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THE POWER IN DEMOGRAPHY: WOMEN'S SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER IDENTITY AT WORK

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This study examined how women's proportional representation in the upper echelons of organizations affects professional women's social constructions of gender difference and gender identity at work. Qualitative and quantitative data were used. Results suggest that sex roles are more stereotypical and more problematic in firms with relatively low proportions of senior women. This research also found that women responded to these constraints in a range of ways and identifies five response profiles. The study challenges prevailing conceptions of gender as an objective property of individuals synonymous with biological sex and universal across organizational settings; instead, it supports a more complex view of gender as an ongoing social construction, the meaning, significance, and consequences of which vary as a function of the power differences reflected in the sex composition across levels of an organization's hierarchy.

Since Kanter's (1977) pioneering work on tokenism, much of the organizational research on gender has focused on how women's proportional representation within work groups affects their workplace experiences (for reviews, see Martin [1985], Konrad and Gutek [1987], Zimmer [1988], Yoder [1991], and Wharton [1992]). Such research has demonstrated that underrepresentation of women is associated with increased performance pressures, isolation from informal social and professional networks, and stereotyped role encapsulation for women. Many researchers have interpreted these findings to mean that balanced representation within work groups will eliminate these negative effects. Others, however, have criticized this view as overly optimistic and empirically unsubstantiated, calling into question the efficacy of number balancing as a strategy to end sex discrimination (Blum & Smith, 1988; Yoder, 1991; Zimmer, 1988).

In this article, I argue that number balancing has been largely inef-

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fective at producing desired outcomes for women because there has been no attention to where in an organization's hierarchy the numerical balances and imbalances occur. With no or few women in positions of power, sex may persist as a salient category with negative consequences for women lower down in the organization, despite balanced representation at lower levels. With this possibility left unexplored, research on group compositional effects has failed to examine adequately the role power plays in shaping women's workplace experiences.

The conception of sex and gender that prevails in organizational research has contributed to this failure (Flax, 1990; MacKinnon, 1987; Reskin, 1988). Gender has been treated as an objective property of individuals synonymous with biological sex and universal across organizational settings. In this study, I take a different approach. Drawing on social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) as well as theories of organizational demography and power (e.g., Acker, 1987; Acker & Van Houten, 1974; Flax, 1990; Kanter, 1977; Reskin, 1988; Ridgeway, 1988), I explore gender as an ongoing social construction, the meaning, significance, and consequences of which vary for individuals across settings. Rather than assuming that distinctions based on sex are always present and that they work in psychologically similar ways for all women, this approach draws attention to the processes through which these distinctions emerge and have meaning for groups and individuals—processes likely to be conditioned on power differences reflected in existing demographic arrangements (Wharton, 1992).

This study examines how women's presence in positions of power affects the social construction of gender difference and the processes that create and sustain women's gender identity at work. I investigated this question from the perspective of woman lawyers working as associates in law firms in which there were low proportions of partners who were women (or "male-dominated" firms) and in law firms in which there were higher proportions of women who were partners ("sex-integrated" firms). Whereas Kanter's work would suggest that a balanced representation of professional men and women within peer groups reduces sex-role stereotyping, reinforces a broader range of acceptable behaviors for women, and promotes a greater sense of value and belongingness in an organization, the present study tested whether these outcomes are further contingent on the degree to which women are represented in formal positions of organizational authority.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Social identity theory, together with research on organizational demography and power, forms the basis for this study's hypotheses. In particular, social identity theory defines and explicates the processes of gender identity formation; research on organizational demography and power addresses the organizational conditions that influence those processes.

Social and Gender Identity

The usefulness of social identity theory for this study lies in the theory's attempts to capture how individuals' identity group memberships shape their perspectives and experiences in different settings. Cognitive social psychologists developed the theory (Tajfel, 1978, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1987), which researchers have recently begun to apply to organizations (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Kramer, 1991; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992; Wharton, 1992). According to this perspective, identity, "the location of an individual in social space" (Gecas, Thomas, & Weigert, 1973: 477), has two components: a personal component derived from idiosyncratic characteristics, such as personality and physical and intellectual traits, and a social component derived from salient group memberships, such as sex, race, class, and nationality (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The social component of identity involves processes of self-categorizing and attaching value to particular social categories (Pettigrew, 1986), so that "an individual's knowledge of his or her memberships in social groups together with the emotional significance of that knowledge" constitutes social identity (Turner & Giles, 1981: 24).

Social identity acquires significance through comparisons between groups when status differences between groups are salient. How favorably a group member perceives his or her group in relation to other relevant groups determines the adequacy of the individual's social identity in a given setting. Because people want to maintain a positive self-image, those in groups with low status may engage in group- and self-enhancing strategies (Tajfel, 1982; Williams & Giles, 1978).

Women's gender identity is one aspect of their social identity; it is the meaning women attach to their membership in the category "female." Identification with this category can be associated with positive, negative, or ambivalent feelings, depending on the salience and nature of comparative distinctions between men and women in a given setting. These distinctions and the value attached to them in turn affect women's group- and self-attributions, including stereotypic attributions. These processes of comparison and attribution, as they occur in organizational settings, help to shape women's gender identity at work.

The Impact of Organizational Demography

Organizations are important determinants of social identity in contemporary society (Wharton, 1992). In particular, organizational characteristics, such as segregation, discrimination, and group composition, are likely to structure comparison and attribution processes by shaping the relative value individuals attach to groups. For example, the emotional significance to women of their gender may be shaped at least in part by the extent to which power differentials are constructed along sex lines: The degree of correlation between membership in sex and hierarchical groups

may communicate to organization members that what is female is good, bad, or indifferent, and thus, can reinforce perceptions of the adequacy of one's gender group, with implications for sex-based comparisons, attributions, and behavior (Alderfer, 1987; Ridgeway, 1988).

Researchers interested in the effects of organizational demography have speculated that overrepresentation of white men in high-status positions may reinforce the devaluation of women and nonwhite subordinates (Konrad & Gutek, 1987; Pfeffer, 1989; Ridgeway, 1988). Yet little empirical work examines the impact of the demographic composition of senior management groups on these individuals' workplace experiences. Results of the relatively few studies that do exist have shown that, as expected, a predominance of white men in high-status positions appears to be detrimental to the performance outcomes and treatment of women and ethnic minorities (Petersik & Schneir, 1980; Ramirez & Soriano, 1982; Tidball, 1974, 1980, 1985, 1986; Tidball & Kistiakowsky, 1976). Tidball (1980), for example, attributed high achievement among women who attended women's colleges to the presence of large numbers of women faculty members. It remains unclear from these studies, however, how women's subjective experiences of gender are related to the presence or absence of senior women and how these experiences may be linked to their success.

Hypotheses

Social identity theory identifies three sets of outcomes relevant to women's gender identity: (1) perceptions of psychological and behavioral differences between groups, including group polarization and group stereotyping, (2) group evaluations and requirements for success, and (3) perceptions of self. In the hypotheses below, I posit relationships between these outcomes and women's proportional representation in positions of organizational power.

Perceptions of group differences. Social identity theory predicts that as identity group memberships become salient, there will be a tendency to polarize and exaggerate psychological and behavioral differences between individuals who fall into distinct identity categories, producing stereotypic perceptions of identity groups (Turner, 1982). Theorists have argued further that low group status increases the salience of group membership (Deschamps, 1982). Hence, when demographic arrangements reinforce status differences between men and women, as when men predominate in positions of organizational power, the categories "male" and "female" will become salient for women and their perception of psychological and behavioral differences between men and women will be exaggerated in a manner consistent with sex-role stereotypes.

Scholars have argued that the exclusion of women from powerful groups is not only associated with, but logically necessitates, differentiation between the sexes (Epstein, 1985, 1988; Jagger, 1983; MacKinnon,

1987; Reskin, 1988; West & Zimmerman, 1987). In a hierarchical context, attributions of difference justify women's subordinate status: "Differences are inequality's post hoc excuse" (MacKinnon, 1987: 8). Thus, the process of converting biological sex into psychological and behavioral differences—that is, into gender—is essentially a social one created and sustained in large measure by the asymmetric distribution of power and privilege between men and women (e.g., Flax, 1990; Reskin, 1988). This inequity necessitates and reinforces the notion that gender categories are mutually exclusive: Women as a group are associated with only one gender, never the other or both (Flax, 1990).¹ By contrast, a more equitable situation would reduce the polarization of differences, supporting instead a notion that gender categories are fluid and include behaviors, values, and attitudes from which men and women are equally free to draw.

These predictions are consistent with demographic research showing that women's token status in work groups leads both men (Kanter, 1977) and women (Izraeli, 1983) to exaggerate sex differences based on sex-role stereotypes. Lockheed (1985) argued similarly that sex functions as a diffuse status characteristic for women in minority situations, leading them to formulate stereotypical expectations that women are compliant, influenceable followers and that men are dominant, influential leaders. More recently, Ridgeway (1988) extended this analysis to suggest that, even where women are well-represented at low levels of an organization, an authority structure predominantly composed of men will produce the same effects.

Hypothesis 1: Compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms will exaggerate psychological and behavioral differences between men and women in a manner that is consistent with sex-role stereotypes.

Group evaluations and requirements for success. Research on social identity has shown that group differences are typically evaluated in accordance with group membership: an individual's evaluations of his or her own group, or in-group, tend to be more favorable than evaluations of another's group (the out-group). In circumstances in which there are clear status differences between groups and the value systems that support these differences are pervasive and mutually understood, however, members of a low-status group will join their out-group counterparts in providing more favorable attributions to the out-group than to their own group

¹ Although research on androgyny (Bem, 1974; Spence & Helmreich, 1978) has demonstrated that individual women can be both "masculine" and "feminine," measures of this construct in that research have been predicated both theoretically and empirically on attributes that differentiated "typical adult males" from "typical adult females" as mutually exclusive categories.

(Tajfel, 1981). In organizational contexts, these people's evaluations of their groups are likely to reflect the values institutionalized by the organization's culture. In organizations, therefore, members of low-status groups are likely to perceive their own group's attributes as inconsistent with their organization's requirements for success.

This prediction is consistent with power-based perspectives on gender. According to these perspectives, in a culture that reserves virtues for men, differentiation based on sex category has meant the devaluation of women by both sexes (Epstein, 1985; Flax, 1990; Jagger, 1983; Jay, 1981; MacKinnon, 1987; Reskin, 1988; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Thus, in organizations in which status differences between men and women are highlighted by a predominance of men in powerful positions, women will evaluate women's attributes less favorably in relation to their firm's requirements for success than will their counterparts in sex-integrated firms. In addition, women in male-dominated firms will evaluate characteristics they attribute to men more favorably than those they attribute to women. In organizations in which women are better represented in powerful positions, women's evaluations of men and women will be comparable.

Hypothesis 2: Compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms will evaluate women's attributes less favorably in relation to firm requirements for success.

Contributing to this phenomenon is the socially and institutionally constructed nature of the criteria upon which group assessments are based. As Pfeffer (1989) argued, an organization may promote the devaluation of women and characteristics attributed to women through political processes that shape standards for performance. These standards result at least partly from a contest among interests in the organization in which each group seeks to reproduce itself. When the more powerful positions in organizations are filled almost exclusively by men, firms' standards for success are likely to reflect characteristics stereotypic of men.

