



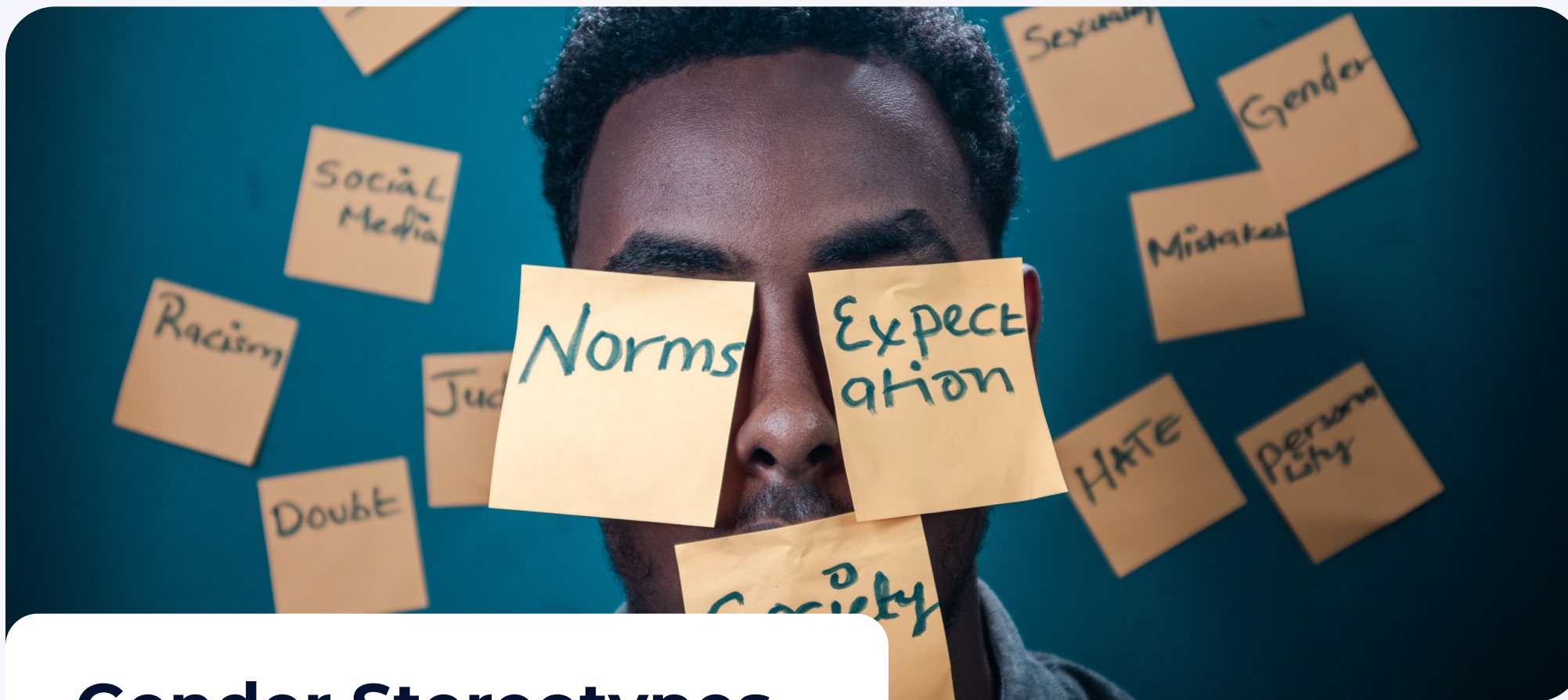
UNIVERSITY OF LUXEMBOURG

Department of Behavioural
and Cognitive Sciences

From Stereotypes to Hostile Sexism – A Psychological Analysis of Conceptions about Gender

Miriam-Linnea Hale, M.Sc.

Asst.-Prof. Dr André Melzer



Gender Stereotypes

GENDER STEREOTYPES

Thinking About Gender...

- What comes to mind spontaneously when **six-year-olds** think of **boys** or **girls**?

Gender role stereotypes.

(Wood et al., 2015)

- Stereotypical **gender roles** establish **beliefs** in stereotypical properties of males and females, **ignoring** individual characteristics (Bosak et al., 2007)



GENDER STEREOTYPES

Stereotypes — a Cognitive Prejudice

- **Knowledge, belief, and behavioral expectations** about a social group
– a heuristic or “rule of thumb” that is **by no means** always true and not always conscious
- People have a strong tendency to look for **confirmation** of stereotypical expectations



Stereotypes: Practical Implications

- Stereotypical beliefs are important for **career choice, job placement, and admittance**
→ Skills, but also adherence to **social norms** is expected (von der Hagen & Voß, 2010)

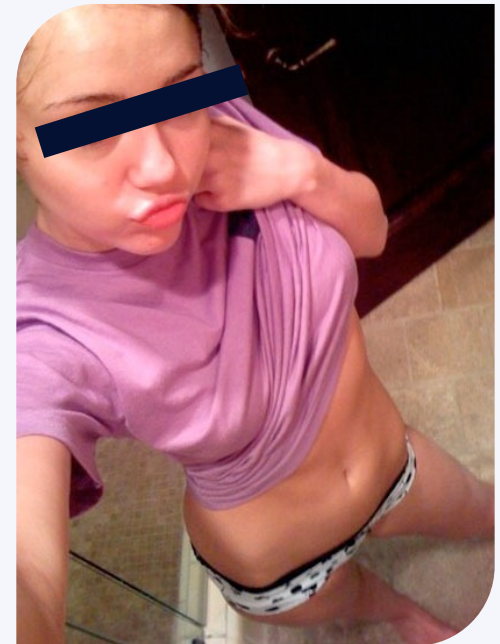
“Female **manager**” should wear a business dress that is more like a **typical male outfit** than a “typical female” dress (Forsythe et al., 1985)



GENDER STEREOTYPES

Gender Stereotypes: Sexualization

- Emphasizing women's **physical appearance devaluates** skills, cognitive abilities, expertise, competence, personality, and achievements (e.g., Gille-Knauf & Mittag, 2008; Loughnan et al., 2010; Rudman & Borgida, 1995)
- Short-term **visual contacts** with **sexualized** portrayals of females affect subsequent **job assignment**, but only for representatives of **high-status** jobs (Glick et al., 2005)



