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COMPETENT BUT HOSTILE: INTERSECTING RACE/GENDER STEREOTYPES

AND THE PERCEPTION OF WOMEN'S ANGER IN THE WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

When displayed appropriately and effectively, anger can communicate status and competence – characteristics that are necessary for success and establishing respect and power among colleagues in the workplace. But for whom is anger beneficial? In this paper, I argue that perceiving an angry target as competent depends on *who* is expressing the emotion, and that race and gender stereotypes intersect to influence perceptions of black women's anger. Using an intersectional framework, I propose two competing hypotheses about the perception of black women's anger in the workplace, relative to the perception of white women's anger: 1) Given race and gender stereotypes about black women's aggressiveness, angry black women may be seen as hostile and therefore less competent, or 2) given race and gender stereotypes about black women's assertiveness and directness, angry black women may be perceived strong and therefore as more competent. To test these predictions, participants (N = 312), recruited through Mechanical Turk, read a vignette depicting a black female, a white female, or a white male target, who expressed either anger or sadness in a work context. The black female target was perceived as significantly more competent, and also as more hostile than the white female target in the anger condition. In the sad condition, the white female target was more competent than the black female target, and previous findings that white men's anger conveys more competence than white women's anger was not replicated. This suggests that intersecting gender and race stereotypes differentially impact white women and black women. I conclude that testing these competing hypotheses is a crucial step in moving forward theory about stereotyping and perceptions of emotion.

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Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

In an interview with CBS in January 2012, Michelle Obama acknowledged that she has been depicted by some as "a strong woman" and said that it has "been an image that people have tried to paint of me since the day Barack announced, that I'm some angry black woman" (CBS This Morning, 2012). In this moment, Michelle Obama captures the dual nature of the familiar "angry black woman" stereotype – that the positive "strong" and negative "angry" labels can be two sides of the same coin. For example, Obama faced a negative angry stereotypes when she was famously portrayed alongside her husband on a cover of *The New Yorker* as a militant, angry black woman in combat gear (Blitt, 2008); yet she also is positively stereotyped as competent and strong, maintaining poise under pressure (Harris-Perry, 2011).

The angry stereotype does not just pertain to Michelle Obama. Look no farther than Bravo's *The Real Housewives of Atlanta* to see NeNe Leakes portrayed as loud and angry, or the infamous Pepsi ad depiction of a emasculating and dominant black woman who controls her partner's food choices to see the negative 'angry black woman' (ABW) stereotype. Harris-Perry (2011) classifies the ABW as one of the three most powerful stereotypes that black women encounter in their daily lives (the other two being the Mammy and Jezebel figures). Her interviews with black women showed that they believe that others see them as more sassy, harsh, and aggressive than they see themselves.

We also see positive images of strong, independent, and successful black women, not only in black female public figures like Oprah and Beyoncé, but also in black women's narratives, both past and present. The "strong black woman" image is an ingroup-driven stereotype that is based in black women's history as intensive laborers during slavery, parents raising children with little assistance, and as a group that endures sexism and racism (Harris-Perry, 2011). Although the

stereotype can have overbearing and emasculating connotations, the strong black woman (SBW) is embraced and proudly perpetuated among black women. In a newspaper series focusing on black women, the Kaiser Foundation interviewed hundreds of black women who see themselves as confident, strong, and resilient (Shefte & Koerber, 2012). Many women expressed the multiple hardships in their lives (e.g. single-handedly taking care of the household, racism and sexism) and their historical struggles for equality as women and as black people – all of which necessitate strength and resilience. Other research shows that it is not only ingroup members who endorse this image: white students see black women as strong and tough (Donovan, 2011) and as having high status when expressing dominance (Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012).

These two seemingly conflicting stereotypes of black women's temperament are distinctly different from stereotypes about white women or women as a whole, specifically stereotypes about their emotions. Women as a whole are stereotyped as 'emotional,' warm, communal, and nice (Williams & Best, 1990), and one emotion that is *not* associated with women is anger (e.g. Hess, Blairy, & Kleck, 2000; Fabes & Martin, 1991; Plant et al., 2000; Timmers, Fischer, & Manstead, 1998). However, when people are asked to think of a woman, they will most likely think of a white, heterosexual, middle class woman (Schneider, 2004). Since most work on gender-emotion stereotypes does not mention the race, age, sexuality, or SES dimensions of the 'emotional' stereotype, gender-emotion stereotypes studied thus far are likely descriptive of beliefs about white women. Thus, stereotypes about black and white women's emotions may be unique.

The purpose of the present study is twofold: 1) to examine how intersecting stereotypes of race, gender, and emotion influence impressions of others' anger in the workplace – specifically, how the ABW and SBW stereotype affects perceptions of angry black women; and 2) to replicate and extend the work of Tiedens and her colleagues (Tiedens, Ellsworth, & Mesquita, 2000;

Tiedens, 2001), and of Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008). Tiedens' work demonstrated that anger can convey qualities of status and competence for (presumably white) men. Using the same stimulus materials, Brescoll and Uhlmann found that this association held with white men in comparison to white women. As with these studies, much of the work on gender and emotion operate under the unexamined assumption that gender-emotion stereotypes (e.g., that it is acceptable for men, but not women to be angry) function similarly for *all* women and *all* men, leaving the race of the emotion-expressing target unspecified, or consider race a "future direction" (Barrett & Bliss-Moreau, 2009; Brody & Hall, 2010; Plant et al., 2000). Because there is little to no empirical work on stereotypes about black women's emotion, I use Tiedens et al.'s (2000) stimulus materials as a basis to understand how perceptions of black women's anger compare to what has been found with white men and women's anger.

In this paper, I use the term 'strong black woman (SBW) stereotype' to refer to the expectation that black women should be strong, resilient, and tough (Donovan, 2011; Harris-Perry, 2011). Black women are especially socialized to conform to this image (Shorter-Gooden & Jackson, 2000; Thomas et al., 2011). Similar to the 'superwoman' image (Reynolds-Dobbs et al., 2008), the SBW stereotype can be oppressive if black women are expected to accept unjust treatment or to not display or admit any weaknesses (Nelson, 2011). I conceptualize the SBW stereotype as positive for the purposes of this study (i.e., brief perceptions of emotion). As will be seen later, I use the construct of agenticism (e.g., assertiveness, boldness) to measure evidence of the SBW stereotype.

To understand how race, gender, and emotion stereotypes interact, I use an intersectional perspective, or the notion that multiple social identities such as gender and race cannot be defined independently (e.g. Crenshaw, 1989). I argue that stereotypes of others are also comprised not only

of race stereotypes or gender stereotypes, but a unique combination of these. Focusing on a

specific expressed emotion (anger) in the workplace, I examine the specific amalgamation of

gender and race stereotypes and its effect on perceptions of competence, which can ultimately

influence decisions in promotions and hiring.

Below, I briefly define intersectionality and review the literature on how anger

communicates status and competence for certain expressers. Next, I consider how gender and

emotion stereotypes affect impressions of anger, status, and competence; then, I briefly review the

literature on gender-biased perceptions of women in the workplace. Last, I review how race and

gender stereotypes affect black women's advancement in the workplace, and propose two

competing hypotheses about how race and gender stereotypes affect perceptions of black women's

anger.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a theory borne out of critical race theory, which challenged assumptions

that the category of 'women' means white, straight, and middle-class (Rich, 1980).

Intersectionality is the idea that multiple social identities such as gender, race, class, and age

(among many other possible identities) cannot be defined independently/in isolation of each other,

and that social identities can only be defined in relation to one another (e.g. Crenshaw, 1989). For

example, a person's experience as a woman cannot be understood by looking only at her gender in

isolation – depending on the situation, other identities influence and define her gender (and vice-

versa). An intersectional approach to studying gender has been repeatedly called for in the field of

psychology (e.g. Bowleg, 2008; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; Warner, 2008), and is seen as

essential for the progress of feminist psychology and psychology as a whole (Shields, 2008). While

the need for an intersectional perspective is crucial, few researchers incorporate intersectionality theory into their empirical work.