Research on men's perceptions of requisite management characteristics provides ample evidence of bias in favor of stereotypically masculine attributes (Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Schein, 1973). Whether women also hold this bias is less clear. Brenner, Tomkiewicz, and Schein (1989) found that women were more likely than men to associate attributes characteristic of the successful manager with attributes characteristic of women. It is unclear, however, whether this is because they view women as more masculine than do their male counterparts, or because they evaluate women's attributes more favorably.

Redefining evaluation criteria may become an option for groups traditionally low in status as status disparities begin to narrow and such groups gain the institutionally backed wherewithal to advance change. They may do this by redefining negatively valued group characteristics

more positively or by creating new, positively valued group characteristics (Tajfel, 1982). In firms in which men predominate in powerful positions, women are unlikely to have the means to change the criteria for success. Since typically only those in powerful groups have access to such means, these are strategies that would be more likely undertaken by women once they have established a significant presence in positions of power. Hence, in organizations in which status differences between men and women have begun to narrow because of the presence of a relatively high proportion of women in powerful positions, requirements for success will expand beyond stereotypically male characteristics to include characteristics stereotypic of women.

Hypothesis 3: Compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms will be less likely to include characteristics stereotypic of women in their perceptions of requirements for success.

Perceptions of self. Thus far, the hypotheses posed in this study have concerned women's attributions about two identity groups, males and females. These are important attributions because they influence the meaning women attach to their own membership in the category "female." This section focuses on how women's self-attributions relate to their attributions about men and women generally and how the demographic composition of powerful organizational groups may influence this relationship.

A basic assumption of social identity theory is that individuals have a need for, and are therefore motivated to present and maintain, positive self-images. As noted above, however, social identity theory posits that when status differences are clear and the value systems that support these differences are pervasive and mutually understood, it may not be possible for members of low-status groups to maintain positive in-group distinctiveness. The theory suggests that under these conditions, individuals may dissociate from their group by assimilating culturally and psychologically into a higher-status group (Williams & Giles, 1978). Thus, according to social identity theory, women in male-dominated organizations may attempt to assimilate—that is, to alter their thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and expectations at work to mirror those typically associated with men.

Descriptions of women adopting male practices and techniques in order to gain acceptance in male-dominated work settings permeate both the popular literature (e.g., Briles, 1987; Madden, 1987) and the scholarly literature (Coppolino & Seath, 1987; Gutek, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Miller, 1976). Gutek (1985) described this phenomenon of women "acting like men" as one of the outcomes of "sex role spill-over," whereby a high percentage of one sex in an occupation causes the gender role for that sex to spill over into the work role for that occupation. Thus, people in men's jobs often "act like men" in order to be perceived as good workers. This phenomenon is consistent with Bell's (1990) research, which showed that when

their cultural identity is different from that of the higher-status majority, individuals often feel pressure to differentiate themselves from their own group at work and behave in a manner more consistent with characteristics they associate with the dominant culture. Adopting this strategy should allow individuals to evaluate themselves favorably in relation to requirements for success despite the relatively unfavorable evaluations they may give to their group.

Alternatively, some evidence suggests that individuals may internalize the psychological and behavioral attributions to their groups as well as the wider social evaluation of themselves as inferior and less deserving (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel, 1982). In some studies, for example, girls have not shown in-group favoritism nor have they engaged in self-enhancing strategies (Deschamps, 1977; Hewstone & Jaspars, 1982). Hewstone and Jaspars wrote that "the relationship between group and self attributions is a complex one" and added that "at the very least, it is affected by . . . the social status of the relevant groups (superior/inferior)" (1982: 110). Consistent with this perspective is Ridgeway's (1988) argument that people have a general cognitive preference for having their expectations about reality supported. Therefore, if women expect men to hold higher-status positions—an expectation that, she argued, is supported by a disproportionate number of men in positions of organizational authority—they will prefer to engage in a level and range of task behavior that are commensurate with low performance and low status. Women will lack task confidence and task motivation, engage in few directive behaviors, and concentrate instead on socioemotional concerns. In short, women psychologically and behaviorally are likely to emulate characteristics stereotypically associated with women as a group, and not with men, and to evaluate themselves unfavorably in relation to requirements for success.

Thus, two alternative hypotheses seem plausible concerning women's self-perceptions in male-dominated and sex-integrated firms:

Hypothesis 4a: Compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms will be more likely to describe themselves as similar to men and less likely to describe themselves as similar to women on psychological and behavioral dimensions; as a result, women in the two types of firm will be equally likely to describe themselves favorably in relation to requirements for success.

Or, alternatively:

Hypothesis 4b: Compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms will be less likely to describe themselves as similar to men and equally or more likely to describe themselves as similar to women on psychological and behavioral dimensions; as a result, women in male-dominated firms will be less

likely to describe themselves favorably in relation to requirements for success.

METHODS

Firms

The main criteria for selecting the organizational domain from which to draw a sample of participants for this research were (1) variability across organizations in the proportional distributions of women and men in senior positions and (2) comparability across organizations in hierarchical structure (equivalence in firms' senior positions), overall size, type of work, and the proportional distribution of women and men in junior positions. Law firms, in which partners and associates are easily identifiable and statuses and job responsibilities are similar across firms for individuals in the two types of position, met these criteria. In addition, law firms have structures similar to other organizations, including accounting firms, management consulting firms, and universities, with "up-or-out" policies typically governing career paths and women encountering similar barriers to top positions (Chamberlain, 1988; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990).

I identified eligible law firms from the 1987 *National Association of Law Placement (NALP) Directory*, which presents demographic and other descriptive data for over a thousand law firms in the United States. I defined a sex-integrated firm operationally as one in which at least 15 percent of the partners were women. Hence, sex-integrated is a relative term: the partnerships of these firms were not sex-balanced, but increasing the criterion for inclusion as a sex-integrated firm would have yielded an inadequate number of firms from which to select. According to Epstein (1993), in the top 251 U.S. law firms, the proportion of women who are partners averages 11.1 percent and ranges from 0 percent (in one firm) to 23 percent (in two firms). The 15 percent criterion therefore marks the upper portion of the distribution of firms on this dimension. I further restricted the pool of eligible firms to those with at least 40 attorneys since inclusion of smaller firms would have been likely to introduce more variability in firm culture (Epstein, 1993). In the geographic area extending from Boston to Washington, DC (the area to which limited finances confined my data collection), eight firms of sufficient size met the sex-integrated criterion. I randomly selected four firms from this group. Three of these firms were large, employing at least a hundred attorneys, and one was about half this size. The proportions of female associates ranged from 38 percent to 47 percent. Their legal work varied, but it primarily involved litigation and corporate, real estate, and labor law.

To control for the potentially confounding effects of firm characteristics, I created a procedure for matching male-dominated firms with sex-integrated firms. My operational definition of a male-dominated firm depended on firm size: For the larger firms, the criterion was no more than 5 percent woman partners; for the smaller firms, it was not more than two

women partners, or somewhat more than 5 percent. Using a uniform criterion of 5 percent woman partners proved too restrictive because I could not find a firm to match the smaller sex-integrated firm. Doing so would have required finding a comparable male-dominated firm with only one woman partner, and there was none. I thus expanded the criterion for inclusion in this category to include small firms with no more than two woman partners while retaining the 5 percent rule for the larger firms. There were 66 male-dominated firms of sufficient size (at least 40 attorneys). From this set, I selected four firms, one to match each of the four sex-integrated firms in overall size, geographic location, ratio of male to female associates, and types of legal work.

Table 1 summarizes the sex composition of the eight firms in the study. In the pair of smaller firms, there were higher percentages of woman partners than in the other firms. Consequently, I conducted parallel sets of statistical analyses, one on the full data set and one that excluded this pair of firms. Analyses of this restricted sample replicated all the significant findings from the analyses of the full data set, which are reported below.

Participants

The *Martindale-Hubble Law Directory* provided the names of the woman associates in each firm, and I sent them an introductory letter describing the study and asking them to participate. I was able to reach 108 women (70 percent of those who received letters) in follow-up phone calls; only 8 women (or 7 percent of those contacted) declined to participate, citing lack of time as the primary reason. Most were enthusiastic about the prospect of participating in the study, and no known organizational dimension distinguished the women who declined to participate.

I randomly selected 4 women from each of the six larger firms in the study and 3 women from each of the two smaller firms. This process yielded a total sample of 30 women working as associates in these firms:

TABLE 1
Percentages of Women in Firms Studied

Matched Pairs of Firms ^a	Percentage of Women in Partnership		Percentage of Women in Associateship	
	Male-Dominated	Sex-Integrated	Male-Dominated	Sex-Integrated
A	.05	.15	.40	.38
B	.04	.18	.40	.40
C	.05	.16	.41	.47
D ^b	.11	.29	.50	.43

^a The firms in pairs A, B, and C employed between 100 and 200 attorneys; the firms in pair D employed approximately 50 attorneys.

^b The higher proportions of woman partners in this pair of firms reflects the smaller size of the partnerships in these firms. In absolute numbers of woman partners, the male-dominated firm in this pair was similar to the other male-dominated firms in the study, whereas the sex-integrated firm had fewer woman partners than the other sex-integrated firms.

15 in male-dominated firms and 15 in sex-integrated firms. All participants were white; one also identified herself as Hispanic. In both the male-dominated and sex-integrated firms, about two-thirds of the participants were in either litigation or corporate practice, about two-thirds were married, and one-third had at least one child. In both types of firms, participants were on the average 32 years old and had been practicing law for about five years.

Data Sources

The primary, qualitative data for this study were obtained from interviews with the participants. To obtain a second source of evidence, I also collected quantitative data from questionnaires. This approach gave me the opportunity to examine the same phenomena from different methodological perspectives, in the spirit of triangulation (Jick, 1979; Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1966), and also to test hypotheses statistically.

Interviews. I conducted two in-depth, semistructured interviews with each participant as part of a larger study of women's intra- and intergroup relations in their firms. The first interview oriented participants to the study and was dedicated primarily to collecting personal history data, attributions about sex differences and similarities, views on criteria for success, and self-perceptions. The second interview session also yielded data on those topics but focused on the nature of women's relationships for purposes of the larger study.

Each interview took between one-and-a-half and two-and-a-half hours to complete; thus, I spent a total of four to five hours interviewing each participant. Each interview covered a standard set of questions, although I encouraged participants to raise and discuss a variety of additional, related topics as well. This interview format is both sufficiently structured to ensure that certain topics are covered and sufficiently flexible to allow an interviewee to focus on issues of particular importance to her (Kram & Isabella, 1985). The interviews took place outside of work, mostly in participants' homes and were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

There were over a thousand pages of transcribed interview data. I content-analyzed these data to identify the range and content of responses in three domains: (1) behavioral and psychological sex differences, which included characteristics attributed differentially to men and women, as well as characteristics described explicitly as gender-neutral, (2) perceptions of what it took to be successful in the participants' firms, which included statements describing the behavioral and psychological attributes required for success as well as those contributing to failure, and (3) self-perceptions, which included statements describing participants' own behavioral and psychological attributes. The Appendix provides more detailed descriptions of the content of these domains.

