**Online Appendices – Supporting Information**

*Appendix A: Participant Details (Study 1)*

MTurk is appropriate for this study as it offers more diversity than student samples. Others caution using MTurk when examining tasks in which workers are incentivized to cheat or share information (Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2013), or highly deceptive (Krupnikov & Levine, 2014), and this study is characterized by neither.[[1]](#footnote-2) In June 2017, workers registered to MTurk can select to participate in this experiment from a list of HIT’s. Participants were instructed not to complete the HIT multiple times (and Qualtrics settings also prevented “ballot-stuffing”), and upon completion of the study would be given a code to submit to receive payment. Limits were placed on the HIT itself so that only workers that met these requirements could see the HIT: 18 years or older, citizen of the United States, at least a 95% approval rating, and completion of at least 1000 HITS. Peer and co-authors (2013) find that such reputational criterions are sufficient for ensuring quality data from MTurk workers.[[2]](#footnote-3)

We approved payment for all workers. Informed consent was given by agreeing to participate in the task after selecting the HIT from the list of available tasks on MTurk. Workers who opted to participate were offered $1.30 to complete a 15-minute survey in which their responses would be anonymous. Actual duration of the survey was 17 minutes on average, with a median time of 12 minutes. Participants were informed that the principal investigators were interested in their attitudes about news.

 After agreeing, participants were redirected to take the survey on Qualtrics. On the first screen participants saw the following audit question, “We check responses carefully in order to make sure that people have read the instructions for the task and responded carefully. We will only accept participants who clearly demonstrate that they have read and understood the survey. Again, there will be some very simple questions in what follows that test whether you are reading the instructions. If you get these wrong, we may not be able to use your data. Do you understand?” Participants can select either, “Yes, I understand” or “No, I do not understand.” Clifford and Jerit (2016), comparing the effectiveness of a variety of attention checks on MTurk workers, find an improvement in data quality when this audit question is included.[[3]](#footnote-4) All respondents selected they understood with the exception of 2 who did not respond.

*Ethical Compliance*

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Documentation of IRB approval will be provided upon request. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

*Appendix B: Image Pre-test (Study 1)*

Nine images were tested; four were procured via a Google image search of stock photos and the remaining images were drawn from previous studies. Participants are registered MTurk workers (*n*=92). After obtaining informed consent, on the introductory page, participants were directed: “On the following pages, you'll see several pictures - you will be asked questions about the person in each of them. When answering questions, please rely on your gut instinct, and make your judgment based only on the picture. There is no wrong answer.” On the next page featuring the image, participants were then instructed: “Using this picture as a guide, to what extent do you think each trait describes this person?” Response options were formatted as a slider arraying from 1 (not at all) to 9 (extremely). Traits drawn from recommendations for candidate images provided by Kaid (2004), while prompt language drawn from Todorov et al. (2013). Mean differences yielded by two-tailed t-tests; \*=p<.05.

|  |
| --- |
| **Study 1** |
| **Trait** | **Mean Difference** |
| qualified  | -0.09 |
| sophisticated  | -0.84\* |
| honest  | 0.29 |
| believable  | 0.34 |
| successful  | -0.23 |
| unattractive  | 0.84\* |
| friendly  | 0.39 |
| sincere  | 0.22 |
| excitable  | -0.23 |
| aggressive  | -0.20 |
| weak  | -0.07 |
| active | -0.3 |

|  |
| --- |
| **Study 2** |
| **Trait** | **Mean Difference** |
| qualified  | -0.16 |
| sophisticated  | 0 |
| honest  | -0.38 |
| believable  | -0.28 |
| successful  | 0.48\* |
| unattractive  | 0.13 |
| friendly  | -0.18 |
| sincere  | -0.44 |
| excitable  | -0.03 |
| aggressive  | 0.93\* |
| weak  | 0.01 |
| active | 0.38 |

*Appendix C: Treatments (Study 1)*

Participants were directed: ‘We would like you to read a recent news story from The Washington Post. Please take your time and pay attention.’