GENDER STEREOTYPES

Sexualization: Job-related Expectancies

Non-sexualized

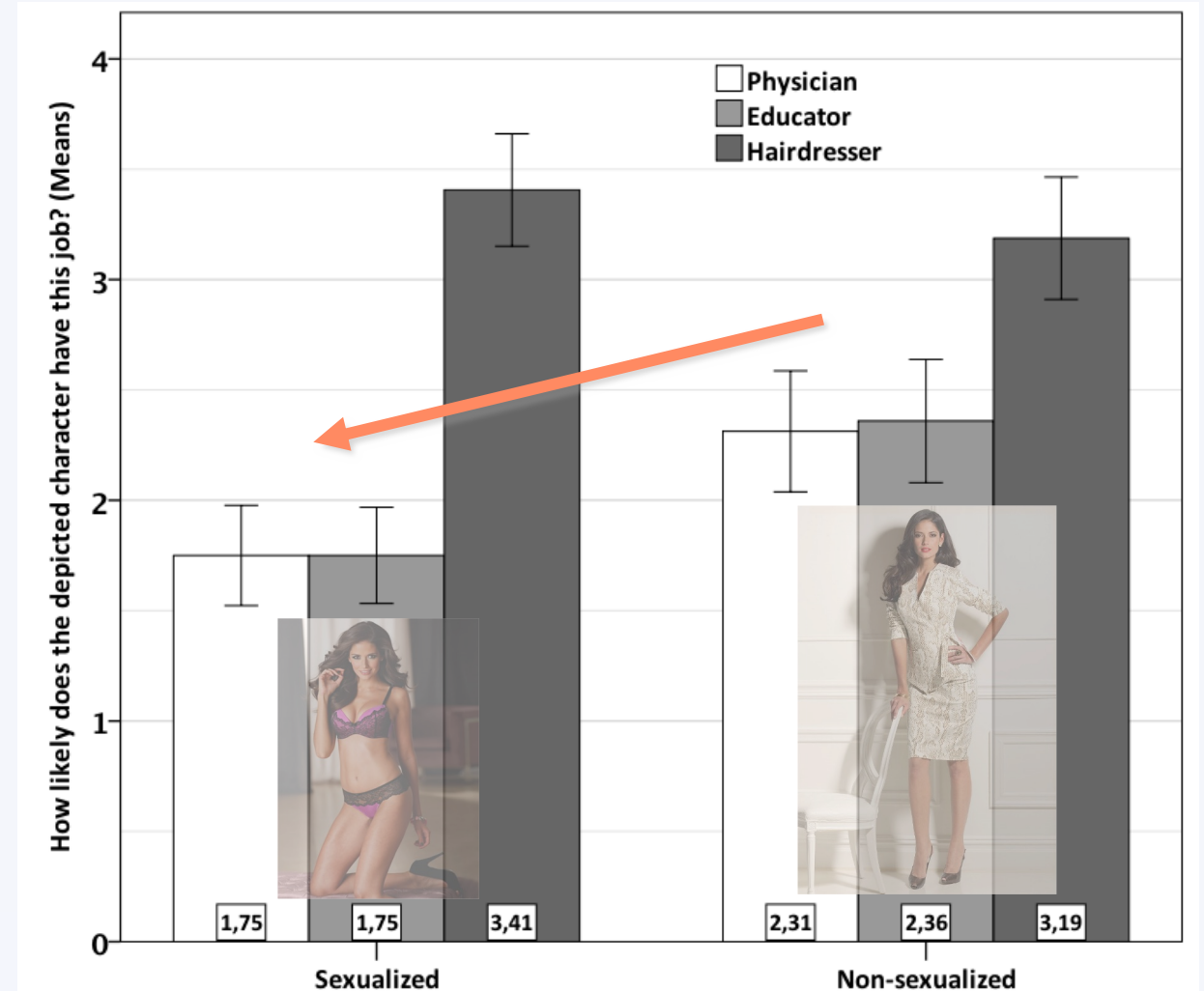


Sexualized



- People trust a **sexually** portrayed woman to have only a **low social status job**

(Melzer & Ramsperger, 2017)



Sexualization and Job Assignment

- Activating the “**sexy woman**” stereotype has a **discriminating** effect of female **sexualization** in staff selection (Forsythe et al., 1985)
- Not only sexualization, but also **moral judgements** and **ratings of competence** play a role in job discrimination (Melzer & Ramsperger, 2017)
- Sexualization negatively affects **competence ratings** for women *and* men (Loughnan et al., 2010)

GENDER STEREOTYPES

From Gender Stereotypes to Sexism

- Like gender stereotypes, **sexism** is a **multidimensional prejudice** regarding content and extent to which it is socially seen as **problematic**, **accepted** or even considered **decent** (Glick & Fiske, 1996)
- Stereotypes related to **skills**
(e.g., *boys/men are better at maths, girls/women are better at languages*)
- Hostile** sexism
(e.g., *women seek power by seeking control over men*)
- Benevolent** sexism
(e.g., *girls should be more protected than boys*)

"You're pretty smart for a girl!"

