surveys, there is a concern that some participants did not answer completely candidly. Next, a clerical error led to the use of a 5-point scale rather than the standard 6-point scale for the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory. When the scale was validated and its reliability estimated, a 6-point scale was used; therefore, comparing the present study to studies that use a 6-point scale may be problematic. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that this discrepancy would account for the effects that were revealed in the analyses.

A final set of limitations involve study design. It is important to note that because these data are correlational it is impossible to know the directionality of the results. Although the results

are consistent with the notion that sexism causes an increase in dark triad scores, it is possible that the reverse is also true. Additionally, it is also possible that a third variable (e.g., conformity to male gender norms, conservative belief systems, social dominance orientation, or political conservatism) may be responsible for mediating the relationship between dark triad scores and sexism or may better account for the relationship than sexism. Future studies should include multiple plausible mediators, including sexism, in a single model, to assess the relative explanatory power of each one.

There is a lack of published empirical literature that explores the dark triad as a manifestation of traditional male gender role behavior, rather than as a set of personality traits similar to all other personality traits. The dark triad literature should include the concept that many of the behaviors exhibited by individuals who score high on the triad, are also present in male sexist behavior. The present finding that approximately 10% of the variance in hostile sexist belief is associated with the dark triad is an important and previously missing connection between the dark triad and gender role literatures.

Because this study shifts perspective from personality traits to gender role behaviors, it is important to continue to explore these concepts through different research paradigms, rather than solely through self-report. It would be interesting for future research to investigate how much of a role sexist ideologies, measured in various ways and measured differently for men and women, account for dark triad scores. Future research may also include an experiment where participants are systematically persuaded to align with varying degrees of sexist beliefs and to see whether that would change dark triad scores. A qualitative approach to exploring and understanding this association could include having participants report relevant critical incidents from their lives, or respond to vignettes or case studies with their own narratives.

There may also be merit in replicating this study with convenience samples that represent different specific populations (i.e., college students, graduate students in specific programs, individuals in retirement homes, parents). Additionally, one could assess whether different birth cohorts differ in their degree of overlap between sexism and dark triad scores, as well as whether different birth cohorts differ in their mean sexism and dark-triad scores. It might be especially interesting to compare two cohorts very different in age, such as Baby Boomers with Millennials. This kind of research may not only help to shed light on dark triad as masked sexism, but also may give some insight into the prevalence of sexism in younger and older populations, and the cross-generational stability of this association.

These data suggest that it could be very useful to continue exploring dark triad personality types as a measure of sexism. If scholars can demonstrate clearly that these malevolent traits are not innate, but instead, that they are learned as part of a sexist culture, agents of personal and social change can help change and restructure the darker sides of humanity and alter how people respond to those who exhibit behaviors consistent with the dark triad.

APPENDIX A INFORMED CONSENT

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

Purpose of the research study:

The purpose of this study is to determine how much one's beliefs are affected by specific personality variables. If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey by providing honest answers to each question.

Time required:

Approximately 10 minutes

Risks, Benefits, and Compensation:

There are no known risks or benefits involved in this study. You will receive \$0.40 through Amazon's Mechanical Turk service for use on Amazon.com if you choose to participate.

Confidentiality:

All of your responses will be anonymous, and you will never be identified as a participant. No personally identifying information will be collected. Neither your name nor IP address (a numerical identification tied to your internet service provider) will be known to the researchers, nor will it be collected with your answers. The survey asks you to provide some general demographic information about yourself. This information is only used to describe your general characteristics, not to identify you as a person. Analysis of answers will be in aggregate form and individual answers will not be published.

Only the researchers will have access to the information we collect online. There is a minimal risk that security of any online data may be breached, but since no identifying information will be collected and the online host (Qualtrics) uses several forms of encryption other protections, it is unlikely that a security breach of the online data will result in any adverse consequence for you.

Voluntary participation:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:

Melissa Gluck: Graduate Student, Department of Psychology, University of Florida,
mgluck2@ufl.edu

Martin Heesacker, PhD: Department of Psychology, University of Florida, phone (352) 273-2136.

Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:
IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

Agreement:

I am agreeing to the following statement: I have read the procedure described above, I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure, I have received a copy of this description, and I am at least 18 years of age.

Yes, I consent to be a participant in this study.

No, I do not give my consent to be a participant in this study.

APPENDIX B
SHORT DARK TRIAD SURVEY

Directions: Please rate the degree to which you agree with the following statements (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree).

It's not wise to tell your secrets.

I like to use clever manipulation to get my way.

Whatever it takes, you must get the important people on your side.

Avoid direct conflict with others because they may be useful in the future.

It's wise to keep track of information that you can use against people later.

You should wait for the right time to get back at people.

There are things you should hide from other people to preserve your reputation.

Make sure your plans benefit yourself, not others.

Most people can be manipulated.

People see me as a natural leader.

I hate being the center of attention. (R)

Many group activities tend to be dull without me.

I know that I am special because everyone keeps telling me so.

I like to get acquainted with important people.

I feel embarrassed if someone compliments me. (R)

I have been compared to famous people.

