GIVING VIRTUOUS PEOPLE THE LICENSE TO HARASS: THE ROLE OF RESPONSIBILITY-FOCUSED POWER EMBODIMENT AND MORAL LICENSING ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT PERCEPTIONS
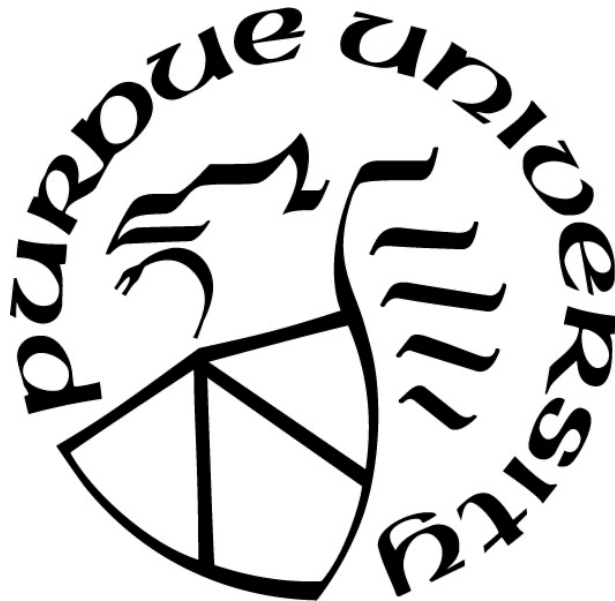
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ABSTRACT

When the #MeToo movement hit its height, many of the powerful figures who were accused of harassment were people who had been previously seen as virtuous (Stockdale, Bell, Crosby, & Berdahl, 2019). The present study investigated how embodied power influenced sexual harassment (SH) judgments by manipulating the initiator to embody responsibility-focused, or self-focused power (compared to a control), and whether moral licensing, operationalized through moral crediting and moral credentialing, would mediate relations between power embodiment and SH judgments. Participants were 376 adults (42% female) residing in the U.S. who were recruited through Mturk. Moral crediting was significantly higher for perpetrators described as embodying responsibility-focused power, compared to a control condition (no power cues), which in turn was higher than perpetrators described as embodying self-focused power. Moral crediting was positively related to false accusations, SH severity (opposite of predictions), and severity of punishment. Additionally, there were gender differences in moral crediting such that the effects of power-embodiment on moral crediting were stronger for women than for men, though both were significant. Taken together, the findings of this study indicate that some initiators evade censure as their actions are seen as less severe when others believe them to have embodies responsibility-focused power. This should serve as an indication that SH is not always done by "bad actors", but by those who appear to be virtuous. These findings should inform future SH policies, research, and training.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment (SH) continues to be a harmful and costly issue for organizations. In 2015, approximately 30,000 of the 90,000 complaints received by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) included a complaint of sexual harassment (Feldblum & Lipnic, 2016). This estimate does not account for the fact that 3 in 4 targets of harassment do not report it to their organization (Feldblum & Lipnic, 2016). Anonymous surveys estimate that approximately 58% of women have experienced potential sex harassing behaviors in their workplaces (Ilies, Hauserman, Schwochau & Stibal, 2003). Targets of SH tend to have lower job satisfaction, work attitudes, and organizational commitment, and are more likely to withdraw from the workplace psychologically and behaviorally (Fitzgerald, Swan, & Magley, 1997). The poor health and satisfaction of these employees can prove costly for organizations (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). Beyond lost productivity, potential legal fees can be a cost for organizations. The EEOC recovered $164.5 million in legal fees for targets for harassment in 2015 alone (Feldblum & Lipnic, 2016).

The recent prevalence of sexual harassment stories involving powerful figures in popular culture, driven by the #MeToo movement, raises many important questions for this line of research. Many of the powerful figures who have been accused of SH in the #MeToo era were positive role models or otherwise perceived as virtuous (Stockdale, Bell, Crosby & Berdahl, 2019). How is it that so many seemingly good people were able to commit harassment without reproach for so long? In the current study, I seek to investigate how people perceive alleged perpetrators (initiators) of SH and make judgments of their motives and culpability. My analysis focuses on concepts of power and moral licensing as factors that shape these perceptions. I will first discuss what defines SH, then review the extant literature on SH perceptions, as well as discuss how initiator power embodiment may play a role in perceptions. Finally, I will explore how moral licensing may explain the relationship between initiator power and SH judgments.

Defining Sexual Harassment

There are two primary ways of defining of sexual harassment: the legal concept and the psychological experience. The legal definition has been outlined by both the EEOC as well as in the courts. In 1980, the EEOC defined SH in two broad categories of *quid pro quo* and *hostile workplace environment*. *Quid pro quo* occurs when a work-related benefit or punishment is contingent on the target's response to sexual advances, whereas *hostile workplace environment* involves unwelcome actions or comments of a sexual nature that interfere with an individual's performance or work environment (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1980).

Psychologists have outlined a more experiential, psychological definition of SH. A tripartite model, introduced by Fitzgerald, Gelfand and Drasgow (1995), has been the most dominant in the literature. By researching the range of unwanted sexual experiences, the authors were able to develop the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ), that measures different dimensions of sexual harassment experiences (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995). The first component of Fitzgerald's tripartite model is *gender harassment,* which involves derogatory comments or actions based on the gender of the target. The next is *unwanted sexual attention*, where a target is subject to uncomfortable and unwelcome sexual comments or advances, which can range from offensive comments to assault or rape. These elements together correspond to the EEOC's hostile work environment. The final piece of Fitzgerald's model, *sexual coercion*, similar to the EEOC's *quid pro quo*, involves pressure for sexual favors in exchange for work-related benefits or under threat of consequences. (Fitzgerald, Swan & Magley, 1997).

Perceptions of Sexual Harassment

Despite this guidance on the definition of sexual harassment, perceptions of what constitutes sexual harassment remain ambiguous. Social scientists have been examining perceptions of SH now for decades. What remains clear is that there are many factors that shape people's perceptions of SH, such as characteristics of the perceiver, characteristics of the conduct, characteristics of the target, or of the initiator themselves.

Characteristics of the Perceiver

There are many relevant perceiver characteristics that have been investigated. One of the most studied variables is perceiver gender. Across studies, in general when gender differences are found, women tend to be more sensitive to harassment than men (Rotundo, Nguyen & Sackett, 2001). It is important to note that the size of the gender difference varies across different types of harassing behaviors. There tends to be more consensus on behaviors that are more severe, such as *quid pro quo*, but larger gender differences in perceptions of behaviors that are more ambiguous, such as those corresponding to hostile work environments (Rotundo, Nguyen & Sackett, 2001). Meta-analyses (Blumenthal, 1998; Rotundo, et al., 2001) and narrative reviews (Gutek & O'Connor, 1995) have both concluded that though significant gender differences are consistently found, they are generally not very large and are subject to influence by other factors.

These perceptual differences are important to study given that they inform legal standards for SH cases. Of importance to this discussion, an important standard involves the judgments of the severity of harassment claims. In SH cases, triers of fact (judges and jurors) are asked to determine whether the alleged harassment is severe from both a subjective standard (did the target demonstrate that it was severe to her or him), and an objective standard (would a reasonable person similarly situated as the target find the conduct to be severe). The latter is referred to as the "reasonable person standard" which is fraught with ambiguity because one person's definition of a "reasonable" is different from another's.

Since scholars began to find gender differences in perceptions of SH, the reasonable woman standard was introduced in some circuits to replace the reasonable person standard. By asking jurors to consider if the situation presented would be one that a 'reasonable woman' would find harassing, the legal system sought to bridge gender gaps and force perspective. Ultimately, the reasonable woman standard was not adopted by the Supreme Court. Gutek and O'Connor (1995) argued that the reasonable woman standard is unnecessary, given that gender differences in perceptions of SH are generally small, and consensus is normally found in the type of behaviors that appear in court cases. Thus, there is no need to change the wording (Gutek & O'Connor, 1995). Perry, Kulik and Bourhis (2004) found evidence that the use of the reasonable woman standard did not strongly affect the outcome of the case, even after controlling for case characteristics, judge gender, and the year the case took place (Perry et al., 2004). The failure of this standard to change perceptions of SH should not, however, underscore gender differences in

perceptions. Gender differences still affect how jurors, supervisors, or the general public perceive SH. The recent tremendous interest in the #MeToo movement has shown that there still exists wide variation in how seriously women and men view claims of SH (Stockdale et al., 2019).

Given the variability in gender differences in perceptions in the literature (Gutek & O'Connor, 1995), researchers were motivated to seek out moderating variables which would explain these differences beyond gender alone. The focus on gender may lead researchers to ignore variables that may function as a proxy for gender but better account for perceptual differences, such as hostile sexism (Wiener & Hurt, 2000; O'Connor, Gutek, Stockdale, Geer, & Melançon, 2004) or past experience with unwanted socio-sexual behavior (Frazier, Cochran, & Olson, 1995). O'Connor and colleagues (2004) presented both student and nonstudent populations with scenarios based on real SH court cases that had high fidelity to what a juror would be presented. They found that hostile sexism (HS) partially mediated the relationship between respondent identification with the target, which in turn explained how credible the participant found the target. Although mean HS scores were relatively low for both student and nonstudent samples, men tended to have higher average scores on the HS scale than women, indicating that they were more likely to be lenient in their judgments (O'Connor et al., 2004).

The differences between men and women in perception of SH is not the only perceiver characteristic that has been studied. Age is also a variable of interest when considering its impact on perceptions. Ohse and Stockdale (2008) found that younger people were less likely than older individuals to perceive hostile work environment situations as SH. In their review, Frazier, Cochran and Olson (1995) pointed out that to date, much of the research on perceptions of SH had been conducted using undergraduate samples, which may have overrepresented 18 to 24 year olds. They presented data using undergraduates as well as graduate students and faculty, showing that undergraduates perceived fewer behaviors as harassing compared to graduate students and faculty (Frazier et al., 1995). Another study found a correlation between age and attitudes regarding sexual harassment which approached significance, suggesting that younger participants were more accepting of SH than older participants (Foulis & McCabe, 1997), but this relationship may not be perfectly linear (Ford & Donis, 1996). Kulik and colleagues found that younger judges and judges appointed by Democrats tended to side with the plaintiff more often than older or Republican-appointed judges, even after controlling for case characteristics,

suggesting that age as well as political ideology affect perceptions (Kulik, Perry, & Pepper, 2003).

Characteristics of the Conduct

A limitation of many early studies of perceptions of SH is that they simply provided participants with a behavior and asked whether or not they considered it to constitute sexual harassment. This type of study does not consider how the participant understands the definition of sexual harassment and does not provide context about the situation like an actual court case would. Frazier and colleagues pointed out that many behaviors, such as a sexual joke, in isolation are not perceived as harassing, but when repeated continuously, make for a hostile work environment (Frazier, Cochran, & Olson, 1995). Indeed, there are important situational characteristics that affect perceptions.