**Dysfunction and Deadlock at the Federal Election Commission – Male Author, Neutral Issue, No Comment**



By Jay Russel June 21

*The Washington Post*

Nearly three years ago, during my tenure on the Federal Election Commission, I [wrote](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/03/opinion/how-not-to-enforce-campaign-laws.html) in this newspaper that my own agency was failing to enforce campaign finance laws. My efforts to cooperate with the other commissioners to fulfill the agency’s mission had been thwarted, revealing an unfortunate truth: The F.E.C. was betraying the American public and jeopardizing our democracy.

It pains me to report that the agency remains dysfunctional, more so than ever, as I prepare to depart at the end of this month as my term nears its end. This is deeply worrisome, because the F.E.C.’s mission is to ensure fairness in elections. One of its core responsibilities is to make sure that all money in political campaigns is disclosed. As Justice Louis Brandeis said, sunlight is “the best of disinfectants.” This quotation graces the street-facing window of the F.E.C.

Unfortunately, a controlling bloc of commissioners who are ideologically opposed to the F.E.C.’s purpose regularly ignores violations or drastically reduces penalties. The resulting paralysis has allowed over [$800 million](https://www.opensecrets.org/outsidespending/disclosure.php) in “dark money” to infect our elections since Citizens United, the 2010 Supreme Court decision that allowed corporations and unions to spend unlimited sums to elect or defeat candidates.

These commissioners have been enabled by the commission’s very structure. By law, no more than three of its six members can be from the same party. Four must agree to begin an investigation.

This breakdown has been purposeful. Last year, for instance, those three commissioners stopped the agency from even investigating allegations of pervasive workplace political [coercion](http://eqs.fec.gov/eqsdocsMUR/16044394613.pdf). These same commissioners also [blocked](http://eqs.fec.gov/eqsdocsMUR/16044391123.pdf) enforcement actions against donors who admitted setting up sham limited liability corporations for the sole purpose of pumping anonymous campaign money into elections.

So what we are left with is an agency mandated to ensure transparency and disclosure that is actually working to keep the public in the dark.

When citizens feel that their voice doesn’t matter, that their vote cannot make a difference, and that they are powerless, our democracy is in danger. We should encourage efforts at the state and local level to enact campaign finance and other reforms that enable greater participation in the political life of the community.

**Dysfunction and Deadlock at the Federal Election Commission - Female Author, Neutral Issue, No Comment**



By Jennifer Simone June 21

*The Washington Post*

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Comments

5/21/2017 2:02 PM CDT

More verbal flatulence from a known prevaricator. Mendacity on a galactic scale. It’s hard to fathom why or how anyone can be sucked into this cesspool of ignorance and self-aggrandizing fantasy.

**Dysfunction and Deadlock at the Federal Election Commission - Female Author, Neutral Issue, Comment**



By Jennifer Simone June 21

*The Washington Post*

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*Appendix D: Randomization Check (Study 1)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Man, Comment** |
| Age | 0.01 (0.01), p=0.26 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | -0.05 (0.10), p=0.600.027 (0.17), p=0.870.04 (0.26), p=0.88 |
|  | **Woman, No Comment** |
| Age | 0.00005 (0.01), p=0.99 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | 0.09 (0.11), p=0.41-0.07 (0.17), p=0.680.03 (0.26), p=0.91 |
|  | **Woman, Comment** |
| Age | -0.009 (0.01), p=0.42 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | 0.07 (0.11), p=0.510.03 (0.17), p=0.890.09 (0.27), p=0.74 |
| N | 470 |

Table features maximum likelihood estimates. Omitted category for experimental condition is: “Man, No Comment.” Standard errors are in parentheses. Tests are two-tailed. \*p<.05.

*Appendix E: Treatments (Study 2)*

Participants were directed: ‘We would like you to read a recent news story from The Washington Post. Please take your time and pay attention.’

**The Iran missile mistake - Woman Author, Masculine Issue, No Comment**



By Jennifer Simone June 21

*The Washington Post*

Along with concessions on inspections, revelation of possible military dimensions of Iran’s nuclear program and allowing Iran to keep its nuclear infrastructure including Fordow, anti-proliferation experts are now properly focusing on one of the most critical failures of the P5+1 negotiators: their inability to include Iran’s missile development in the talks.