"When a woman has scholarly inclinations there is usually something wrong with her sexual organs."
F. Nietzsche

Media as Teacher

- **Media**—an important source for **social learning** (Bandura, 2001)
- Media updates societally relevant **norms** via presentation of **prototypical gender roles** and patterns of **behavior**



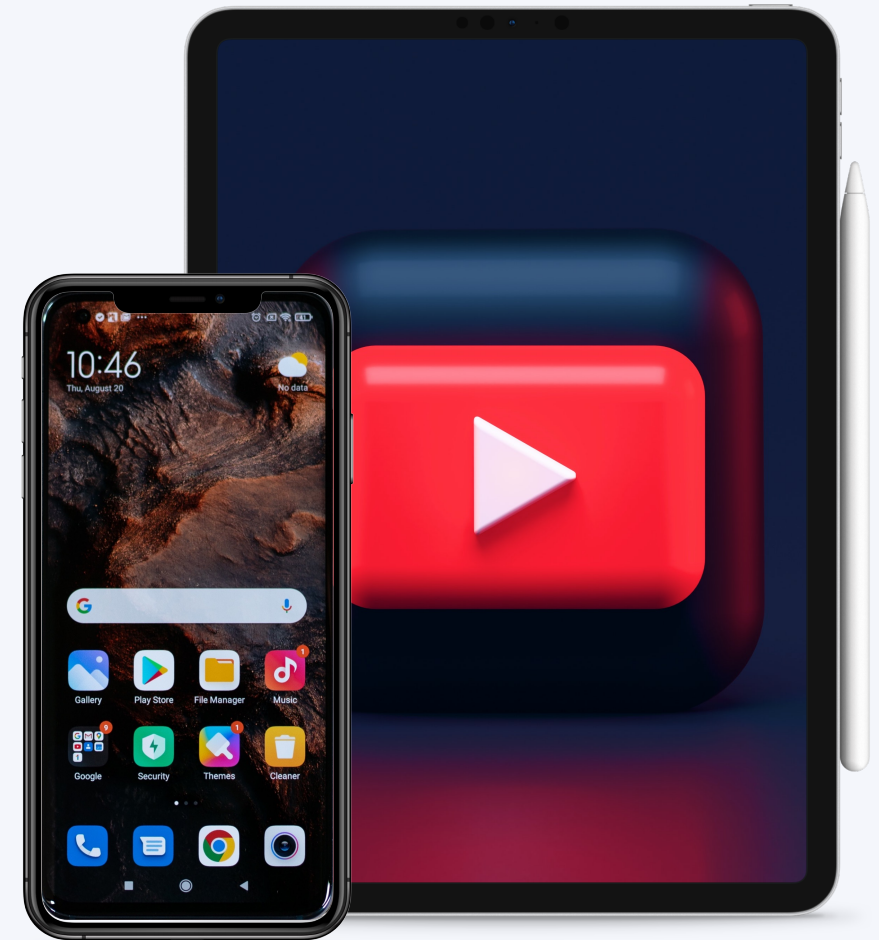


Online Sexism

PREVALENCE

Online Sexism

- Both hostile and benevolent sexism are highly **prevalent** on social media (e.g., Jha & Mamidi, 2017; Greenwood & Gautam 2020)
- Social media has become more prevalent especially in the lives of **younger generations**
- In Germany, **94%** of adolescents own a smartphone and they spend a daily average of **four hours online** (mpfs, 2021)
- According to **YouTube's** own data, people around the world consume more than **one billion hours** of YouTube content **every day** (Goodrow, 2017)



Online Sexism

- Most social media platforms **ban sexism** as hate speech and rely on **AI** and user reports to recognize and remove it



Far from perfect and mainly **limited** to **hostile** sexism and does not account for reclamation (Cepollaro, 2020)

- Benevolent** sexism has **negative** effects on various areas of life



Benevolent Sexism

- May be perceived as equally or even more **unpleasant** than hostile sexism and can elicit strong **negative** reactions at the emotional, cognitive, and even physiological levels (Bosson et al., 2010; Salomon, Burges & Bosson, 2015; Bosson, Pinel & Vandello, 2010)
- Can increase **acceptance** of intimate partner violence and teen dating violence (Dasil et al., 2020; Durán et al., 2011)
- Is often **not directly recognized** as sexism, even in online contexts (e.g., Dardenne et al., 2007; Jha & Mamidi, 2017)
- Decreased likelihood of women choosing **STEM** professions and fields of study, as well as possible reduced success (e.g., lower grades) (Kuchynka et al., 2018)



<http://www.misstreated.org/blog/2016/1/3/benevolent-sexism-when-cherishing-women-leads-to-death>



Our Research

Questions

- ? How do men and women **react** to hostile and benevolent sexism in social media contexts?
- ? Are there **platform** differences?
- ? Are there differences in **recognition** of benevolent and hostile sexism in social media contexts?



The Studies

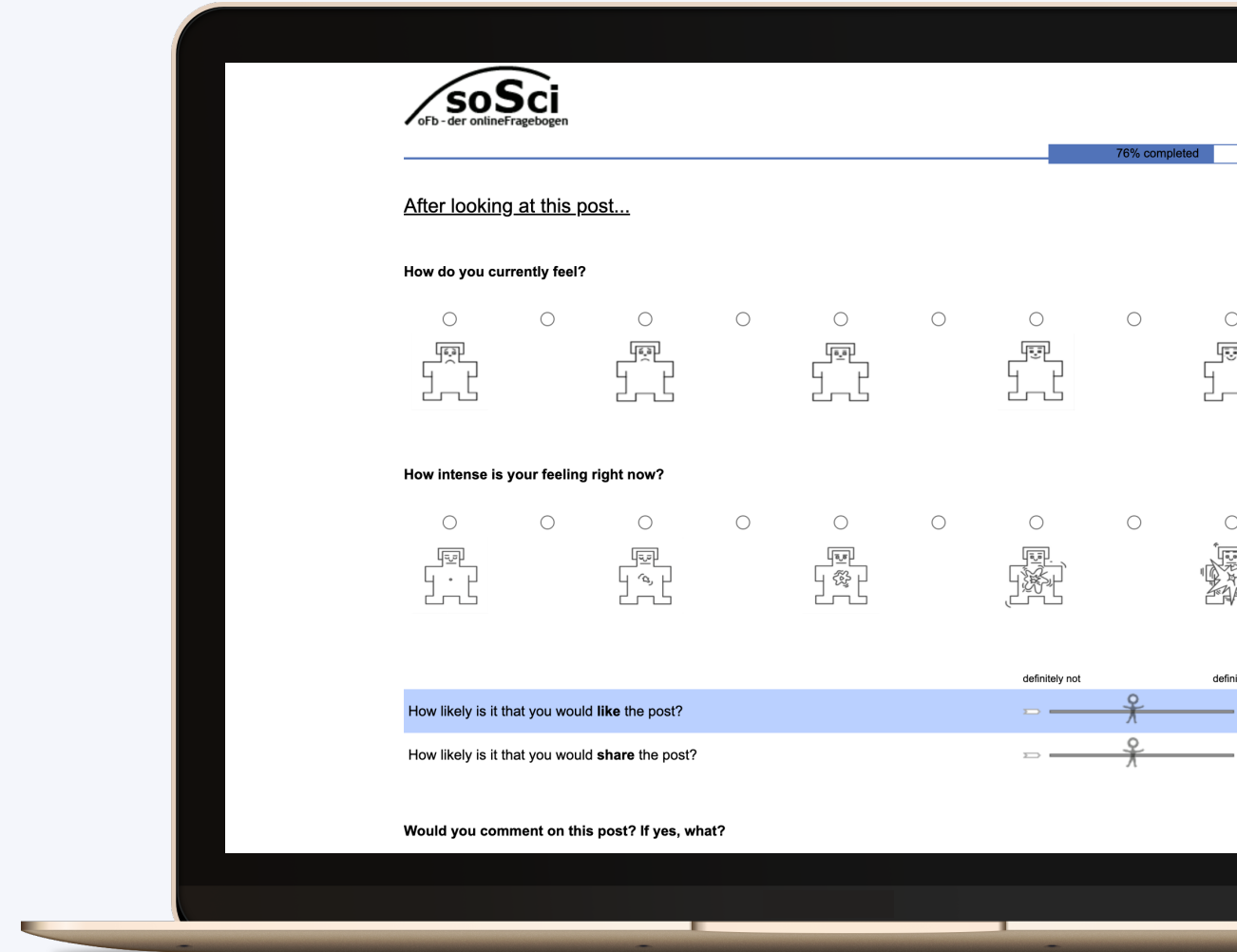
- **Collaboration** with sociologist Claire van Duin
- Funded by the Luxembourgish *Ministry of Equality between Women and Men*
- Two **interdisciplinary** psychological-sociological studies on reactions to sexism in the context of social media in the form of online surveys