The frequency of the described harassment is important in shaping perceptions of SH. More severe incidences, like sexual assault, need only happen once to be considered SH. When examining the frequency of incidents, Thomann and Weiner (1987) found that "under conditions where there were multiple occurrences of the incident compared to a single occurrence, subjects were more likely to indicate that the incident constituted a sexual advance and sexual harassment, and attributed a greater degree of responsibility to the alleged harasser." (p. 580) Clearly, the frequency of the behaviors is a situational characteristic that has implications for how SH is perceived.

As alluded to earlier, there is some degree of variability in what behaviors are considered harassing. The type of behavior is an important characteristic that affects perceptions. Across several studies using undergraduate samples, it has been found that coercive and threatening behaviors are considered the most harassing (Hunter & McClelland, 1991; Reilly, Carpenter, Bartlett, & Brewer, 1982). Outside of the academic context, workers similarly rated sexual bribery as more harassing than ambiguous behaviors like staring or flirting (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1988).

Characteristics of the Target

Characteristics of targets themselves are also important in forming perceptions. Johnson et al. (1997) found that when participants read a story about an incidence of sexual harassment of an intoxicated woman, they viewed the initiator more favorably than when the target was sober. The actions taken by the target, including whether they told the initiator to stop, also influence perceptions (Osman, 2007). Other characteristics of the target that have been studied include age (DuBois et al., 1999) and make-up use (Workman & Johnson, 1991). Some in the field, including Jensen and Raver (2018), have called for studies that integrate target and initiator characteristics, given that they have been shown to interact.

Characteristics of the Initiator

Beyond characteristics of the target, conduct, and perceiver, the last focus of studies of perceptions cover characteristics of the initiator. At this point, less attention has been paid to initiator characteristics in the SH perception literature. Most studies have focused on what initiator characteristics are associated with SH behaviors. For example, men who score highly on the Likelihood to Sexually Harass scale (LSH) were more likely to perceive a relationship between words relating to power and words relating to sex (Pryor & Stoller, 1994; Pina, Gannon, & Saunders, 2009), perhaps suggesting that men who are highly likely to sexually harass do so because they see SH as a means to display or earn power in organizations.

Regarding perceptions of harassment as a function of initiator characteristics, research demonstrates that defendant attractiveness plays an important role. Castellow, Wuensch, and Moore (1990) found that more attractive defendants were judged less harshly than unattractive ones, especially when the plaintiff was unattractive. Attractive defendants tend to be perceived as less culpable in related crimes as well, such as rape (Gerdes, Dammann, & Heilig, 1988).

The characteristic of the initiator that has been studied most often is the initiator's status in the organization. In a survey of undergraduates, behaviors were considered more harassing when carried out by a professor versus a student, even though it was reported that harassment from professors occurred far more rarely than harassment by fellow students (Frazier, Cochran, & Olson, 1995; Bursik, 1992). These findings extend beyond the academic context. Behaviors engaged by supervisors were perceived as more harassing than the same actions by coworkers

(U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1988; Pryor, 1985; Katz, Hannon, & Whitten, 1996). In many studies investigating initiator status, authors suggest that SH is perceived as more severe because the initiator has power over the target. There remains a gap in the literature regarding different types of initiator power, and the effect it may have on perceptions of SH. Is it true that power always lead to more severe SH judgments? In the next section, I explore how perceptions are formed before turning to the power literature to understand how it is conceptualized and how it may affect perceptions.

How Perceptions are Formed

When individuals are faced with a case of unwanted socio-sexual conduct, how do they form perceptions and judgments of severity, culpability, or moral wrongness? Socio-sexual conduct was a term introduced by Gutek (1980) to avoid labeling behavior as sexual harassment, as there are complications with how individuals use that label. This question has been explored by many researchers throughout the SH and psycholegal literature. Wiener and Hurt (1997) conducted qualitative interviews with 50 adults to better understand their decision-making process when judging SH. They found that individuals weigh several factors when coming to a decision, including how welcome the conduct seemed, how frequently the conduct happens, and the status of the initiator (Wiener & Hurt, 1997). By outlining these decision points, Wiener and Hurt helped illuminate both the common and varied processes people use when making judgments about SH. Fundamentally, when individuals are faced with an incident of socio-sexual conduct, they must make an attribution as to who is culpable.

Attribution theory (Kelley, 1967; Weiner, 1972) explains that individuals ultimately assign cause to understand behaviors. Explanations for behaviors can be attributed to enduring or dispositional characteristics of the actor, or to characteristics of the situation external to the actor. Kelley (1967) outlined corollaries that explain how individuals use information to make attributions to either the situation or individual, notably the consistency of the behavior displayed. If the same actor performs the same behavior consistently over time, observers are more likely to attribute their actions to enduring characteristics of the actor. When a behavior is an isolated incident, however, they are less likely to attribute it to the actor. This process can easily be mapped on to how individuals perceive and make attributions about culpability of SH. When a man consistently harasses over time, they are more likely to believe he is guilty of

harassment. When the conduct occurs fewer times, they are more likely to attribute it to another factor of the situation, including the target's features, alcohol, etc.

The attributional model also has potential to explain why we see perceiver differences in SH. Regan and Totten (1975) found that individuals who are more empathetic are more likely to make situational attributions rather than dispositional ones. Similarly, women have different, more hostile experiences of SH than men, which may explain why they label a wider range of behaviors as harassing (Gutek, 1980). Pryor (1985) suggested that socio-sexual behavior that is incongruent with one's social role is seen as more harassing. This inappropriate, out-of-role behavior is more likely to be attributed to a specific characteristic of the individual. This may provide insight as to why the harassing conduct of "nice guys", or people with presumably upstanding character, may be dismissed as it is not consistent with past behavior. Conversely, for an egocentric man with a questionable moral past, the same harassing conduct would not seem out-of-role. In Pryor's study, when the initiator had power over the target, operationalized as a professor harassing a student, the behavior was seen as more harassing (Pryor, 1985). The next section explores power and its influence on perceptions of SH.

Sexual Harassment and Power

In the sexual harassment literature, initiator power has generally been construed as negative. Supervisors' actions seem more severe than those of coworkers, and professors are seen more harassing to college students than their peers. Overall, people perceive higher status initiators' actions as more severe than those of equal status (Frazier et al., 1995). This has been found to be true for target's self-perceptions (i.e. "Is what *I* experienced SH?") and making judgments about the actions of others (Stockdale, Vaux, & Cashin, 1995; Frazier et al., 1995). The severity of powerful initiators also maps onto gender issues of SH perceptions. Men hold more power and status in society than women, and therefore harassment perpetrated by men is seen as more severe than that carried out by women (Gutek, 1980).

Although power, operationalized most often as initiator status, has generally been seen as severe, it is clear that power is more complex. To summarize decades of research, power is dynamic and multifaceted. Tost (2015) defined power as "the asymmetric control over valued resources, which in turn affords an individual the ability to control others' outcomes,

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experiences, or behaviors." I begin by briefly reviewing the extant understandings of power, using those conceptualizations to understand how power affects perceptions of SH.

In their seminal paper, French and Raven (1959) described six bases of power: reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, expert, and informational. *Reward power* is based on the target's perception that another has the ability to control rewards relevant to them. *Coercive power* relies on the perception of the target that the agent has the ability to punish them. *Legitimate power* is derived from internalized values with dictate that the agent has the legitimate right to influence the target, and the target has an obligation to accept this influence. *Referent power* stems from the identification of the target with the agent. *Expert power* is based on the belief by the target that the agent has some special knowledge. Finally, *informational power* refers to the ability of the agent to control the information received by the target.

Not all of French and Raven's six bases of power are viewed equally. Some, like legitimate, expert, and informational power are seen as more appropriate manifestations of power. Especially in organizations, leaders who have real credibility or legitimate reasons to be responsible for others, would be more respected than those who attained their power through less legitimate means. Others, like reward, coercive, and referent power, can be manifested in more corrupting ways.

Moving beyond the work of French and Raven, more modern theorists have continued to conceptualize power as complex. Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson (2003) described how power activated a behavioral activation system in powerholders. When individuals feel powerful, it mobilizes affective, cognitive, and behavioral resources to achieve pleasurable and goal-oriented outcomes. Powerholders tend to feel more positive, and behave with less inhibition than those without. They process information more automatically and are more attentive to rewards. To contrast, when individuals become aware of their lack of power, they experience a behavioral inhibition. Individuals with reduced power are less positive, and more inhibited in their social behaviors. Unlike the powerholders, they have more controlled information processing, and focus less on rewards. Instead, they become more attentive to threats, punishment, and the goals of others. In the SH domain, perceivers may be aware that those with power experience this behavioral activation, and therefore have a greater capacity to cause harm to others.

Modern scholars have been revisiting the notion that power is not always severe and corrupt, and it has appropriate manifestations. The importance of powerholders' responsibility

toward others has been emphasized in the literature (Winter, 1973) in addition to focusing on the egocentric and potentially dangerous manifestations of power. (Cartwright & Zander, 1968; Overbeck & Park, 2001). Some have begun investigating the individual personality differences that explain how different people use power. For example, those high in Dark Triad traits (composed of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy; Paulhus & Williams, 2002) are more likely to abuse power than those lower (Ziegler-Hill et al., 2016). The trait of dominance, a value associated with masculinity, is associated with using power over others.

In his work, Winter (1973; Winter & Barenbaum, 1985) described a responsibility-focused form of power. Responsibility-focused power is the felt obligation to look out after others when one possesses power. Individuals who express this power show concern for others, concern about consequences, and self-judgment. The responsibility motive contrasts the power motive, wherein individuals are mostly concerned with prestige rather than the well-being of others and tend to behave more impulsively and aggressively. This responsibility motivation was found to predict success in managers at AT&T, such that in a longitudinal study those who scored higher in responsibility motives had risen to higher levels of management than those who scored lower (Winter, 1991).

Tost (2015) examined how legitimate, role-based power elicits a sense of responsibility that other forms of power do not. Tost found that parents, supervisors, and those with explicitly powerful roles have a conscious, controlled motivation to use their power in service of others. To contrast, attractive people, people under the influence of alcohol, and those who feel power by less legitimate means rely on more unconscious, automatic processes to use their power that result in self-serving and possibly unethical behaviors. Hershcovis et al. (2017) found that when supervisors felt they held power through a legitimate role, it increased their likelihood to stop incidences of incivility against their subordinates, as an offense against their subordinate was seen as an affront to their own status (Hershcovis et al., 2017).