I am an average person. (R)

I insist on getting the respect I deserve.

I like to get revenge on authorities.

I avoid dangerous situations. (R)

Payback needs to be quick and nasty.

People often say I'm out of control.

It's true that I can be mean to others.

People who mess with me always regret it.

I have never gotten into trouble with the law. (R)

I enjoy having sex with people I hardly know

I'll say anything to get what I want.

APPENDIX C
THE DIRTY DOZEN

Directions: Please rate the degree to which you agree with the following statements (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree).

1. I tend to manipulate others to get my way.
2. I have used deceit or lied to get my way.
3. I have use flattery to get my way.
4. I tend to exploit others towards my own end.
5. I tend to lack remorse.
6. I tend to be unconcerned with the morality of my actions.
7. I tend to be callous or insensitive.
8. I tend to be cynical.
9. I tend to want others to admire me.
10. I tend to want others to pay attention to me.
11. I tend to seek prestige or status.
12. I tend to expect special favors from others.

APPENDIX D
THE AMBIVALENT SEXISM INVENTORY

Below is a series of statements 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: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

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

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

In a disaster, women ought not necessarily to be rescued before men.

Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.

Most women are too easily offended.

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

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

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

Women should be cherished and protected by men.

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

Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.

Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.

Men are complete without women.

Women exaggerate problems they have at work.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Feminists are making entirely reasonable demands of men.

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

APPENDIX E
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tell us a little about yourself.

This information will be used to describe the sample as a group.

Please Note: For each of the questions below, we have tried to provide a number of options. However, we recognize that these options will not capture everyone's identities or characteristics. Therefore, for some questions, we have also included an "Other" option for you to describe in your own words your identity if the categories provided do not capture it. Thank you for telling us about yourself!

What is your age? _____

How do you identify your gender?

Male

Female

Transgender/transsexual

Other (please specify): _____

What is your race/ethnicity? Please select the one best descriptor, or use the "Biracial/Multiracial" option to specify further. Also, if the categories provided do not fully capture your identity, please feel free to use the "Other" category to specify further.

African/African American/Black

American Indian/Native American

Arab American/ Middle Eastern

Asian/Asian American

Caucasian/European American/White

Hispanic/Latinx American

Pacific Islander/Pacific Islander American

Biracial/Multiracial (please specify): _____

Other (please specify): _____

How do you identify your sexual orientation? Please select one best descriptor. Also, if the categories provided do not fully capture your identity, please feel free to use the "Other" category to specify further.

Exclusively lesbian or gay

Mostly lesbian or gay

Bisexual

Mostly heterosexual

Exclusively heterosexual

Asexual

Pansexual

Other (please describe): _____

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Some high school

High school diploma

Some college

AA degree

Bachelor's degree

Tradesperson certificate

Some graduate school

Master's degree

Advanced degree (MD, DO, PhD, PsyD, EdD., etc)

What is your current employment status? Please select as many as apply.

Part-time

Full-time

Self-employed part-time

Self-employed full-time

Not currently employed

How would you identify your current social class? Please select one best descriptor.

Lower class

Lower middle class

Middle class

Upper middle class

Upper class

How would you identify your family's social class when you were growing up? Please select one best descriptor.

Lower class

Lower middle class

Middle class

Upper middle class

Upper class

What is your household income (that is, the income of you and those on whom you rely financially)? Please indicate the best descriptor.

\$0- \$10,000/yr

\$10,001-\$20,000/yr

\$20,001-\$30,000/yr

\$30,001-\$40,000/yr

\$40,001-\$50,000/yr

\$50,001-\$60,000/yr

\$60,001-\$70,000/yr

\$70,001-\$80,000/yr

\$80,001-\$90,000/yr

\$90,001-\$100,000/yr

\$100,001-\$110,000/yr

\$110,001-\$120,000/yr

\$120,001-\$130,000/yr

\$130,001-\$140,000/yr

\$140,001-\$150,000/yr

\$150,001-\$160,000/yr

\$160,001-\$170,000/yr

\$170,001-\$180,000/yr

\$180,001-\$190,000/yr

\$190,001-\$200,000/yr

\$200,000+/yr

APPENDIX F
DEBRIEFING FORM

Thank you for participating in this study!

This study aims to explore the relationship between sexism and dark triad personality traits (narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism). The current study proposes that those who exhibit high scores of sexism will have increased scores on the dark triad personality measure. This relationship may suggest that these personality features are a manifestation of power and privilege rather than a set of innate personality traits.

If you have any questions, comments, concerns or you would like a copy of the article and results, email the researcher or the faculty sponsor.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:

Melissa Gluck: Graduate Student, Department of Psychology, University of Florida,
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Martin Heesacker, Ph.D.: Department of Psychology, University of Florida, phone (352) 273-2136.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Melissa is a third-year doctoral student in the Counseling Psychology Area working with Dr. Martin Heesacker. She graduated from Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, PA in 2015 with a B.A. in psychology. Her research interests are focused on precarious manhood and the dark triad of personality in relation to men and masculinities studies.