GENDER ROLE CONFLICT AND SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

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requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology

By

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ABSTRACT

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Gender role conflict (GRC) is thought to occur when men's adherence to strict male gender roles create conflicts with incompatible situational demands (O'Neil, 2015). GRC has been correlated with various negative outcomes (e.g., anxiety, depression, hostility towards women and aggression; Sharpe, & Heppner, 1991; Kaplan, 1992). Though there is an abundance of correlational research, GRC research has yet to address the critiques regarding gender role adherence within different situational contexts (Addis, Mansfiel, & Syzdek, 2010). Research regarding contextual influences has begun to focus on centerfold syndrome, which examine patterns of masculinity reinforcement after men are exposed to sexualized images of females (Wright, 2011). By creating an environment in which centerfold syndrome is activated, the present study examined contextuality and the impact it has on GRC. Male participants were assigned to a control or experimental condition and asked to fill out a measure for GRC and centerfold syndrome. In order to create an environment in which masculinity is reinforced participants in the experimental condition were shown 15 sexualized images of females. The analysis showed that men in the experimental condition did not have significantly higher scores across the entire gender role conflict measure or in its individual sub-scales when compared to the control conditions. Explanations for the null-findings as well as future directions will be further discussed.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In contemporary American society, changing expectations and non-traditional messages about desired masculine behavior is fostering an environment that is contribution to a conflict within men. These changing gender norms and expectations for men in modern America have been widely acknowledged throughout gender literature (e.g., Aarseth,2009; Levant,2011; Marsiglio, Amato, Day & Lamb, 2000; O'Neil, 2015; Pleck 1987). One of the most prominent and widely accepted ways of understanding these changes in masculinity is through the lens of gender role conflict theory (Whorely & Addiss, 2006). Gender role conflict (GRC) is thought to occur when men's adherence to strict male gender roles create conflicts with incompatible situational demands. For example, in many instances through adolescence and early adulthood, men are praised for their stoicism and detachment from emotional connections (O'Neil, 2015). Encouraging men to restrict their emotional expression may lead to a static view of the male identity and may encourage men to center male gender norms around their relation to masculinity (O'Neil, 2015). In addition, studies have also found strong positive relationships with GRC and associations of feminine attributes and values as inferior, inappropriate and immature (O'Neil, 2015). Studies have also shown a positive relationship between GRC and personal restriction and devaluation or violation of others or oneself (O'Neil, Good, & Holmes 1995; O'Neil, 2008).

Studies have shown that GRC tends to relate to a variety of negative consequences of both an intrapersonal and interpersonal nature. For example, one study showed that GRC was related to both higher levels of anxiety and a lower capacity for intimacy (Sharpe & Heppner, 1991). Another study showed a positive relationship between GRC and hostile sexism as well as self-reported sexual and dating violence (O'Neil, 2015). GRC is associated with negative attitudes toward help-seeking behaviors (Good & Wood, 1995) and is negatively correlated with psychological well- being (Davis & Walsh, 1988) and self-esteem (Cournoyer & Mahalik, 1995). GRC is also related to intolerance towards homosexuals (Rounds, 1994), greater acceptance of rape myths (Kassing, Beesley & Frey, 2005), and greater instances of aggressive behaviors and hostility towards women (Kaplan, 1992).

Despite the wealth of correlational research on GRC, we still do not have a clear understanding of the role that environmental context may play in men's experience of GRC. In 2008, Stephen Western published a critique regarding a need for research that explored GRC in a situational context including a need to further understand how contextual factors may affect an individual's level of GRC and gender identity development. Furthermore, GRC has been viewed as trait based construct that has limited itself in regard to examining context, situational and environmental cues that may affect men's behavior in relations to GRC. To date, only one study has examined GRC within a situational context. When Jones and Heesacker (2011) used sexist humor to prime masculinity, they found a situational effect for only one of the five GRC subscales (i.e., restrictive emotionality). As such, it remains unclear whether Jones and Heesacker's limited results reflect the relative stability of GRC levels or – instead – reflect a weak prime.

With this in mind, the goal of the present study is to gain a better understanding of the relationship between GRC and situational factors. In order to test whether or not men's GRC levels vary based on situational context, it may beneficial to create an environment where masculinity is reinforced. Based on previous research (e.g. Brooks, 1955;1997; Wright 2011; Wright & Roberts, 2015) we expect that exposing men to sexualized images of women will create a situational context where masculinity is reliably reinforced. We hypothesize that men in the masculinity prime condition will report elevated levels of GRC compared to controls.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender differences have been examined in psychology dating back to the late 1800's. The first theories that examined sex differences focused on trying to establish males' superiority over females (Helgeson, 2015). During this period in gender research, psychologists were focused on establishing white males' intellectual superiority by examining the differences in the size of brains in males and females. This research proved unsuccessful and led psychologists to start examining other ways to explain gender differences. In an attempt to find these key differences, Wolley and Hollingworth (2015) conducted a series of studies designed to find the sex differences that were believed to exist between men and women (e.g., motor, affective, sensory and intellectual abilities). They concluded that these sex-differences were nothing more than fabrications and ill-informed beliefs that focused on the perceived limitations of women (Feis & Goroman, 2012).