There are many examples in everyday life of figures who represent honorable, ethical holders of power. In Christian and Islamic religions, icons such as Jesus and Muhammed, respectively, are worshipped for how they used their power to do good and serve others. Outside of religious contexts, many of the most admired leaders in history are enshrined because of how they served others. American heroes such as Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, and Dr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. are memorialized for how they used their power to better the lives of others.

The way society has come to value honorable manifestations of power trickles into our lives in other ways as well. In the leadership literature, many theories emphasize the importance of leaders to use their power to benefit employees, not just to simply manage them. Servant leadership directs leaders to account for the needs of their employees, and work with them to solve problems (for a review, see Van Dierendonck, 2011). Similarly, transformational leadership emphasizes not just working with subordinates, but actively gathering support and guiding the organization (Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

Nationally, there has been increased pressure to leverage people with social power or who have been privileged by oppressive systems to serve others who hold less privileged and stigmatized identities. For many marginalized groups, including the LGBT+ community, allies are encouraged to use their privileged status to aid those with marginalized identities, through advocacy, mentoring, and sharing of resources. This strategy has been introduced in sexual harassment training to integrate bystanders into helping peers when they see harassment. In 2013, the Campus Violence Elimination Act was introduced to require U.S. colleges to provide bystander intervention training to their student populations in order to reduce sexual violence on college campuses (Coker et al., 2016). By intervening in a potentially dangerous situation, a bystander can use their power to help another.

However, virtuous manifestations of power may have unexpected consequences. Stockdale, Gilmer, and Dinh (2019) showed that priming participants to feel a sense of responsibility-focused power led to feelings of being communal (connected to others), which in turn had the unexpected effect on *increasing* intentions to sexually harass. Participants primed with egocentric power had more feelings of being powerful and sexy, which also increased intentions to harass, as expected. It is a troubling and seemingly paradoxical finding that communal feelings led to intentions to harass, when they should have evoked a protective motive. Relatedly, it has been found that men who identify as feminist allies are less likely to be judged as guilty of harassment than men who are not allies (Lizzio-Wilson, Klas, & Clarke, 2019).

As power clearly has many nuances, it is important then to apply these findings about power to understand how power is more than just status (e.g., being a professor or supervisor).

Together, these findings suggest that responsibility-focused power may be affecting perceiver's judgments of SH severity and initiator guilt, such that those who enact responsibility-focused power are judged less severely than others. It may be the case that, following attribution theory, those who embody responsibility-focused power represent a consistent moral character, and their socio-sexual conduct is not even construed as harassment. Explanations for ambiguous socio-sexual conduct, then, would be attributed to factors external to the initiator, such as the target or environment. To further understand a possible explanation as to why this may be the case in forming perceptions about SH, I introduce moral licensing as a potential explanatory mechanism.

Moral Licensing

Effron and Monin (2010) define moral licensing as happening when "observers reduce their condemnation of morally dubious behavior in light of the actor's prior good deeds" (p. 1618). That is, observers or actors themselves can excuse behaviors that violate morals when they consider past moral behavior. Moral licensing can occur for both one's own behavior and the behavior of others, and for transgressions that are blatant or ambiguous. Broadly, moral licensing can fit into the understanding of human behavior that people wish to hold positive views of themselves (Greenwald, 1980) and that humans care about making good impressions on others (Schlenker, 1980).

Effron and Monin (2010) identified two forms of moral licensing: moral crediting and moral credentialing. When moral crediting, actors accumulate "credits" for positive behaviors that offset negative behaviors, or moral "debits" (Effron & Monin, 2010), similar to a moral piggy bank. The behavior is still interpreted as a transgression, but it is accepted in light of other moral deeds. Effron and Monin (2010) found that when students read a vignette about someone who had committed a blatant transgression, they excused the behavior if the individual had a history of other upstanding moral behavior. Interestingly, if this past moral behavior occurred in the same domain, the individual did not receive moral credits. That is, if the participant read a vignette where a school principal had vehemently opposed drug use, but then sexually harassed a student (different domains), the participant could excuse his behavior. But if the participant read about an individual who opposed sexual harassment, then turned around and carried out harassment (same domain), he was not morally credited. When the blatant transgression occurred

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in the same domain that the past moral behavior occurred (i.e. speaking out against harassment then harassing), the actor was seen as a hypocrite.

To contrast crediting, when moral credentialing, actors or observers consider the actor's past good deeds, and license transgressions by construing their actions as not a transgression at all (Effron & Monin, 2010), almost as if the actor has a moral certificate on their wall, licensing them to act without penalty. Effron and Monin (2010) explained that when moral credentialing, the transgression is re-construed to not be a transgression. That is, actors and observers change the way they think about the behavior so they do not consider it to violate morals. Moral credentialing could explain why fervent followers of a leader refuse to accept any of their leader's actions as wrongdoings.

Effron and Monin (2010) found that when transgressions were ambiguous, observers looked to the actor's past moral behavior to understand whether the act was a transgression. When the actors had previously behaved morally in the same domain, they were morally credentialed. Polman, Pettit and Wisenfeld (2013) similarly found that participants morally credentialed high-status defendants in a case and construed their wrong behaviors less negatively than a control condition. These same processes can easily be mapped on to judgments when the behavior is socio-sexual conduct. Since harassment is often ambiguous, it is likely that observers look to the alleged initiator's past behaviors. When that initiator embodies a responsibility-focused power, it would be easy to credential him as a good person and construe his behavior as not harassing.

According to my review of power, and similar variables like initiator status, I would expect that an initiator that embodies a traditional, self-focused power would be seen as more harassing than an initiator with no power cues. However, given findings about responsibility-focused power, when initiators are perceived to be using their power for good, they may be perceived as less guilty than either a self-focused initiator or a control condition that is absent of power cues. The leniency responsibility-focused initiators receive may be due to moral licensing. Both crediting and credentialing may explain why power can increase the likelihood to sexually harass and potentially impact perceptions of SH. Initiators who embody responsibility-focused power may be seen as having done good deeds for others and therefore allowed to commit such acts. Similarly, perceivers may judge a responsibility-focused initiator as incapable of engaging in harassment because they are such a "good individual". This follows attribution theory, that

observers look to consistent behavior, and moral licensing, that in ambiguous situations. Thus, perceivers may look to not only characteristics of the situation and target, but the initiator as well. When the initiator embodies something we think is good (e.g., enacting responsibility-focused power), we do not attribute their behavior as SH (Osman, 2007; Johnson et al., 1997; Pryor, 1985).

Hypotheses

Past research on moral licensing demonstrates that people tend to perceive transgressive behavior as less serious if committed by people who have engaged in positive moral behaviors or are otherwise perceived to be morally strong than those with lower moral credentials. Furthermore, research on the effects of responsibility-focused power demonstrates that people (and actors) perceive acts of such forms of power to be less egregious, whereas acts of more self-focused, or egocentric acts of power are seen as more inappropriate. Therefore, synthesizing these lines of research, I predict that perceivers will morally license an alleged sexual harassment initiator who has engaged in responsibility-focused power behaviors in the past. Specifically:

> H1: Perceptions of the initiator's conduct will be rated as the most severe and the initiator to be more culpable when the initiator embodies self-focused power compared to a control or an initiator who embodies responsibility-focused power. Perceptions of the initiator's conduct will be rated as the least severe, their accuser as least credible, and the initiator least culpable when the initiator embodies responsibility-focused power.

> H2a: Initiator power embodiment will be related to moral licensing, such that an initiator that embodies responsibility-focused power will receive higher ratings of moral crediting and moral credentialing than self-focused initiators or a control.

> H2b: Moral crediting and moral credentialing will be related to perceptions of severity and culpability, such that the conduct of initiators who receive higher ratings of moral crediting and moral credentialing will be seen as less severe, their accuser less credible, and the initiator seen as less culpable than one who receives lower moral crediting and moral credentialing.

> H3: Moral licensing will mediate the relationship between the initiator's embodiment of power and judgments of SH guilt and severity such that in the contrast to the self-focused power and control conditions, perceivers will have higher moral licensing ratings of the alleged initiator who embodies responsibility-focused power. Moral licensing, in turn, will be associated with lower (more lenient) judgments of SH.
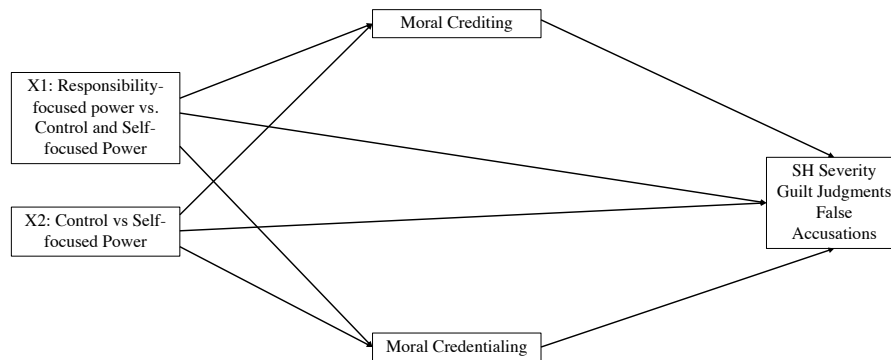
Figure 1. Theoretical model for Hypotheses 1-3 showing the parallel mediation of power embodiment through moral licensing to affect SH outcomes

Gender is an important perceiver variable in the study of sexual harassment (O'Connor et al., 2004; Rotundo, Nguyen & Sackett, 2001). Hypothesis 4 follows past sexual harassment perceptions literature:

H4: Women, compared to men, will have stronger (less lenient) judgments of SH.

As an exploratory question, I examine whether gender moderates the mediated relationships between the alleged initiator's power embodiment and perceptions of sexual harassment initiator guilt. Because women are generally more sensitive to SH and are more likely to believe that if acts of unwanted socio-sexual behavior happened to them, they would consider it to be sexual harassment, compared to men (this phenomenon is labeled "self-referencing;" O'Connor et al., 2004; Wiener et al., 2002), it follows that women may be less likely than men to morally license an alleged initiator's harassing conduct regardless of their form of power embodiment.

RQ1: Will gender moderate the mediated relationship between alleged initiator power embodiment and SH judgments through moral licensing judgments such that women will be less likely than men to morally license (credentialing or crediting) the harassing conduct of an alleged initiator? Furthermore, will the indirect relationship between power conditions and SH judgments through moral licensing be weaker for women than for men?
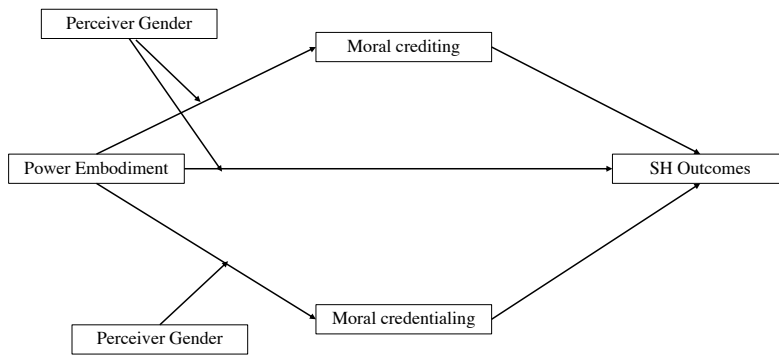
Figure 2. Theoretical model for Hypothesis 4 and Research Question 1 showing predicted moderation of perceiver gender.