Anger and Status/Competence Conferrals in the Workplace

Emotion and emotional expressions are omnipresent in the workplace (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995) and affect beliefs about the expresser. Emotional expressions – whether conveyed through facial expressions, voice intonation, and/or behavior – are powerful communicators because of their ability to signal states and action tendencies, and to influence trait impressions about a person (e.g. Ekman & Davidson, 1994; Hall & Friedman, 1999; Hess, Blairy, & Kleck, 2000; Montepare & Dobish, 2003). For instance, expressions of happiness suggest that the expresser is likable, confident, and approachable, whereas a person who expresses sadness might lead to impressions of weakness and shyness (Montepare & Dobish, 2003). Anger expressions in particular have been found to convey dominance, strength, competence, and decreased warmth (Hess, Adams, & Kleck, 2005; Tiedens, 2001).

Anger is an especially important emotion to consider when studying emotion in the workplace because when displayed appropriately and effectively, it can communicate status and competence – characteristics that are necessary for success and establishing respect and power among colleagues in the workplace (Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008; Ragins & Winkel, 2011). For example, Tiedens et al. (2000) found that people believe that high status (white male) targets in a vignette were more likely to express anger and pride than low status targets, who were believed to express guilt, sadness, and appreciation. Tiedens et al. also found the reverse relationship, that people assume that the target who is described as feeling angry has high status, and that the target who is sad is of lower status. When only information about two targets' competence was described, Tiedens et al. found that participants believed that the more competent target was angry

and the less competent target was sad. Importantly, the vignette described a situation in which two colleagues failed to put together a successful meeting with a client, and each coworker was equally at fault.[1] While the findings cannot be generalized to every situation, both sadness and anger were deemed as socially appropriate emotional responses for white men – but the appropriateness depended on his status. It is also important to note that this pattern of findings is based on descriptions of targets feelings, not descriptions or images of their expressive behavior.

Competence is a key factor in determining how people perceive others' anger. Using the same organizational failure situation with videotapes, Tiedens (2001) found that white male targets who reported feeling angry during this incident were seen as having more status and being less responsible for the situation than targets who expressed sadness. Interestingly, this relationship was fully mediated by perceptions of the target's competence, and not by perceptions of liking. Tiedens found this same mediation of competence ratings in a video study involving a white, male target acting as a politician; participants were more likely to vote for and to attribute status to a politician who expressed anger as opposed to sadness. With regards to competence, one study found that the chances of an employee (gender unspecified) being promoted were greater when the employee expressed anger, rather than guilt, after a failure (Rafaeli & Pratt, 2004; as cited in Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008). While this finding supports Tiedens' (2001) work, the mechanisms behind this association were not investigated.

Tiedens et al. (2000) argue that the association of high status with competence could be at the root of the emotion expectations in their study – at least for white men. In line with Expectation States theory (Berger, Fisek, Norman, & Zelditch, 1977), Tiedens et al. (2000) assert

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[1] See the present study's methods section for more detail

that a person's status creates expectations about what emotion that person might express in a situation. Specifically, *diffuse status characteristics*, observable attributes that individuals possess to different degrees (e.g., attractiveness) or type (e.g., gender) that activate expectations about the individual's performance, help explain Tiedens' findings (Ragins & Winkel, 2011). When an individual's group membership (e.g., gender) is salient, beliefs about the competence and status of the group becomes relevant, and expectations based on these beliefs ensue. For example, when a female manager expresses sadness, expectations about her behavior are interpreted based on her group membership (female) and the status associated with that group – so her sadness might be interpreted as conveying weakness, a loss of control, or irrationality, traits associated with low-status. Put another way, those perceived to have lower status in society are expected to show emotions associated with lower status – or their emotions are interpreted as lower status. Thus, beliefs about the social status of certain social categories (e.g., gender; race; SES) should also be associated with certain expectations about emotions.

Gender and Emotion Stereotypes

There is an abundant literature showing the existence of gendered expectations and stereotypes about emotion. Women (most likely white, North American women) are believed to express and experience emotions that facilitate relationships, such warmth and cheerfulness, while men (most likely white, North American men) are expected to express and experience emotions that convey agency and power, such as anger (Hess et al., 2000; Fabes & Martin, 1991; Johnson & Shulman, 1988; Plant et al., 2000; Timmers et al. 1998). Similarly, in the workplace and especially in service jobs, employers expect women to suppress negative emotions such as anger and convey positive emotion such as enthusiasm and warmth (Hochschild, 1983). Moreover, across ethnicities in the U.S., people believe that men express and experience anger more than women do, though

European ethnic groups hold this idea more strongly (Durik et al., 2006). These stereotypes persist despite the fact that in general, men and women report experiencing anger with the same frequency, do not differ on self-reported anger intensity (e.g. Kring & Gordon, 1998; as cited in Fischer & Evers, 2010), and do not differ on the occurrence of daily aggression (Archer, 2004; as cited in Fischer & Evers, 2010; see Kring, 2000 for a review).

There are only two empirical studies to my knowledge that address the extent to which these gendered expectations for emotion play out in the workplace. First, in a videotape study, Lewis (2000) found that male actor-CEOs (race unspecified) were rated as more effective leaders when displaying anger than when displaying sadness or remaining neutral. The opposite pattern was found for women (race unspecified). Women actor-CEOs were viewed as less effective leaders when expressing anger as opposed to sadness or neutral emotion. However, leader effectiveness in this study was measured by ratings of the target's ability and likability – which are not necessarily equivalent to measuring competence (especially when considering gender stereotypes in the workplace, as I discuss later). In addition, Lewis (2000) did not analyze the target gender difference in effectiveness ratings – so there is no way to know (statistically) if men and women significantly differed on ratings of leadership effectiveness when angry, neutral, or sad.

In a second study, Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) found that a (white) woman who labeled herself as angry in a past work-related situation was rated as less competent, as having a lower salary, and as having less status than a man (race unspecified) in the same situation. They also found that participants made internal attributions regarding the woman's anger (i.e., the anger was believed due to personality as opposed to the situation) mediated the relationship between anger and perceived status; these results held when the emotion comparison was sadness as well as no emotion. One caveat about this study is that the videotaped actors did not really express anger or

sadness – in the video, they merely said that the situation (in which the target and another coworker lost an important account) made them angry, sad, or did not mention their emotion.

Each of these studies used sadness and neutral or 'no emotion' conditions in comparison to anger conditions. Sadness can be a useful comparison in relation to anger to examine how gender stereotypes operate, given that it is an emotion stereotypically associated with women, and that anger is typically associated with men. Women's sadness might be evaluated positively because of its congruence with gender-emotion stereotypes. Reflecting this idea, Lewis (2000) hypothesized and found that women leaders were perceived as most effective when neutral, somewhat effective when sad, and as least effective when angry. Although Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) found no differences in competence ratings for the white woman when she was sad versus angry, the means show the same pattern as Lewis' (2000) findings. However, sadness is also an emotion that is devalued because of its association with weakness and low status (Tiedens et al., 2000). According to expectation states theory, women's sadness *and* anger (and perhaps any emotion) will be interpreted negatively because gender serves as a low-status cue (in the absence of other status-laden cues). However, women's sadness seems to be interpreted more positively compared to men's sadness and to women's anger, at least in the direction of the means in Lewis' (2000) and Brescoll & Uhlmann's (2008) studies. Anger goes against both gender-emotion norms and expectations about status characteristics. From these studies, it is clear that for women, expressing the counter-gender-stereotypical emotion of anger results in penalties in perceived status and competence.

Backlash for Women in the Workplace

Women are often faced with a double bind at work, where they must act agentic (i.e. confident, assertive, and ambitious) to be seen as competent, but doing so makes them seem less

likeable because it departs from traditional gender roles of warmth and communality which involves displaying niceness and concern for others (e.g. Eagly & Carli, 2007; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001). While related to competence, agenticism is distinct in that it is stereotypically associated with men, and that it leads to impressions of competence for men and women. Rudman and Fairchild (2004; Rudman, 1998) have shown that gender role violations result in backlash, or negative social or economic sanctions (e.g., decreased liking, interpersonal rejection, sabotage, bias in hiring). For example, female job applicants who promoted themselves in an agentic manner were viewed as deficient in social skills and were less likely to be hired than self-promoting men, who were seen as both competent and likable (Rudman, 1998). The idea here is that for women, perceptions of their competence depend on impressions of both warmth and agenticism, yet women are often punished if warmth does not accompany the agentic display.