ONLINE SEXISM

The Studies

- Study 1**
 468 participants aged 18-79,
 recognizing online sexism, emotional
 reactions to sexist Instagram posts
- Study 2**
 422 participants aged 18-35, emotional
 and behavioral responses to sexism
 compared across three social media
 platforms



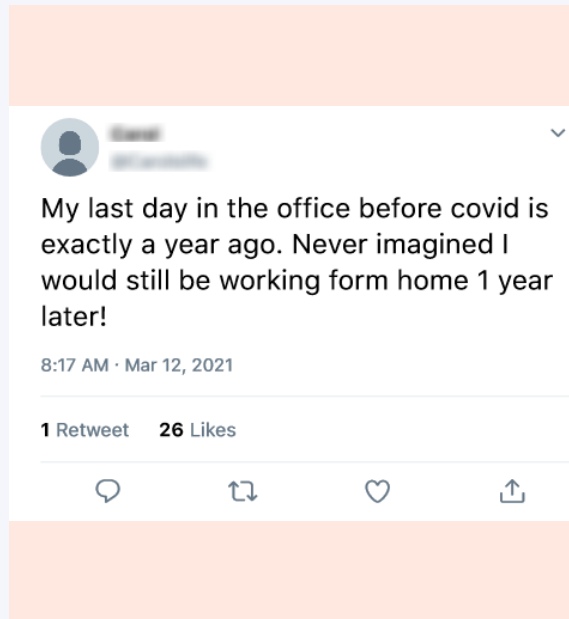
STUDY 1

Main Results Study 1

- **Benevolent sexism** was more **difficult** to recognize than hostile sexism
- **Women** perceived sexist posts as significantly more **sexist** than men did
- Persons with stronger **sexist attitudes** perceived posts as **less** sexist
- Posts that were perceived as **funny** were rated as **less** sexist
- Participants reacted with stronger **negative emotions** to the hostile sexist posts than to the benevolent or non-sexist posts