In February 2014 congressional testimony, U.S. chief negotiator Sherman said that U.S. concerns relate not to “ballistic missiles, per se. It is about when a missile is combined with a nuclear warhead.”

The U.S. position seems to have prevailed, since the U.S. version of the April 2 framework agreement addresses ballistic missiles only indirectly, noting that a future U.N. Security Council resolution would clarify their status. The Iranian version of the agreement, as well as a joint statement between Tehran and the European Union released concurrently, fails to mention ballistic missiles at all.

This occurred despite the presence of five U.N. Security Council sanctions resolutions between 2006 and 2010. Even worse, as the Associated Press reported last week, the administration may backtrack on this approach by offering Tehran relief on sanctions related to ballistic missiles. This would effectively lead to the collapse of the sanctions architecture, emboldening Iran to continue its ballistic missile development and hence cheat on its nuclear commitments under a deal.

While it is not unprecedented to separate bomb-making from the delivery system in negotiations, it would be a huge mistake for four reasons. First, an ICBM is the clearest sign of a power’s intentions as to its nuclear program. Second, excluding missiles complicates verification, which is always highly problematic. Third, because a missile program often takes longer than a bomb-making program, we are giving up another measure for determining Iran’s breakout potential. And fourth, letting Iran keep its ICBM program completely undercuts international sanctions and deterrence with other powers.

Iran’s insistence on keeping its ICBM program belies its claim that its program is peaceful, and letting Iran keep it belies our country’s stated intention to stop and dismantle the Iranian nuclear weapons threat. The last time we tried to separate the two issues — letting North Korea keep its missile program while striking a deal (which it predictably violated) on enrichment — we wound up with a rogue regime that had both. Does any serious person doubt we are heading that way again? We should fully expect similar results.

**Community college is the solution - Male Author, Feminine Issue, Without Comment**



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I am writing a series of columns on community colleges: What do they do right, what do they do wrong, how can they be strengthened to realize all the hopes we have placed in them? Community colleges serve a huge group of people, with about 7.4 million students — 46 percent of all U.S. undergraduates — attending 1,132 community colleges nationwide.

My first conclusion, after reviewing data compiled by several researchers, is that community colleges at the moment are pretty much a mess. They get far too few of their students on the road to good jobs or four-year college degrees. Many of their classes are poorly taught. Many of their programs are poorly organized. Even their best efforts are poorly funded.

A plan has been proposed recently to eliminate tuition for community colleges so more students could have a chance at higher education. This would, in essence, add a 13th and 14th grade to the free public education system. But the educators I have interviewed think that will do little good. The problem isn’t tuition. It’s guidance and teaching. Students are turned off not by the cost of community college but by the frustrating entrance standards and classes that do not take them in the directions they want to go. They are given little assistance in navigating the confusing requirements.

Some high schools are trying to increase readiness for both two-year and four-year colleges by getting more students into college-level courses like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and the Cambridge courses. But the Post’s annual America’s Most Challenging High Schools list shows that just 11 percent of high schools have reached a high level of involvement in such courses and tests.

American community colleges have many talented faculty and staff. But taken together, from a national perspective, their record is dismal. More than 80 percent of their students say that when they enter they intend to earn a bachelor’s degree or higher. Six years after their enrollment, according to the research, just 15 percent have done so.

There has never before been as much attention paid to these institutions, born in the mid-19th century and now needing help in the 21st century. They changed many lives for the better, but their future is uncertain.

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**Community college is the solution- Woman Author, Feminine Issue, No Comment**



By Jennifer Simone June 21

*The Washington Post*

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My first conclusion, after reviewing data compiled by several researchers, is that community colleges at the moment are pretty much a mess. They get far too few of their students on the road to good jobs or four-year college degrees. Many of their classes are poorly taught. Many of their programs are poorly organized. Even their best efforts are poorly funded.

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Comments

6/21/2015 2:02 PM CDT

Jennifer Simone, of course, sounds more like a whiny housewife and not a serious person. What business does she have discussing such serious issues? She can't even make a sandwich if she was given all the ingredients. Don't try analyzing things when you have no clue what the real facts are. I can make a sandwich finger-licking good.