However, the problem for psychologists remained as they struggled to find enduring traits that distinguished one sex psychologically from another. It was during this era that psychologists believed that the real differences among men and women could be examined by measuring masculinity and femininity (Helgeson, 2015; Terman & Miles, 1936). Masculinity was then defined as sets of behaviors, interests and traits that are associated with the male gender role (e.g., aggression, apathy and success driven; Helgeson, 2015) In contrast, femininity was defined as sets of behaviors interest and traits that are associated with the female gender role (e.g., nurturing, submissive and empathetic; Helgeson, 2015) It was during this time that researchers believed that masculinity and femininity where considered to exist on different continuums, in which the presence of one meant the absence of the other.

In 1974, Costantinople and Bem began argued that masculinity and femininity were not qualities that were reserved for one specific gender; instead, both males and females possess masculine and feminine qualities. This emphasized androgyny, having both masculine and feminine qualities, as being optimal for psychological wellbeing (Zosuls, Miller, Rubel, Martin & Fabes, 2011). The development of this framework separated sex and gender; sex began to be defined as the biological and physical attributes

that accompany being male or female. Gender was then defined as a complex array of psychological, sociocultural relations and practices associated to sex (e.g., masculinity and femininity) that were based on biology and shaped by the environment and experiences (Griffith, Gunter & Watkins, 2012). This definition of gender created a view in which masculinity was seen as a social role shaped by gender norms that men attempt to perform and actively maintain.

In an attempt to maintain and perform their gender norms men would conform to societies gender normative roles, affecting their attitudes, behaviors, cognitions and relationships (O'Neil, 1986; 2015). These gender normative roles are dictated by social norms that influence what individuals feel is acceptable for men and women to do (Mahaik, 2003; Levant & Richmond, 2007; Gilbert & Scher, 1999). Specifically, men are socialized to avoid being perceived as feminine, unsuccessful, or weak which creates a divide in the socialization between men and women (David & Brannon, 1976; Levant, 2011; Levant & Richmond, 2007; Mahalik, 2003). This socialization begins at birth, but can most prominently be seen during childhood development. Young boys are encouraged to suppress their emotions and certain activities begin to be gendered (e.g., playing with dolls, dressing up, playing with trucks and wrestling).

As a result of the gender socialization viewed throughout development, the psychology of men and masculinity is growing in their support for the social constructionist viewpoint. This theory views men's experiences of masculinity as varying across social groups and context (Addis & Cohane, 2005; Addis & Mahlik, 2003: Smiler, 2004: Wong & Rochlen, 2008). Unlike previous gender theories, the social constructionist framework views gender as socially formed rather than existing naturally as qualities inherent to men or women.

Furthermore, this emphasis implies that individuals actively construct their view of masculinity based on social context. Masculinity is thus viewed as a continuous process that is always being constructed and challenged. Due to this process, men must "perform" their gender in order to label themselves as masculine (Addis & Cohane, 2005; Connel, 1995; West & Zummerman, 1987). The performance of masculinity in western cultures emphasizes characteristics such as stoicism,

independence, physical toughness, dominance, restrictive emotional expression and competition (Brannon and Juni 1984; Connell 2005; Levant et al. 2007; Levant 2011; Mahalik et al. 2003; Addis & Cohane, 2005).

The New Man: Masculinity in a Modern World

Although masculinity and femininity have been consistent areas of interest in the psychology of gender, the evolution of the psychology of men as a formal discipline began in the 1930's with the development of the Male Sex Role Identity paradigm (MSRI; Addis, Mansfiel, Syzdek, 2008). This paradigm believed the problems that occurred with individuals in society were fundamentally rooted in an individual's inability to establish a sex role identity (Pleck, 1981). The MSRI paradigm assumed that personality development depended on the formation of gender role identity. The extent to which their gender identity need was met was the major determinant of how completely men and women would embrace their traditional gender roles (Zosuls, Miller, Rubel, Martin & Fabes, 2011).

The development of a complete sex role identity was seen as an extremely fragile outcome of a highly risky developmental process and especially difficult for developing men (Pleck, 1981). Through this lens, the development of appropriate gender role identity was viewed as a failure prone process. Failure for men to achieve their masculine gender role identity resulted in homosexuality, negative attitudes towards women, or strict adherence to hyper-masculinity beliefs (Zosuls, Miller, Rubel, Martin & Fabes, 2011).

In response to the MSRI paradigm and the shifting ideology of sex roles, Joseph Pleck published "The Myth of Masculinity" in 1981. His book critically analyzed and critiqued the fundamental principles of MSRI by further examining gender and masculinity. Through his critiques, Joseph Pleck developed the revolutionary theory termed Gender Role Strain Paradigm (GRSP; Pleck, 1981). GRSP views gender roles as being concepts that are psychologically and socially constructed that bring with them social and psychological advantages and disadvantages. It's through social interaction that the reinforcement, punishment and learning of masculinity ideologies are formed, encouraged and maintained. These social interactions constrain men to conform to the dominant male role norms by adhering to the socially sanctioned masculine behaviors while avoiding certain proscribed behaviors (Levant, 2011).

GRSP states that gender roles are operationally defined by gender role stereotypes and norms, these norms develop from the dominant gender ideology in society (Reidy, Brookmeyer, Gentile, Berke & Zeichner, 2016). Due to the contradictory and inconsistent nature of gender roles, most men violate masculine norms in some way and are constantly failing to meet societies definition of manhood. This violation leads to social condemnation and negative psychological consequences. For example, Zeman and Garber (1996) found that due to the fear of negative social consequences in response to violating masculine norms, boys controlled their expression of emotions in comparison to their female counterparts. The fear of violating a gender norm may result in the need to over conform to traditional gender roles, with consequences of violation theorized to be more severe for males (Pleck, 1981).