Backlash exists in part because of entrenched beliefs about what women and men should be like (*prescriptive stereotypes*) and what they should *not* be like (*proscriptive stereotypes*) (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). While some stereotypes about women have changed slightly in that women are seen as more agentic than in the past, the prescriptive and proscriptive beliefs about who holds positions with the highest status and power have not changed (Phelan & Rudman, 2010). In other words, while women are *allowed* to be agentic and to express agentic emotions such as anger, women are still seen less favorably than a man who expresses those emotions and behaviors (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Following this logic, role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) and Heilman's (1983, 2001) lack of fit model propose that the perceived mismatch between the communal female gender role and the agentic leadership role results in prejudice towards female leaders.

The stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) offers another explanation of the double-bind women face. The model posits that there two main dimensions on which people are stereotyped: warmth and competence. Pertaining to gender stereotypes, Fiske and her colleagues' model predicts that women who conform to traditional gender roles are perceived as warm but incompetent (likable but disrespected) while non-conforming women are perceived as cold but competent (dislikable yet respected). Thus, women must prove their competence *and* their warmth or communality to be respected and liked. High status out-groups (e.g., working women) pose a competition, while low status groups (e.g., housewives) are nonthreatening and do not evoke competition. High status out-groups thus elicit feelings of envy and low status groups elicit paternalistic stereotypes and feelings of warmth and pity.

Following the stereotype content model, the literature on backlash, and the work on gender-emotion stereotypes, competence becomes important to measure for a number of reasons: 1) studies of anger impressions have found competence to predict perceptions of high status (for white men); 2) white women receive backlash when their anger is seen as less competent and as having less status than white men's anger; 3) the stereotype content model states that competence and warmth are the main dimensions on which people stereotype others, and that nontraditional (e.g., angry) women should be seen as competent but cold; 4) perceptions of competence are contingent on agenticism and communality/warmth for (white) women; and 5) generally, competence impressions can have consequences for the likelihood of promotion, establishing respect, and for impressions of likability.

Because backlash in response to anti-gender normative behaviors has the potential to subtly affect hiring and promotion decisions, understanding its many forms is key in breaking the barrier to gender equity in the workplace. Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) and Lewis (2000) provide

preliminary evidence that women who express anger at work experience backlash in the form of lower salaries and less ascribed status and competence. Yet, we do not yet know about whether or not backlash results for *all* women who express anger in the workplace.

Race, Gender, and Emotion Stereotypes

Sanchez-Hucles & Davis (2010) argue that an intersectional perspective is particularly vital to understanding the unique barriers that prevent women of color from attaining leadership positions. Research about the perceptions of female leaders along with research on gender stereotypes does not specify racial ethnicity and thereby suggests that these female leaders are white. Sanchez-Hucles and Davis argue (as do I) that we cannot ignore the forms of racism and sexism that women of color encounter in the journey to becoming leaders. They specifically cite intersectional stereotypes about race and gender (e.g., Mammy, Jezebel, Sapphire for African American women) as a source of gender/race discrimination that affect black women's advancement in the workplace. Specific challenges black women face in the workplace include receiving lower salaries than white men and women (Holvino & Blake-Beard, 2004), being promoted at a slower rate than black men, and being more likely than men to encounter discrimination due to their status as an outgroup member (Combs, 2003).

Black women report that they are stereotyped as being confrontational or "out of control" in the workplace (Catalyst, 2004a; p.17; Hall, Everett, & Hamilton, 2012; Nelson, 2008), reflecting an angry black woman (ABW) stereotype. The ABW is loud, domineering, emotional, irrational, aggressive, argumentative, quick-tempered (Burnham, 1994; Donovan, 2011; Weitz & Gordon, 1993) direct (Popp, Donovan, Crawford, Marsh, & Peele, 2003) and hostile (Landrine, 1985). The ABW stereotype could contribute to the "concrete ceiling" that minority women face in the workplace (Catalyst, 2004b). Furthermore, Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas, and Harrison (2008)

suggest that the ABW stereotype limits black women in the workplace; expectations of black women to be tough and to not show any vulnerability may overshadow their professional skills and limit their ability to admit their shortcomings. Overlooking black women's competencies in the workplace may explain the fact that black women frequently do not have the mentors they need to succeed in their careers, and are therefore less likely to ask for help in difficult situations (Haslam & Ryan, 2008; as cited in Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010).

Previous work on the ABW stereotype is based on black women's narratives about perceptions of their anger (Harris-Perry, 2011; Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003; Nelson, 2008), empirical studies of black women's intersectional identity (Settles, 2006), and exploration of stereotype content about black women (Donovan, 2011; Landrine, 1985; Reynolds-Dobbs et al., 2008; Weitz & Gordon, 2003). Importantly, Donovan (2011) found that a sample of all-white students perceived black women as tough, strong, talkative, and loud. Taken together, it is evident that the stereotype of the strong and tough black woman (SBW) and the stereotype of the finger-wagging, confrontational ABW exist, and these stereotypes are relevant to many black women's lived experiences. The ABW stereotype in many ways highlights the intersection of racism and sexism that black women face, in that it is consistent with stereotypes about white women (emotional, irrational) and black men (hostile, aggressive), and may be unique to black women (Donovan, 2011; Settles, 2006; Thomas, Hacker, & Hoxha, 2011). While qualitative analyses and stereotype content studies are informative, we do not yet know if black women's anger displays are always perceived negatively, or whether their anger communicates competence, as it does for white men (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Tiedens, 2001).

There has only been one study (to my knowledge) to empirically investigate the ABW stereotype in the workplace. Livingston et al. (2012) tested whether dominant black women would

incur backlash from perceivers compared to white women, black men, and white men. Participants read a vignette about a meeting between a CEO and an employee who made a mistake; CEOs were described either as dominant (e.g. demanding, tough) or communal (e.g. encouraging, caring). Results showed that white women were rated as having less status when dominant than when communal, but there was no such penalty for black women. Black men were penalized for expressing dominance but white men were not. Replicating Brescoll and Uhlmann's (2008) finding, internal attributions made about the target's dominance mediated the relationship between the race and gender interaction and perceived leader status. Interestingly, leader status was measured with five questions about effectiveness, skill, admiration, respect, and salary – somewhat of a combination between leader effectiveness of Lewis (2000) and perceived status of Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008).

While Livingston et al. (2012) mention agentic emotion, and cite Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008), they were primarily concerned with dominance and agenticism (though they do not distinguish between these constructs). However, their prime example of a black female leader who displays agenticism and dominance is Ursula Burns, the first black female CEO of a Fortune 500 company, who is "assertive, outspoken, and even confrontational at times" (Livingston et al., 2012; p. 355). In their study, they used pictures and vignettes to present either a dominant versus communal leader – but not an angry leader. The dominant leader expressed disappointment by assertively demanding action from an employee – whereas the communal leader expressed compassion and encouraged the employee. Therefore it is unclear whether this 'dominant' black woman CEO resembles the ABW or SBW stereotype.

The Present Study

In this proposal, I consider two competing hypotheses. First, a double jeopardy hypothesis (Beal, 1970; Epstein, 1973) suggests that black women occupy two disadvantaged social positions, thus, their anger will be judged negatively: for example, aggressive, confrontational, argumentative (Burnham, 1994; Weitz & Gordon, 1993). Following the double jeopardy logic, any stereotype particular to black women will result in greater discrimination or negative attitudes than any stereotype particular to white women, who occupy fewer disadvantaged social positions. In addition, role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) would predict that being a black woman is not consistent with the roles associated with the prototypical white male leader, as black women have neither the race or gender component of leaders who are "allowed" to express anger (Chung-Herrera & Lankau, 2005).

An intersectionality perspective suggests a second and competing hypothesis. An intersectional hypothesis would predict that black women's race and gender roles are *more* consistent with the agentic roles associated with leaders (and therefore anger) because black women's roles include being strong and self-sufficient (Parker & Ogilvie, 1996). Black women may *not* automatically be disadvantaged relative to white women because they are perceived to be strong and tough (Donovan, 2011), traits that are consistent with the valued male stereotypes (i.e., agenticism). Although the ABW stereotype is typically characterized as negative, I propose that there may be positive consequences for black women's anger when displayed in the workplace. Parker and Ogilvie (1996) proposed that women of color might use different influence strategies than white women because of their racial/ethnic backgrounds that reflect strength, self-confidence, independence, and direct communication. Similarly, Livingston et al (2012) found that black

women CEOs were seen as having more status than white women when displaying a dominant communication style with an employee.