CHAPTER 2: METHODS

Participants

Participants were recruited via Cloud Research, a third-party platform that facilitates online studies through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Participants were required to reside in the United States and be 18 years old or older. This was a one-time survey that took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participants were paid $1.00 for their time.

Participants who failed to correctly answer either manipulation check question were removed (N = 54, 10% of participants), as well as participants who incorrectly answered one of the manipulation check questions and provided an incoherent response to the open-ended item (i.e. "nice study", N = 160, 30% of participants). As a result, the final sample was 376 participants.

A crosstab chi-square analysis was conducted to determine whether participant exclusion from the manipulation check systematically differed between levels of the independent variable, resulting in no significant difference, χ^2 (2,567) = 5.12, p = .077. The final sample was 42% female, 71% white, and the average participant age was 37. Participants reported having an average of 12 years of working for pay, and 70% reported that they work full time outside of MTurk. 57% reported having worked at a job that had a sexual harassment policy.

Measures and Materials

Demographics

I collected information about participants' age, gender, work experience, familiarity with their organization's SH policies, and political orientation.

PANAS

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) scale (α = .88 for positive affect, α = .85 for negative affect; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) was used as control measure for affect as data was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants rated the extent to which they agree that words such as "Guilty" and "Enthusiastic" describe them on a typical day

on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = *Not at all* to 5 = *Extremely*). The internal consistency reliabilities of these scales in the current study was α=.92 for positive affect and α=.95 for negative affect.

Moral Licensing

Two measures of moral licensing are included in this study. *Moral crediting* was measured by an adapted version of Lin, Ma and Johnson's (2016) moral crediting scale (α= .97). Items were re-worded to ask participants if they credit the behavior of the initiator, not their own behavior. For example, the item "Each good deed I performed added to my moral credit" was adapted to "Each good deed Troy performed added to his moral credit". Participants rated their agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*). The internal consistency reliability of this scale in the current study was α=.85.

Moral credentialing was measured on an adapted version of Dinh's (2020) scale (α = .95) Participants rated how appropriate workplace behaviors would be if Troy did them on a 7-point Likert scale (from 1 = *Definitely inappropriate* to 7 = *Definitely appropriate*). The workplace behaviors listed included socio-sexual conduct ("Make unwanted attempts to stroke, fondle, or kiss a coworker") and incivility ("Make demeaning or derogatory remarks about a coworker"). The internal consistency reliability of this scale in the current study was α=.97.

SH Severity

An adapted version of the SH perceptions subscale from Bhattacharya and Stockdale (2016) was used to measure perceptions of the harassment (α = .89). Participants were asked to rate their agreement to 3 statements on 5-point Likert scales (from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*). An example item includes "After reading the scenario I definitely think Troy sexually harassed Alicia." The internal consistency reliability of this scale in the current study was α=.76.

Guilt Judgments

Also adapted from Bhattacharya and Stockdale (2016; α = .94), participants were asked to rate 3 items on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*) statements on how responsible they found the alleged initiator for the conduct (i.e., "How responsible is Troy for the conduct alleged in this case?") as well as how responsible they found the target (i.e., "How responsible is Alicia for the conduct alleged in this case?"). The internal consistency reliability of this scale in the current study was α=.77.

False Accusation Beliefs

The final harassment perception scale adapted from Bhattacharya and Stockdale (2016) is the 3-item false accusations scale (α = .92). This scale asked participants about the credibility of the target's, (Alicia) claims (i.e. "Alicia's accusations against Troy were mostly false"). The internal consistency reliability of this scale in the current study was α=.91.

Manipulation Checks

To screen potential problematic responders (Litman, Rosen, Rosenzweig, Weinberger-Litman, Moss, & Robinson, 2020) and to ensure data quality, I included two open-ended questions (i.e. "What is your impression of Troy?" and "What did you think of this study?") in addition to manipulation check questions to ensure participants attention ("What award did Troy receive at work?").

SH Scenarios

Participants were randomly assigned to read one of three power embodiment conditions. The power embodiment cues were adapted from Stockdale, Gilmer, and Dinh (2019) where participants were primed to feel power in either a self-focused or responsibility-focused way. Below are the different scenarios used to describe power embodiment.

Self-focused Power

Troy Smith is a mid-level manager at a U.S. pharmaceutical company. Last year at the firm's end-of-year party, Troy was awarded "Most likely to promote himself" by his coworkers. Recently he met with a group of senior leaders to pitch a proposal for an important strategic initiative that, if successful, would not only significantly increase his firm's profitability, but would also position Troy for a significant promotion.

After Troy's meeting, he finished his performance reviews of his direct reports. One of them had been off the mark all year and hadn't hit their numbers. Troy decided that it's time for this employee to consider a different career path, so he recommended that they be terminated from their current position. Troy knew the firm cannot afford to string along people like this who are not making a contribution. Mostly, Troy did not want the employee's poor performance to reflect poorly on him as a manager, especially with this big proposal as a possibility.

Responsibility-focused Power

Troy Smith is a mid-level manager at a U.S. pharmaceutical company. Last year at the firm's end-of-year party, Troy was given an award by the company for being an excellent leader and mentor. Recently at work he met with a group of senior leaders to pitch a proposal for an important strategic initiative that, if successful, would not only significantly help the firm reach its goal to be a "best place to work", but would also position his team members for important engagements in the future, which will be great for their careers.

After the meeting Troy finished performance reviews of his direct reports. One of them, Becky, had been off the mark all year and hadn't been hitting their numbers. Troy decided that he was going to give this employee extra attention and mentoring so they had a better understanding of how to leverage their talents. Mostly, Troy knows how important it is in the firm for leaders to take personal responsibility for the professional development of their mentees. Troy feels a particular responsibility to mentoring his junior employees.

Control

Troy is a mid-level manager at a U.S. pharmaceutical company. Last year, at the firm's end-of-year party Troy received a small bonus for reaching firm-wide goals. Recently at work,

he met with a group of senior leaders to listen to a proposal for an important strategic initiative that, if successful, will not only significantly help the firm reach its goals, but will also make the firm more profitable.

After the meeting, Troy worked on his performance reviews of his direct reports. One of them had been off the mark all year and hadn't hit their numbers. Troy decided to set this review aside and work on it another day.

The sexual harassment scenario was adopted from Bhattacharya and Stockdale (2016), which was adapted from *Bales v. Wal-Mart Stores* (1998), where an employee accused her supervisor of sexual harassment:

Alicia Johnson was a research technician at the pharmaceutical company. Troy Smith was her direct supervisor. After working for two years in the organization, Alicia filed a formal complaint against Troy Smith claiming sexual harassment. Alicia complained that Troy inappropriately touched her in front of other co-workers. She stated that he would also frequently try to discuss his sexual life with her even with her expressed disdain. Alicia stated that Troy would often discuss how he had dreamed about her 'sexy dresses' and that he would often force her to talk about her personal problems with her boyfriend and even call her repeatedly at home. She complained that if she took a day off he would repeatedly call her or drive by her house. She insisted that she kept quiet in fear of losing her job since Smith was her supervisor. The company conducted an investigation.

Procedure

Data were collected online through the Qualtrics survey platform. Participants had the opportunity to read the study description, requirements, and the option to read the study information sheet prior to agreeing to participate. Once they consented to participate, they then took the PANAS measure. After the PANAS, participants were then randomly assigned to read the vignette of one of the three power conditions. After answering two follow-up attention check questions about the vignette ("What award did Troy receive at work?" and "What is your impression of Troy?"), participants then completed the moral credentialing and moral crediting scales. The order of these two scales was randomized to counterbalance.

Following the moral licensing scales, the participants then read the second scenario outlining the complaint of sexual harassment. Next, they answered an attention check question about the vignette ("Which of these was a complaint Alicia had against Troy?") and completed the three SH outcome measures (SH severity, guilt judgments, and false accusation beliefs). They then answered exploratory items regarding the disciplinary actions that the organization should take against Troy following this complaint and item asking them to rate the severity of the disciplinary action from 1 (*Not severe*) to 10 (*Very severe*). Finally, participants completed the demographic measures. Once the demographic measures were completed, participants were thanked for their time, debriefed, and given a completion code that they could enter on the Mechanical Turk website as proof of completion.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Correlations and reliability estimates are displayed in Table 1. Moral crediting was positively related false accusation beliefs and, counter to hypothesized direction, also significantly positively related with SH perceptions for men. Moral crediting was not significantly related to guilt judgments. Notably, for both men and women, negative affect and false accusations were strongly correlated to moral credentialing. Given that there were no significant differences between conditions on positive and negative affect, these variables were dropped as control measures.

Table 1. Correlations and Reliability Estimates

Variables	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
a. SH Severity	.758	.387**	-.277**	-.087	-.134	.043	-.359**	.071
b. Guilt Judgments	.455**	.768	-.389**	-.185*	.003	-.077	-.101	.376***
c. False Accusations	-.235**	-.264**	.908	.463**	.444**	.269**	.690**	-.148
d. Positive Affect	-.034	.056	.439**	.915	.137	.230**	.422**	.025
e. Negative Affect	-.267**	.083	.472**	.256**	.945	.251**	.633**	.129
f. Moral Crediting	.156*	.121	.309**	.485**	.230**	.853	.202*	.046
g. Moral Credentialing	-.314**	.084	.572**	.396**	.680**	.200**	.967	.095
h. Punishment Severity	.126	.410***	-.061	.198**	.161*	.048	.193**	N/A

Values below the diagonal are for male participants, and values above the diagonal are for female participants. Cronbach's alpha values are listed on the diagonal. $* p <.05, **p <.01, *** p <.001$

Means and standard deviations for each condition are displayed in Table 2. Tukey's post-hoc tests revealed significant differences between all conditions in moral crediting, with those in the self-focused power condition giving Troy the fewest moral credits, followed by the control condition. Those who read about Troy who embodied responsibility-focused power gave the highest moral crediting ratings (i.e. gave Troy the most credits). Guilt judgments were higher in the self-focused power than in the responsibility-focused power condition, and punishment severity was rated highest in the self-focused power condition than the responsibility focused power condition. Contrary to hypotheses, however, SH perceptions were higher in the responsibility-focused condition than in the control condition.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations by Condition

Variables	Responsibility-focused power M (SD)	Control M (SD)	Self-focused power M (SD)
a. SH Perceptions	4.24 (.615)$_b$	3.97 (.801)$_a$	4.18 (.776)$_{ab}$
b. Guilt	3.78 (.847)$_a$	3.86 (.690)$_{ab}$	4.09 (.770)$_b$
c. False Accusations	3.08 (1.06)	2.90 (1.02)	2.93 (1.12)
d. Positive Affect	3.43 (.875)	3.19 (.857)	3.33 (.889)
e. Negative Affect	2.48 (1.07)	2.68 (.945)	2.56 (1.20)
f. Moral Crediting	4.07 (.646)$_c$	3.71 (.678)$_b$	3.48 (.911)$_a$
g. Moral Credentialing	2.80 (2.07)	3.14 (1.96)	3.29 (2.16)
h. Punishment Severity	7.02 (2.19)$_a$	7.14 (2.06)$_{ab}$	7.77 (2.16)$_b$
N-size	133	116	128

Different subscripts per row denote significantly different means ($p <.05$) as determined by Tukey post-hoc tests

Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were analyzed using Hayes Process (2017) model 8. Model 8 tests the effect of power condition on SH severity, guilt judgments, and false accusations with moral crediting and credentialing as parallel mediators. Gender was a moderator on the a and c[1] paths. Model 8 findings are provided in Tables 3, 4, and 5. By way of orientation, because the independent variable, power, had three conditions, two contrasts were created. X1 compares the Responsibility power condition (coded -.67) to both the control and self-focused power condition (coded .33 each); and X2 compares the control condition (coded -.5) to the self-focused power condition (coded .5).