**Community college is the solution- Male Author, Feminine Issue, Comment**



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*The Washington Post*

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By Jay Russel June 21

*The Washington Post*

Along with concessions on inspections, revelation of possible military dimensions of Iran’s nuclear program and allowing Iran to keep its nuclear infrastructure including Fordow, anti-proliferation experts are now properly focusing on one of the most critical failures of the P5+1 negotiators: their inability to include Iran’s missile development in the talks.

In February 2014 congressional testimony, U.S. chief negotiator Sherman said that U.S. concerns relate not to “ballistic missiles, per se. It is about when a missile is combined with a nuclear warhead.”

The U.S. position seems to have prevailed, since the U.S. version of the April 2 framework agreement addresses ballistic missiles only indirectly, noting that a future U.N. Security Council resolution would clarify their status. The Iranian version of the agreement, as well as a joint statement between Tehran and the European Union released concurrently, fails to mention ballistic missiles at all.

This occurred despite the presence of five U.N. Security Council sanctions resolutions between 2006 and 2010. Even worse, as the Associated Press reported last week, the administration may backtrack on this approach by offering Tehran relief on sanctions related to ballistic missiles. This would effectively lead to the collapse of the sanctions architecture, emboldening Iran to continue its ballistic missile development and hence cheat on its nuclear commitments under a deal.

While it is not unprecedented to separate bomb-making from the delivery system in negotiations, it would be a huge mistake for four reasons. First, an ICBM is the clearest sign of a power’s intentions as to its nuclear program. Second, excluding missiles complicates verification, which is always highly problematic. Third, because a missile program often takes longer than a bomb-making program, we are giving up another measure for determining Iran’s breakout potential. And fourth, letting Iran keep its ICBM program completely undercuts international sanctions and deterrence with other powers.

Iran’s insistence on keeping its ICBM program belies its claim that its program is peaceful, and letting Iran keep it belies our country’s stated intention to stop and dismantle the Iranian nuclear weapons threat. The last time we tried to separate the two issues — letting North Korea keep its missile program while striking a deal (which it predictably violated) on enrichment — we wound up with a rogue regime that had both. Does any serious person doubt we are heading that way again? We should fully expect similar results.

Comments

6/21/2015 2:02 PM CDT

Jay Russel, of course, sounds more like a housewife and not a serious person. What business does he have discussing such serious issues? He can't even make a sandwich if he was given all the ingredients. Don't try analyzing things when you have no clue what the real facts are. I can make a sandwich finger-licking good.

*Appendix F: Randomization Check (Study 2)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Man, Masculine Issue, Comment** |
| Age | -0.02 (0.02), p=0.21 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | 0.29 (0.16), p=0.070.22 (0.24), p=0.360.26 (0.37), p=0.48 |
|  | **Man, Feminine Issue, No Comment** |
| Age | -0.005 (0.01), p=0.76 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | -0.05 (0.14), p=0.740.29 (0.24), p=0.230.56 (0.35), p=0.11 |
|  | **Man, Feminine Issue, Comment** |
| Age | -0.008 (0.02), p=0.59 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | 0.01 (0.14), p=0.92-0.007 (0.24), p=0.980.25 (0.36), p=0.48 |

 **Woman, Feminine Issue, No Comment**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Age | -0.02 (0.02), p=0.31 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | 0.10 (0.15), p=0.500.13 (0.25), p=0.590.14 (0.37), p=0.71 |
|  | **Woman, Feminine Issue, Comment** |
| Age | -0.01 (0.02), p=0.42 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | 0.02 (0.15), p=0.890.39 (0.26), p=0.13-0.36 (0.41), p=0.38 |
|  | **Woman, Masculine Issue, No Comment** |
| Age | -0.01 (0.02), p=0.46 |
| EthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | 0.14 (0.15), p=0.330.21 (0.24), p=0.390.57 (0.35), p=0.11 |
|  | **Woman, Masculine Issue, Comment** |
| AgeEthnicityPartisan identificationGender  | -0.02 (0.02), p=0.140.11 (0.15), p=0.450.29 (0.25), p=0.240.41 (0.37), p=0.26 |
|  |  |
| N | 550 |

Table features maximum likelihood estimates. Omitted category for experimental condition is: “Man, Masculine Issue, No Comment.” Standard errors are in parentheses. Tests are two-tailed. \*p<.05.