After I had collected all excerpts from the interviews that pertained to these three domains, I trained a second coder, who was blind to the hy-

potheses of this study, to do the same with a sample of eight randomly selected interview transcripts. This sample constituted 13 percent of the total number of interviews. The second coder read the transcripts and identified the statements that pertained to the three domains. I measured reliability by calculating the proportion of statements identified by both coders within a particular domain. There was 93.4 percent agreement on the identification of statements regarding sex differences, 82.2 percent agreement on statements regarding what it takes to be successful, and 83.4 percent agreement on statements describing self-perceptions. Virtually all lack of agreement between the two coders was a function of the second coder's failing to identify statements that I had identified, so that the data set I identified and subsequently analyzed was larger in each domain. There appeared to be no systematic differences between the coders' classifications of data as a function of firm type.

Next, I sorted data according to the behavioral and psychological attributes participants discussed as more or less characteristic of women and men, as facilitating or inhibiting success, and as more or less characteristic of themselves. For example, many participants referred to the attribute "aggressive" as more characteristic of men than women (some referred to aggressiveness as equally characteristic of the two); participants also often discussed the importance of being aggressive for achieving success in their firms; and finally, many women, either in the course of these discussions or at some other point in their interviews, described how aggressive they themselves were in their roles as lawyers. For each participant, I then pieced together the information she provided on each attribute to gain a better understanding of the links she made among the three domains. I did not, however, always have complete information from the interview data on any given attribute a participant discussed. For example, a participant might discuss an attribute on which she perceived men and women to differ but not offer a description of herself on this attribute; or she might offer a description of herself but not provide an assessment of whether or not the attribute was related to success in her firm. I used these data for a qualitative analysis (described below) of women's gender identity at work and to inform the content of the questionnaire items developed as a second data source.

Questionnaires. I developed questionnaire items to examine more systematically how the participants viewed the attributes that emerged from the interviews and to develop quantitative measures of the constructs contained in the hypotheses. The questionnaire focused on 36 behavioral and psychological attributes; examples are "works long hours," "overbearing," "dresses attractively," "close to co-workers," "persuasive," "competent," and "satisfied with workplace." Table 4 gives the complete list of attributes. The criterion for including an attribute on the questionnaire was that at least three participants mentioned it in the course of their interviews. The questionnaire contained four lists of these attributes; each

list was a separate section of the questionnaire interspersed among several other sections. The 36 attributes appeared in a different, random order on each list. On the first list, participants rated how much each attribute was characteristic of herself on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1, "not at all characteristic of me," to 5, "very much characteristic of me." Similarly, on the second and third lists, participants rated how much each attribute was characteristic of "professional women" and "professional men," respectively, on a scale ranging from 1, "not at all characteristic of women (men)," to 5, "very much characteristic of women (men)." On the fourth list, participants rated how much each attribute was related to success in her firm on a scale ranging from 1, "required for success," to 5, "a hindrance to success"; the midpoint, 3, was labeled "irrelevant." Hence, participants rated four subjects—themselves, professional women, professional men, and what it takes to be successful in their firms—on each of the 36 attributes. These items served as the basis for quantitative measures related to women's gender identity. I included one additional item, "expects to make partner," in the list of attributes on which participants rated themselves in order to assess participants' expectations for promotion.

I mailed the questionnaire to each participant. Of the 30 participants, 29 completed and returned the survey. I made repeated efforts to obtain the questionnaire from the single remaining nonrespondent, but to no avail. A reexamination of her interview data revealed no apparent reason for her failure to return the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Qualitative analyses of the interview data provided a "holistic and contextual portrayal" (Jick, 1979: 603) of women's gender identity at work. In addition to providing evidence about the relationship between the sex composition of a firm's partnership and women's perceptions of group differences (Hypothesis 1), group evaluations and perceptions of requirements for success (Hypotheses 2 and 3), and women themselves (Hypotheses 4a and 4b), this analysis revealed women's own reflections on how the presence of woman partners influenced what they saw and experienced in their firms, how they felt about their experiences, and the coping strategies they used. It also yielded rich examples of how firms reinforced certain kinds of roles and how women responded. As such, this analysis revealed important nuances in women's experiences and provided evidence for both anticipated and unanticipated differences as a function of firm type. In addition, by revealing exceptions to general trends and caveats, this analysis uncovered and highlighted important variability within firm types that is typically ignored as error in traditional statistical analyses. Finally, the results of this analysis provided a context for understanding and interpreting statistical relationships revealed in the quantitative analysis.

The quantitative analysis provided evidence to corroborate the findings from the qualitative analysis. I developed quantitative measures from

the questionnaire data to test each hypothesis. These measures, described below, served as dependent variables for the statistical analyses. To test between-subjects hypotheses about differences occurring as a function of women's proportional representation in a firm's partnership, I regressed each dependent variable on a dummy variable indicating firm type (1 = sex-integrated, 0 = male-dominated). To correct for the potential problem of nonindependence of observations within firms, I employed Huber's (1967) formula in these regression equations; this formula produces unbiased estimates of the standard errors of beta coefficients, allowing for correlated observations within sampling clusters (i.e., firms). To test within-subjects hypotheses, I used *t*-tests for matched pairs of variables.

Hypothesis 1: Perceptions of group differences. The qualitative analysis of perceptions of group differences primarily involved noting the kinds of behavior and psychological attributes participants used to compare and contrast men and women at work. In addition, I noted participants' descriptions of people who represented exceptions or counterexamples to the general statements they made about the presence or absence of sex differences and any commentary they provided about the nature or cause of the sex differences they reported.

Four quantitative measures were also used to test the hypothesis about perceptions of group differences. First, I calculated for each participant the correlation² between her ratings of professional men and her ratings of professional women on the 36 attributes identified in the content analysis. A negative correlation indicates that a participant viewed men and women as having opposite characteristics (for example, an attribute viewed as highly characteristic of men was viewed as highly uncharacteristic of women, and vice versa); a positive correlation indicates that a participant viewed men and women similarly (attributes seen as characteristic of men were also seen as characteristic of women). Second, I calculated the absolute value of the difference between a participant's rating of professional women on a particular attribute and her rating of professional men on that attribute and averaged the differences across the 36 attributes for each participant. These measures assessed the degree of polarization in participants' perceptions of professional men and women.

Two additional measures assessed the degree to which perceptions of men and women were consistent with traditional sex-role stereotypes. In order to obtain independent assessments of which attributes identified in this study constituted sex-role stereotypes, I administered a separate survey to 50 U.S. students enrolled in a professional master's degree program. Women represented 36 percent of this sample; the average age of students in the sample was 26 years, and they had an average of four years of work experience. I presented these individuals with the list of 36 attributes and

² The correlations described in this section were computed as Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients, transformed to Fisher's *Z*-statistics (Guilford & Fruchter, 1978) for purposes of hypothesis testing and comparison.

asked them to rate each on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1, "a stereotype associated with the way women are," to 7, "a stereotype associated with the way men are"; the midpoint, 4, was labeled "gender neutral." I considered attributes with average ratings greater than 5 to be stereotypically masculine and those with average ratings less than 3 to be stereotypically feminine. There were 12 attributes that met the criterion for the masculine stereotype and 11 that met the criterion for the feminine stereotype. These are identified in Table 4.

I then generated two scales. The first scale was a participant's average rating of professional women on the 11 attributes identified as stereotypically feminine; the second was her average rating of professional men on the 12 attributes identified as stereotypically masculine. The interitem reliabilities of these scales were .73 and .65, respectively.

Hypotheses 2 and 3: Group evaluations and requirements for success.

For the qualitative analysis of group evaluations and requirements for success, I examined the links participants made between their attributions to men and women, on the one hand, and their statements about the value their firms placed on those attributes, on the other. These statements were often descriptions of the challenges and opportunities they believed women or men, by virtue of their sex or gender, faced in their firms. From this analysis, I ascertained participants' beliefs about the comparative advantages and disadvantages of being male or female as well as about the kinds of gender roles their firms expected them, and women generally, to enact.

To quantitatively assess participants' evaluations of men and women relative to their firm's requirements for success, I calculated for each participant the correlation between her ratings of professional women and what it takes to be successful and the correlation between her ratings of professional men and what it takes to be successful. The stronger the positive correlation, the more favorable a participant's rating of the group.

I originally intended to quantify participants' perceptions of how much femininity contributed to or detracted from success by combining their assessments of the 11 feminine attributes into a single scale. The interitem reliability of this scale (.53) was too low, however, to warrant treating the items in this manner. Therefore, I looked for patterns among those attributes that significantly differentiated between participants' ratings of what it took to be successful in male-dominated and sex-integrated firms to quantitatively assess the stereotypic content of firms' requirements for success.

Hypothesis 4: Perceptions of self. The qualitative analysis of self-perceptions involved generating profiles of participants to capture how each understood and enacted her own gender identity at work. Profiles were based on (1) the gender role a participant enacted at work—whether and to what extent the participant self-consciously drew on traditionally masculine or feminine sex-role stereotypes (or both) when characterizing herself—(2) the degree to which the gender role she enacted conformed to her

perception of her firm's requirements for success, and (3) the degree to which her gender role conformed to her perception of what her firm's requirements for success should be. Each profile addressed whether and how a woman's perception of women generally influenced her own behavior and experience, similarities and differences between her own views about attributes that are valuable and what she perceived to be the predominant views in her firm, and her own assessments of the personal and professional costs and benefits associated with the roles she played.

This analysis yielded five profiles capturing variability both within and between firm types: (1) the accommodator, (2) the resister, (3) the self-blamer, (4) the minimizer, and (5) the integrator. Table 2 summarizes the characteristics of each profile. There was 100 percent agreement between my categorizations of participants into these profiles and those of a second coder.

To quantitatively assess the degree of similarity between participants' perceptions of themselves and their perceptions of professional women as a group, I calculated for each participant the correlation between her ratings of self and her ratings of professional women. I developed a parallel measure with ratings of self and ratings of professional men. The stronger the positive correlation, the more similar were women's descriptions of themselves and their descriptions of women and men, respectively. I also created scales to measure self-stereotyping. These were participants' mean self-ratings on the 11 stereotypically feminine attributes and their mean self-ratings on the 12 stereotypically masculine attributes. The interitem reliabilities of these scales were .68 and .78, respectively.

To quantitatively assess participants' evaluations of themselves relative to their firm's requirements for success, I calculated for each participant the correlation between her ratings of self and her ratings of what it takes to be successful. The stronger the positive correlation, the more favorable a participant's rating of herself.

RESULTS

This section presents both qualitative and quantitative results comparing women's gender identity in male-dominated and sex-integrated firms. The qualitative comparisons draw heavily on direct quotations from interviews to illustrate women's perceptions and experiences. Table 3 presents findings for the quantitative dependent measures developed to test hypotheses about differences between sex-integrated and male-dominated firms. Table 4 presents complete quantitative results for the four ratings of each attribute: ratings of self, professional women, professional men, and what it takes to be successful. Table 5 lists the significant findings by firm type for the four ratings of each attribute.