Though fear of negative social consequences leads to a greater conformity, certain characteristics prescribed by gender role norms are psychologically dysfunctional which may in turn create greater negative experiences in the presence of changing norms. For example, the feminist movements of the 1970's brought change to the previously held workplace gender norms and subsequently destabilized men's status as a "bread winner". These continual changes within society and the unstable adherence to gender norms are theorized to cause gender role strain (Levant, 2011; Pleck, 1981; Zosuls, Miller, Rubel, Martin & Fabes, 2011).

Embedded within the main principles of GRSP are three broader ideas about how cultural standards for masculinity have potentially negative effects on individual males. Discrepancy strain occurs when a man is unable to meet standards set by traditional and internalized gender roles. The disconnect between these expectations and a male's actual masculine characteristics can result in negative internalized self-judgments and negative social feedback from others thus affecting self-esteem and psychological well-being (Pleck, 1995).

Trauma strain occurs a result of experiencing traumatic events during the process of the socialization of masculine gender roles. Levant (1992) examined trauma in the male gender role socialization process and the effect it had on adult male emotional experience and communication. Levant hypothesized that males' overreliance on aggression and difficulties with emotional tenderness and

intimacy stem from a nearly universal socialization of males to be "alexithymic"(i.e., unable to put emotions into words; Levant, 1992; 2011;Zosuls, Miller, Rubel, Martin & Fabes, 2011).

Dysfunction strain occurs when fulfilling the traditional gender role becomes dangerous to the individual (Levant, 2011). This third strain proposes that socially desirable characteristics for men (e.g., homophobia, aggression, avoidance of femininity) can have negative consequences for men and others because these characteristics are inherently negative. Research done by Spence, Helmreich and Holahan (1979) distinguished between positive components of masculinity, M+ (e.g., achievement, responsible, driven) and the negative components of masculinity, M- (e.g., Impatient, aggressive). They found that M- components are highly correlated with measures of fighting, alcohol and drug abuse (Snell, Belk, & Hawkins, 1987; Spence, Helmerich, & Holahan, 1979). A substantial amount of research has documented that these negative male personality styles have had a problematic impact for males psychological and social well-being (Davis 1987, Sharpe & Heppner, 1991, O'Neil 1986, Major & Bilson, 1992).

Gender Role Conflict

The most widely-used and accepted conceptualization of GRSP is Gender role conflict theory (Mellinger & Levant, 2011). In 1992 article Peck, along with other colleagues stated that gender role conflict plays an important role in providing a link between societal norms that endorse traditional masculinities and how individuals adapt them (Thompson, Peck & Ferrera, 1992). Though the concepts of gender role conflict and GRSP are intertwined, interpersonal and personal experiences of gender role conflict are categorized by devaluation, restriction, and violation (Gelfer, 2014).

Gender role conflicts occurs when strict male gender roles create conflicts with incompatible situational demands and can lead to negative consequences for men and those around them (O'Neil, Good & Holmes, 1995). Through this conflict, men's attempt to live up to their prescribed version of masculinity hinders their full human potential (Schauab & Williams, 2007). Gender role conflict (GRC), has been associated with higher levels of anxiety and lower capacity for intimacy (Sharpe & Heppner, 1991), positively correlated with higher hostile sexism and self-reported sexual and dating violence (O'Neil, 2015). Researchers have also found that GRC is associated with negative attitudes toward help-seeking behaviors

(Good & Wood, 1995), it is negatively correlated with psychological well- being (Davis & Walsh 1988), decreased self-esteem (Cournoyer & Mahalik, 1995), intolerance towards homosexuals (Rounds, 1994), greater acceptance of rape myths (Kassing, Beesley &Frey, 2005), greater instances of aggressive behaviors and hostility towards women (Kaplan, 1992).

Personal and interpersonal experiences of GRC are broken down into three categories. The first of the three is gender role devaluation, which are negative critiques of oneself or others that results from conforming to, deviation from, or violating stereotypical norms of masculinity (O'Neil, 2015). The second is gender role restriction, which is the implication that GRC confines people to behave in accordance to stereotypical masculine and gender norms (O'Neil, 2015). The third and most severe kind of GRC is gender role violations; they occur when people harm themselves, others, or are harmed by others because of destructive gender role norms of masculinity ideology (O'Neil, 2015). Gender role violations of others includes discriminatory behavior toward women, sexual harassment, homophobic and antigay attitudes, emotional abuse, and even sexual and physical assault (O'Neil, 2015).

There are four overall patterns of male GRC that have been theoretically linked to men's fear about appearing feminine (O'Neil, 2015). They are Success, Power, and Competition (SPC), Restricted Emotion (RE), Restricted Affectionate Behavior Between Men (RABBM) and Conflict Between Work and Family Relationships (CBWFR);(Wester, Vogel, O'Neil & Danforth, 2012). SPC refers to personal attitudes about success pursed through competition and power. RE is defined as having restrictions and fears about expressing one's feelings, as well as in finding words to express basic emotion. RABBM represent restrictions in expressing one's feelings and thoughts with other men and difficulty in physical affection. CBWFR reflects the experience of restriction in balancing work, school, and family relations that can result in health problems, overwork, stress, and a lack of leisure and relaxation. Past research has shown that men who score higher in RE and RABBM report less social connection, experience higher rates of marital conflict and have higher rates of sexual entitlement (O'Neil, 2015).