STUDY 2



Non-sexist



Benevolent Sexism



Hostile Sexism



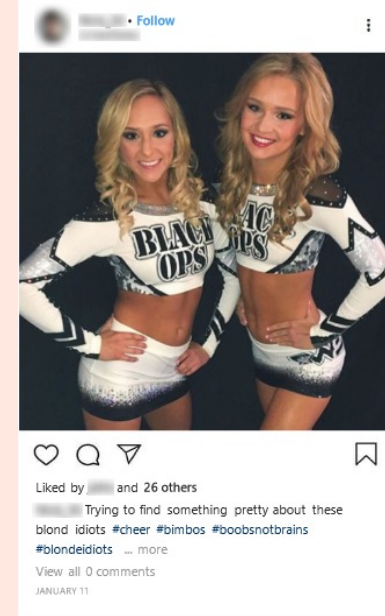
STUDY 2



Non-sexist



Benevolent Sexism



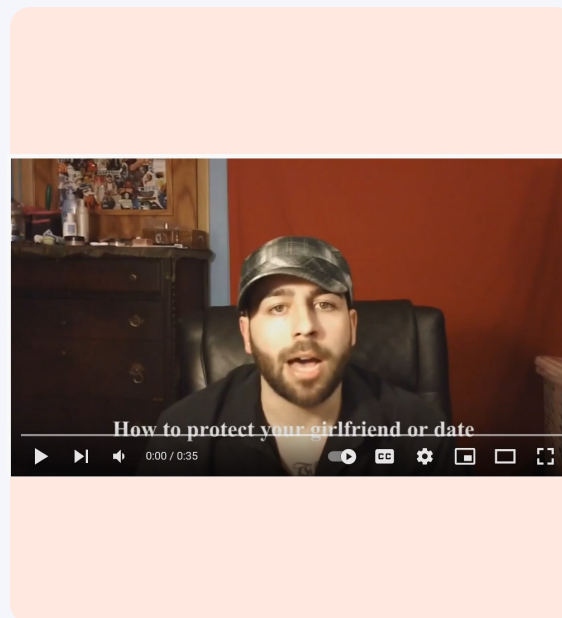
Hostile Sexism

STUDY 2



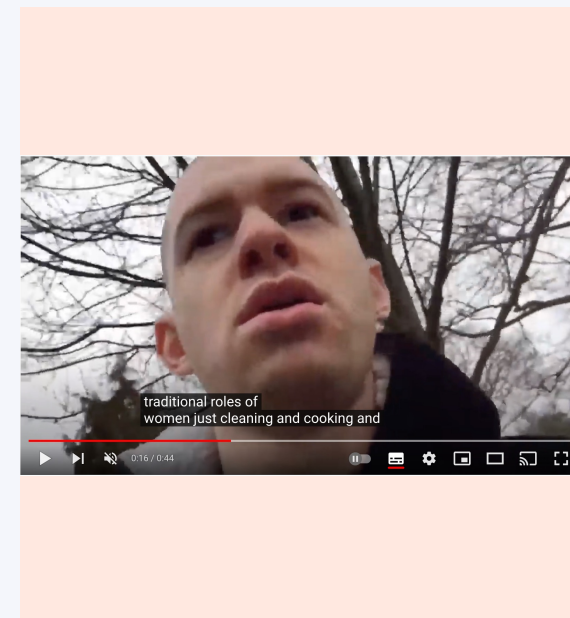
Non-sexist

Americans trying different Japanese snacks.



Benevolent Sexism

A man talking about how men should protect their girlfriend physically and emotionally.



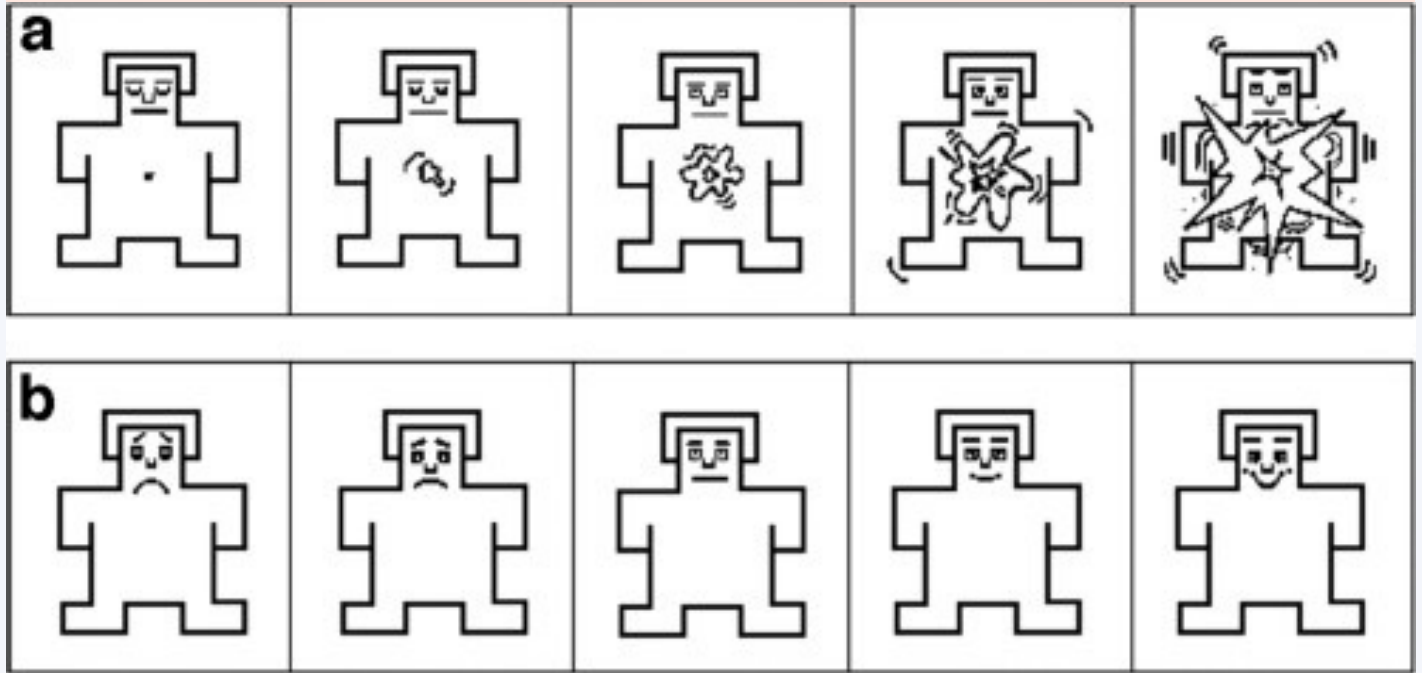
Hostile Sexism

A man giving a talk filled with sexist slurs, proclaiming that a woman's place is in the kitchen and the bedroom.



STUDY 2

Emotional Reaction



The Self Assessment Manikin

(Bradley & Lang, 1994)

Arousal: emotional reaction on a **physiological** level (scale a)

Valence: emotional reaction **positive** vs. **negative** (scale b)

STUDY 2

Behavior

01

Like

How likely is it that you would **like** this post?

02

Share

How likely is it that you would **share** this post?