Supporting this hypothesis, my preliminary work (Dicicco, Li, & Shields, 2012a) has found that participants perceive an angry black woman as more agentic than an angry white woman. In this study, we manipulated emotion, gender, and race with audio clips of black and white female actors[2]. Participants were told that they would listen to an employee being interviewed about stress in the workplace; the employee was either a black or white woman and spoke in a neutral or angry tone of voice. In addition to the interaction of target race and emotion condition, we also found a main effect of hostility, such that the black woman target was perceived as more hostile than the white woman, regardless of emotion condition (anger vs. neutral). This main effect finding replicated an earlier study in which I used vignettes instead of audio clips to manipulate emotion (Dicicco & Shields, 2011).[3] While the interaction finding on agenticism supports the intersectionality hypothesis, the main effect of hostility may support the double jeopardy hypothesis, as black women may be perceived negatively based on her race and gender regardless of the emotion she expresses.

A second audio study (Dicicco, Li, & Shields, 2012b) replicated the interaction finding on agenticism. In this replication of the first audio study, we used a different black actress and a stronger manipulation of status (a paragraph describing the target's occupation[4]). In the low status conditions, black women were seen as more agentic than white women in the anger condition (no

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[2] We also added an independent variable of occupational status, but the manipulation was not effective and results related to status were therefore not presented.

[3] In this study, participants read vignettes that described either Taisha or Rachel discuss workplace stress. She described a stressful workplace scenario in either an angry or neutral manner, which was manipulated with nonverbal cues[3] embedded in the vignette.

[4] Targets said they worked under a supervisor as a cashier (low status) or an accounting manager (high status).

target race differences in the neutral conditions). There was also a marginally significant interaction for hostility for low status targets, where black women were seen as more hostile in the anger condition while there were no target race differences in the neutral condition. There were no significant interactions of race and emotion on any dependent measures in the high status condition. While the interaction on hostility was marginal, this study suggests that low status black women may be perceived as both hostile and agentic when angry, supporting the notion that multiple intersections of identity influence perceptions of the target.

These competing hypotheses suggest that the ABW stereotype is a double-edged sword, as Harris-Perry (2011) has postulated. In Harris-Perry's interviews with black women from Oakland, California, one woman reported that although she "had a certain power to make herself heard," she felt that the only way that she could do so was by confirming the ABW stereotype (p. 91). I am particularly interested in this situation because it highlights the possibilities for two different interpretations. (1) This woman may have been expected to get aggressive and assertive, and could therefore escape the repercussions (backlash or negative perceptions) that a white woman might expect in the same situation. (2) However, she may have fulfilled the stereotype believing she would be heard; yet in actuality, she would be seen as an intimidating angry black woman. Harris-Perry argues that while her assertiveness and anger demanded others' attention, this woman felt she was not genuinely heard or that she was only seen as a stereotype. Black women may be freer to express anger (than white women), but their anger may evoke the SBW stereotype that overshadows their identities and personalities.

Hypotheses

First, I expected to replicate prior work showing that white men will be perceived as more competent than white women when angry. Second, I expected to replicate my prior work showing

that the anger conditions are perceived as more agentic, hostile, and less warm than the sad conditions overall. Lastly, two competing hypotheses were tested: 1) Black women will be perceived as *more* competent than white women when angry if perceivers rely on *positive* stereotypes about black women as strong, assertive, and independent (i.e. the Superwoman image or the Strong, Independent Black Woman; Donovan, 2011; McRae, 2004; Reynolds-Dobbs et al., 2008); or 2) Black women will be perceived as *less* competent than white women when expressing anger, if perceivers rely on *negative* stereotypes about angry black women as aggressive and hostile (Burnham, 1994; Reynolds-Dobbs et al., 2008; Weitz & Gordon, 1993).

Hypothesis 1. I expect to replicate the finding that white women are perceived as less competent than men because white women violate traditional gender stereotypes of warmth and communality (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008). This finding is consistent with the stereotype that men express and experience more anger than women do (e.g., Plant et al., 2000). I make no explicit hypotheses for the perceptions of white men in relation to black women (or vice-versa).

Hypothesis 2. I expect the anger conditions to be rated as more agentic and more hostile than the sad conditions. The studies that I have conducted thus far have shown that the anger conditions are rated as more hostile than neutral conditions, and neutral conditions are rated as warmer. These results were found in the previously mentioned vignette study (Dicicco & Shields, 2011) in which emotion was manipulated with nonverbal cues inserted in the vignette. In both audio studies (Dicicco et al., 2012a; 2012b) these results were replicated when emotion was manipulated through voice. Despite different types of emotion manipulations and different comparisons to anger (sadness versus neutral) across past studies and in this study, I expect to replicate this effect. I interpret these findings as evidence of successfully manipulating emotion,

because anger conveys more approach (agentic traits, e.g., assertiveness, boldness) and hostility impressions (Montepare & Dobish, 2003), especially when comparison to sadness and neutrality.

Hypothesis 3. Although the SBW stereotype can constrain and obscure black women's identities, the strong stereotype may have some positive effects in some situations. I predict that, contrary to the white woman who is disliked for her assertiveness or anger (e.g. Rudman, 1998; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008), the angry black woman will be viewed as assertive, and will therefore be liked and seen as competent. Specifically, if angry black women are perceived in terms of the SBW stereotype, then perceptions of them as more agentic than white women will mediate perceptions of black women as more competent than white women.

Livingston et al. (2012) obtained some support for this hypothesis, with their finding that white women CEOs were penalized (i.e., seen as having less status) for displaying dominant behaviors while black women CEOs were not. If dominant black women and dominant white men do not differ in ratings of leader status (Livingston et al.), angry black women and angry white men may be perceived as similarly competent and agentic. Additionally, stereotypes about white women as passive, weak, and fragile would suggest that white women who display anger are more likely to disconfirm gender stereotypes than black women who are stereotyped as strong and direct (Landrine, 1985; Nelson, 2011; Popp et al., 2003).

Some of my preliminary findings suggest that stereotypes about black women's emotions are not necessarily negative, and that black women's anger can convey the SBW image. In my first audio study (Dicicco, Li, & Shields, 2012a), I found that angry black women were seen as more agentic when compared to angry white women. When I included occupational status as a third independent variable (Dicicco & Li, 2012b), I replicated this finding among low status black and white targets.

Hypothesis 4. Angry black women may be perceived as confirming the hostile aspects of the ABW stereotype (e.g. Harris-Perry, 2011; Landrine, 1985). Some of my prior studies have supported this. In my first audio study (Dicicco et al., 2012a) and in my vignette study (Dicicco & Shields, 2011), I found that black women were perceived as more hostile than white women regardless of emotion. These findings suggest that black women are perceived as hostile regardless of emotion displayed, plausibly because they are negatively stereotyped based on their race and gender. Therefore, I predict that if a black women are perceived in terms of the ABW stereotype, perceptions of angry black women as more hostile than angry white women will mediate perceptions of black women as less competent than white women. I also predict that if black women are perceived as hostile, they will be seen as less warm and likable.

Chapter 2. METHOD

The design of the study is a 3 (Target: black woman, white woman, white man) X 2

(Emotion: anger, sad) between-subjects design. Replicating the methodology of Tiedens (2001)

and Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008), participants read a short vignette about two coworkers in an

advertising agency who lose a client due to a failed meeting. In the vignette, one of the employees

was either a black woman (Shanice), a white woman (Jessica), or a white man (Dan), and was

described as feeling either angry or sad about the situation (see below for vignette). Participants

then rated their impressions of the target on competence, agenticism, hostility, warmth, and

likability.

Participants

The initial sample included 447 American participants from Amazon's Mechanical Turk

(an online resource for recruiting participants; see Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011).

However, 28.9% of this initial sample (129 participants) failed to pass manipulation checks and an

additional 1.3% was suspicious of the study's purpose (six participants mentioned race when asked

about the study's purpose). Manipulation checks consisted of correctly identifying the target's

gender, race, and emotion after reading the vignette and completing the dependent measures. The

manipulation check was multiple choice format and read, "What race would you say the employee

(Jessica) was?" The five answer choices were Asian, Black, White, Latino/a, Middle Eastern.