Goldberg and colleagues found similar result when investigating the effects of exposure to sexualized images can have on participant's judgements relating to attraction and commitment. In a series

of two experiments Goldberg found that males exposed to images of nude females rated themselves as less committed and in love with their significant other as well as reporting their significant other as less attractive. They also found that ratings of overall relationship satisfaction were lower for men in the sexualized condition. Furthermore, Elder and Morrow (2016) found that an increase number of men reported discomfort and reluctance on being emotionally intimate with other men and were more likely to follow what they deemed to be socially desirable gender scripts.

Research concerned with the overall mental well-being of men, has begun to look at the effects that sexual objectification of females in the media (Wright, 2011). Sexual objectification is the reduction of a person to a body that is only valuable to the degree that it can provide other with pleasure (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) Developed by clinical psychologist Gary Brooks (1995), centerfold syndrome describes what may occur psychologically when men are exposed to suggestive and sexual pictures of women:1) the belief that voyeurism is natural and inevitable, 2) the reduction of to sexual objects, 3) the belief that that masculinity can be validated through sexual skill 4) the belief that masculinity can also be validated through conquest, 5) the belief that attractive females are trophies and 6) increase in the acceptance of non-relational sex (Wright, 2015). These beliefs are commonly abbreviated in literature as: voyeurism, sexual reductionism, masculinity, validation, trophysim and non-relational sex (Wright & Roberts, 2015; Brooks, 1955; 1997). In a 2015 study, Paul Wright and Robert Tokunaga studied whether or not exposure to female centerfold images caused young adult males to identify more strongly to "the centerfold syndrome." They found that recent exposure to sexualized images had immediate strengthening effects on sexual reductionism, masculinity validation, and non-relational sex belief and those effects persisted for approximately 48 hours (Wright & Tokunaga, 2015).

Critiques of current Gender Role Conflict Research

Current research suggests that men's expression of the male gender-role may be understood more completely by examining both state-like and trait-like dimensions of masculine gender-roles (Jones& Heesaker, 2011; Leszczynski & Strough, 2008; Levant & Richmond, 2007; Pickard & Strough, 2003). Addis, Mansfield and Syzdek (2010) proposed that research on men and masculinity has not focused on

the contextual nature of gendered social learning, and they indicated that in order to build a more complete look at men's masculinity researchers should begin to research the environments or states in which gender-roles are made salient. GRC has previously worked under the assumptions that GRC itself is relatively internal and stable (Jones & Heesaker, 2011). That is to say that the degree in which men experience GRC should not vary from one week to the next, between different situations or between different social roles (Jones & Heesaker, 2011). In his recent work, O'Neil addressed this critique and conceded that in order to gain a greater understanding of GRC and men's masculinity it is beneficial that future research looks at situational context and environmental cues (O'Neil, 2015.)

In an attempt to address these critiques, Liu (2005) asked participants to evaluate their experience with gender role conflict across different scenarios by assessing participants' ideal GRC in comparison to participant's ideal level of GRC (i.e., Who would you be in and ideal world?). Blazina and Jackson (2009) examined the contextual nature of boys' gender roles by asking participants to describe "how you are as a man" across different roles (e.g., In classroom, with my father, in sports). Their results indicated that GRC levels can vary, and the conflicts that arises is conflicts within roles (e.g., idealized man, father, son and husband) not across roles as previously believed.

Though these studies have attempted to address contextual aspects of masculinity, they are still vulnerable to critics of measuring gender role conflict in a trait-like manner. The first study that attempted to manipulate situational context was a study done by Jones and Heesacker (2011) which hypothesized that men's self-reported gender role conflict will fluctuate in response to exposure to video clips that attempted to prime different the notions of masculinity. They also hypothesized that the changes would be moderated by individuals score on self-concept clarity, that is that men with lower self-concept clarity will show greater fluctuations in their self-reported levels of GRC. Participants where brought into a computer laboratory then randomly assigned to a control condition or one of six priming conditions. Participants that were randomly assigned to the priming conditions were asked to watch different video clips of well-known comedians. Participants in the control condition were told they were in the control condition and asked to skip the videos and go directly to the questionnaires. Jones and Heesacker (2011)

were able to show that men's GRC decreased in one of the subscales of GRC but the other three were not significantly different. The limitation of the study was its reliance on video clips, which may or may not mirror typical contexts in which men's gendered behavior is primed. Moreover, these primes may not have elicited genuine gender-role contemplation by participants.

Overview and Predictions

With this in mind, the goal of the present study is to gain a better understanding of the relationship between GRC and situational factors. In order to test whether or not men's GRC levels vary based on situational context, we created an environment where masculinity tropes where reinforced. The purposes of using images that would activate centerfold syndrome was to bring forward masculine expectations in participate thus creating a standard in which they should judge their level of masculinity against. This masculine standard should have further created a greater discrepancy between participant's current masculinity level and the societal ideal level of masculinity. Thus, we hypothesized that men in the masculinity prime condition will report elevated levels of GRC compared to controls.

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

Participants and Design

One hundred heterosexual male students over 18 from Western Carolina University (WCU) were recruited using WCU's SONA systems participant pool. The SONA system is an online research management system that allows students to sign up for experimental studies in exchange for participation credit. Out of the hundred participants, 4 were disqualified for not fully completing the questionnaires and 4 were disqualified because of their sexuality status (i.e., homosexual). The final sample ($N = 92$) had a mean age of 18.89 (SD=1.35). The racial makeup of the participants is as follows: 80% White, 10% Black, 4 % Hispanic and 6% "Other".