*Appendix G: Cell Means (Study 1 and 2)*

**Table A: Cell Means (Study 1)**

|  |
| --- |
| *Author Credibility* |
| Man, No comment | 4.87, *SD*=1.05 |
| Man, CommentWoman, No commentWoman, Comment | 4.49, *SD*=1.124.84, *SD=*1.164.45, *SD=* 1.12 |
| *Outlet Credibility* |
| Man, No comment | 4.59, *SD=*1.28 |
| Man, CommentWoman, No commentWoman, Comment*Author Follow Up* | 4.44, *SD*=1.254.54, *SD=*1.404.45, *SD=* 1.23 |
| Man, No comment | 5.01, *SD*=1.32 |
| Man, CommentWoman, No commentWoman, Comment | 4.51, *SD*=1.464.94, *SD=*1.384.48, *SD=* 1.39 |
| *Outlet Follow Up* |  |
| Man, No comment | 5.02, *SD=*1.48 |
| Man, CommentWoman, No commentWoman, Comment | 4.57, *SD*=1.544.98, *SD=*1.584.55, *SD=* 1.34 |

**Table B: Cell Means (Study 2)**

|  |
| --- |
| *Author Credibility* |
| Masculine Issue, Man, No Comment | 4.38, *SD*=0.94 |
| Masculine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Man, No CommentFeminine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, No CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, No CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, Comment | 3.87, *SD*=0.104.55, *SD=*1.104.04, *SD=* 0.984.42, *SD=*1.263.98, *SD=*1.124.13, *SD=*1.094.03, *SD=*1.13 |
| *Outlet Credibility* |
| Masculine Issue, Man, No Comment | 4.32, *SD=*1.07 |
| Masculine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Man, No CommentFeminine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, No CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, No CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, Comment*Author Follow-up* | 3.93, *SD*=0.944.49, *SD=*1.044.12, *SD=*0.984.64, *SD=*1.114.05, *SD=*1.194.18, *SD=*1.014.06, *SD=*1.06 |
| Masculine Issue, Man, No Comment | 4.13, *SD*=1.45 |
| Masculine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Man, No CommentFeminine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, No CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, No CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, Comment | 3.70, *SD*=1.194.19, *SD=*1.323.45, *SD=* 1.483.91, *SD=*1.653.37, *SD=*1.434.09, *SD=*1.453.51, *SD=*1.37 |
| *Outlet Follow-up* |  |
| Masculine Issue, Man, No Comment | 4.31, *SD=*1.39 |
| Masculine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Man, No CommentFeminine Issue, Man, CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, No CommentFeminine Issue, Woman, CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, No CommentMasculine Issue, Woman, Comment | 4.00, *SD*=1.164.63, *SD=*1.173.89, *SD=* 1.504.35, *SD=*1.363.59, *SD=*1.394.41, *SD=*1.313.82, *SD=*1.41 |

*Appendix H: Gendered Insults Taxonomy and Study 3 Details and Results*

In Study 1 we randomly assigned participants to read an article featuring an actual abusive comment (taken from *The* *Washington Post’s* comment section) and found author gender did not condition the effects of this comment on attitudes towards the author and outlet. We posited that the comment may need to be more overt and gendered for author gender to moderate its effect and again using an actual comment from *The Washington Post* that meets these criteria we fielded the study a second time. Once more the effects of author gender were null. We again posited that the gendered insult may need to be gender specific to condition the effects of author gender on outcomes of interest. Though we would ideally use an actual comment for an experimental manipulation to maintain external generalizability, we quickly realized myriad issues in identifying such a real-world comment and instead chose to privilege internal validity over external validity concerns in this test. As a result, we looked to the literature on gender insults and slurs and developed a taxonomy of terms to help guide selection of insult for our experimental manipulation. After accumulating a list of 22 possible gendered insults from popular and scholarly sources, we went through several steps to classify terms with the eventual aim of selecting two for a third experiment. We detail these steps in the paragraph that follows and visually classify terms in Table C.