Participants had only two choices when asked about the target gender (male, female), and six

choices when asked about the target's emotion (happy, surprised, ambivalent, sad, angry, and

afraid). I excluded participants who incorrectly identified any one or more of these categories.

Overall, of the 129 participants who failed to pass manipulation checks, 79 participants

misidentified the target's race, 55 misidentified the target's emotion, and 16 misidentified the

target's gender. Among these participants who failed manipulation checks were 20 participants who misidentified two or more target characteristics (11 misidentified race and emotion, 5 misidentified race and gender, 2 misidentified gender and emotion, and 2 misidentified race, gender). Importantly, the proportion of participants who misremembered the target's race in the present study (approximately 17% of total sample) was similar to that of a study that manipulated race via vignettes (Donovan, 2007). While 28.9% of the present study's participants failed to pass manipulation checks, other studies that have utilized Mechanical Turk have reported from 25% to as much as 40% of the sample misidentifying an aspect of a vignette or failing manipulation checks (Berinsky, Huber, & Lentz, 2012; Kaiser et al., 2013; Mather et al., 2012; Oppenheimer, Meyvis, & Davidenko, 2009).

The proportion of participants who failed manipulation checks was distributed evenly across conditions, with a few exceptions: participants in the sad emotion condition were about twice as likely to incorrectly identify the target's emotion (15.9% of those in the sad condition versus 8.9% in the anger condition, respectively). Additionally, participants in the black female target condition were about 10 times as likely to incorrectly identify Shanice's race (43.7%) than were participants in the white target conditions (4.5% in Dan and Jessica conditions combined). Most all participants who incorrectly identified Shanice's race remembered that she was white instead of black, despite pilot testing indicating that Shanice is unanimously assumed to be a black name. Participants in this sample may have either reacted to a question asking about race or assumed the target was white. Similarly, participants may have misidentified the target's emotion because they expect the target to be angry in the situation instead of sad.

Unexpectedly, nonwhite participants (125 participants, 28% of the total sample) were more likely to incorrectly identify target race than white participants; participant ethnicity significantly

predicted identifying target race correctly ($b = .78$, Wald χ^2 (1) = 9.02, $p < 01$). Forty-five (14.2%) of white participants and 33 (26.4%) of nonwhite participants incorrectly identified the target's race. This was also true of participants in the black woman condition, where participant ethnicity predicted correct identifying of target race ($b = 1.49$, Wald χ^2 (1) = 7.21, $p < 01$). Of the 20 nonwhite participants in the angry black woman condition (n = 78), 13 (65%) incorrectly identified the target's race, versus 17 (29.3%) of the 58 white participants in the cell. Participant gender and age did not influence the accuracy of identifying target race. To ensure that manipulations were successful and to make claims about the perception of a black woman, a white woman, and a white man's anger, I had to exclude a higher proportion of nonwhite participants (47 participants, 37.6% of nonwhite sample) than white participants (79 participants, 25.3% of white sample) from my final sample. However, the proportion of participants who failed manipulation checks overall were similar to past studies, as mentioned above.

The final sample included 312 Mechanical Turk participants, including at least 30 participants per condition. Participants were 125 women, 183 men, and 3 transgender (75% white, 10.3% Asian, 7.1% Latino/a, 4.2% black, 2.2% Multi-ethnic, and <1% each American Indian and Pacific Islander, respectively). Participants were a mean age of 28.6 (*SD* = 9.56), ranging from 18 to 65 years. The number of participants who reported their highest degree was a High School diploma (39.1%) was about equal to those who earned a Bachelor's Degree (36.9%); 13.5% had earned an Associate degree; 7.4% of participants had earned a Master's degree; and 1.9% had earned a Doctorate or professional degree. Participants represented a range of household incomes: 20.2% had an income of less than $25,000; 31.1%, an income of $25,000-50,000; 34%, an income of $50,000-75,000; and 22.4% an income greater than $75,000.

Materials

Vignettes were adapted from those used by Tiedens et al. (2000; these were also used in Tiedens, 2001 and in Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008). The only aspect of the vignettes that differed from those used in Tiedens et al. (2000) was the target names (see the bolded text below). In the original vignettes, there were two targets (Andy and Don), but I am only interested in how participants perceive one of the targets (Shanice, Jessica, or Dan). Therefore, the other target (Andy) will not be discussed further. Both targets in the vignette are described as having the same status in the company (as in Study 3 of Tiedens et al., 2000).

> **Shanice** and Andy are coworkers at Signal Advertising Agency. They have been working at Signal for roughly the same amount of time and are at the same level. Today, they have a meeting with a client to present an idea for advertising a new product.
>
> When they go to the meeting, Andy has the materials for the slide presentation in his car and he follows **Shanice**, who has the directions, to the meeting. Andy and **Shanice** lose each other in traffic. **Shanice** arrives at the meeting on time but she cannot do the presentation because the visuals are in Andy's car. By the time Andy arrives, the client is furious and they lose the account. **Shanice feels angry about the situation.**

Target gender and race were manipulated with the names "**Shanice**" (the black female target), "**Jessica**" (the white female target) and "**Dan**" (the white male target). All three names were pilot tested with a separate convenience sample for perceived race and gender. Following prior studies, target emotion was manipulated in the last line of the vignette. The sad vignette read: **"Shanice feels sad about the situation."**[5]

Following Tiedens et al.'s (2000) procedure, the order of which target arrives late to the meeting was counterbalanced, such that the target (Shanice, Jessica, or Dan) was either the one who arrives at the meeting on time without the materials, or the one who has the materials but is

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[5] While targets felt angry or sad in the vignettes, the extent to which the emotion was expressed to others is not indicated.

late to the meeting. Counterbalancing the vignette versions demonstrated that results were due to the emotion Shanice experienced rather than her specific behaviors in the vignette (i.e. not having materials versus arriving late).

Procedure

Participants were recruited from the Mechanical Turk website (via Amazon.com) and received a $0.20 for their participation. Participants were told that the purpose of the study was to understand perceptions of stressful situations at work. In this online study, participants were directed to a survey where they were first asked to read the consent form and indicate their consent. Next, participants were told that they would be answering questions about a scenario, and that they should read the scenario carefully. After reading the vignette, participants rated the target on the dependent measures, indicated what they thought the study is about (the suspicion check), reported the target's gender, race, emotion, and occupation (manipulation and attention checks), and indicated their demographic information.

Dependent Measures

Competence. The main dependent measure of interest was perceived competence. Based on Tiedens (et al., 2000; 2001), the measure of competence included two 11-point bipolar adjective scales: "incompetent – competent" and "knowledgeable – ignorant" (reverse scored; see Appendix). Other measures of competence were: "If you had to guess, how good do you think this employee is at his/her job," and "How likely do you think it is that the employee will get promoted within the next year," each measured on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*) Likert scale. Tiedens' two-item measure of competence was not reliable ($\alpha = .45$), so I combined these four items; the resulting alpha level was .70.

Another measure of competence was estimation of the target's salary[6]: "If the average salary of those who work in advertisement is $75,000 per year, how much do you think this employee makes per year;" participants answered in an open-ended format.

Warmth/Likability. Tiedens (2001) measured perceived warmth with two 11-point bipolar adjective scales: "cold – warm" and "likable – not likable" (reverse scored). While Tiedens (2001) found this measure to be reliable (α= .83), I did not (α= .53). Therefore, each was analyzed separately.

Agenticism. Agenticism was measured with a 4-item 11-point bipolar adjective scale adapted from Heilman and Okimoto, 2007: "not assertive – assertive" (reverse scored), "weak – strong," "bold – timid" (reverse scored), and "not tough – tough" (α= .81). I used four items as opposed to two because I want to be able to capture all agentic aspects of the "Strong Black Woman" (SBW).

Hostility. The hostility scale included two traits adapted from Heilman and Okimoto, 2007: "abrasive – not abrasive" (reverse scored) and "nice – hostile" (α= .80), also measured with an 11-point bipolar adjective scale.

Exploratory Measures

Because I am also interested in how expressions of emotions convey trait attributions such as competence, I asked participants how much emotion they would think the target would display in the scenario if it had continued, on a Likert scale of 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). I also asked participants to what extent they thought the target would be able to control her/his emotions, on a Likert scale of 1 (*not at all able*) to 7 (*extremely able*).