Procedure

The present study closely followed Jones and Heesacker's (2011) experimental procedure. Participants were asked to meet the researcher in a computer lab on Western Carolina's campus. Computers were provided, to further ensure complete anonymity of responses. Once participants entered the room and had accessed the link to the study, they were informed that they would be asked to fill out a series of questionnaires and to provide ratings of images or answer trivia questions. After consenting to participate in the study, all participants filled out a demographic questionnaire then assigned to one of the three situational manipulations.

In both the neutral and masculine prime condition participants were told that they would be shown a series of pictures. Participants were informed that the pictures would remain on the screen for a minimum of 15 seconds. After exposure to the 15 images they were then asked to fill out the gender role conflict scale (GRCS) and the centerfold syndrome scale (CSS). See Appendix C and Appendix D for images used in each condition.

In the control condition participants were told that they would be asked a series of trivia questions. Participants were informed that the questions would remain on the screen for a minimum of 15 seconds. After answering the trivia questions, they were then asked to fill out the Gender Role Conflict

Scale (GRCS) and the Centerfold Syndrome Scale (CSS). See Appendix E for descriptions of trivia questions used.

Materials and Measures

Gender Role Conflict. Each participant's level of gender role conflict was measured using the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil, 1986), which consists of 37 items that measure the cognitive, emotional and behavioral consequences associated with male gender role socialization. According to Whorley and Addis' (2006) meta-analysis of masculinity methodological trends, 65% of the studies that used masculinity research relied on the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil ,1986). The GRCS is comprised of four subscales: Success, Power and Competition (SPC); Restrictive Emotionality (RE); Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men (RABBM); and Conflict Between Work and Family Relationships (CBWFR). These subscales are summed together to provide a composite GRCS score, and higher subscales and composite scores represent higher levels of gender role conflict. Male participants responded to questions such as "Expressing feelings make me feel open to attack by other people," Hugging other men is difficult for me," and "I like to feel superior to other people" on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) (Wester & Vogel, 2008). See Appendix A for the full measure.

The construct validity of the GRCS has been demonstrated with positive relationships between GRCS and other measures of men's attitudes toward masculinity (Good et al., 1995). Good et al. (1994) reported that correlations between the GRCS and the Brannon Masculinity Scale (Brannon & Juni, 1984) and the Fear of Intimacy Scale (Descutner & Thelen, 1991) provide evidence for the construct validity for the overall GRCS and for three of the four subscales. Cronbach's alpha for the full 37-item scale in this sample was .90. A factor inter-correlation revealed the GRCS to be moderate with inter-correlations ranging from .35 to .68, which implies that though the factors are related they are separate entities (Moradi et a, 2000; O'Neil, 2005). Internal consistency analyses have been conducted and revealed that SPC factors alphas ranged from .83 to. 89 with a mean of .86; RABBM alphas ranged from .82 to .88, with a mean of .84 and for CBWFR alphas ranged from .73 to .87, with an average of .80 (Chamberlin,

1993; Chatier, 1986; Cournoyer, 1995; Good, Dell & Mintz, 1989; Good,1995: Hayes, 1985; Horhoruw, 1991; Kaplan, 1992; E.J.; Mendelson, 1988). For the present study the entire GRC measure had an alpha of .93. The four subscales of GRC were as followed: SPC alpha was .87 , RE alpha was. 89, RABMM alpha was .89 and CBWF was .80.

Centerfold Syndrome Scale. In order to assure that the stimuli allowed masculine norms to be salient in the environment, Centerfold Syndrome Scale(CSS) was used as a manipulation check. The scale was developed using the previous objectification and media sex literatures (Wright, 2009, 2012, 2013) for indices with items analogous to Brooks's conceptualizations: voyeurism, sexual reductionism, masculinity, validation, trophysim and non-relational sex. Participants responded to questions like "Casual sex is acceptable," "It is embarrassing to date a woman who is physically unattractive," and "Real men know how to pull hot chicks", on a 7-point Likert scale: (1) *disagree strongly*, (2) *disagree*, (3) *moderately disagree*, (4) *neither agree nor disagree*, (5) *moderately agree*, (6) *agree*, (7) *agree strongly* (See Appendix B for the full measure). Higher scores equate to stronger adherence to the centerfold syndrome beliefs. For the present study, the alphas for the centerfold syndrome scale was .94, well above the minimum acceptability of .70.

Situational Context Manipulation. The sets of images used were pre-tested by 32 college student enrolled in psychology 150 at Western Carolina, participants received 2 points extra credit for taking part in the ratings. Each image and statement was rated on two dimensions: (1) attractiveness and (2) the degree to which it depicted the women as sexual objects. Participants were asked to rate the images and statements on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely). Participants deemed the sexualized images of females to be more attractive and more sexually objectifying than the neutral images or the trivial statements.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analysis of means revealed that there were no significant differences in GRCS scores across condition (see table 1). In order to further assess whether the experimental manipulation was effective, I conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare the effect of the experimental manipulation (i.e., presentation of visual stimuli) on Centerfold Syndrome Scale (CSS) scores in the sexualized, neutral, and control conditions. This analysis revealed no effect of the experimental manipulation on CSS scores across conditions [F (2, 89) = .44, p =.543]. These results indicated that the experimental manipulation did not produce the predicted pattern of results in participants (i.e., elevated CSS scores in the sexualized condition, compared to neutral and control conditions).