We first eliminated all terms that were not nouns as nouns are seen as more intense insults than their adjectival forms (Horn 2016).[[4]](#footnote-5) We did this to ensure the treatment is intense and explicitly insulting. We then classified the remaining insults by whether they 1) disproportionately target one gender and, 2) encode gender in their semantic properties. By matching those terms that disproportionately targeted the gender for which their semantic properties were also encoded, we were able to narrow our examination to insults that are used for men or women in practice *and* that have good face validity as gender-specific abuse. Of the remaining insults we eliminated all those not explicitly related to gendered expectations, resulting in choice set C (feminazi, cuck, bastard, bitch, breeder, fuckboy), delineated by the border in Table C. We further narrowed choice set C down by removing all insults that refer to promiscuity, given the valent differences for women perceived as sexual versus men. This resulted in choice set D (feminazi, cuck, bastard, bitch), delineated by highlighting in Table C. We put the remining insults to the test by asking several questions: 1) is it equally as insulting as other insults in set D? 2) does it have good face validity as specific to men or women? and, 3) is it broadly known and/or used by the public? Using these questions, we eliminated feminazi and cuck, which are less know to public and used as an insult less often. This leaves us with the final gender-based insult for men, bastard, and the final gender-based insult for women, bitch. This selection comports with literature on gender abuse that finds bastard to be the male equivalent of bitch, gender-specific referents encoded in each, and each disproportionately used to refer to men and women (Coyne et al. 1978; Scruton 2017).[[5]](#footnote-6)

|  |
| --- |
| **Table C: Gendered Insult Taxonomy**  |
| **Insult**  | **Noun** (0=no, 1=yes) | **Encode gender as part of semantic content** (w=women, m=men, 0=no) | **Disproportionately used for one gender** (w=women, m=men, 0=no) | **Related to social expectations for that gender** (0=no, 1=yes) |
| feminazi | 1 | w | w | 1 |
| cuck | 1 | m | m | 1 |
| bastard | 1 | m | m | 1 |
| bitch | 1 | w | w | 1 |
| breeder | 1 | w | w | 1 |
| fuckboy | 1 | m | m | 1 |
| whine  | 0  | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| nag | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| frigid | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| impotent | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| bossy  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| whore | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| dick | 1 | m | m | 0 |
| slut | 1 | 0 | w | 1 |
| douche | 1 | 0 | m | 0 |
| asshole | 1 | 0 | m | 0 |
| cunt | 1 | w | m | 0 |
| twat | 1 | w | m | 0 |
| pussy | 1 | w | m | 0 |
| motherfucker | 1 | m | 0 | 0 |
| prick | 1 | m | m | 0 |
| cocksucker | 1 | m | m | 0 |

*Treatments*

**What every leader in government should be doing right now – Woman Author, Neutral Issue, Woman Abusive Comment**



By Jennifer Simone July 13

*The Washington Post*

With the latest federal employee survey out in the field, many government leaders may be tempted to wait for the results before launching into their next round of employee engagement activities. That would be a big mistake.

Agency leaders need to focus on employee engagement 365 days a year – not just when the survey results become public – and they should seek to communicate with the workforce as frequently and transparently as possible.

These are some of the lessons from a recent Best Places to Work in the Federal Government analysis of federal agencies. Let’s first take a closer look at the need for leaders to recognize the connection between employee engagement and agency performance.

Members of the federal government noted that some leaders see engaging employees and supporting their mission as two separate matters. The most successful leaders in high-performing agencies see the two issues as directly related. Employees fully engaged in achieving their agencies’ mission are usually more effective.

The advice for federal leaders applies throughout the federal government. Make employee engagement a full-time responsibility for all leaders. More specifically, talk directly with employees to solicit their views about your agencies’ strengths and weaknesses, as well as advice regarding what you might do differently to improve employee satisfaction, commitment and, ultimately, performance.