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[6] Tiedens (2001) included similar measures, although the latter salary question was considered a measure of status instead of competence (or at least an indirect measure of competence).

An 11-point bipolar adjective item was also included to measure aggressiveness: "aggressive – passive." Aggressiveness could be perceived as either hostile or agentic. If participants perceive it as related to hostility, it could describe the ABW stereotype. However, aggressiveness could be perceived as a positive and agentic trait, more in line with SBW stereotype. I wanted to explore whether or not this measure correlates with agenticism or hostility, and to what extent it correlates with hostility for each target in order to explore how participants construe "aggressiveness" for black women, white women, and white men.

Chapter 3. RESULTS

Before testing my hypotheses, I ran a 3 (Target: black woman, white woman, white man) X 2 (Emotion: anger, sad) X 2 (Vignette: version 1, version 2) between-subjects ANOVA to test if the version of the vignette (i.e., the order in which the target name appeared) influenced the interaction of race and gender on any of the dependent measures. Results indicated that the vignette version had no significant interaction effects with target and emotion (all F's < 1.4 for the 3-way interaction; all F's < 2.3 in all 2-way interactions). There was one exception: an interaction of Target X Vignette Version on hostility ($F(2, 298) = 6.45$; $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .04$), so subsequent significant main effects of target on hostility were analyzed with vignette version as an independent variable.

In a 3 (Target) X 2 (Emotion) X 2 (Participant Gender) ANOVA, participant gender did not have main effects (all $Fs < 3$) or interaction effects ($Fs < 2$) on the main dependent variables; therefore, participant gender is not examined any further. However, participant ethnicity did interact with target ($F(2, 305) = 3.22$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$) and with emotion ($F(1, 305) = 5.57$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$), but there was no significant three-way interaction on the main dependent measures. Pairwise comparisons reveal that nonwhite participants were marginally more likely to perceive angry targets as less agentic than white participants ($M_{nonwhite} = 5.51$, $SD = 1.50$; $M_{white} = 5.92$, $SD = 1.40$; $p < .07$). Nonwhite participants were marginally more likely to perceive the white woman target as more agentic overall ($M_{nonwhite} = 5.64$, $SD = 1.43$; $M_{white} = 5.10$, $SD = 1.46$; $p = .08$) and the white man target as less agentic overall ($M_{white} = 5.52$, $SD = 1.55$; $M_{nonwhite} = 4.99$, $SD = 1.58$; $p = .07$), compared to white participants' perceptions of these targets. Given that these comparisons

are marginal and that the main focus of the present study is on how emotion and target interact, these findings will not be discussed further.

Main Effects of Emotion

A 3 (Target) X 2 (Emotion) between-subjects ANOVA was performed on all dependent measures. Replicating my past findings and supporting my hypotheses, I found that the anger condition was perceived overall as more hostile ($F(1, 306) = 167.36, p < .001; \eta^2 = .35$), aggressive ($F(1, 306) = 135.45, p < .001; \eta^2 = .31$), and agentic ($F(1, 306) = 32.90, p < .001; \eta^2 = .10$) than the sad condition (see Table 1). There was also a main effect of emotion on warmth $F(1, 306) = 112.61, p = .001; \eta^2 = .27$) and likability ($F(1, 306) = 14.78, p < .001; \eta^2 = .05$), where the neutral conditions were rated as more warm and likable than the anger conditions (see Table 1).

I ran the same ANOVA for the exploratory measures; a main effect of emotion emerged on emotion control ($F(1, 303) = 19.98, p < .001; \eta^2 = .06$), such that targets who were angry ($M = 4.92, SD = 2.13$) were rated as less likely to be able to control their emotions than targets who were sad ($M = 6.15, SD = 2.06$). An emotion main effect also emerged for express emotion ($F(1, 303) = 9.92, p < .01; \eta^2 = .03$), such that angry targets were perceived to express more emotion ($M = 8.17, SD = 1.77$) than sad targets ($M = 7.53, SD = 1.93$). There were no statistically significant main effects of target on any of the exploratory dependent measures.

Testing the Competing Hypotheses

Competence. To test my competing hypotheses, I look specifically the interaction of target and emotion for the main dependent measures. In the same 3 (Target) X 2 (Emotion) between-subjects ANOVA as above, there were several significant interactions. First, there was a significant Target X Emotion interaction on competence ($F(2, 306) = 4.79, p < .01; \eta^2 = .03$).

Supporting hypothesis 3, the black woman target was rated as significantly more competent than the white woman target in the anger condition, and white woman target was rated as more competent than black woman target in the sad condition (see Table 1). I had predicted (hypothesis 1) to replicate the finding that an angry white man target would be rated as more competent than the angry white woman target, but this comparison was not significant ($p = .18$). There was a significant main effect of Target on the salary that participants thought the target deserved, $F(2, 308) = 3.21$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$)[7]. Reflecting the gender-stereotypical salary allocation, the white man target was given a higher salary than the white and black women targets, regardless of emotion condition (see Table 2).

Agenticism. The interaction of target and emotion was only marginally significant on perceived agenticism ($F(2,306) = 2.61$, $p < .08$). In line with hypothesis 3, pairwise comparisons revealed that ratings of agenticism for the white woman and the white man target significantly differed in the anger condition ($p < .05$), such that the white man was more agentic ($M = 6.02$, $SD = 1.39$) than the white woman target ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.53$). While not statistically significant ($p = .12$), the black woman target was rated as more agentic ($M = 5.94$, $SD = 1.28$) than the white woman target in the anger condition ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.53$). Therefore, the hypothesis (3) that the black woman target would be perceived as more competent *and* more agentic than the white woman target was only partially supported.

As noted in Table 3, agenticism was significantly correlated with competence and hostility ($p < .001$). When broken down by target, agenticism was negatively associated with warmth for the white man target ($p < .01$) but these constructs are unrelated for female targets.

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[7] There were two extreme outliers in the white man condition (50 and 650,000) that severely affected the standard deviations in this condition when compared to the other target conditions; therefore these two outliers were removed for this analysis.

Warmth and Likability. In Hypothesis 3, I predicted that the black woman target would be liked more than the white woman target in the anger condition, but not in the sad condition. Although no significant main effects or interaction effects were found on likability or warmth, the direction of the means suggest that, overall, the white woman target was liked more than the other targets, especially within the sad condition (see Table 1). Both warmth and likability were positively correlated with competence, and negatively correlated with hostility and aggressiveness (see Table 3). These correlations were replicated within each target condition as well.

Hostility and aggressiveness. There was a significant interaction of Target and Emotion on both hostility ($F(2,306) = 3.76$, $p < .05$; $\eta^2 = .02$) and the aggressive item ($F(2,306) = 5.42$, $p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .03$). Supporting hypothesis 4, pairwise comparisons showed that the black woman target and the white man target were significantly more hostile than the white woman target in the anger condition ($p < .01$; $p = .001$, respectively; see Table 1). No differences among the targets emerged in the sad condition. The results were similar for aggressiveness: The black woman target was viewed as more aggressive than the white woman target in the anger condition ($p = .001$). The white man was also seen as more aggressive than the white woman ($p < .05$; see Table 1). Aggressiveness was correlated positively with both agenticism and hostility overall and within each target condition.

Correlations

Overall, competence was positively correlated with agenticism, warmth and likability, but negatively correlated with hostility (see Table 3). Breaking the correlations down by target condition highlights the intersectional position of the black woman target, in that different patterns of relationships exist for each target, based on the target's race and gender. For instance, competence is generally negatively associated with hostility, but this is not true when looking at

the black woman target, where there is no significant correlation between the two items. This finding is not surprising given that the angry black woman target was perceived as competent and hostile. When looking at the two white targets, we see the same pattern of correlations, except for warmth; perceptions of the white man target's competence was not correlated with warmth, and was not as significantly correlated with likability. Each of these examples elucidate that the black woman and white woman were perceived similarly in terms of warmth and likability, but that the black woman was perceived differently than the white targets in terms of hostility. This pattern of correlations generally supports my intersectional hypothesis, that black woman may be perceived differently depending on their gender and race, but counters my specific hypotheses that black woman would be perceived as more competent (hypothesis 3) or more hostile (hypothesis 4). Instead, the black woman target was perceived as both competent and hostile when angry, and these impressions were not negatively correlated as one would expect (since hostile impressions are generally negative and competence impressions are positive).