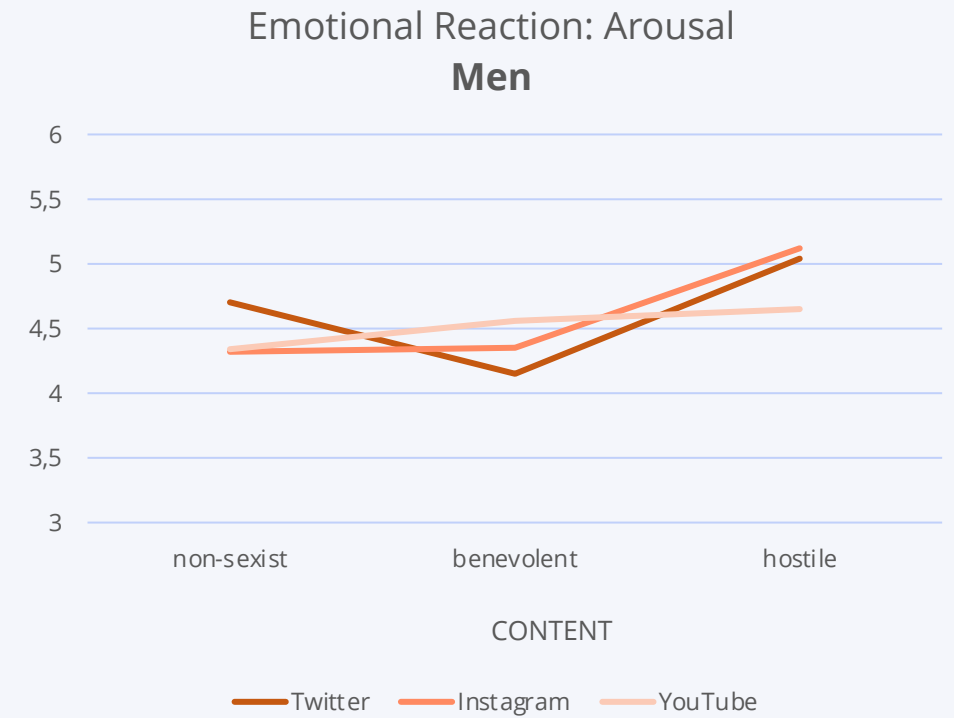
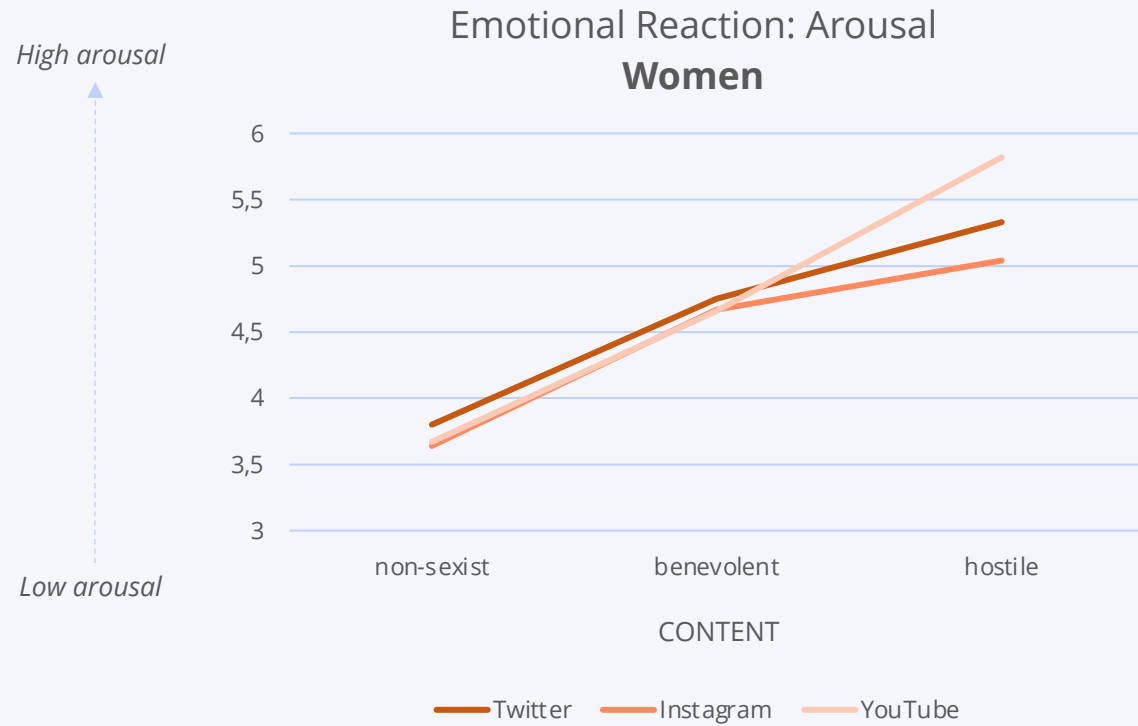
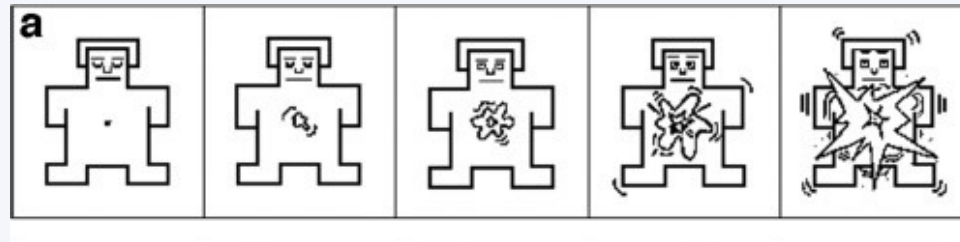
03

Comment

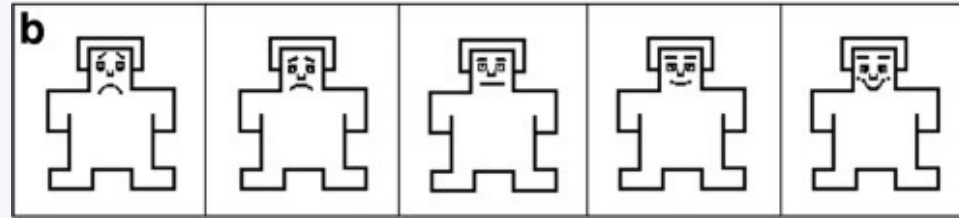
Would you **comment** on this post?
Yes → Comment Box