Some agencies convene regular focus groups consisting of a random sample of employees, while others organize more permanent advisory committees throughout the year to collect feedback. Either way, be sure to follow through by implementing some of the employee suggestions, engaging employees in the process and making adjustments as needed over time.

One of the best ways a leader can improve employee satisfaction and commitment is through personal communication. Schedule time in advance to talk with your employees. Whether scheduling check-ins with direct reports, or personal site visits, the effort should yield dividends if you genuinely engage in open dialogue.

The bottom line for leaders is: Don’t wait. Get out there now. Start talking with your employees and take action, however small at first, to follow through on their recommendations. If you start right away, your employees might even take note of progress.

Comments

7/13/2018 2:02 PM CDT

This bitch, Jennifer Simone, cannot be serious. What does she know? Don't try writing about things when you have no clue. Dumb BITCH.

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*Study 3 Details*

We ask, does there need to be a match on the insult and author gender for there to be a moderating effect of author gender on perceptions of author and outlet credibility? We note only where details differ from Study 1 and Study 2.

Participants

Participants were again recruited from Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to complete our 6-minute survey at the rate of $1.00. A total of 507 participants of 590 recruited completed the task. The sample included 61% men, with 28% identifying as Republican, 25% as Independent, and 44% as Democratic. The average age was 35 years old (SD=10.61).

Experimental Methods and Stimulus

As in Study 1, participants were again randomly assigned to a news article designed to look like a *Washington Post* column (see treatments above), written by fictional contributors Jennifer Simone or Jay Russel. Participants either read an article with an abusive comment directed at men, with an abusive comment directed at women, or no abusive comment. The comment varies by author name and woman- or man-specific insult: ‘This bastard (bitch), Jay Russel (Jennifer Simone), cannot be serious. What does he (she) know? Don't try writing about things when you have no clue. Dumb BASTARD (BITCH).’

Manipulation checks indicated that most participants correctly recalled the article topic (89%) and author name (88%). To ensure randomization of key covariates among experimental conditions, we estimated multinomial logistic regression analyses and the results suggest the randomization procedure was successful.

Experimental Measures

Like Study 1 and 2, we constructed the four items of interest. Both credibility indices were reliable: author credibility (*M*=4.89; *SD*=.96) had a Cronbach’s alpha of .7,and outlet credibility (*M*=7.36; *SD*=1.07) had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.77. The mean for intention to seek news from the reporter in the future was 4.69 (*SD*=1.50), and from the outlet was 4.87 (*SD*=1.48). Independent variables were binary indicators representing exposure to one of two factors: woman author, and gender-specific abusive comment (none, insult women, insult men).

*Study 3 Results*

Again, MANOVA results indicated a significant main effect for treatment, *F(*5, 486) = 20.0, *p*<.05.Univariate tests investigated the effects of an abusive comment featuring a gender-specific insult. Comment type refers to 0=no comment, 1=female comment, and 2=male comment. As with Study 1 and 2, the data did not support a moderated relationship between author gender and abusive comment, even when gender-specific.

**Table 2. ANOVA Results for Treatment Effects on Credibility and Follow-up**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Author Credibility** | **Outlet Credibility** | **Author Follow-up** | **Outlet Follow-up** |
| Comment TypeWoman ReporterComment Typex Woman Reporter | *F*(2, 495) = 9.88\**F*(1, 495) = 2.27*F*(2, 495) = 1.32 | *F*(2, 496) = 6.34+*F*(1, 496) = 2.28*F*(2, 496) = 3.2 | *F*(2, 498) =7.53*F*(1, 498) =1.61*F*(3, 498) =8.37 | *F*(2, 499) =16.738\* *F*(1, 499) =0.95*F*(2, 499) =2.20 |
| R2 | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.06 |

*\* p < 05,* + *p=0.06 .*

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5. Scruton, E. (2017). Gendered Insults in the Semantics-Pragmatics Interface.; Coyne, J. C., Sherman, R. C., & O'Brien, K. (1978). Expletives and woman's place. Sex Roles, 4(6), 827-835. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)