Table 1

GRC Means by Condition

Condition	Mean	SD	N
Sexualized	3.43	.82	30
Neutral	3.36	.82	31
Control	3.50	.81	31

Gender Role Conflict

In order to test my hypothesis that men in the sexualized condition would exhibit higher levels of gender role conflict compared to neutral and control conditions, I first conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The goal of this analysis was to compare the effect of the experimental manipulation (i.e., presentation of visual stimuli) on full-scale Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS) scores in the sexualized, neutral, and control conditions. This analysis revealed no effect of the experimental manipulation on full-scale GRC scores across conditions [F (2, 89) = .201, p = .819].

After running the ANOVA, I conducted a bivariate correlation to examine the relationship between the four subscales. As shown in Table 2, this analysis revealed significant relationships among the four subscales. To further examine my hypothesis, I conducted a multivariate analysis of variance

(MANOVA) to determine whether there was an effect of the experimental manipulation (i.e., presentation of visual stimuli) on each of the four subscales of GRC (i.e., (SPC) Success, Power and Competition; (RE) Restrictive Emotionality; (RABBM) Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men; and (CBWFR) Conflict Between Work and Family Relationships) in the sexualized, neutral, and control conditions.

Table 2.

Subscale Correlations

Trait	1	2	3	4
1. SPC	----			
2. RE	.376**	----		
3. CBWF	.339**	.351**	----	
4. RABBM	-.536**	.608**	.334**	-

Note: SPC= Success Power and Competition, RE= Restrictive Emotion, CBWF= Conflict Between Work and Family, RABBM= Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men, *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

In order to test the present hypothesis, it was necessary to examine several dependent variables simultaneously and examine differences along a combination of dimensions. Therefore, a MANOVA was the most appropriate statistical tool to use. This analysis revealed no effect of the experimental manipulation on GRC subscale scores across conditions F (6, 174) = 1.82, $p < .095$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.88361$, partial $\eta^2 = .038$. See Figure 1 (Panel A.B.C and D)

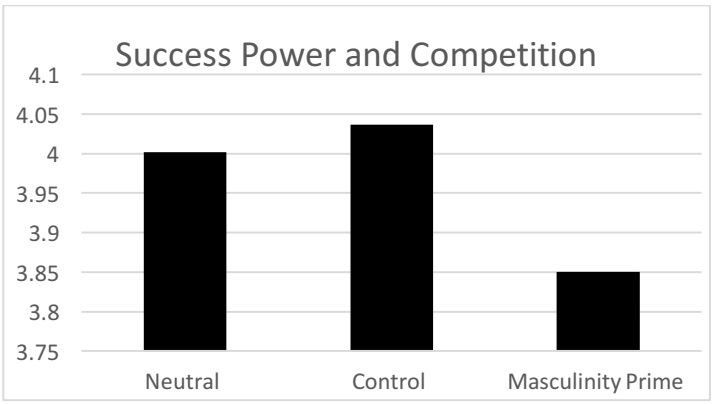

Figure 1 (Panel A). SPC mean.

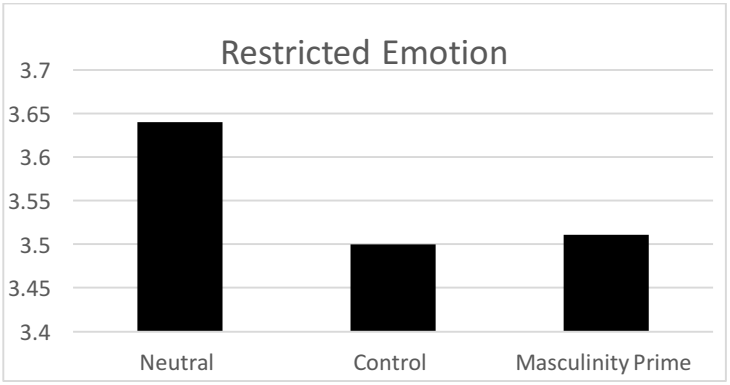

Figure 1 (Panel B). RE Mean.

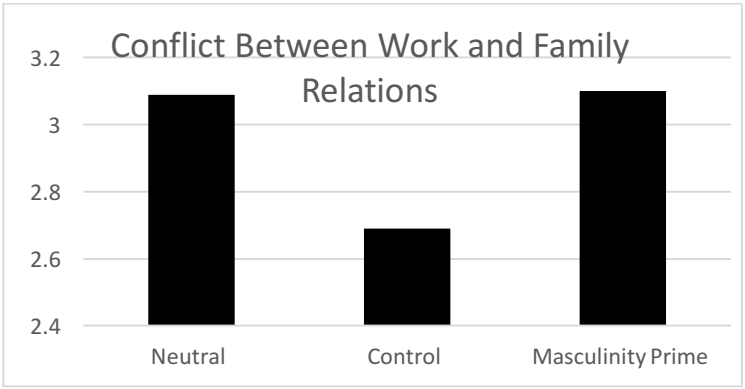

Figure 1 (Panel C). CWFR mean.