Moral Licensing

Power condition had a significant effect on moral crediting for both contrasts: X1 ($a = -.50$, SE = .08, $p < .001$) and X2 ($a = -.28$, SE = .10, $p = .005$). The significant X1 effect indicated that respondents rated the perpetrator enacting responsibility-focused power higher on moral crediting than the perpetrator enacting either the self-focused power or control. The X2 effect (which was moderated by gender) indicated that the perpetrator enacting self-focused power received lower moral crediting ratings than the perpetrator in the control condition.

Inspection of the relative interactions for both of the power condition contrasts indicated no significant X1 × Gender interaction ($b = -.05$, SE = .08, $p = .511$). However, the X2 × Gender interaction was significant ($b = -.23$, SE = .10, $p = .019$). Examination of the relative slopes of moral crediting on X2 by gender indicated no effect of the X2 contrast for men ($b = -.05$, SE = .13, $p = .718$). However, there was a significant effect of the X2 contrast for women ($b = -.51$, SE = .15, $p = .001$). indicating that women rated the control condition higher on moral crediting than they did the self-focused power condition. The estimated conditional means of moral crediting by condition and gender are shown in Figure 3. Linear contrasts were run for men and women for each power condition. Women ($t(154) = 5.62$, $p < .001$) and men ($t(215) = 3.68$, $p < .001$) both had significant linear effects, indicating that both genders gave responsibility-focused Troy the most moral credits, followed by control Troy, and gave self-focused Troy the fewest moral credits. Examination of the effect sizes indicate that this effect was stronger for women (Cohen's $d = 1.08$) than for men (Cohen's $d = .60$).
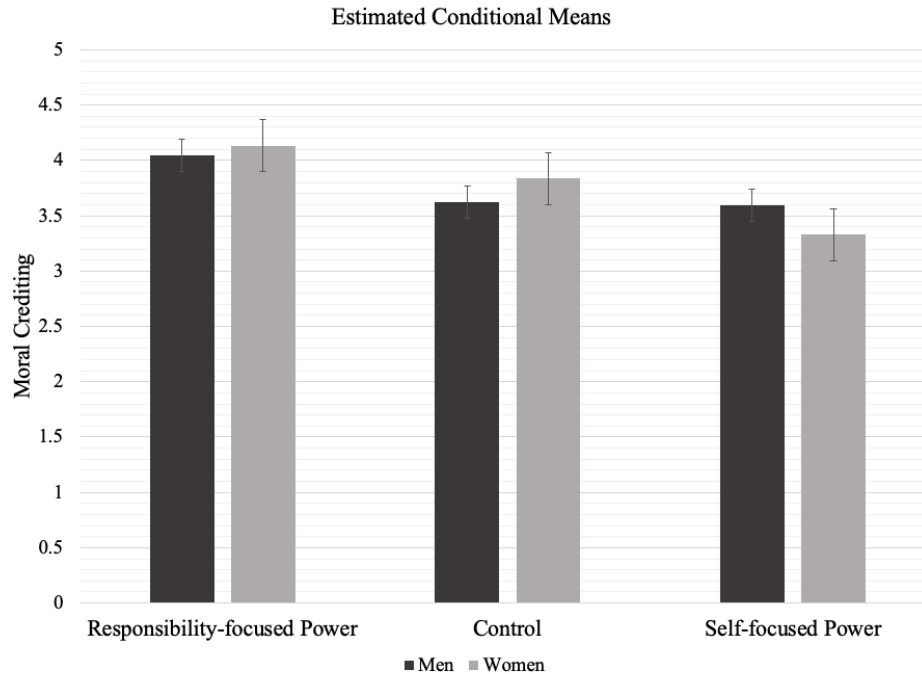
Figure 3. Estimated conditional means of moral crediting for each gender by power condition.

There was no effect of the power conditions on moral credentialing, nor was there an interaction with power and gender on moral credentialing. Together, these results partially support Hypothesis 2a such that the perpetrator embodying responsibility focused power received higher moral credits (but not credentials) than the perpetrator embodying self-focused or control power, and it provides an answer for Research Question 1 regarding gender as a potential moderator. The remaining analyses examine the full moderated mediation models on each SH ratings. Findings for the effects of power condition on the moral licensing mediators are not repeated as results discussed in this section are conceptually equivalent for all three outcome variables.

SH Severity

The statistical results for the findings from this analysis can be found in Table 3. There was a significant effect of X2 on SH severity ratings indicating that participants rated the harassment severity higher when the perpetrator embodied self-focused power than the control condition. There was no significant interaction between power condition and gender on SH severity. A one-way ANOVA of power condition on SH severity was conducted to test for a

linear contrast among the conditions. The linear contrast was not significant, $t(374) = -.59$, $p = .557$. As shown in Table 2, SH Severity judgments were lowest in the Control condition.

Moral crediting was significantly positively associated with SH severity, and moral credentialing was significantly negatively related to SH severity. The indirect effect of power condition on severity through moral crediting was moderated by gender (see Table 3 and Figures 4 and 5). Indirect effects were tested with a bootstrapping analysis with 10,000 samples. For both women and men there was an indirect effect of X1 on SH severity through moral crediting, such that the responsibility-focused power condition produced higher moral crediting than the other two conditions, which in turn positively predicted SH severity ratings. For women (but not men), there was a significant indirect effect of X2 on SH severity through moral crediting such that the self-focused power condition received lower moral credits compared to the control condition, and moral crediting was positively associated with SH severity ratings. There were no significant indirect effects for moral credentialing, nor were they moderated by gender.

Table 3. Process results for SH Severity

Effect	Moral Crediting	Moral Credentialing	SH Severity
X1[1]	-.50 (.08), $p < .001$	.41 (.22), $p=.069$	-.02 (.08), $p=.830$
X2[2]	-.28 (.10), $p = .005$	.16 (.27), $p=.560$	.26 (.09), $p=.005$
Gender (Women)	.01 (.04), $p=.846$	-.30 (.11), $p=.006$	-.02 (.05), $p=.628$
Moral crediting			.17 (.05), $p<.001$
Moral credentialing			-.13 (.02), $p<.001$
X1 * Gender	-.05 (.08), $p=.511$	.03 (.23), $p=.879$	.03 (.08), $p=.721$
X2 * Gender	-.23 (.10), $p=.019$	-.03 (.27), $p=.921$	-.11 (.09), $p=.227$
X* Gender	$F(2,368) = 3.06, p=.048$	$F(2,368)=.016, p=.984$	$F(2,366) = .786, p=.456$
Men: X1	-.44 (.11), $p<.001$		
Women: X1	-.55 (.13), $p<.001$		
Men: X2	-.05 (.13), $p=.718$		
Women: X2	-.51 (.15), $p=.001$		

Indirect effect: Crediting-Men
X1: -.08 (.03), 95% CI: -.14 to -.03
X2: -.01 (.02), 95% CI: -.06 to .04
Indirect effect: Crediting – Women
X1: -.10 (.03), 95% CI: -.16 to -.04
X2: -.09 (.04), 95% CI: -.16 to -.03
Indirect effect: Credentialing – Men
X1: -.05 (.04), 95% CI: -14 to .03
X2: -.02 (.05), 95% CI: -.12 to .07
Indirect effect: Credentialing – Women
X1: -.06 (.04), 95% CI: -.15 to .03
X2: -.02 (.05), 95% CI: -.13 to .09

[1]X1 compares the Responsibility power condition (coded -.67) to both the control and self-focused power condition (coded .33 each). [2]X2 compares the control condition (coded -.5) to the self-focused power condition (coded .5).

Men

Indirect effects
X1: -.08, 95% CI [-.14 to -.03]
X2: .01, 95% CI [-.06 to .04]

Moral Crediting

-.44***

X1: Responsibility-focused power vs. Control and Self-focused Power

X2: Control vs Self-focused Power

.26**

.17***

SH Severity

-.13***

Moral Credentialing

Indirect effects
X1: -.05, 95% CI [.14 to -.03]
X2: .01, 95% CI [-.12 to .07]
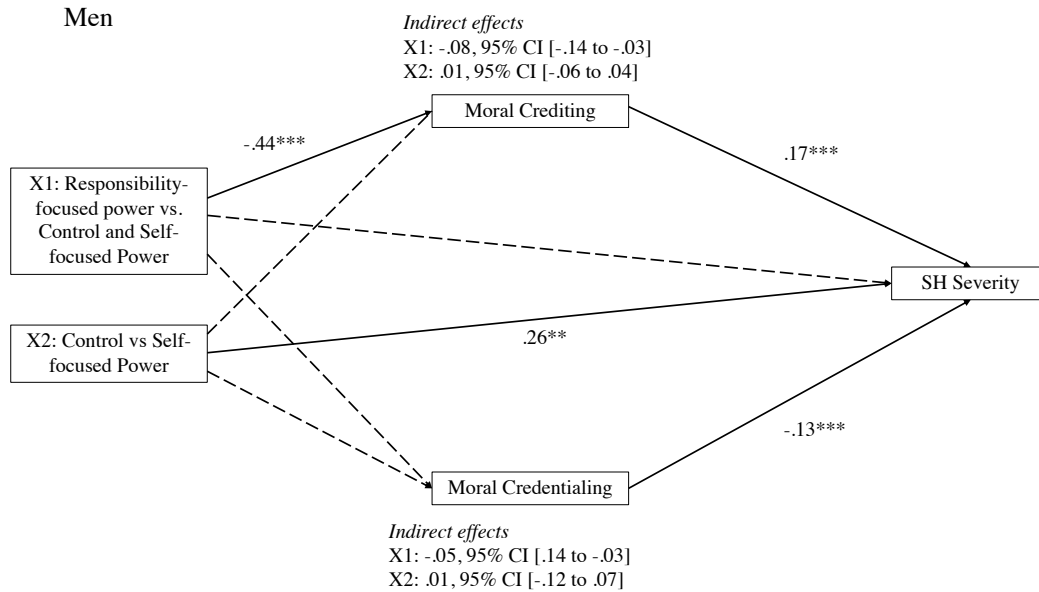
Figure 4. Process results on SH Severity for male participants.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Women