STUDY 2

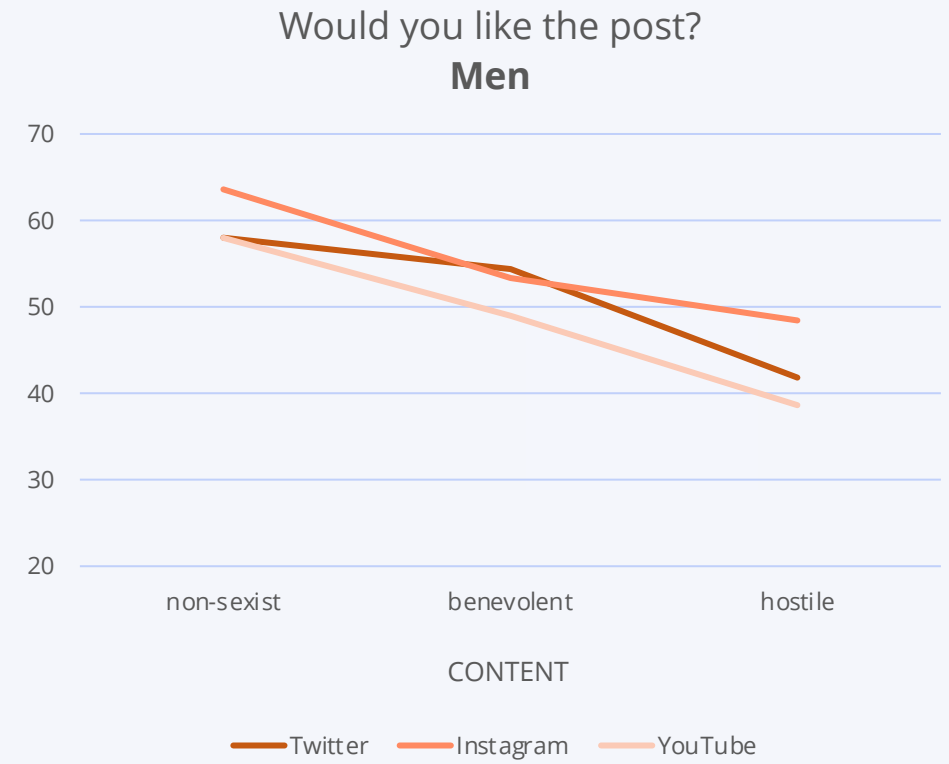
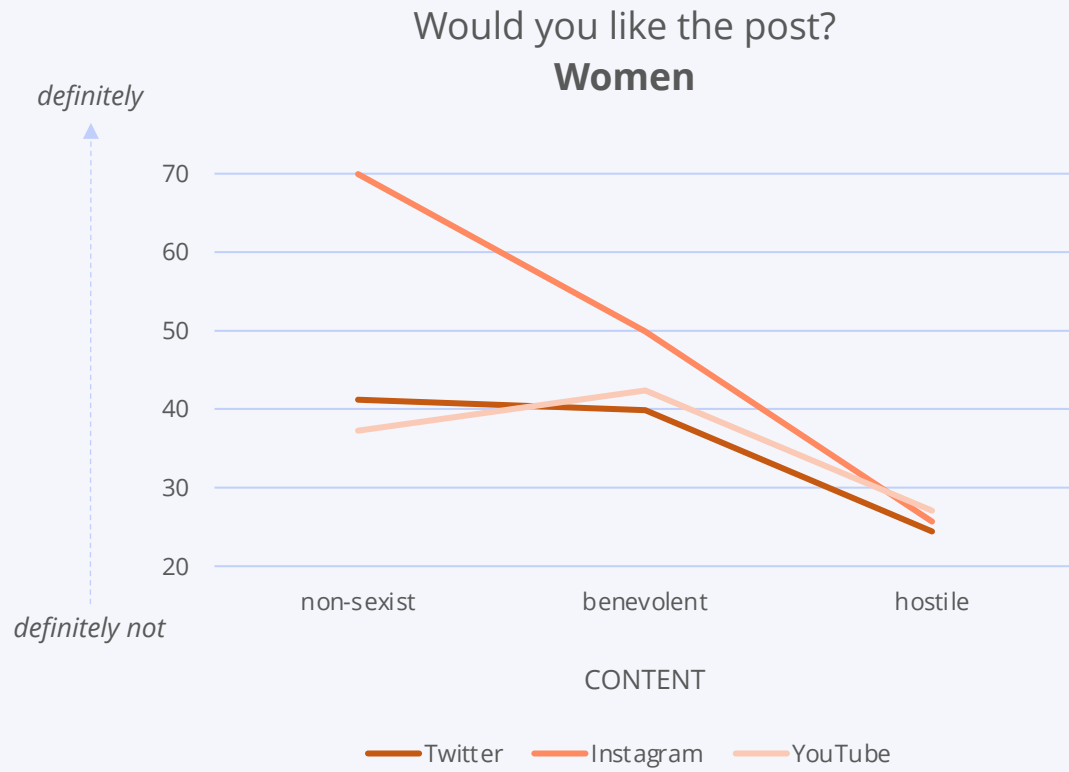