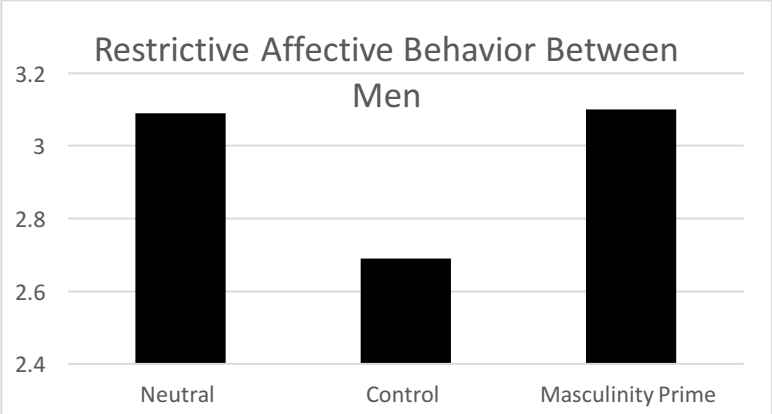

Figure 1 (Panel D). RABBM mean.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The goal of the present study was to test whether situational influences – such as exposure to sexualized images of women – would elicit higher expressed levels of gender role conflict (compared to neutral and control conditions) in a sample of heterosexual males. It was predicted that exposure to sexualized visual stimuli would reinforce the concept of masculinity for men, thus contributing to higher levels of gender role conflict. The results did not support my hypothesis. There was no elevation of men's gender role conflict scores in the sexualized condition.

Possible Explanations

The images used for the study were specifically chosen based on the criteria for activating centerfold syndrome and masculine tropes associated with it. Our manipulation check revealed that the images used did not create a situational environment in which increased levels of centerfold syndrome as previously believed. Though the images were pretested to ensure their sexual objectification and attraction of women depicted, centerfold syndrome was not activated. One explanation for this might be the generational differences between when centerfold syndrome was first conceptualized and the current sample. Due to the widespread advancements in communication and the pervasive access to the internet, the current generation has continuously been exposed to sexualized images of females which in turn might create a desensitization to sexualized images that was not seen in previous generations. Furthermore, the manipulation might have further been weakened due to the presence of a female making participants uncomfortable to fully process the sexualized images they were presented. Though steps were taken to fully provide anonymity (reassurance that their responses where anonymous and researchers back was turned all the way as to further provide privacy) those steps might not have been enough to overcome the female's presence. As a result, the manipulation did not create a situational context that reinforced masculinity and thus did not influence GRC scores.

This research study was conceptual replication of Jones and Heesackers' 2011 study. That study was the first in GRC literature that examined the role that environmental context has on males' state GRC

score. Previously, literature has looked at GRC as an internal and stable construct, that should remain stable regardless of changes in the environment. One explanation that might account for the null findings in the present study, is that Jones and Heesackers' significant results in one of the subscales of the GRCS, might have not been a true representation of GRC. Due to the methodology in which participants where only asked to skip the videos that did not belong to the condition that they were assigned and the stimuli might not have been an adequate prime of masculine behaviors, it could be that the changes in scores where not adequate representation of GRC.

In addition, the study consisted of college freshman no older than 19, therefore this may have also contributed to the null findings. Throughout GRC literature men in their upper twenties who are traditionally transitioning into full adulthood and taking on new more adult responsibilities (e.g., marriage, family and careers) show the greatest level of changes in their scores of GRC (O'Neil, 2008). Men who are transitioning into college life tend to not have many new masculine expectations thus not being as susceptible to masculine contextual changes in the environment. Moreover, men in the new generation have been exposed to more egalitarian values which promote greater gender equality and fluidity in gender norm adherence. These new views regarding gender norms might have also contributed to a sample that is not experience GRC to the degree that previous generation have.

Future Directions

Developed by Vandello and Bosson (2008) the Precarious Manhood Theory (PMT) states that manhood is an elusive construct and men must continuously fight in order to continuously prove their manhood. Though the relationship between PMT and GRC has not been established in previous literature, Bosson and Vandello (2010) and O'Neil (2016) both have suggested that there might be a relationship between having Precarious Manhood Beliefs (PMB) and developing GRC. In his meta-analysis of GRC literature O'Neil (2016) states that "distorted gender role schema are part of the man's restricted masculinity ideology that produce GRC and contribute to precarious manhood". Due to the feeling of threat that men experience who have precarious manhood beliefs in situations in which their masculinity is called into question, it is likely that constant threats create an identity of conflict and anxiety as

described in GRC. It is also probable that the findings found in Jones and Heesacker's (2011) initial study, could better be explained as fluctuations in precarious manhood instead of GRC. Thus, future studies should examine the relationship between these two constructs and the role they play in responses to situational cues.

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Appendix A: Gender Role Conflict Scale (O'Neil et aI., 1986)

Instructions: In the space to the left of each sentence below, write the number that most closely represents the degree that you Agree or Disagree with the statement. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement; your own reaction is what is asked for.

Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

1. Moving up the career ladder is important to me.
2. I have difficulty telling others I care about them.
3. Verbally expressing my love to another man is difficult for me.
4. I reel torn between my hectic work schedule and caring for my health.
5. Making money is part of my idea of being a successful man.
6. Strong emotions are difficult for me to understand.
7. Affection with other men makes me tense.
8. I sometimes define my personal value by my career success.
9. Expressing feelings makes me feel open to attack by other people.
10. Expressing my emotions to other men is risky.
11. My career, job, or school affects the quality of my leisure or family life.
12. I evaluate other people's value by their level of achievement and success.
13. Talking about my feelings during sexual relations is difficult for me.
14. I worry about failing and how it affects my doing well as a man.
15. I have difficulty expressing my emotional needs to my partner.
16. Men who touch other men make me uncomfortable.
17. Finding time to relax is difficult for me.
18. Doing well all the time is important to me.
19. I have difficulty expressing my tender feelings.
20. Hugging other men is difficult for me.
21. I often feel that I need to be in charge of those around me.
22. Telling others of my strong feelings is not part of my sexual behavior.
23. Competing with others is the best way to succeed.
24. Winning is a measure of my value and personal worth.
25. I often have trouble finding words that describe how I am feeling.
26. I am sometimes hesitant to show my affection to men because of how others might perceive me.
27. My needs to work or study keep me from my family or leisure more than would like.