Indirect effects
X1: -.10, 95% CI [-.16 to -.04]
X2: -.09, 95% CI [-.16 to -.03]

Moral Crediting

-.55***

-.51**

X1: Responsibility-focused power vs. Control and Self-focused Power

X2: Control vs Self-focused Power

.26**

.17***

SH Severity

-.13***

Moral Credentialing

Indirect effects
X1: -.06, 95% CI [-.15 to .03]
X2: -.02, 95% CI [-.13 to .09]

Figure 5. Process results on SH Severity for female participants.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Guilt Judgments

The statistical results for the findings from this analysis can be found in Table 4. The X1 contrast had a significant effect on guilt judgments ($b = .27$, SE $= .09$, $p = .002$), as did X2 ($b = .20$, SE $= .10$, $p = .047$). Probing this interaction found that the X1 contrast was significant for women ($b = .42$, SE $= .13$, $p = .002$) but not men ($b = .13$, SE$=.11$, $p = .245$), such that women perceived Troy to be more guilty in the control and self-focused power conditions than in the responsibility focused condition. The X2 contrast was significant for men ($b = .47$, SE$=.13$, $p < .001$) but not women ($b = -.07$, SE$=.15$, $p = .668$) such that men perceived Troy to be more guilty in the self-focused power condition than in the control condition. A one-way ANOVA of power condition on guilt judgments were conducted separately b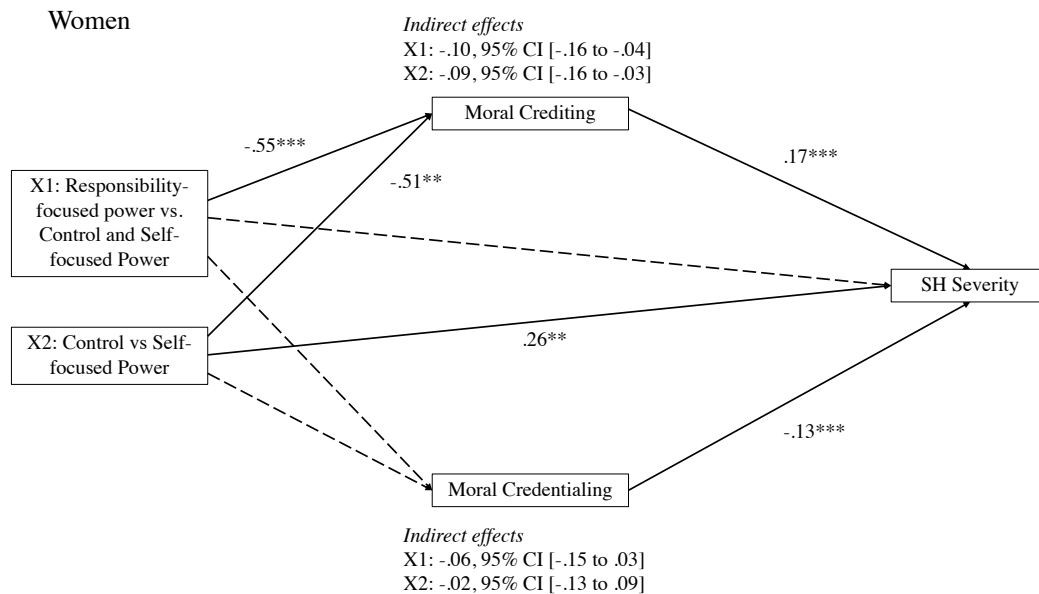y gender to test for linear contrasts. The linear term was significant for men ($t(215) = 2.72$, $p = .007$, Cohen's $d = .45$) and for women ($t(155) = 2.08$, $p = .040$, Cohen's $d = .40$). Hence the hypothesis that perceptions of the perpetrator's guilt would be lower in the responsibility-focused power condition, followed by the control condition, and highest in the self-focused power condition was supported. The effect was slightly stronger for men than for women.

Neither moral crediting nor moral credentialing were associated with guilt perceptions, hence the bootstrapped indirect effects of power condition on guilt perceptions through moral crediting or through moral credentialing were insignificant (95% confidence intervals passed through 0, see Table 4 and Figures 6 and 7). Although these findings do not support hypotheses concerning the mediating effects of moral licensing, they do show that when the perpetrator held responsibility-focused power, (and for men, control power) compared to other forms of power, participants tended to give the perpetrator moral credits and they independently rated him as less guilty.

Table 4. Process Results for Guilt Judgments

Effect	Moral Crediting	Moral Credentialing	Guilt Judgments
X1[1]	-.50 (.08), $p<.001$	.41 (.22), $p=.069$	.27 (.09), $p=.002$
X2[2]	-.28 (.10), $p=.005$	.16 (.27), $p=.560$	.20 (.10), $p=.047$
Gender (Women)	.01 (.04), $p=.846$	-.30 (.11), $p=.006$	.02 (.04), $p=.613$
Moral crediting			.08 (.05), $p=.127$
Moral credentialing			-.01 (.02), $p=.536$
X1 * Gender	-.05 (.08), $p=.511$	.03 (.23), $p=.879$	.14 (.08), $p=.090$
X2 * Gender	-.23 (.10), $p=.019$	-.03 (.27), $p=.921$	-.27 (.10), $p=.008$
X* Gender	$F(2,368) = 3.06, p=.048$	$F(2,368)=.016, p=.984$	$F(2,366) = 4.91, p=.008$
Men: X1	-.44 (.11), $p<.001$		.13 (.11), $p=.245$
Women: X1	-.55 (.13), $p<.001$		.42 (.13), $p=.002$
Men: X2	-.05 (.13), $p=.718$		.47 (.13), $p<.001$
Women: X2	-.51 (.15), $p=.001$		-.07 (.16), $p=.668$

Indirect effect: Crediting-Men
X1: -.04 (.03), 95% CI: -.10 to .01
X2: -.00 (.01), 95% CI: -.04 to .02
Indirect effect: Crediting – Women
X1: -.05 (.03), 95% CI: -.12 to .02
X2: -.04 (.03), 95% CI: -.12 to .02
Indirect effect: Credentialing – Men
X1: -.00 (.00), 95% CI: -.03 to .01
X2: -.00 (.00), 95% CI: -.03 to .01
Indirect effect: Credentialing – Women
X1: -.01 (.01), 95% CI: -.03 to .02
X2: -.00 (.01), 95% CI: -.03 to .02

[1]X1 compares the Responsibility power condition (coded -.67) to both the control and self-focused power condition (coded .33 each). [2]X2 compares the control condition (coded -.5) to the self-focused power condition (coded .5).

Men

Indirect effects
X1: -.04, 95% CI [-.10 to .01]
X2: -.00, 95% CI [-.04 to .02]

Moral Crediting

X1: Responsibility-
focused power vs.
Control and Self-
focused Power

-.44***

X2: Control vs Self-
focused Power

.47***

Guilt Judgments

Moral Credentialing

Indirect effects
X1: -.00, 95% CI [-.03 to .01]
X2: -.00, 95% CI [-.03 to .01]
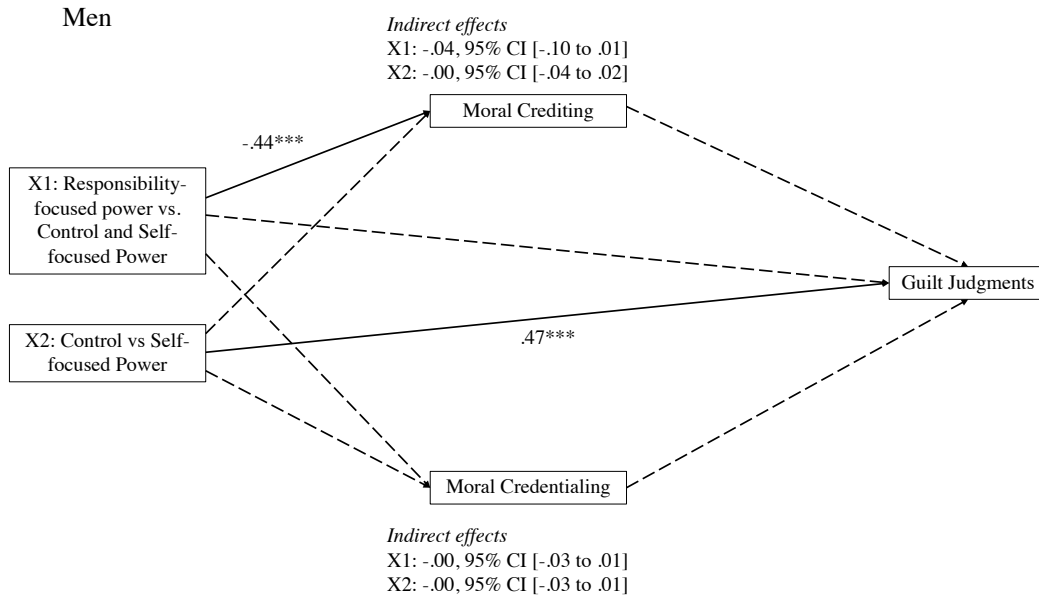
Figure 6. Process results on Guilt Judgments for male participants.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Women

Indirect effects
X1: -.05, 95% CI [-.12 to .02]
X2: -.04, 95% CI [-.12 to .02]

Moral Crediting

X1: Responsibility-
focused power vs.
Control and Self-
focused Power

-.55***

-.51**

.42**

X2: Control vs Self-
focused Power

Guilt Judgments

Moral Credentialing

Indirect effects
X1: -.01, 95% CI [-.03 to .02]
X2: -.00, 95% CI [-.03 to .02]

Figure 7. Process results on Guilt Judgments for female participants.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

