

Who Benefits

Experimental Evidence of Gender Differences in Aid Allocations

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Despite this, we know remarkably little about gender differences in attitudes toward welfare recipients.

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- marital status (Lichter, Baston, and Brown 2004)
- employment (Harris 1993; Willrich 2000)

My Question

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When men and women are put in direct competition for scarce public aid resources, how do women fare compared to similarly-situated men?

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Whereas men seeking aid are usually seen as failed breadwinners or lazy “home slackers” (Willrich 2000), in control of their poverty and having not earned aid.

Hypothesis 1

H1. On average, male applicants will be seen as less deserving than female applicants.

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Third-party evaluations of worker quality pay higher returns for women and little to no returns for men (Abel, Burger and Piraino 2020; Dadgar and Trimble 2015).

Hypotheses

- H2a.** High quality male applicants will not earn significantly more than low quality male applicants.
- H2b.** High quality female applicants will earn significant more than low quality female applicants.

Empirical Approach

YouGov survey experiment (n=1800); nationally representative sample + low SES oversample¹

Following DeSante (2013), subjects are shown two applications for state aid

Each has a stated need of \$900 with a budget constraint of \$1,500 Prompt

Any funds not given to the applicants go to the state to “offset the state budgetary deficit” (principled objection)

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Empirical Approach

WORK FIRST ASSISTANCE APPLICATION

Applicant Name: Misty [REDACTED] Date of Application: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED] Telephone: [REDACTED]
County: [REDACTED]
Case No.: [REDACTED] District No.: [REDACTED]

HOUSEHOLD: List all household members for whom Assistance is being requested:

(Non-Applicant household members are not required to provide a social security number, immigrant, or citizen status)

Name	Date of Birth	Sex	Social Security No.	Citizen/Eligible Immigrant	Relationship
[REDACTED]	08/16/2010	M	[REDACTED]	Y	Son
[REDACTED]	04/14/2012	F	[REDACTED]	Y	Daughter

Total assessed monthly need: \$ 900.00

Worker Quality Assessment (circle one):

Poor

Excellent

Applicant Statement: I understand that it is against the law for me to make false statements and that I am

Empirical Approach

I use names (Sandra, James, Sammie, Misty) to cue applicants' gender. Names

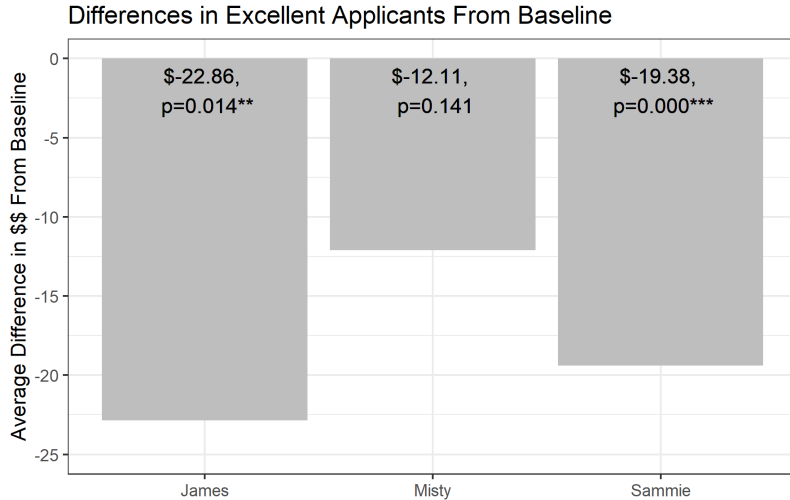
Names were chosen specifically to cue whiteness so as to examine the effects of gender in isolation from racialized welfare attitudes.

I use a binary "Worker Quality Rating" (Excellent/Poor) to denote quality

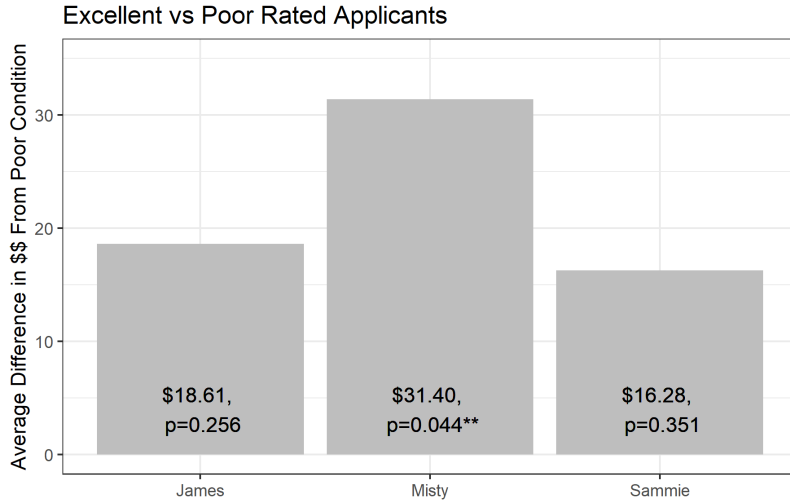
All subjects were shown Sandra with an "Excellent" rating as a baseline as Applicant 1

Applicant 2 is a randomly assigned a name (James, Sammie, or Misty) and quality rating (Excellent/Poor) with equal probability

Results: H1 - Men Receive Less?