28. I strive to be more successful than others.
29. I do not like to show my emotions to other people.
30. Telling my partner my feelings about him/her during sex is difficult for me.
31. My work or school often disrupts other parts of my life (home, family, health leisure.
32. I am often concerned about how others evaluate my performance at work or school.
33. Being very personal with other men makes me feel uncomfortable.
34. Being smarter or physically stronger than other men is important to me.
35. Men who are overly friendly to me make me wonder about their sexual preference (men or women).
36. Overwork and stress caused by a need to achieve on the job or in school, affects/hurts my life.
37. I like to feel superior to other people.

Appendix B: Centerfold Syndrome Scale (Wright, 2015)

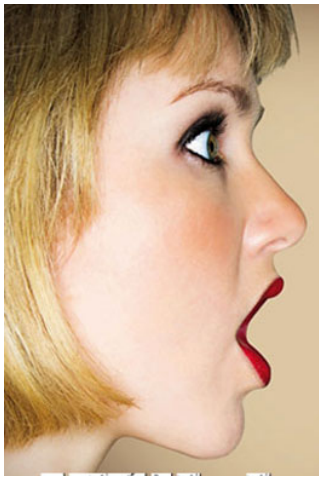
Instructions: In the space to the left of each sentence below, write the number that most closely represents the degree that you Agree or Disagree with the statement. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement; your own reaction is what is asked for

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. Men are "hardwired" to want to look at women's bodies.
2. It is okay to check out an attractive woman at a bar or dance club.
3. It is natural for a man to admire pretty women and look at their bodies, even if he has a girlfriend.
4. When women are out at a club, it is okay to think of them as "eye candy."
5. It is okay to admire women's bodies as they pass by on the street.
6. The best thing about women is their bodies.
7. If cosmetic surgery would make my partner more attractive, I would strongly encourage it.
8. Women should spend a lot of time trying to be pretty; no one wants to date a woman who has "let herself go."
9. There is nothing wrong with men being primarily interested in a woman's body.
10. Using her body and looks is the best way for a woman to attract a man.
11. There is nothing more validating than getting an attractive woman to have sex.
12. Something is wrong with a guy who turns down a chance to score with a woman.
13. Men love a challenge and often choose to pursue the seemingly unattainable woman.
14. Real men know how to pull hot chicks.
15. A man who can't drive his partner crazy in bed isn't much of a man.
16. It is embarrassing to date a woman who is physically unattractive.
17. Men try not to date physically unattractive women because their friends will think less of them.
18. Men who can get any woman into bed demand respect.
19. Being with an attractive woman gives a man prestige.

20. Having a beautiful partner is a good way for a man to boost his social status.
21. It's okay to have ongoing sexual relationships with more than one partner.
22. It is possible to enjoy sex with a person and not like him or her
23. The best sex is with no strings attached.
24. One night stands are sometimes very enjoyable.
25. I don't need to be committed to a person to have sex with them.
26. I would like to have sex with many partners.
27. Life would have fewer problems if we could have sex more freely.
28. Sex as a simple exchange of favors is okay if both people agree.
29. It is okay for sex to be just good physical release.
30. Casual sex is acceptable.

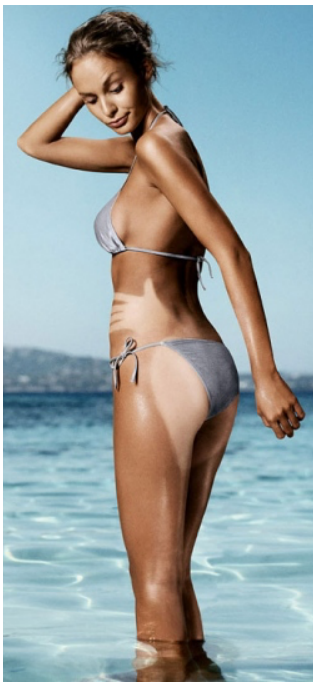
Appendix C: Sexualized Pictures




Are
Proud sp


I can't cook. Who ca


RIB
LOIN
ROUND




jbs
MENS UNDERWEAR


SCHOUDER
BORST
BILLEN
BEEN

APPENDIX D: NEUTRAL IMAGES

APPENDIX E: NEUTRAL STIMULI

1. Television has proven that people will look at anything, rather than each other.
2. There is a fine line between numerator and denominator.
3. I believe that if life gives you lemons, you should make lemonade. . . And try to find somebody whose life has given them vodka, and have a party.
4. Laziness is nothing more than the habit of resting before you get tired.
5. Think of how stupid the average person is, and realize half of them are stupider than that
6. Most people wear two shoes
7. The answer to this question is light
8. Paper is good to write on
9. Black and white make Grey
10. The answer to this question is football
11. The answer to this question is table
12. The answer to this question is catamount
13. Apples, pears and bananas are all fruit
14. The answer to this question is yellow
15. The answer to this question is bed