STUDY 2



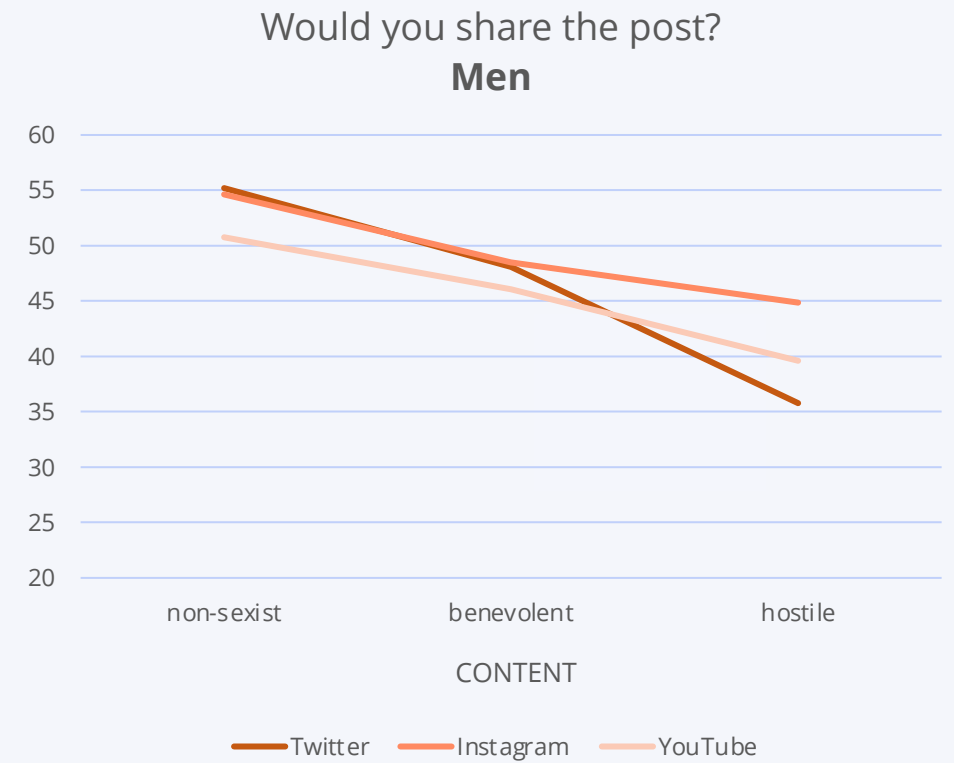
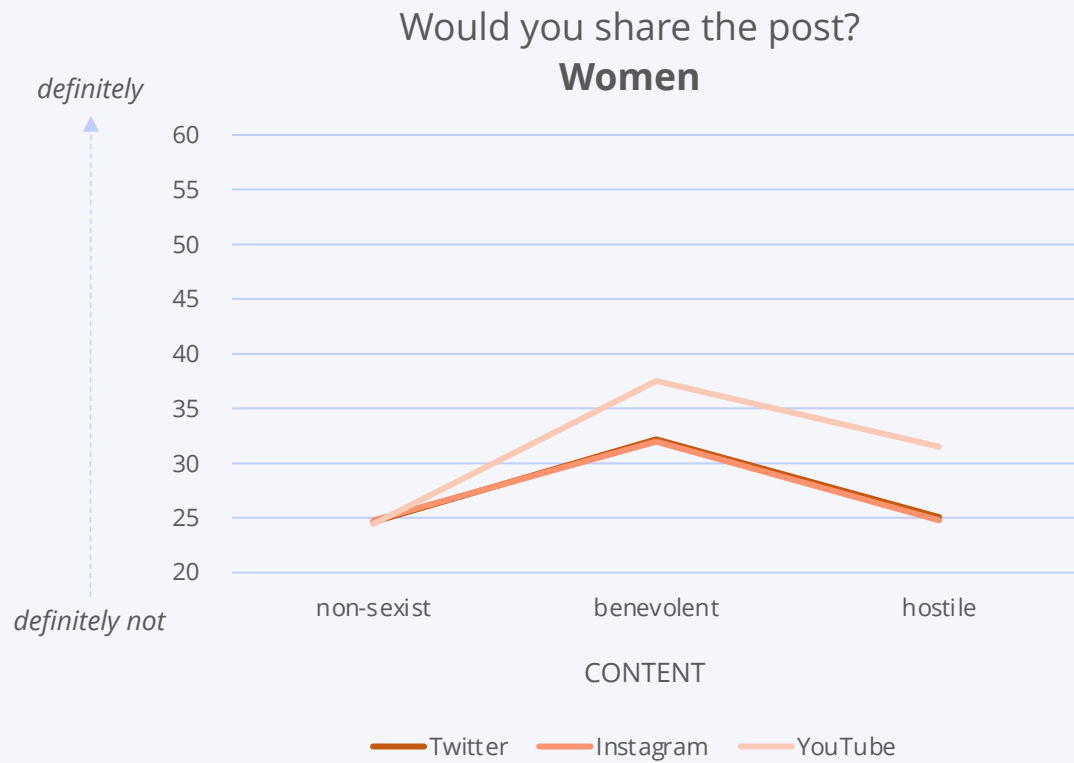
STUDY 2

Liking



STUDY 2

Sharing



STUDY 2

Comments

Hostile Sexist Content

Mainly negative comments

"Seems like you're still living in the 50s " (YouTube)

"You are very vulgar" (Tweet)



Comments

STUDY 2

Benevolent Sexist Content

Mixed reactions to the more subtle form of sexism

"welcome to the 21st century" (Instagram)

"Guys really should love their girls" (Instagram)

"Women should be protected because it's your partner and it's educated to do it, not because women can't protect themselves" (YouTube)

"Women are human beings, with legit feelings and should not be treated like delicate flowers." (Twitter)



Implications

Benevolent Sexism

- **Ambivalent:**

- Difficult to recognize
- Mixed reactions

- **Complex:** varying reactions on different levels

➔ More research to better understand this form of sexism and its effects

➔ Increase **public awareness**



Implications

EFECCTS

Further Preventive Possibilities

- **Humor:** very prevalent, e.g. in the form of sexist jokes or “Memes”
- Stereotypical and sexist **attitudes**

↳ Make sexism harder to recognize



Increased **awareness** is essential for intervention and prevention



Outlook

Approaches to Eradicating Sexism *(sel.)*

- CoE campaign “Preventing and combating sexism”
- Committee of Advertising Practice Ltd. (CAP, UK):
Ban on harmful gender stereotypes in ads

“[Advertisements] must not include gender stereotypes that are likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence.”

(e.g., an ad that belittles a man for carrying out stereotypically ‘female’ roles or tasks)

- **Hostile** sexism: can be considered **hate speech** and therefore subject to **regulation** of social network sites
- **Benevolent** sexism: often hard to identify → calls for **awareness** campaigns

Socio-political **activities** (“pressure”) are needed to, among other things, **sensitise** or **oblige** the operators of social networks to also prevent this form of sexism (e.g. by means of artificial intelligence and amending community guidelines)



<https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/combating-and-preventing-sexism>

Some Concluding Thoughts

Outlook

Multidisciplinary cooperation is the key to evidence-based policy

- **Bundling** of the various stakeholders: Politics, NGOs, interest groups, scientific research
- Policy making clearly benefits from **evidence**
 - Present opportunity to present findings from our lab at today's meeting (Thank You!)
 - Cooperation between MEGA and Uni.lu
- **"Win-win situation"**: scientific publications – joint outreach – evidence-based policy making



MEGA



/ Institute for Health and Behaviour

University of Luxembourg

11, Porte des sciences

L-4366 Esch-sur-Alzette

THANK YOU

/ Miriam-Linnea Hale, M.Sc.

/ miriam-linnea.hale@uni.lu

/ Asst.-Prof. Dr André Melzer

/ andre.melzer@uni.lu



/ @foreverBcurious

/ @Typ_404

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