Hypothesis 1: Perceptions of Group Differences

In the course of their interviews, participants in both male-dominated and sex-integrated firms drew on sex-role stereotypes to describe sex

TABLE 2
Characteristics of Participant Profiles

Gender Role Characteristics	Accommodator	Resister	Self-Blamer	Minimizer	Integrator
Masculine/feminine	Masculine and sexual aspects of feminine	Feminine	Feminine	Neither masculine nor feminine	Both masculine and feminine
Conforms with firm's requirements for success	Yes	No—unwilling to conform	No—unable to conform	Irrelevant	Yes
Conforms with participant's perception of what firm's requirements for success should be	Mixed	Yes	No	Irrelevant	Yes

TABLE 3
Comparisons Between Firm Types: Constructs, Measures, and Statistical Results^a

Construct	Hypothesis	Measures	Male-Dominated Firms		Sex-Integrated Firms		<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> ²
			Means	s.d.	Means	s.d.		
Perceptions of differences between men and women	1	Correlation between ratings of professional men and ratings of professional women	.28	.40	.57	.33	2.44*	.28
		Mean absolute value of difference between ratings of professional men and women	.83	.34	.59	.28	-2.72**	.13
		Mean rating of professional men on 12-item scale of stereotypically masculine attributes	3.90	.33	3.73	.38	-2.17*	.06
		Mean rating of professional women on 11-item scale of stereotypically feminine attributes	3.32	.36	3.29	.29	-0.27	.00
		Correlation ^b between ratings of professional women and ratings of what it takes to be successful	.40	.31	.69	.29	2.29*	.20
Evaluations of men and women	2	Magnitude of difference between above correlation and correlation between ratings of professional men and ratings of what it takes to be successful	.35	.30	.21	.41	-1.58†	.04

TABLE 3 (continued)

Construct	Hypothesis	Measures	Male-Dominated Firms		Sex-Integrated Firms		<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> ²
			Means	s.d.	Means	s.d.		
Sex-role stereotypes and perceptions of criteria for success	3	See ratings of attributes labeled stereotypically masculine (M) and stereotypically feminine (F) under "Ratings of What It Takes to Be Successful" (Tables 4 and 5)						
Self-attributions relative to attributions about professional men and women	4a, 4b	Correlation between ratings of professional men and ratings of self	.17	.34	.36	.29	1.82†	.08
		Correlation between ratings of professional women and ratings of self	.68	.26	.87	.27	2.98**	.12
		Magnitude of difference between above two correlations	.51	.26	.51	.20	0.01	.00
		Mean ratings of self on 12-item scale of stereotypically masculine attributes	3.04	.54	3.15	.66	0.57	.01
		Mean ratings of self on 11-item scale of stereotypically feminine attributes	3.51	.47	3.42	.40	-0.53	.01
Self-evaluations	4a, 4b	Correlation between ratings of self and ratings of what it takes to be successful	.38	.43	.64	.38	2.19*	.10

^a T-tests used nonindependence-corrected standard errors; they were one-tailed for Hypotheses 1–3, two-tailed for Hypotheses 4a and 4b; *n* = 29. Correlation variables are Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients, transformed to Fisher's Z-statistics, calculated for each participant.

^b A positive correlation with ratings of what it takes to be successful indicates a positive relationship with attributes that lead to success.

†*p* < .10

**p* < .05

***p* < .01

****p* < .001

TABLE 4
Summary and Comparative Statistics for 36 Attributes Rated by Participants^a

Attribute ^b	Ratings of Professional Women			Ratings of Professional Men			Ratings of Self			Ratings of What It Takes to Be Successful ^c		
	Male-Domi- nated	Sex- Inte- grated	<i>t</i>	Male-Domi- nated	Sex- Inte- grated	<i>t</i>	Male-Domi- nated	Sex- Inte- grated	<i>t</i>	Male-Domi- nated	Sex- Inte- grated	<i>t</i>
Masculine (M)	2.00 (0.65)	2.04 (0.59)	.19	4.27 (0.80)	4.15 (0.55)	-.46	1.53 (0.74)	2.15 (0.80)	1.99†	2.80 (0.94)	3.00 (0.71)	1.27
Aggressive (M)	3.00 (0.76)	3.50 (0.65)	3.62***	4.07 (0.46)	3.86 (0.66)	-1.15	3.23 (0.86)	2.71 (1.32)	-1.34	1.80 (0.41)	1.79 (0.58)	-.06
Works long hours (M)	4.20 (0.68)	4.29 (0.61)	.31	4.20 (0.56)	4.36 (0.50)	.94	3.50 (1.34)	4.00 (0.78)	1.07	1.07 (0.26)	1.21 (0.42)	2.08*
Well connected to powerful super- iors (M)	2.97 (0.93)	2.82 (0.82)	-.62	3.87 (0.64)	3.78 (0.89)	-.65	3.13 (1.36)	3.57 (1.50)	1.28	1.43 (0.50)	1.50 (0.48)	.29
Self-confident (M)	3.53 (0.99)	3.50 (0.80)	-.12	4.27 (0.46)	4.07 (0.62)	-1.12	3.53 (1.06)	3.86 (1.10)	1.28	1.47 (0.52)	1.29 (0.47)	-1.27
Overbearing (M)	2.60 (0.63)	2.57 (0.75)	-.12	3.47 (0.64)	2.78 (1.05)	-1.84*	2.33 (1.05)	2.11 (1.04)	-.47	3.40 (1.06)	3.57 (1.09)	.68
Able to promote (i.e., sell) oneself to others (M)	3.27 (0.78)	3.71 (0.47)	2.16*	4.13 (0.30)	4.29 (0.73)	1.05	3.60 (1.18)	3.36 (1.15)	-.69	1.53 (0.52)	1.57 (0.51)	.19
Oriented toward making a profit (M)	3.33 (0.62)	3.36 (0.50)	.12	3.67 (0.62)	3.36 (0.50)	-1.66†	3.21 (1.25)	3.57 (1.28)	.77	1.50 (0.57)	1.75 (0.58)	1.08
Able to be "one of the guys" (M)	2.87 (0.64)	3.18 (0.54)	1.39†	4.36 (0.72)	4.14 (0.53)	-1.25	3.03 (1.17)	3.43 (0.94)	1.21	1.97 (0.30)	1.93 (0.47)	-.22
Able to speak knowl- edgeably and persua- sively but with little actual knowledge (M)	3.07 (0.70)	3.21 (0.70)	.55	3.80 (0.68)	3.79 (0.70)	-.08	3.23 (1.12)	3.32 (0.82)	.32	1.90 (0.39)	1.86 (0.36)	-.29
Analytical (M)	4.07 (0.46)	3.93 (0.61)	-.87	4.07 (0.46)	3.64 (0.63)	-2.74**	4.27 (0.70)	3.96 (0.97)	-2.01*	1.33 (0.49)	1.50 (0.52)	1.03
Yells when angry/ upset (M)	1.86 (0.77)	1.79 (0.89)	-.21	2.57 (1.16)	2.57 (1.28)	0	1.93 (1.10)	1.71 (1.14)	-.55	3.90 (0.47)	3.64 (0.77)	-1.22

TABLE 4 (continued)

Attribute ^b	Ratings of Professional Women			Ratings of Professional Men			Ratings of Self			Ratings of What It Takes to Be Successful ^c		
	Male-Domi-nated	Sex-Inte-grated	<i>t</i>	Male-Domi-nated	Sex-Inte-grated	<i>t</i>	Male-Domi-nated	Sex-Inte-grated	<i>t</i>	Male-Domi-nated	Sex-Inte-grated	<i>t</i>
Feminine (F)	3.77 (0.56)	3.85 (0.55)	.48	1.20 (0.41)	1.46 (0.52)	1.42†	3.53 (0.92)	3.62 (0.87)	.21	3.00 (0.76)	2.85 (0.55)	-.65
Dresses attractively (F)	4.00 (0.65)	3.93 (0.62)	-.48	3.20 (0.94)	3.14 (0.77)	-.25	3.70 (0.88)	3.29 (0.99)	-1.93†	2.13 (0.35)	2.21 (0.43)	.78
Coy; manipulative (F)	2.20 (0.77)	1.93 (0.92)	-.76	2.13 (1.06)	1.86 (0.77)	-.64	1.67 (0.82)	1.64 (0.63)	-.09	3.73 (0.96)	3.93 (0.92)	.60
Flirtatious (F)	2.60 (0.74)	2.21 (0.89)	-1.42†	2.33 (0.72)	2.43 (1.01)	.30	2.00 (1.00)	1.38 (0.77)	-2.35*	3.60 (0.83)	3.79 (0.89)	.61
Cries easily when angry/upset (F)	2.33 (0.90)	2.27 (0.88)	-.28	1.20 (0.56)	1.15 (0.38)	-.27	2.73 (1.39)	2.21 (0.80)	-1.58	4.80 (0.41)	3.57 (0.65)	-1.72*
Close to co-workers (F)	3.73 (0.59)	3.53 (0.57)	-.67	3.27 (0.80)	3.50 (0.65)	.78	3.50 (1.12)	3.86 (0.77)	1.22	3.37 (0.48)	2.21 (0.43)	-2.56**
Sensitive to people (F)	3.73 (0.59)	3.93 (0.61)	.83	2.60 (0.63)	2.82 (0.61)	1.42†	3.87 (0.48)	4.07 (0.47)	1.04	2.70 (0.59)	2.64 (0.63)	-.47
Relates well to women at work (F)	3.80 (0.86)	4.00 (0.39)	.57	2.93 (0.59)	3.29 (0.61)	1.57†	4.07 (0.59)	4.00 (0.96)	-.30	2.33 (0.59)	2.21 (0.43)	-.74
Management style shows concern for people's well-being (F)	3.86 (0.77)	3.79 (0.70)	-.22	2.64 (0.63)	3.00 (0.55)	1.49†	4.40 (0.63)	4.57 (0.65)	.63	2.40 (0.54)	2.57 (0.76)	1.18
Concerned with activities outside work (F)	3.07 (0.70)	3.43 (0.75)	1.32†	2.73 (0.70)	3.18 (0.91)	1.33†	3.93 (1.03)	3.25 (1.05)	-2.95**	3.07 (0.80)	2.71 (0.83)	-.89
Feminist (F)	3.47 (0.74)	3.29 (0.91)	-.64	2.07 (0.88)	1.93 (0.92)	-.62	3.67 (1.04)	3.71 (0.91)	.11	3.53 (0.48)	3.29 (0.47)	-2.05*
Relates well to men at work	3.60 (0.83)	3.93 (0.47)	1.06	4.43 (0.73)	4.32 (0.61)	-.70	3.83 (1.03)	3.86 (1.10)	.05	1.20 (0.41)	1.50 (0.52)	1.52
Sets out to be reasonable when negotiating	4.14 (0.53)	4.00 (0.71)	-.95	3.33 (0.90)	3.38 (0.87)	.22	4.30 (0.59)	4.32 (0.72)	.09	2.33 (1.05)	2.21 (0.58)	-.38

TABLE 4 (continued)