Mediation Analysis

I hypothesized that a mediation model would show either that perceptions of agenticism would mediate the relationship between target race and competence (hypothesis 3) or that perceptions of hostility would mediate the relationship between target race and competence (hypothesis 4). Because the results regarding competence showed that the angry black woman was perceived as more competent than the angry white woman (supporting hypotheses 3), I tested the first model[8].

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[8] Instead of the angry black woman target being perceived as hostile and therefore less competent, the angry black woman was perceived as more hostile *and* more competent than her white counterpart. Therefore, a meditational model testing how hostility *positively* predicts competence was not hypothesized.

To test mediation, I used using the bootstrapping technique (Hayes, 2012; Preacher &

Hayes, 2004). Selecting data only from the anger and female target conditions (n = 96), I set a

95% confidence interval using 5000 re-samples. Target Race was entered as the predictor,

agenticism as a mediator, and ratings of competence as the outcome variable. The indirect effect

of target race on perceived competence with agenticism as the mediator was not significant ($F(2,$

$92) = 7.49, p > .05$). The 95% confidence interval for agenticism as the mediator included zero (-

.46, .01). This non-significant effect may be due to the non-significant relationship between target

race and agenticism ($F(1, 93) = 3.46, p < .07$).

Chapter 4. DISCUSSION

In this study, I sought to replicate and extend prior findings about the construal of a target's anger in a workplace setting (Brescoll & Uhlmann 2008, Lewis, 2000; Tiedens, 2001). Specifically, I explored how race and gender stereotypes affect impression formation of an angry target at work. Overall, results from the present study in part support both competing hypotheses, countering the notion that the proposed outcomes were necessarily competing or orthogonal.

The most intriguing finding is that participants perceived an angry black woman as more competent than an angry white woman, whereas the opposite was found when both female targets were sad. Providing support for my first hypothesis regarding the SBW stereotype, the data show that when it comes to anger in the workplace, black women may be perceived in similar ways that white men are (as demonstrated in Livingston et al., 2012). This competence finding is especially interesting given that my preliminary work did not find race differences in perceived competence in any emotion condition (Dicicco & Shields, 2011; Dicicco et al., 2012a; 2012b). Competence findings from my previous work and from this study contextualize emotion stereotypes. When participants think about an angry black or white woman in general (i.e. "Shanice feels angry"), they are more likely to make judgments based on stereotypes because they have little information about her. When participants hear an audio clip of an angry black or white woman (as in my previous studies), more varied degrees of emotion emerge; the black woman is not just angry, but irate, and the way she expresses her anger (i.e. word choice, signs of exasperation, voice volume) makes a difference when it comes to gender/race stereotypes and assessments of emotion appropriateness.

Interestingly, this study failed to replicate the finding that white men are perceived as competent when angry, relative to white women (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Lewis, 2000). While the direction of the means suggested that the white man target was perceived as more competent than the white woman target when angry, the effect was not significant. While there was an effect of target on salary allocated, there were no significant differences in salaries among emotion and target conditions, unlike in Brescoll & Uhlmann's study. Considering the same vignette was used in video format instead of vignettes, targets in their study may have conveyed microexpressions of anger or sadness, or the visual cue of the target's gender influenced gender emotion stereotyping (e.g. Hess et al., 2000; 2005). However, in the present study, the white man target was rated as more agentic than the white women target in the anger condition, reflecting the gender and emotion stereotypes (men are more agentic than women, especially when angry) and Brescoll and Uhlmann's finding that angry white men are rated more favorably than angry white women.

The effects I found in previous research (Dicicco & Shields, 2011; Dicicco et al., 2012a; b) that black women were more agentic than white women in the anger condition were not completely replicated in this study. The perception of an angry black woman target as more agentic than an angry white woman target was marginally significant. Overall, the SBW hypothesis (3) that the black woman would be perceived as more agentic and competent than the white woman was partially supported.

My second competing hypothesis (4) that the black woman target would be seen as less warm, more hostile, and therefore less competent than the white woman target also received partial support. The black woman was perceived as more hostile and aggressive than the white woman overall, and especially in the anger condition. However, the prediction that black woman

target would be perceived as less warm and likeable than the white woman when angry did not reach significance, despite means supporting the predicted pattern. And, as noted earlier, the black woman target was perceived as more competent than the white woman target, countering my second hypothesis that the opposite relationship would occur. It should be noted that participants could have interpreted 'aggressive' as positive and agentic, or as negative and hostile, based on positive correlations with both hostility and agenticism. Looking at the correlations of competence and hostility by target condition, the pattern for the black woman and white targets were different. For the white man and the white woman targets, hostility was strongly negatively associated with competence, but for the black woman target, this correlation was absent, suggesting that impressions of hostility may not always be detrimental to black women's perceived competence.

In conclusion, both hypotheses have kernels of truth, highlighting the intersectional nature of the findings. The black female target was perceived as hostile and aggressive, yet competent. While the white man target and the black woman target were rated similarly on most dependent measures, the black woman target had the highest rating of competence in the anger condition. Including race in the analysis of perceived anger in the workplace reveals that black and white women are not stereotyped in the same way, nor are white men and black women stereotyped in the same manner.

Limitations

The specific scenario used in this study, as well as in Tiedens (2001) and Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) limits the generalizeability of the findings. The target in the vignette gets angry or sad about a negative work situation in which it is partially the target's fault. Impressions of an angry target depend on the extent to which the perceiver judges the target to be at fault, with

more fault attributions leading to negative perceptions (Tiedens et al., 2000). Thus, impressions of fault may differ based on the perceiver or individual difference variables such as attitudes or knowledge about the target prior to the anger-inducing event, prejudice, gender-role endorsement, and/or political affiliation. It would be more realistic to include these perceiver variables in studies of emotion perception at work, as people often are in different stages of getting to know their coworkers.

While this study represents what past research would have found had they included race in their analyses (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Tiedens, 2001), we do not know if anger about a situation versus anger directed towards another person have different consequences regarding gender emotion stereotypes. Given that there is often hierarchy in workplaces, that status impacts stereotype formation (e.g. Fiske, 1993), and that anger is associated with status, occupational status should also impact perceptions of an angry target. If black female CEOs demonstrated dominance and did not receive backlash (Livingston et al. 2012), high status black women may escape some negative race stereotypes such as hostility.

Implications for Future Research

There are at least two possible mechanisms for the effect of race and gender on impressions of competence. Angry black women might receive a 'boost' in competence ratings for conforming to stereotypes; or, angry white women might receive more backlash (e.g., Rudman, 1998) for counter-stereotypical behavior relative to black women. The fact that the white woman target was rated as more competent than the black woman target when she was sad suggests that white women may be rewarded for conforming to expected gender/race stereotypes of conveying warmth and vulnerability (Ragins & Winkel, 2012), whereas black women are expected to appear strong (Livingston et al., 2012; Shefte & Koerber, 2012). A qualitative study

could elucidate how meanings of agenticism, hostility, and competence depend on the gender and race of the target. For instance, if participants are allowed to respond to an open-ended question about their perceptions, we might see more depth in stereotype content. If black women are as hostile and competent when displaying anger, they may also be perceived as intimidating – in which case competence would not be equivalent to unambiguously positive regard; rather, perceptions of competence might stem from feelings of fear or threat.

The fact that angry black women in this study were perceived as both competent and hostile could suggest that the ABW and SBW stereotypes are not contradictory or are both present when others perceive an angry black woman. It is possible that both stereotypes are at work, or that nuances of the situation bring one side of the stereotype (either the hostile or the agentic) to the forefront of a person's mind when forming impressions. Black women may have to walk a fine line between being perceived as strong and being perceived as hostile when it comes to expressing anger, discontent, or frustration at work. Future studies should elucidate the situational factors that elicit either (or both) side(s) of the stereotype in the perception of a black woman expressing anger at work.

Stereotypes of angry black women in this study suggest that (mostly white) participants may hold ambivalent attitudes towards black women in certain work-related situations, given perceptions of them as competent and hostile. Fiske and colleagues (2002; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007) argue that these ambivalent stereotypes reflecting both positive and negative dimensions are based on impressions of others as warm and/or competent (Stereotype Content Model). Fiske et al. further contend that impressions of low warmth and high competence stem from feelings of envy or jealousy, citing rich people, Jews, and Asians as examples (Fiske et al., 2002; 2007). This theory raises the question of 1) how momentary emotion expressions at the

level of the individual influence group-based stereotypes, and 2) how impressions of black women might be motivated by feelings of envy and competition when black women express anger but not when they express sadness.