False Accusations

The statistical results for the findings from this analysis can be found in Table 5. On false accusation beliefs, there was a direct effect of power through the X1 contrast ($b = -.27$, SE $= .10$, $p = .006$). Those in the responsibility-focused condition were more likely to see Alicia as making a false accusation than those in the control or self-focused power conditions. There was not a significant direct effect on the X2 contr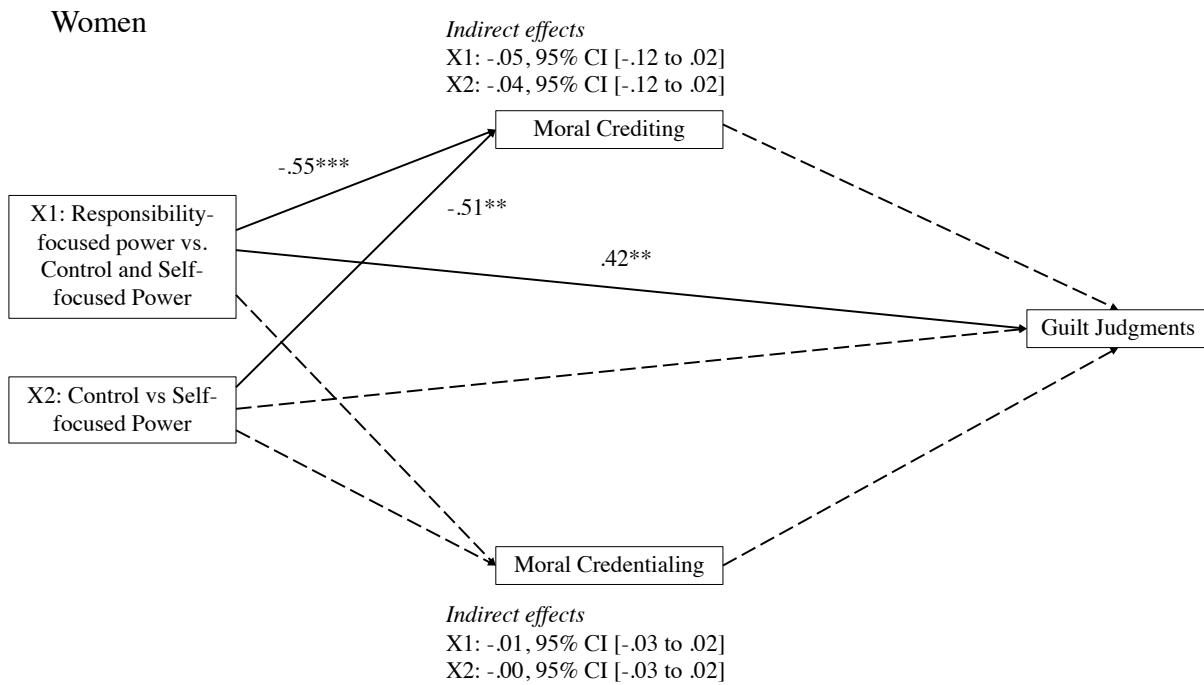ast, indicating there were no significant differences between the control and self-focused conditions. There were no gender differences for X1 or X2 on false accusation beliefs ($F(2,366) = .570$, $p = .566$). A one-way ANOVA on false accusation beliefs by power condition with a linear contrast was conducted. The linear contrast approached significance, $t(374) = -1.88$, $p = .061$.

Moral crediting was significantly related to false accusation beliefs ($b = .18$, SE $= .06$, $p = .003$), such that when Troy was given more moral credits, participants were more likely to see Alicia as making a false accusation. Because of the significant Gender*Condition interaction on moral crediting, described above, there were gender differences in the indirect effects. Moral crediting mediated the X1 contrast for men but not the X2 (see Table 5 and Figure 8). Moral crediting mediated both the X1 and X2 contrast on false accusations for women. (see Table 5 and Figure 9) Moral credentialing did not mediate the relationship between power condition and false accusation beliefs for men or women.

Table 5. Process Results for False Accusations

Effect	Moral Crediting	Moral Credentialing	False Accusations
X1	-.50 (.08), $p<.001$	.41 (.22), $p=.069$	-.27 (.10), $p=.006$
X2	-.28 (.10), $p=.005$	.16 (.27), $p=.560$	-.08 (.11), $p=.495$
Gender (Women)	.01 (.04), $p=.846$	-.30 (.11), $p=.006$	-.15 (.04), $p=.001$
Moral crediting			.18 (.06), $p=.003$
Moral credentialing			.32 (.02), $p<.001$
X1 * Gender	-.05 (.08), $p=.511$	.03 (.23), $p=.879$	.06 (.09), $p=.527$
X2 * Gender	-.23 (.10), $p=.019$	-.03 (.27), $p=.921$	.09 (.11), $p=.399$
X* Gender	$F(2,368) = 3.06, p=.048$	$F(2,368)=.016, p=.984$	$F(2,366) = .570, p=.566$
Men: X1	-.44 (.11), $p<.001$		
Women: X1	-.55 (.13), $p<.001$		
Men: X2	-.05 (.13), $p=.718$		
Women: X2	-.51 (.15), $p=.001$		

Indirect effect: Crediting-Men
X1: -.08 (.03), 95% CI: -.16 to -.02
X2: -.01 (.03), 95% CI: -.07 to .04
Indirect effect: Crediting – Women
X1: -.10 (.04), 95% CI: -.19 to -.03
X2: -.09 (.04), 95% CI: -.19 to -.02
Indirect effect: Credentialing – Men
X1: .12 (.10), 95% CI: -.07 to .31
X2: .06 (.11), 95% CI: -.16 to .29
Indirect effect: Credentialing – Women
X1: .14 (.10), 95% CI: -.07 to .35
X2: .04 (.13), 95% CI: -.21 to .30

[1]X1 compares the Responsibility power condition (coded -.67) to both the control and self-focused power condition (coded .33 each). [2]X2 compares the control condition (coded -.5) to the self-focused power condition (coded .5).
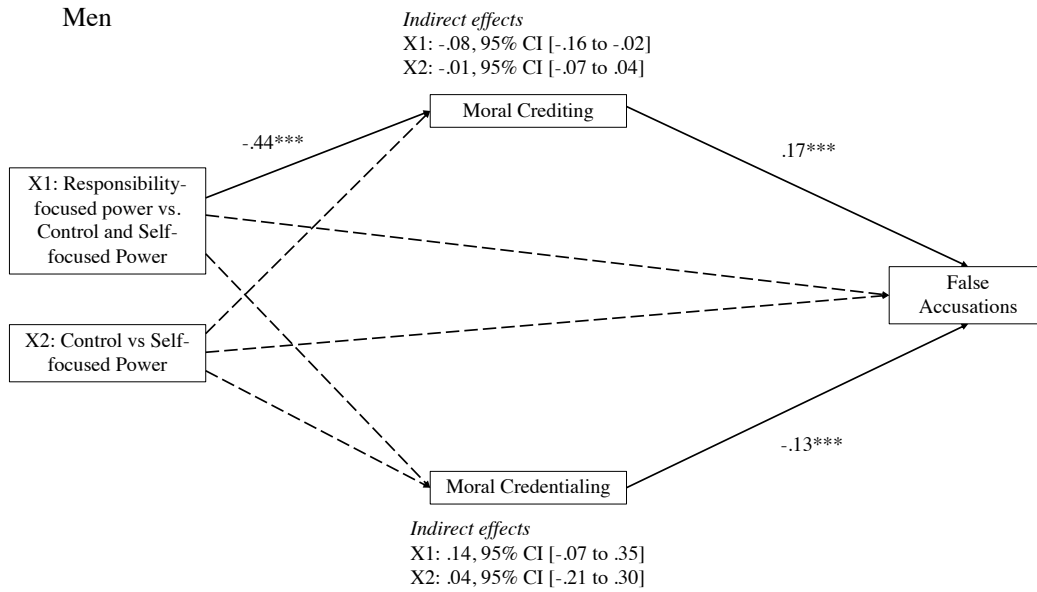
Figure 8. Process results on false accusations for male participants.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

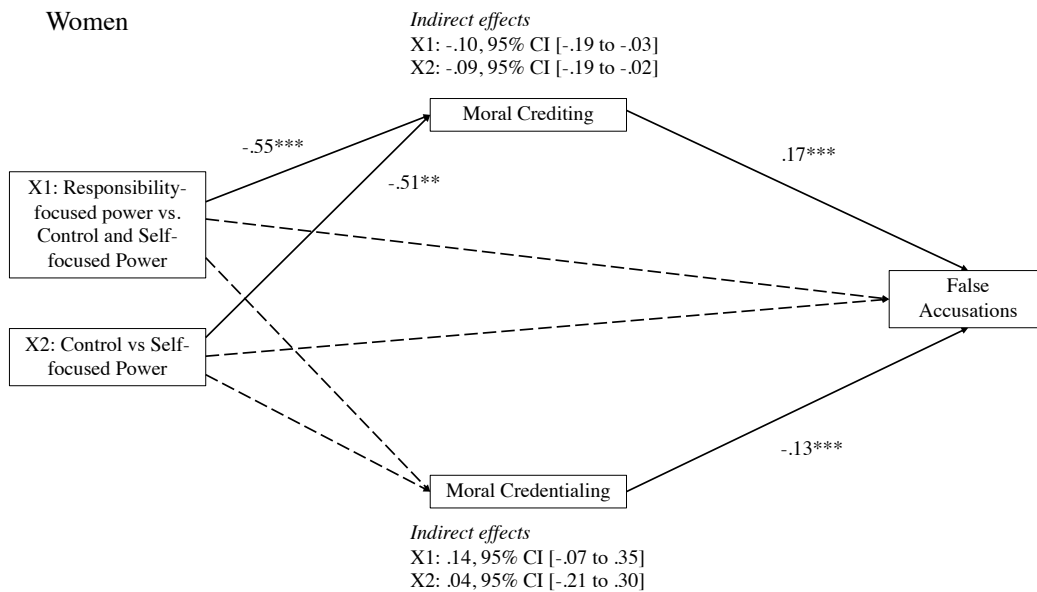Figure 9. Process results on false accusations for female participants.

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Exploratory Analyses

Two exploratory questions were added to the analyses. After providing their judgments on the SH outcomes scales, participants were asked to choose a disciplinary action that Troy's organization should take against him following this complaint of sexual harassment. Options ranged from no disciplinary action to firing Troy. Percentages of participants in each condition who selected each consequence can be found in Table 6. Notably, over half (53%) of participants in the self-focused power condition elected that Troy should be demoted or fired, compared to only 36% of participants in the responsibility-focused power condition. When asked to rate the punishment they chose for Troy on a scale of 1 (what I chose is very lenient) to 10 (What I chose is very severe), participants in the self-focused and control power conditions rated their choice as significantly more severe than those in the responsibility-focused power condition ($b = .490$, SE $= .560$, $p < .05$). Means and standard deviations of punishment severity by condition can be found in Table 2.