Attribute ^b	Ratings of Professional Women			Ratings of Professional Men			Ratings of Self			Ratings of What It Takes to Be Successful ^c		
	Male-Dominated	Sex-Integrated	<i>t</i>	Male-Dominated	Sex-Integrated	<i>t</i>	Male-Dominated	Sex-Integrated	<i>t</i>	Male-Dominated	Sex-Integrated	<i>t</i>
Competent	4.27 (0.70)	4.36 (0.50)	.31	4.00 (0.53)	4.21 (0.58)	.93	4.13 (0.64)	4.43 (0.51)	2.18**	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	0
Politically savvy	3.20 (0.68)	3.46 (0.63)	1.64	4.07 (0.46)	4.00 (0.88)	-.36	3.00 (0.93)	3.50 (1.16)	2.09*	1.67 (0.49)	1.68 (0.46)	.66
Persuasive	3.80 (0.94)	3.68 (0.46)	-.54	3.80 (0.68)	3.79 (0.58)	-.07	4.27 (0.88)	3.96 (1.00)	-1.26	1.53 (0.52)	1.36 (0.50)	-1.05
Expresses individuality at work	3.60 (0.51)	3.62 (0.63)	.06	2.47 (0.83)	2.92 (0.86)	1.75†	3.73 (0.96)	3.61 (0.63)	-.50	3.40 (0.74)	2.50 (0.65)	-3.27**
Rainmaker ^d	2.77 (0.60)	3.29 (0.56)	2.74*	3.57 (0.94)	3.81 (0.75)	.65	1.86 (0.95)	2.00 (1.30)	.31	1.87 (0.48)	1.82 (0.54)	-.29
Able to handle many many clients	3.60 (0.83)	3.77 (0.60)	.54	3.40 (0.83)	3.69 (0.63)	1.50	3.83 (1.22)	3.78 (0.97)	.58	1.23 (0.42)	1.14 (0.38)	-.42
Sexually involved with co-workers	2.36 (0.93)	1.50 (0.76)	-2.61*	2.61 (0.92)	1.71 (0.82)	-2.79**	2.13 (0.81)	1.23 (0.60)	-1.76†	3.87 (0.92)	4.50 (0.76)	2.21*
Satisfied with work-place	2.93 (0.80)	3.08 (0.64)	.63	3.47 (0.64)	3.23 (0.60)	-1.35	2.93 (1.27)	3.64 (0.84)	2.10*	1.93 (0.59)	1.79 (0.43)	-.87
Wants to make partner	3.20 (1.08)	3.50 (0.65)	1.01	4.33 (0.49)	4.21 (0.70)	-.87	3.17 (1.18)	3.77 (0.67)	1.70†	1.27 (0.46)	1.29 (0.61)	.09
Serious about one's work	4.27 (0.70)	4.43 (0.51)	.74	4.47 (0.51)	4.43 (0.52)	-.29	4.33 (0.72)	4.57 (0.65)	1.58	1.00 (0.00)	1.07 (0.27)	1.20
Loves one's work	3.00 (0.76)	3.23 (0.60)	1.16	3.40 (0.51)	3.23 (0.73)	-1.07	3.07 (0.88)	3.57 (0.94)	1.73†	1.93 (0.80)	1.64 (0.63)	-1.53
Expects to make partner							2.60 (1.35)	3.79 (1.42)	2.88**			

^a Table presents means, standard deviations (in parentheses), and *t*-statistics with nonindependence-corrected standard errors for simple regressions of attribute ratings on firm type (0 = male-dominated; 1 = sex-integrated). *T*-tests were one-tailed for ratings of professional women, professional men, and what it takes to be successful on sex-role stereotypical attributes, two-tailed for all ratings of self and for all ratings on gender neutral attributes (*n* = 29).

^b M indicates a stereotypically masculine attribute; F indicates a stereotypically feminine attribute; no designation indicates a gender-neutral attribute.

^c Higher means indicate the attribute was less likely to contribute to success.

^d One who generates business.

†*p* < .10; **p* < .05; ***p* < .01; ****p* < .001

TABLE 5
Summary of Significant Findings for Individual Attributes^a

Ratings	Higher in Male-Dominated Firms	Higher in Sex-Integrated Firms
Ratings of professional men	Analytical (M) Oriented toward making a profit (M) Overbearing (M) Sexually involved with co-workers	Management style shows concern for people's well-being (F) Feminine (F) Sensitive (F) Relates well to women (F) Concerned with activities outside work (F) Expresses individuality
Ratings of professional women	Flirtatious (F) Sexually involved with co-workers	Aggressive (M) Able to be one of the guys (M) Able to promote oneself (M) Concerned with activities outside work (F) Rainmaker
Ratings of self	Analytical (M) Dresses attractively (F) Concerned with activities outside work (F) Flirtatious (F) Sexually involved with co-workers	Masculine (M) Satisfied with firm Loves the work Wants to make partner Expects to make partner Competent Politically savvy
Ratings of what it takes to be successful ^b	Works long hours ^c (M) Sexually involved with co-workers	Close to co-workers (F) Cries easily (F) Feminist (F) Expresses individuality ^c

^a M indicates a stereotypically masculine attribute; F indicates a stereotypically feminine attribute; no designation indicates a gender-neutral attribute.

^b Except where noted, higher ratings indicate that an attribute was less likely to hinder success.

^c Higher ratings indicate the attribute was more likely to contribute to success.

differences they observed at work, often attributing socioemotional concerns to women and task concerns to men. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, however, in sex-integrated firms participants' distinctions were less sharp, and reports of counterexamples were more common.

In male-dominated firms, participants variously described women as more sensitive to people's feelings, better able to relate to women, more concerned with people's well-being in the way they managed, and more flirtatious than men. They described men as more oriented toward making a profit, better able to be one of the guys, more likely to work long hours, more overbearing, more analytical, more self-confident, more aggressive, and better able to "shoot from the hip" than women. The following statements are illustrative.

Women [supervisors] would be much more understanding of the kind of pressure we're under and also give more positive

feedback than I think the typical male supervisor would do. . . . The men seem to have this hard line because that's the way they deal with the other men—to make jokes, putting them down all the time—whereas I think that women would be more likely to praise and build people up.

There are male associates who . . . are obnoxious because they're so aggressive and so determined to get their two cents in and impress all these partners. With few exceptions most of the women just kind of tend to sit there and listen. . . . I think in general the women tend to be less aggressive.

The work ethic is different. [The men] don't ever care if they go home. They hang out and pal around a lot with the other guys, see who can gut it out longer, even just to show, just to be the last one to leave. . . . The women want to come in and get their work done and leave.

Women are less likely to shoot from the hip. They want to be absolutely certain. They are more afraid to make a mistake, where men have a great deal more ability to breeze through it.

Whereas participants in sex-integrated firms drew some of these same kinds of contrasts, they also cited differences that were counterstereotypical, suggesting a less rigid differentiation between the sexes:

Frequently the men are not very emotionally giving. . . . Women are much more nurturing that way. Though there are some men I've worked with, especially in legal aid, who are very nurturing and very, very good at it.

I have such a difficult time making generalizations about women and men. I'd like to be able to say that women have a better sense of trying to promote cohesiveness and interpersonal relationships. And certainly that is the case, for example, on the associates committee, where the events that are intended to increase associate cohesiveness, they're by and large planned by and administered by women. Having said that though, if I were just to sit down and take a handful of women and a handful of men, I'd say OK these three women only care about themselves and they're only doing the work, and these three guys are pretty much the same, they're assholes. Then there's these guys who really care about the firm and want to care about people, and women who are the same way. I don't come down with a clear demarcation.

I'm not one of those people who say there is absolutely no difference between the sexes, but I'm also not one of those people who says that there are these great noticeable, always-present-in-the-same-circumstances differences either. And I know some women who are very strident and I know some men who are very gentle and reasoned, rational. So it's really hard to say.

In law school . . . we believed that women were less confrontational, less likely to be in a hostile, aggressive situation, and more wanting to work toward solving problems. And I more or less believe that, [but] with the small sample of individuals who are in my department, I can't say that that's true in terms of style. Some of the women fit that model, some of the women are also the most aggressive that you can imagine.

Some of the guys are the ones who are sort of soft-spoken and likely to be pushed around or accommodating to other people . . . So that [belief] hasn't borne itself out in practice.

Moreover, there was some sense that the increasing presence of women in traditionally male institutions, such as the law and law firms, may have had a psychological and behavioral effect on the men in sex-integrated firms. For example, one participant from a sex-integrated firm believed that the presence of women actually freed men from the need to engage in some stereotypically male behavior.

Women bring something to an all male institution when you integrate it. . . . I think that men, when they run in packs, tend to act like small boys. I think there's a lot of the pecking-order-establishing and one-ups-manship and bravado. And I think women reduce the need for that somewhat. It still exists, but I think one thing women do is that they allow the existing men who are above that to feel comfortable excusing themselves from it because the women do, by and large.

Quantitative results were consistent with these portrayals. As Table 3 shows, the average correlation between participants' ratings of professional women and their ratings of professional men was positive in both types of firms, but it was lower for women in male-dominated firms ($t = 2.44$, $p < .05$, one-tailed test). The magnitude of the differences between ratings of men and ratings of women was also greater for women in male-dominated firms ($t = -2.72$, $p < .01$, one-tailed test). In addition, compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms rated professional men higher on the 12-item scale of masculine attributes ($t = -2.17$, $p < .05$, one-tailed test). By contrast, Table 5 shows that women in sex-integrated firms rated professional men higher on five of the stereotypically feminine attributes, though these differences were only marginally significant (see Table 4).

Contrary to the hypothesis, women in male-dominated firms were no more likely than their counterparts in sex-integrated firms to base their attributions to women on feminine sex-role stereotypes. Nevertheless, Table 5 shows a pattern to participants' ratings of women as a function of firm type. Those in male-dominated firms rated professional women higher on attributes related to sexuality, such as flirtation and sexual involvement with co-workers, whereas those in sex-integrated firms rated professional women higher on three attributes related to masculinity: aggressiveness, ability to be one of the guys, and ability to promote oneself.

Summary. Both the qualitative and quantitative results supported Hypothesis 1, which predicts that, compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms will perceive greater psychological and behavioral differences between men and women and will tend to define such differences along sex-role stereotypical lines. Although participants working in sex-integrated firms also reported some stereotypical differences between men and women, their characterizations were less polarized and often counterstereotypical.

Hypotheses 2 and 3: Group Evaluations and Requirements for Success

In support of Hypothesis 2, most participants who worked in male-dominated firms believed that the attributes they associated with men were the most important ones for achieving success, whereas those they associated with women were less important and perhaps even detrimental. Moreover, as predicted in Hypothesis 3, these participants' characterizations of the attributes their firms valued rarely included stereotypically feminine attributes. For example, as one participant explained:

I think if I'm going to be a trial attorney I can't really rely on or develop those attributes that are considered sort of feminine. I'm not saying that you should forget about being a woman, but on the other hand, I think what society has defined as being masculine or feminine, it's more the masculine, it seems, that you have to go toward. . . . I don't know if professionalism is the right word, but [the male partners] are very concerned about their self-image I think they would prefer whatever that professionalism is to be defined probably in masculine terms. . . . I think they have a skewed view of what being feminine is. And those attributes just don't mesh well in an established place.

Similarly, another reported:

In litigation especially it's very much a battlefield approach to things and hard-hitting: "Let's get right to it." That's more a male approach. Whereas women: "Let's figure out the strategy and let's keep figuring it out, and let's go over it again. And then maybe, I don't know, are we right?" I think that's more of a female response. And that's why in a firm like mine a lot of times women who are in litigation and who are more feminine will be the brief writers [behind the scenes].

The qualitative data revealed further how women in these firms received such messages about how to behave. One way was by observing the reactions of partners to women who displayed more masculine kinds of behaviors. For example, one participant described a woman colleague who received a "set of brass balls to put on her desk because she had become much more aggressive, the way she needed to become, in the way she negotiated for clients." Other women looked to the woman partners for cues about what kinds of behaviors their firms valued. For example, one participant observed that "the women who are going to become partners here are going to be women who act pretty much like men." Another described the more successful women in her firm as women "whose femaleness is not noticed all the time" and who are "modeling more on the men."