This study has implications for perceptions of black women at work. Black women face challenges in the workplace specific to their gender and race, reflecting their experience of double jeopardy (e.g., Combs, 2003; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). Included in the list of barriers is that black women are stereotyped ambivalently as hostile yet competent when they are perceived as angry. An intersectional perspective of race, emotion, and gender stereotypes demonstrates that black women do not conveniently fit in previous study findings regarding gender emotion stereotypes, and alludes to potential complexities in how race/gender stereotypes function.

Because stereotypes also affect perceptions of self (Steele & Aronson, 1995), it may be especially difficult for black women to navigate leadership positions if they are to expect both positive and negative impressions when showing anger. For instance, black women might refrain from showing anger or any emotion or trait related to it (e.g., assertiveness) for fear of being negatively stereotyped. Alternatively, as Reynolds-Dobbs and colleagues (2008) have suggested, black women may have a harder time demonstrating their approachability and likability when showing 'vulnerable' emotions like sadness or compassion, if people expect them to be aggressive, direct, and hostile.

Black women's voices are important in making sense of the present study's finding to get a clearer picture of how race and gender stereotypes operate in the workplace. The present study highlights the need for research that focuses on black women's lived experiences and their

perspectives on how their emotions are stereotyped. I plan to conduct a focus group study that will investigate this question.

Conclusion

Black women who are believed to be angry about a negative outcome at work are not necessarily perceived negatively. Thinking about the image of the angry black woman resulted in perceptions of increased hostility, but also perceptions of increased competence in comparison to thinking about an angry white woman. My prior work has shown that when anger is contextualized by a verbal expression of anger, black women's anger may be more likely to be perceived as strong and agentic (the SBW stereotype). When anger is not contextualized, mostly white perceivers may be more likely to rely on the ABW stereotype, although the ABW stereotype may not be completely negative, as evidenced by ratings of the black female target as competent. Overall, this study fills a gap in the previous literature on emotion and gender stereotypes as well as demonstrates the need for intersectional perspectives in psychological work.

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APPENDIX A

Tables and figures

Table 1

Means for Main Dependent Variables by Emotion and Target Conditions

	Anger Condition			Sad Condition		
Target	Black woman (n = 42)	White woman (n = 58)	White man (n = 62)	Black woman (n = 33)	White woman (n = 64)	White man (n = 59)
Competence	5.55 (1.43)	5.00 (1.41)	5.37 (1.43)	5.19 (1.32)	5.98 (1.47)	5.49 (1.66)
Agenticism	5.94 (1.28)	5.46 (1.53)	6.02 (1.39)	4.73 (1.58)	5.01 (1.37)	4.79 (1.48)
Hostility	7.27 (1.34)	6.46 (1.53)	7.32 (1.28)	4.86 (1.29)	4.84 (1.52)	4.72 (1.64)
Aggressiveness	7.08 (1.75)	5.80 (2.00)	6.60 (1.83)	3.91 (1.92)	4.30 (1.53)	4.07 (1.59)
Warmth	4.62 (1.37)	5.00 (1.53)	4.81 (1.65)	6.69 (1.60)	6.98 (1.62)	6.85 (1.90)
Likability	5.54 (1.76)	5.95 (1.94)	6.00 (1.78)	6.31 (2.25)	7.08 (1.99)	6.75 (2.10)

Note. Standard deviations in parentheses. Scales ranged from 1-11, with higher scores indicating higher levels of the dependent measure. $N = 312$.

Table 2

Means for Salary (in Dollars) Allocation Across Conditions

	Anger Condition			Sad Condition		
	Black woman	White woman	White man	Black woman	White woman	White man
Salary	63268.29 (11247.28)	62282.00 (16290.95)	65766.67 (14316.48)	61000.00 (13000.00)	64312.50 (11528.95)	67396.55 (10052.39)

Note. Standard deviations in parentheses. Participants were told that the average employee earned $75,000 per year; $N = 314$.

Table 3

Correlations Among Dependent Variables – Overall and by Target

	Competence	Agenticism	Hostility	Aggressive	Warmth	Likability
Competence	**1**	**.40*****	**-.28*****	**.06**	**.24*****	**.29****
Black woman	1	.48***	-.05	.18	.31***	.39***
White woman	1	.27*	-.45***	-.09	.40***	.29***
White man	1	.49***	-.24**	.13	.07	.22*
Agenticism		**1**	**.29*****	**.54*****	**-.10**	**-.04**
Black woman		1	.40***	.49***	-.05	.08
White woman		1	.26**	.54***	.06	-.03
White man		1	.24**	.58***	-.24**	-.10
Hostility			**1**	**.58*****	**-.68*****	**-.47*****
Black woman			1	.67***	-.65***	-.50***
White woman			1	.51***	-.65***	-.54***
White man			1	.58***	-.72***	-.38***
Aggressive				**1**	**-.38*****	**-.29*****
Black woman				1	-.35**	-.29*
White woman				1	-.28**	-.27**
White man				1	-.47***	-.29***
Warmth					**1**	**.36*****
Black woman					1	.38***
White woman					1	.41***
White man					1	.28**

Note: *** = $p \leq .001$, ** = $p < .01$, * = $p < .05$

Figure 1

Findings from the 3 (Target) X 2 (Emotion) ANOVA – Anger Condition
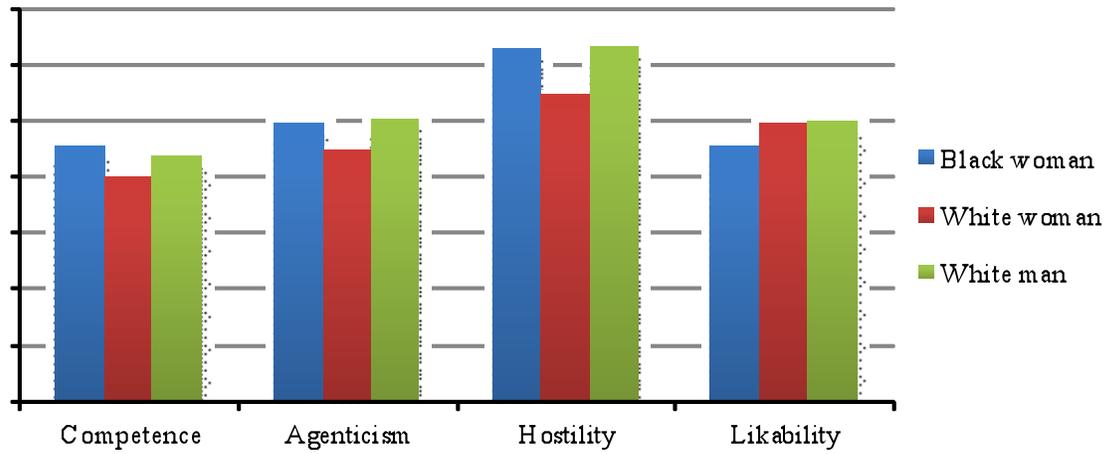
Figure 2

Findings from the 3 (Target) X 2 (Emotion) ANOVA – Sad Condition

APPENDIX B

Dependent Measures

Please rate Shanice/Jessica/Dan on the following scales:

1.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Incompetent   Competent

2.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Knowledgeable   Ignorant

3.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Cold   Warm

4.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Likable   Not Likable

5.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Passive   Aggressive

6.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Assertive   Not Assertive

7.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Weak   Strong

8.

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11

Bold   Timid

9.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Not Tough   Tough

10.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Abrasive   Not Abrasive

11.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Nice   Hostile

12. If you had to guess, how good do you think this employee is at his/her job?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Not at all   Somewhat   Extremely

13. How likely do you think it is that the employee will get promoted within the next year?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Not at all   Somewhat   Extremely

14. If the average salary of accountants is $75,000 per year, how much do you think this employee makes per year? _____

15. How much anger/sadness do you think Shanice/Jessica/Dan will express in this situation?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Not at all   Somewhat   Very Much

16. To what extent do you think Shanice/Jessica/Dan is able to control her/his anger/sadness?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

Not at all Able   Somewhat Able   Extremely Able