Results: H2a-b - Worker Quality



Confirming the Mechanism

My results hold when stratified by ideology, except among respondents who identify as “very liberal”

These findings are also robust to stratifying by gender, mitigating concerns about simple in-group bias. Gender

Additionally, these findings substantively replicate when I split the sample into the nationally representative and low SES subsamples Nat. Pop Low SES

- (though many results are statistically insignificant, likely due to lack of power)

Conclusion

Sexism is alive and well - and it cuts both ways

Welfare appears to be a domain in which white women “benefit” from benevolently sexist attitudes - unlike black women (DeSante 2013; Hayes and Mitchell 2022)

Though these effects appear driven by positive affect toward “high quality” women

While white men seeking welfare appear to suffer from hostile sexism and receive less

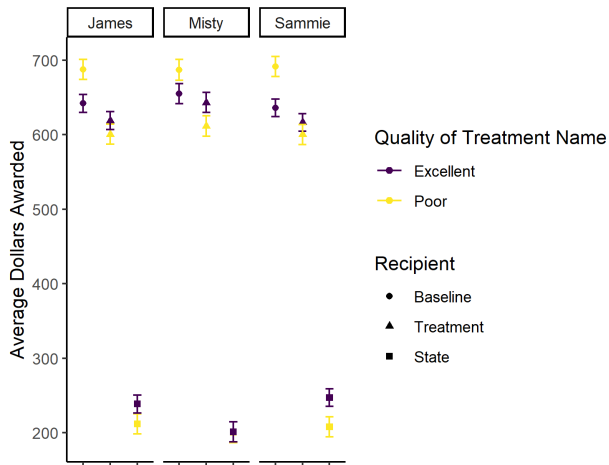
Both results imply attitudes caustic to gender equality

Future work will benefit from comparing men and women of different races and sexes on similar dimensions.

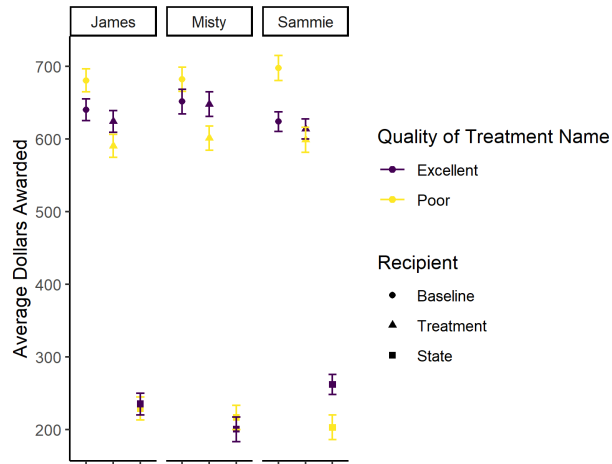
Thank you!

swarr15@ur.rochester.edu <https://sites.google.com/view/sarah-r-warren/research>

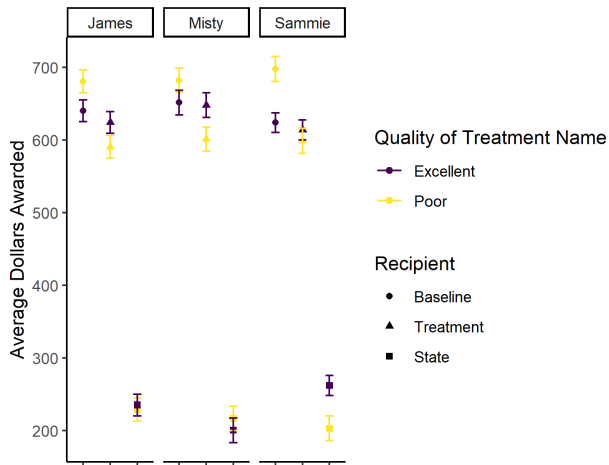
Appendix - Full Results Fig



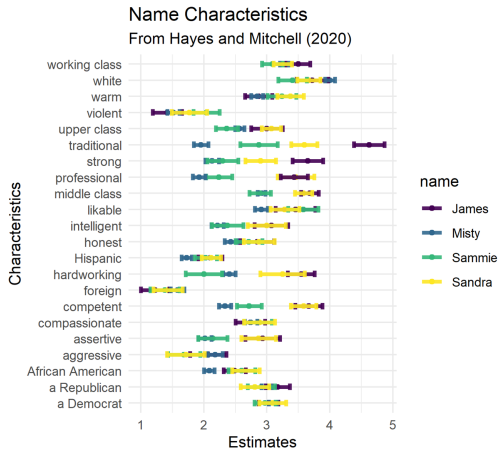
Appendix - Nationally Representative Results



Appendix - Low SES Results



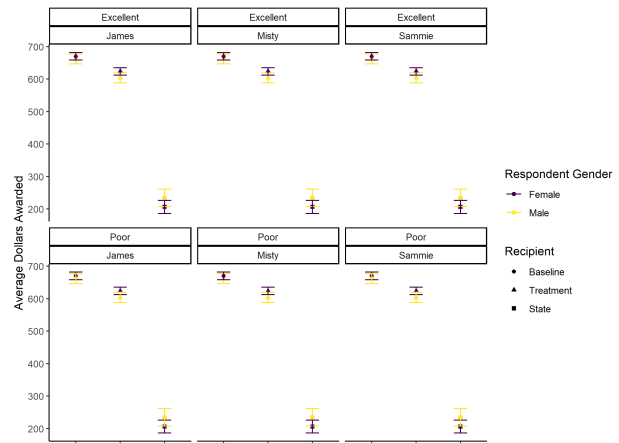
Appendix - Name Characteristics



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Appendix

Appendix - Gender of Respondents



Prompt

Respondents receive the following prompt:

Researchers have been hired to consult with a nearby state's welfare agency. Below you will find two applicants for government assistance. The application information has been redacted to hide information that may identify individual applicants.

Each applicant has a state-assessed level of need of \$900 per month. Your task is to allocate \$1,500 between the two applicants. You can allocate any amount between \$0 and \$900 to each applicant. Any remaining funds will be used to offset the state's budget deficit. Please enter three numbers below.

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Appendix