In sex-integrated firms, participants' characterizations of women, while often stereotypical, were nonetheless positive:

I think women are better at perceiving political undertones that may be part of a particular company's approach to marketing

a product for instance or their approach to communicating with a federal agency. . . . I think women have a more humane perspective basically on people's problems and so they bring that to their analysis in terms of analyzing a client's problem. Because again all of our clients are basically groups of people and you have to have sensitivity to group dynamics that go on.

Rather than seeing women as needing to change in order to fit in, women in sex-integrated firms were more likely to see the legal profession as changing to fit women:

I think that women are bringing to the practice the sense that you don't have to be so aggressive—you can be cooperative and still do things for your client. You don't have to fight every inch of the way. Being cooperative may actually help your client in the long run because you won't spend as much time fighting over things that aren't worth fighting over, and so you won't spend the client's money. So I think women are changing the profession.

Quantitative results confirmed these differences. As predicted in Hypothesis 2, women in male-dominated firms evaluated women's attributes less favorably than did their counterparts in sex-integrated firms: The average correlation between participants' ratings of professional women and their ratings of what it takes to be successful was lower for women in male-dominated firms than it was for women in sex-integrated firms ($t = 2.29$, $p < .05$, one-tailed test).

Table 6 shows the results of within-firm-type analyses comparing evaluations of women and men. As expected, women in male-dominated firms rated women's attributes less favorably than men's attributes: A matched-pairs t -test showed that for participants from male-dominated firms, the correlation between ratings of what it takes to be successful and ratings of professional women, on the one hand, was significantly lower than the correlation between ratings of what it takes to be successful and ratings of professional men, on the other ($t_{\text{matched}} = 4.48$, $df = 14$, $p < .001$, one-tailed test). In sex-integrated firms, however, in which I had hypothesized that ratings of men and women would be more comparable, and where I therefore had not expected to find evidence to reject the null hypothesis, a similar pattern was marginally significant ($t_{\text{matched}} = 1.89$, $df = 13$, $p < .10$, two-tailed test). Table 3 presents the results of a regression analysis comparing the magnitude of the differences between evaluations of men and evaluations of women as a function of firm type. As expected, this analysis showed that overvaluation of men and undervaluation of women was greater in male-dominated firms ($t = -1.58$, $p < .10$, one-tailed test), although this difference was only marginally significant.

The quantitative analysis also showed some support for Hypothesis 3. Compared to participants from sex-integrated firms, participants from male-dominated firms rated four attributes as more likely to hinder their success; three of these were stereotypically feminine attributes. Table 4 presents these results, which are summarized in Table 5. This analysis al-

TABLE 6
Comparisons of Mean Correlations Within Firm Types^a

Firms	Ratings of Self and Ratings of Women		Ratings of Self and Ratings of Men		<i>t</i> ^b	Ratings of Women and Ratings of What It Takes to Be Successful		Ratings of Men and Ratings of What It Takes to Be Successful		<i>t</i> ^b
	Means	s.d.	Means	s.d.		Means	s.d.	Means	s.d.	
Male-dominated	.68	.26	.17	.34	7.46***	.40	.31	.74	.19	4.48***
Sex-integrated	.87	.27	.36	.29	9.73***	.69	.29	.90	.29	1.89†

^a For male-dominated firms, *n* = 15; for sex-integrated firms, *n* = 14.

^b Results of *t*-test for matched pairs of variables.

†*p* < .10

****p* < .001

so supported the notion that gender roles for women were more flexible in sex-integrated firms: Whereas participants from male-dominated firms perceived expressions of individuality to be a hindrance to success, those from sex-integrated firms perceived such expressions as a positive attribute.

Despite support for the hypothesis that male-dominated firms will reinforce men's attributes while devaluing women's, the qualitative analysis revealed an important qualification to these conclusions: some evidence in the interview data suggested that for women in male-dominated firms to act too much like men was problematic. This qualification further illuminates the gender-based criteria for success in these firms. One participant explained:

There's nothing men hate more—especially men in power—than a woman who is [too much] like a man. It's a very negative thing. There was a very well-qualified woman who interviewed at our firm for a position. She had years of experience in the exact practice area that we were recruiting for, but when she showed up at the doorstep . . . people hated her. Men and women alike said, "She's too mannish." She had this very deep voice, she was very asexual in her dress, and she didn't get the job.

This story suggested that acting like a man could be a hindrance to a woman's ability to succeed to the extent that it interfered with men's ability to view her as a sexual creature. This perspective was consistent with the view, expressed by a number of women from male-dominated firms, that powerful men desired and reinforced expressions of sexuality from their female subordinates. To provide an example of the role they saw sexuality playing in partners' evaluations of women, two participants from male-dominated firms related the following joke, which had been told in their firms:

There were three woman associates who found \$25,000 in an account. One of the associates wanted to keep the money; the second associate opted to give it to the client; the third felt it should go to the partnership. Which one made partner? Answer: The one with the biggest tits.

Many women working in male-dominated firms described overt sexuality as an effective, if inappropriate and personally unacceptable, mode of relating to men, particularly those in authority:

Some of the guys—especially the ones that got there because they have this lust for power—love it when women flirt with them. Part of the accoutrement of the power is having women love you. And if you don't act like you really love them, you know, I think you suffer.

This participant went on to explain that, from her observations, one way to make partner was by "pandering to men." She believed that the women

in the partnership may have realized “on a subconscious level that they had to—that they weren’t going to be evaluated equally, and so they had better make some kind of bond that would help them over that hump.” Most women also warned, however, that women were likely to “lose out” if they went too far beyond flirtation. As one participant explained, “You have to be a good sport, but the Virgin Mary too.” Nonetheless, as results in Table 5 show, these participants rated sexual involvement with co-workers as less likely to hinder success than did their counterparts in sex-integrated firms.

Though not evident in the quantitative results, such concerns were not entirely absent in interviews with women in sex-integrated firms. There were instances when these women too felt the extra burden of needing to manage expressions of female gender:

It’s almost a catch 22: If you allow yourself to be perceived as too feminine that will count against you—people can’t help but be distracted by it. But if you don’t allow some of it into how you deal with men in your firm [that can also be a problem]. Men want you to be feminine as well. . . . [Sometimes] they might enjoy a little banter. So if you never react to that, and you’re unwilling to play a little of that game, some men don’t care, but some just consider you the hard bitch image.

Unlike their counterparts in male-dominated firms, however, there was no sense among these participants that women needed to move beyond “banter” to more overt expressions of sexuality in order to succeed.

Summary. These results supported both Hypotheses 2 and 3. Compared to women in sex-integrated firms, women in male-dominated firms evaluated women’s attributes less favorably in relation to their firms’ requirements for success; women in male-dominated firms were also less likely to report that their firms valued stereotypically feminine attributes. Moreover, these data suggested that women in male-dominated firms had two carefully circumscribed gender roles that they were required to enact simultaneously in order to achieve success: the masculine role and the seductress–sex object role—both roles defined by men’s preferences. Women’s warnings against being too mannish or too sexual, however, attested to the ambiguity of these roles and the difficulty inherent in negotiating the fine line between successfully and unsuccessfully enacting them. By contrast, women in sex-integrated firms perceived greater latitude in the gender roles their firms prescribed.

Hypothesis 4: Perceptions of Self

Table 7 summarizes the distribution of participants from male-dominated and sex-integrated firms across the five profiles that emerged from the qualitative analysis of participants’ own gender roles at work. Most notably, there was greater variability in the male-dominated firms than in the sex-integrated firms and little similarity across firm types. This analysis revealed more complexity than either formulation of Hypothesis 4 suggests.

TABLE 7
Qualitative Results: Participants' Perceptions of Self

Profile Type	Male-Dominated Firms	Sex-Integrated Firms ^a
Accommodator	6	0
Resister	3	0
Self-blamer	4	0
Minimizer	2	2
Integrator	0	12

^a One participant was unclassifiable. She appeared to combine aspects of several profiles.

In male-dominated firms, only one profile supported Hypothesis 4a, which predicts that those women will adopt masculine characteristics while shedding the feminine in order to meet their firms' requirements for success. This was the accommodator profile, characteristic of six participants in these firms. Women who adopted this strategy made conscious efforts to conform to their firms' norms and expectations and did so with no apparent regard for their own behavioral preferences. They explicitly differentiated their own behavior from that of other women and consciously modeled themselves after men instead:

Women tend to show their insecurity which I don't think is a good thing. I've sort of stopped doing that. I used to say to other people, even men colleagues, "God, I don't think I can do this; I'm so worried about this, blah, blah, blah." . . . [I learned that] you don't do that. Men don't do that. So I've stopped doing that. But that was a pretty easy rule to follow: Do not wear your heart on your sleeve.

I've seen many women set themselves up—and maybe I did this in the beginning before I learned a lesson, now that I think back on it—for being cast as feminist. Once they're labeled like that, no one will deal with them anymore. It's not in [the partners'] interest. . . . Let's face it, this is a man's environment, and it's sort of Jock City, especially at my firm. But either you're going to stay there and deal with it, or you can leave. . . . I just tend to join in and laugh with them.

Some women enacting this profile appeared to accept as legitimate the charge that women needed to change:

I think of the women as being whiners. . . . Instead of being aggressive about something that bothers them, they whine about it, and I think it's a waste of everybody's time, and it annoys me. . . . You don't win a law suit by whining to the judge, you win a law suit by making a logical and aggressive argument.

Another was more ambivalent. For example, she described the women in her firm as more family-oriented and concerned with childrearing than the men. As a single parent of two, she both empathized with women in this regard and clearly dissociated herself from them:

I know what kind of woman the partners will make a partner. They want a woman who is going to make the same sacrifices the guys are going to make. So far I've done that. I've lost a marriage in the process, along with all the other guys who get divorced and that's something they can relate to. They probably assign it to the fact that I'm a lunatic and bill the way I do. . . . I don't want people to describe me like that, but they think that's cool. It's not a negative in their minds. It sounds really unattractive to me because I try to care about how I live my life. But I've seen it happen that they start to really discount women who take time out for childrearing. . . . I think I understand what the institution responds to. And I'm reacting, to my detriment or not. But I'm tied up with that.

Accommodators, although imitating some aspects of the traditionally masculine sex role, also tried to establish a rapport with men by drawing on traditional sex-role relationships. Though no women in the study claimed to use sex as a strategy to get ahead, several who fit this profile admitted to being flirtatious with men:

Every once in a while [when you're dealing with men], if you want to get something done, you get into your little-girl-cutesy-flirty mode.

Another described drawing on traditional sex-role relationships to established a rapport with her male superiors, stopping short of being "openly sexual." She explained:

I think that the men in most law firms don't know how to deal with strong professional women because they haven't had the experience yet. And so, you have to figure out a way to communicate with these people on their own level. . . . Let's face it. How in the past have women and men related to each other? For the most part . . . men and women have related in one of three ways: either mother/son, husband/wife as lovers, or husband/wife in the nonsexual aspects of the marriage. Those are the traditional roles. And where do you fit in? You could be openly sexual but that would bring with it a very much more substantial problem. . . . So it's easier for me to take on the role of [my boss's] daughter or his wife or his mother, or some role that he's familiar with.

Yet, despite the virtual consensus among participants working in male-dominated firms about the gender roles most conducive to success, nearly half of these participants were either unwilling or unable to follow such prescriptions. Two profiles characterized these participants: the resister and the self-blamer. Both supported Hypothesis 4b, which predicts that women in male-dominated firms will emulate characteristics typically associated with women and shun those typically associated with men, thus seeing themselves unfavorably in relation to their firm's requirements for success.

The resister profile characterized three participants in male-dominated firms. Unlike the accommodators, these participants identified more

strongly with women's characteristics than with men's. Moreover, they rejected as invalid their firms' assessments of women as well as their firms' prescriptions for women's behavior. They expressed anger and frustration about the pressures they felt to act like men and anticipated leaving their firms before decisions about their partnership would take place. One resister, for example, described her firm's values as personally unacceptable:

I don't like the idea of being partners with these [men]. They're all so different from me, and it's such a powerhouse type of mentality. I just don't think that's really for me.

Another described her firm's values as misguided:

There's a very macho way of how you negotiate, how you approach problems with opposing counsel which is sort of knock-'em-out. If you can't sort of good-ol'-boy it, you need to be brutal and tough. I think sometimes that can be a good negotiating style, but not always, or even usually. And I think that a lot of the men in my firm think that any other way is not effective. And you're criticized if you don't embrace that view of negotiating. Women generally are more mediators. They try to work toward a solution on a give and take. I think among men there's a lot more shove-it-down-the opponents'-throats and that's the value they admire. And if you can act like a man you will get [rewarded].

This participant linked the "horrendously high turnover" among women in her firm, as well as her own intentions to leave, to her firm's "macho attitude":

I don't have that attitude. Personally I think because I'm a woman. And this is something I'm dealing with myself now about how ambitious I am and what I want to do with my career. . . . Knowing the women that I know, we have other goals and other interests. And I don't think any of us are that serious about what we're doing that we're willing to give everything else up for it. There are a lot of women—myself included—who are going to leave that place. And it's not because they were rejected; it's because the price was too high for them. . . . I think many women go in because they feel a strong need to be validated by going with a macho firm: "I could have made it. I did it for a couple years. Now I'm going to go back and do something that I really would like. And I've shown that I could compete in this world, but I choose not to."

Participants who fit the self-blamer profile, in contrast to those classed as accommodators and resisters, were neither able to conform to their firm's image of successful women nor able to reject that image as illegitimate. Instead, these women seemed to internalize their firm's devaluation of women. Four participants from male-dominated firms fit this profile. Like resisters, these women identified more with women than with men; yet for them, gender identity was problematic and seemed a source of low self-esteem:

In my own case . . . [it is] not that they are really discriminating against me because I'm a woman; but because I'm a woman, I just really don't have the qualities that lead to success in that firm. I'm very unaggressive. I hate controversy. I like to please—I very much would like to please. And I hate litigation. I hate conflict. I really don't thrive in that kind of situation, and I also don't thrive on pressure. And that's something that's been remarked in my informal evaluation. I think that's partly because of my socialization.

When I asked if there were ways that being a woman had been a help or hindrance to her ability to practice law, another self-blamer commented as follows:

The one thing I think I do have [as a woman] is that I see all the different sides of the question. It's really a flaw as a lawyer. . . . I think that to be a really good lawyer you have to live your case, you have to put yourself into your case and sort of internalize the justice of your own position. I'd say my tendency mentally is to do the opposite thing, to see the other guy's side.

Upon further reflection, this participant noted:

But in a way [the tendency to see the other guy's side] can be helpful too, especially if you're a person whose role is not really to spearhead a case and to have the ultimate judgment or argument about what you're going to say, but just to sort of fill in all the cracks. I think that then it's quite helpful.

This kind of reflection was typical in interviews with self-blammers. To the extent that they valued their own capacities as women, they tended to do so as a way of affirming the appropriateness of their subordinate roles.

Finally, there was a small minority of women in male-dominated firms for whom sex was an irrelevant category. These participants described themselves as generally “oblivious” to gender, “unaware,” or “not very conscious” of how it might affect their own or others' experiences. There were two participants from male-dominated firms who fit this, the minimizer, profile:

I guess I always just think of myself in terms of the way I am as a person. I don't think of it necessarily as a woman thing, but just an individual thing.

I can't honestly say that being female has affected me personally.

I don't expect to be confused for a man. But I don't go around thinking of it as an issue very much. There are obviously circumstances and situations that I'm aware of, but it's not in the forefront of my mind.

Minimizers were reasonably satisfied with their firms and gave little attention to their firm's expectations for success. Though they observed some sex differences, the differences they noted were typically insignificant and, by their own accounts, unrelated to ability to be successful.

In sex-integrated firms, the pattern was dramatically different. There were no participants working in sex-integrated firms who fit the accommodator, resister, or self-blamer profiles, and there were only two who fit the minimizer profile. With the exception of one participant who seemed to combine various aspects of several profiles and who therefore defied classification, the remaining participants in sex-integrated firms fit a fifth profile, the integrator. Integrators self-consciously drew on both traditionally masculine and traditionally feminine images when describing themselves and felt reasonably confident that doing so enhanced their ability to succeed in their firms. This profile was consistent with Hypothesis 4b, which predicts that, compared to women in male-dominated firms, those in sex-integrated firms will be less constrained by sex-role stereotypes and more likely to evaluate themselves favorably in relation to their firms' requirements for success.

For example, one representative integrator, who emphasized her more "masculine" qualities of "aggressiveness" and "forthrightness," also commented that "the times when I'm most successful are when I am most feminine," referring to her capacity to relate empathically to clients. These participants commonly attributed many of their strengths to the fact that they were women:

Being a woman I think I have open to me a wider arsenal of personalities and a wider array of behaviors. Men to me tend to act the same all the time. I don't see that they vary their character very much. I think women are more chameleon-like—better actors, if you will. The good male lawyers are good actors, but there aren't a lot of them. The women are better at that.

As a woman, I tend to communicate better about a deal or about a case. Women tend to create an atmosphere of team work in the sense of making sure everybody gets together for dinner if everyone's working late, or spending a lot of time talking about a case. I can't say every woman does this, but I think that generally the women do more than the men. The men tend to be less communicative.

For some of my clients, especially pro bono clients, [being a woman makes it] easier for me to deal with them on a personal level. I can talk to them much easier. They know you understand what's happening. Frequently the men are not very emotionally giving. So there's a problem there sometimes with men. They don't understand that sometimes the clients are afraid, and they don't know what's going on, and they're depending on you to help them.

Integrators who occasionally felt unable to fit in with a male-oriented culture tended to formulate new roles and new kinds of relationships that were both personally satisfying and professionally acceptable, a strategy women in male-dominated firms did not report:

You're not [the male partners'] golfing buddy, and there aren't that many women who play racquetball. . . . And therefore

women kind of have to find other ways to develop a personal relationship with them, as opposed to a merely professional relationship. I was having a hard time with that, but I'm learning that part of it is bringing your own personality in. I don't think you can just leave your personality at home and try to fit into the sort of gray-bearded stereotype. I'm not going to grow a gray beard.

This strategy of carving out new roles provided a sharp contrast to the strategies of accommodators, who tended to rely on traditional sex-roles as a model for their relationships with men, and of resisters, who opted out of such relationships altogether.

The quantitative analysis showed some support for both formulations of Hypothesis 4. As shown in Table 3, women in sex-integrated firms were more likely than their counterparts in male-dominated firms to rate themselves and women similarly ($t = 2.98, p < .01$, two-tailed test), supporting Hypothesis 4a. They were also more likely to rate themselves and men similarly ($t = 1.82, p < .10$, two-tailed test), however, supporting Hypothesis 4b at a marginal level of significance. These findings support the qualitative analysis, which showed that most women in sex-integrated firms were integrators who drew on both masculine and feminine roles. As Table 6 shows, participants in both sex-integrated and male-dominated firms described themselves as more similar to women than to men ($t_{\text{matched}} = 9.73, df = 13, p < .001$ and $t_{\text{matched}} = 7.46, df = 14, p < .001$, respectively). The magnitude of these differences in ratings was unrelated to firm type (see Table 3).

There were no differences in self-ratings on either the scale of masculine attributes or the scale of feminine attributes. Significant differences in ratings of individual attributes, summarized in Table 5 showed some self-stereotyping as a function of firm type, however. Consistent with the accommodator profile, participants in male-dominated firms rated themselves higher on two attributes related to feminine expressions of sexuality at work—flirtation and attractive dress. They also reported more sexual involvement with co-workers. No clear pattern emerged from the analyses of individual masculine attributes: Participants in male-dominated firms rated themselves higher on the stereotypically masculine attribute, “analytical”; those in sex-integrated firms rated themselves higher on the stereotypically masculine attribute, “masculine.”

As shown in Table 3, results concerning women's self-evaluations supported Hypothesis 4b. Participants from male-dominated firms described themselves less favorably in relation to requirements for success than did women from sex-integrated firms ($t = 2.19, p < .05$, two-tailed test). This finding is consistent with both the resister and self-blamer profiles in male-dominated firms, contrasted with the integrator profile in sex-integrated firms. Not surprisingly, women in male-dominated firms also saw themselves as less competent and reported less satisfaction with their firms, less desire to become partners, and lower expectations for promotion. Partic-

ipants' own reflections suggested a direct and conscious link between the presence of women in senior positions and their desire for and optimism about promotion to partner. For example, one woman from a sex-integrated firm described the year her firm promoted several women into the partnership as a "kind of turning point." She no longer felt there was "some sort of quota" and described a subsequent "relaxation" among woman associates, "one less thing to worry about" as they anticipated their reviews for entry into the partnership: "If you don't have female partners, you don't have female associates who stick around long enough to make partner." For this associate, as for other women from sex-integrated firms, the entry of women into the partnership indicated the very real possibility that she too could become a partner, and that her sex, *per se*, would not pose a barrier.

Summary. On balance, both the qualitative and quantitative analyses showed stronger support for Hypothesis 4b than for 4a. Despite the generally shared perception among women in male-dominated firms that women were devalued and subjected to gender role prescriptions defined in men's terms, these women chose to respond in a variety of ways. Those who wished to compete for partnership consciously changed their behavior to conform to their firms' expectations; others refused to change their behavior, rejecting their firms' expectations and the values underlying them and forgoing the possibility of promotion; still others internalized their firms' assessments of women and hence were able neither to conform to nor reject their firms' norms. By contrast, those in sex-integrated firms experienced less ambivalence about their gender identity, self-consciously enacting both masculine and feminine roles as they saw fit. Compared to participants in sex-integrated firms, those in male-dominated firms were also less likely to evaluate themselves favorably in relation to their firms' requirements for success. Finally, a relatively small minority of women in the study minimized the role of gender at work and were unmindful of any challenges or opportunities it might offer.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research demonstrates how the proportional representation of women in positions of power affects professional women's gender identity at work. In firms in which few women were in positions of power, sex roles were more stereotypical and more problematic. Women in these firms, when compared to women in firms with higher proportions of senior women, characterized men as more masculine and less feminine, evaluated feminine attributes and attributes they associated with women less favorably in relation to their firm's requirements for success, and had more difficulty enacting gender roles that were both personally satisfying and consistent with their firms' norms and expectations.

Women in male-dominated firms responded in different ways to their firms' devaluation of women. Some were accommodators, enacting roles

that emphasized "masculine" aggressiveness and instrumentality, offset in some cases by "feminine" sexuality. Nearly half the participants in male-dominated firms, however, rejected these roles. Of these, some were resisters, who criticized their firms for reinforcing stereotypically masculine qualities and described their own feminine qualities of sensitivity and moderation as more valuable and appropriate. Others were self-blamers, accepting their firms' requirements for success and internalizing their firms' devaluation of women as a valid assessment of their own deficiencies.

In addition, although they responded to women's devaluation in a range of ways, most women in male-dominated firms experienced some discomfort with the sex-role requirements in their firms, and, relative to women in sex-integrated firms, rated themselves less favorably in relation to requirements for success overall. These findings help to explain the lower levels of job satisfaction as well as lower desire for and expectations of promotion among the women in the male-dominated firms.

There was less variability in gender identity among women in sex-integrated firms. These women were more easily able to integrate expressions of masculinity with expressions of femininity. They regarded feminine attributes as a source of strength and competence and, compared to women in male-dominated firms, found their firms more accepting of nonsexual aspects of femininity. In addition, they expressed less anger, frustration, and ambivalence about requirements to enact masculine roles at work.

This study also showed that in sex-integrated firms, biological sex was less tightly linked to a bipolar construction of gender in which masculine traits are reserved for men and feminine traits for women. Results suggest that this more fluid construction of gender may foster a more positive view of women. It also may be liberating for women since it encourages them to draw on both masculine and feminine aspects of themselves, with choices depending on the particular demands of a situation and their own comfort levels rather than on the demands of their firms. For example, women in sex-integrated firms believed that expressing their individuality would contribute to their success, whereas those in male-dominated firms believed such behavior would be a hindrance. Women's greater sense of acceptance in these firms may further explain their higher levels of satisfaction with their firms and optimism about their careers.

Although this construction of gender could be liberating for men as well, these findings also suggest that women in sex-integrated firms may have had greater gender role flexibility than their male counterparts: participants from sex-integrated firms saw their female colleagues as more masculine yet saw their male colleagues only as less unfeminine than did participants from male-dominated firms. Hence, it is unclear whether the movement in these firms is toward more uniformly embracing both masculine and feminine attributes for both sexes, or toward embracing both for women only.

Finally, this study revealed an interesting pattern of results related to

femininity and women's sexuality at work. Although there were no differences in self-ratings on the femininity scale as a function of firm type, a separate analysis of each feminine attribute showed differences in stereotypically feminine expressions of sexuality, such as dressing attractively and being flirtatious, both in self-ratings and in ratings of professional women as a group: Compared to women in sex-integrated firms, those in male-dominated firms rated themselves, and women generally, as more flirtatious at work; they also rated themselves as more attractively dressed. Moreover, women in male-dominated firms emphasized the role of sexuality in gaining favor with senior men and, compared to women in sex-integrated firms, rated sexual involvement with co-workers as less detrimental to success. Thus, the feminine attributes that distinguished women in male-dominated firms from those in sex-integrated firms may reflect the sexualized gender role their firms prescribed.

Limitations of the Study

The statistical results showing relationships between the presence of women in senior positions and junior women's perceptions of gender at work are necessarily associational rather than causal. Consequently, it is unclear whether the presence of women in senior positions per se makes a difference in women's experiences or whether other factors in organizations' internal environments lead both to increased proportions of women partners and to more positive experiences. The matching procedure used to select firms for this study diminishes the potentially confounding effects of some of these factors. This design feature, however, does not control for all possible confounds. Tidball (1980) suggested, for example, that the attitudes of men in institutions with high proportions of achieving women are more helpful to junior women than the attitudes of men in other kinds of institutions. Therefore, it may be that the men in senior positions, who promoted women in the first place, structured a more supportive environment for women. They may have communicated a different set of messages about gender to the women in their firms. More than likely, some combination of these factors together with demography's direct effects contributed to differences in women's perceptions of gender. Further research into the organizational contexts that yield different numbers of women in senior positions may help to clarify the processes involved.

In addition, there may have been a self- or firm-selection bias. When I asked why they chose their firms, however, none of the participants named the number of woman partners as a conscious reason but it is possible that this factor influenced their decisions unconsciously. There was no way to assess the possibility of firm-selection bias in this study. It may be that the male-dominated and sex-integrated firms applied different criteria when hiring women, which might explain differences in the self-ratings and ratings of women as a group. The qualitative data show, however, that women's experiences in the two types of firms were quite differ-

ent, providing support for the notion that it was organizational context, rather than systematic a priori differences between women, that influenced their ratings.

Another limitation of this study is that it focuses only on women's perspectives. It is important to assess men's views as well, since men may react negatively to shifts toward greater representation of women in traditionally male-dominated settings (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992). In addition, it is important to investigate how the gender identity of men may be influenced by increasing numbers of women in senior positions. For example, the women from the sex-integrated firms in this study perceived men as less masculine and more feminine than did those in male-dominated firms; it is important to know whether or not men share this perception.

Finally, whereas the sampling method of drawing carefully matched pairs of firms enhanced the internal validity of this field study, the relative smallness of the sample, a requirement for collecting the qualitative data, may have compromised its external validity. The question about how generalizable the results are awaits further investigation of these phenomena in other work settings and with larger samples.

Implications for Theory and Practice

This study makes four theoretical contributions. First, it extends the developing literature on organizational demography to include the impact of demographic composition across hierarchical levels of organizations, highlighting the distribution of power within them as an important consideration in demographic research. Unexamined variability in groups' representations at senior organizational levels may explain Tsui, Egan, and O'Reilly's (1992) findings that women and minorities were generally unaffected by their demographic status in their work units. The question remains, however, as to how women's experience may change as women gain an even larger share of senior positions.

Second, this work challenges prevailing conceptions of gender as an objective property of individuals synonymous with biological sex and universal across organizational settings. It supports instead a more complex view of gender as an ongoing social construction, the meaning, significance, and consequences of which vary as a function of power differences reflected in the sex composition across levels of an organization's hierarchy. As such, this study establishes gender as an important dependent variable in organizational research, where traditionally it has been treated as only an independent variable.

Third, the qualitative analysis in this research identified five profiles characterizing women's different interpretations of and responses to their firm's views of women. Some of these represent different responses to similar demographic circumstances. Further investigation into these profiles, including the individual and organizational antecedents, costs, and ben-

efits associated with them, offers a promising direction for researchers interested in influences on women's career success.

Fourth, this study highlights the extent to which members of low-status groups accept as valid a low group- and even self-valuation. Social identity theorists have traditionally ignored situations in which low-status groups perceive status disparities to be legitimate, considering them "rare" or "trivial" (Caddick, 1982: 139). Yet more than half the participants from male-dominated firms failed to question their firm's negative views of women: Accommodators depicted themselves as aspirants who learned to shed attributes associated with women and model their behavior after men instead. Self-blamers internalized their firm's assessments of women as valid depictions of themselves and hence gave up any aspirations for success. These findings beg further inquiry into the consequences for individuals who fail to reject a dominant culture's negative assessments of their identity groups.

This study also has practical implications. Though most of the social identity literature focuses on the benefits associated with the self-enhancing strategies undertaken by members of low-status groups seeking to maintain a positive social identity, the results of this study suggest some potential costs as well. The self-enhancing strategies women employed in male-dominated firms involved differentiating themselves from their "deficient" female colleagues by enacting a masculine gender role, fulfilling men's expectations that women relate to them on sexual terms, or leaving their firms altogether. Adopting a masculine or a sexualized role, or both, reinforces the notion that women are deficient, breeds resentment among women, and interferes with the development of positive in-group relationships (Ely, 1994). Such problems may account for the high rates of turnover among talented women many organizations are facing today (Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1987). This research suggests that increasing the number of women in senior positions may help organizations to both stem such turnover and draw on a range of talent within women that is broader than either the traditional masculine or feminine role affords on its own.

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APPENDIX

Content Analytic Domains

Perceptions of Sex Differences

Operational definition: Characterizations of the presence or absence of cognitive, emotional, or behavioral differences between men and women.

Interview Questions

1. Do you see differences between the work styles of men and women?

2. Do women bring something different to the traditional practice of law?
3. Are there ways in which being a woman has been a help/hindrance in your ability to do your job?

Exemplary Statements from Interviews

Category	Statement
Sets out to be reasonable when negotiating	I think women have a potential for being more reasonable negotiators . . . putting a fair deal on the table to start with, rather than starting way over on my side because you know you're going to end up in the middle anyway.
Competent	I think that the good female associate is better than the good male associate.
Yells when angry/upset	As far as being on an all-female deal, I've done that a few times. . . . I think there was less screaming going on.
Management style shows concern for people's well-being	[On an all-female team there was] just more awareness that you only can work so fast. A more reasonable, humane way of managing the team.
Aggressive	Some of the junior people were concerned that to do well on the tender offers it may help to be a male, or exhibit the male aggressiveness.
Sensitive to people	[Women tend] to be more emotional, but I mean that in a positive sense—more sensitive to people.

Perceptions of What It Takes to Be Successful

Operational definition: Statements about what it takes to be successful in participant's firm, either by the firm's definition or by partners' expectations. This includes personality traits, attitudes, and behaviors that either should or should not be evidenced if one wants to do well or to make partner; how the firm expects an attorney to act or be; what kinds of people they hire or don't hire. This also includes descriptions of the firm's policies (formal or informal) for making partnership decisions.

Interview Questions

There were no interview questions specifically designed to elicit responses in this domain.

Exemplary Statements from Interviews

Category	Statements
Cries easily when angry/upset	I really have tried to control my tendency to tear up because my thought is that if I would allow myself to sit and cry, that no matter how much respect they have for me up to that point, I'd lose some of it, and they would think, "Oh God, she can't handle this. She is not being professional."
Aggressive	One of the things that it takes to be a partner is to be aggressive. I mean, how can you be a lawyer—if you can't speak up on your own behalf with the people that you work for, how can they perceive you are being a good advocate for your client?
Work long hours	The only real requirement for making partner is a willingness to work long hours and be flexible about it.
Flirtatious	Every once in a while if you want something done, you get into your little-girl-cutesy-flirty mode.
Expresses individuality	The firm values people's individuality. We have a lot of weirdos here!

Competent

If you're not really competent, nothing is really going to help you. You have to be good.

Perceptions of Self

Operational definition: Statements describing what she is or is not like, or what she does or does not do, as a lawyer or as a person, including statements in which she compares herself with others.

Interview Questions

1. What image, if any, do you try to convey about yourself by the way you dress for work?
2. Is being a woman an important part of your identity at work? Outside work?
3. Is femininity (as you have defined it) an important part of your identity at work? Outside work?
4. How well integrated do you feel in your firm? How well do you feel you fit in?

Exemplary Statements from Interviews

Category	Statement
Sensitive to people	I think I'm more sensitive to people's moods and needs, sort of maybe the personal things that are going on in relationships.
Flirtatious	I'm just very careful not to flirt.
Feminine	I would say that compared to some people I work with, not necessarily just in my firm, I'm probably a little bit more feminine than not.
Yells when angry/upset	I can really have a knock-down, drag-out, screaming, four-letter-word battle in a room if somebody's creating a problem.
Relates well to men at work	She was a woman who was very good at . . . knowing how to get along with the guys. Unlike me. I never knew how to get along with the guys at all.
Sets out to be reasonable when negotiating	I don't come in asking for 3 million if I know I want 100,000.

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