Table 6. Job punishments by condition

Job Punishment	Responsibility-focused power	Control	Self-focused Power
No Action	9.8%	7.8%	4.7%
Issue a verbal warning	13.5%	10.3%	6.3%
Issue a written warning	18.8%	16.4%	16.4%
Require Troy to attend training	21.8%	19.8%	19.5%
Demote Troy	16.5%	16.4%	15.6%
Fire Troy	19.5%	29.3%	37.5%

Conclusion

To summarize, I found support for most of my hypotheses. The embodied power of the initiator did not have a significant effect on moral credentialing, but it did affect moral crediting. Both men and women were more likely to give Troy moral credits when he held responsibility-focused power in comparison to control or self-focused power. However, contrary to speculations, the effects of the power conditions on moral crediting were stronger for women than for men. In turn, moral crediting affected the outcome variables in expected (positively

predicting false accusations) and unexpected (positively predicting SH severity) ways. Moral crediting did not, however, affect guilt judgments. Instead there were direct effects of the power conditions on guilt judgments in the expected pattern, which were slightly stronger for men than for women. Participants in the responsibility-focused power condition rated their chosen disciplinary action against Troy as significantly more severe than in the control or self-focused power conditions. Implications of these findings are discussed

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

This study found that with the exception of SH severity, there was a linear trend on all other judgments such that the responsibility-focused perpetrator was treated more leniently than the control perpetrator, who in turn was treated more leniently than the self-focused perpetrator. Moreover, moral crediting explained the relationship between embodied power and SH outcomes. That is, participants who read about responsibility-focused Troy outweighed his past moral deeds to excuse his harassment. Additionally, those who gave Troy credits were more likely to agree with statements that Alicia, the target, was making a false accusation. There was also an effect of gender on moral crediting, and while both men and women gave Troy in the responsibility-focused condition (aka "responsible Troy") the most moral credits, women were more likely than men to give moral credits to Troy in the control condition (aka "control Troy") and less likely than men to give moral credits to Troy in the self-focused condition (aka "self-focused Troy"). In other words, the linear effects of the power conditions on moral crediting were stronger for women than for men. Moral credentialing did not operate as a mediator, nor was it affected by the power embodiment of the initiator.

Counter to hypotheses, moral credits were *positively* related to SH perceptions, indicating that the more moral credits Troy was given, the more severe the participant rated his behavior. In retrospect, this pattern is understandable when revisiting Effron and Monin's (2010) description of moral crediting. Contrary to moral credentialing, when moral crediting, one does not *reconstrue* the transgression as a moral or acceptable act, but instead deems the transgression *acceptable* in light of past moral deeds. So, when participants read about the allegations against responsible Troy, they still saw his actions as severe (indicated by high SH severity), but participants licensed his harassment by shifting blame to his accuser and by giving him a less severe punishment.

The mediating effect of moral crediting on false accusation beliefs may indicate that perceptions have more to do with the character of the target rather than that of the initiator. Because the participant has already morally credited responsible Troy's character, they may have been conflicted when reading about the allegations against him. Therefore instead of reconciling his past "good" behavior with this new information, they instead perceived that Alicia must be making a false claim for her own benefit.

Moral credentialing did not operate as a mediator as hypothesized, however it was related to SH judgments. In retrospect, the item content in the moral credentialing scale may have been capturing a different construct. The questions ask about how appropriate it is for Troy to engage in sexual harassment behaviors, which may have reflected participant's attitudes towards sexual harassment generally rather than their conception of Troy as a moral person. For example, an item on the Sexual Harassment Attitude Scale (SHAS; Mazer & Percival, 1998) reads "It is only natural for a man to make sexual advances to a woman he finds attractive," which is similar to items on the moral credentialing scale regarding sexual harassment, such as "It is appropriate for Troy to make attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship with a coworker despite their efforts to discourage it." Therefore, the moral credentialing scale may not have functioned as intended. Future research should replicate this paradigm with another moral credentialing measure.

Theoretical Implications

An important implication of this study for the broader literature on sexual harassment perceptions is the introduction of moral licensing as an explanation for judgments. Past research has explored whether moral licensing could explain how likely an *individual* is to harass (Dinh, 2020), but has not yet explored how moral licensing may give insight to harassment perceptions. The present study integrated moral licensing, in the forms of moral crediting and credentialing, as explanatory mechanisms for SH judgments. This joining of the sexual harassment and moral licensing literatures should continue.

This study is also an exploration of the concept of power beyond solely the initiator's organizational status. By moving beyond a definition of power that is marked by a difference in hierarchical position, the literature can be expanded to rethink how initiators can hold power over targets. Past studies found that when initiators have greater positional status (defined by organizational structure), which implies greater power, their actions are seen as more severe (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1988; Pryor, 1985; Katz, Hannon, & Whitten, 1996). In the present study, embodiment of responsibility-focused or "good" power actually *helped* initiators, as they got more moral credits than initiators in other conditions. The responsibility-focused initiator's conduct was seen as more severe (than control), but also more likely to be a

false accusation. These findings should invite scholars to reconsider how power can be multifaceted and have differential effects on perceptions.

Practical Implications

The #MeToo movement brought conversations about sexual harassment to the front of public discussion, leaving many shocked that some notorious perpetrators had been harassing for so long without retribution. Further, the widespread prevalence of SH became clear with the #MeToo hashtag going viral. The findings of the present study may reveal why some initiators are able to carry out harmful conduct for so long. Broadly, these results shed light on why some initiators seem to get a pass to harass because they are seen as a good or virtuous individual. The fact that perceivers are more likely to question the accuser when the alleged powerful perpetrator embodies virtuous qualities should challenge how claims of SH are evaluated. Those who dictate SH policy should consider how individual's perceptions of the perpetrator's moral character may influence to what extent they view their behavior as harassing. Peirce, Smolinski, and Rosen (1998) pointed out over 20 years ago that a barrier to many employees are managers reacting defensively or trying to rationalize away charges of sexual harassment. This disregard is one of the contributing factors to why many employees felt their claims were "falling on deaf ears" (Peirce et al., 1998). In exploratory analyses, we found that participants were less likely to elect to take severe disciplinary action against the responsibility-focused initiator compared to the control and self-focused initiator, which should be a concern to organizations. Making employees at all levels aware that even seemingly good people can harass may be necessary in order to empower more people to see these harassing actions for what they really are: unacceptable. Organizations should stay vigilant that their work environment is not one that tolerates harassment.

In addition to informing policy, the findings of the present study should be in consideration when designing and conducting harassment training in organizations. Sexual harassment training that is informed with the effects of moral licensing can work to make employees aware of how moral licensing may construe their perceptions. Stockdale and Dinh (2020) proposed harassment training that had key elements to address the effects of power and moral licensing: perspective-taking (Blader, Shirako, & Chen, 2016; Galinsky, Rucker, & Magee, 2016), accountability (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999), and awareness of hypocrisy (Susewind

& Hoelzl, 2014). By holding power holders accountable for their actions, encouraging to them to take the perspective of others, and pointing out hypocrisy in moral licensing tendencies, SH trainings can become more effective.

Limitations and Future Directions

No study is without its limitations. One limitation of the present study is the limited understanding of how the power prime is operating. Said another way, it is possible that the responsibility Troy is presented as a warm individual, in addition to being one that uses power for communal purposes. Similarly, self-focused Troy may be seen as cold, and therefore his harassing actions seen as more severe. Warm/cold impressions are one of the most profound dimensions of person perception (Kelley, 1950). It could be the case that in life, warmth and responsibility-focused power embodiments go hand-in-hand, or that responsibility-focused power embodiment gives rise to perceptions of one's warmth, even in the absence of direct cues about warmth. Future research should try to parse apart warmth from these embodiments of power to understand how either warmth, power embodiment, or some combination of the two are operating on harassment perceptions.

Another limitation of this study is the modality in which participants were presented with the information and asked to make judgments. Participants were all recruited online via MTurk, and were exposed to stimuli by reading them onscreen and then answering questions to glean their judgments. In the workplace, and in the courtroom, reading online is likely not the way that perceivers glean information about incidents of SH. As this was an online study, participants could have responded less carefully and paid less attention to stimuli than originally intended. Additionally, there have been concerns about data quality from MTurk due to careless responders or participants from outside the United States (McGonagle, Huang, & Walsh, 2016; Litman, Rosen, Rosenzweig, Weinberger-Litman, Moss, & Robinson, 2020), and although several precautions were taken to ensure data quality, there still could have been malingering. Future research could use various methods, such as audio recording or videos presenting the SH scenario to make the prime more salient and have more fidelity to a real life SH case.

Negative affect was strongly related to judgments, and for false accusations in particular, positive and negative affect were related in the same direction. This could be due to careless responding while taking the 20 item PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), as participants

could have chosen responses arbitrarily (McGonagle, Huang, & Walsh, 2016). Another potential explanation for this pattern of results could be the case that affect is related to SH judgments. While other research has explored affect and decision-making (Van Knippenberg et al., 2010; Clore, Schwartz, & Conway, 1994; Forgas, 1995), there has yet to be research investigating affect as a variable that could influence SH judgments. Given that evaluating a claim on complicated and emotionally-charged events like sexual harassment requires perceivers to weigh various information, it is possible that affect influences how they process information.

Finally, a limitation of this study was the nature of the SH scenario presented. The case with Troy and Alicia was straightforward, and had quite a bit of evidence for unwanted sexual attention. We know from SH prevalence research that this kind of harassment is not the most typical case. Rather, those who respond to the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ; Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995) report experience gender harassment more often, and overt advances like *quid pro quo* remain rare. Future research could explore whether these relationships between power and moral crediting hold with a different case of sexual harassment, such as one of primarily gender harassment, or a case with less evidence.

Conclusion

In the swell of the #MeToo movement, many of the powerful figures who were accused were people who had been previously seen as virtuous (Stockdale, Bell, Crosby, & Berdahl, 2019), leading many in disbelief of their actions. The present study investigated how embodied power influenced SH judgments by manipulating the initiator to embody responsibility-focused, or self-focused power (compared to a control). Additionally, moral licensing, operationalized through moral crediting and moral credentialing, was explored as an explanatory mechanism as to why an initiator would be able to harass while evading censure. Ultimately, I found substantial support for my hypotheses. The embodied power did affect moral crediting, which in turn was positively related to false accusations and SH severity. Additionally, there were gender differences in moral crediting such that both men and women did give responsibility-focused Troy the most moral credits, but women were more likely than men to give the control condition Troy moral credits. Taken together, the findings of this study indicate that some initiators get a pass as their actions are seen as less severe when others believe them to have done good moral

deeds in the past. This should serve as an indication that SH is not always done by "bad actors", but by those who appear to be virtuous, which should inform future SH policies and training.

APPENDIX A. MEASURES

Demographic Questions

1. What is your age?
2. How many years have you been employed at a job for pay?
3. What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Another gender not listed above
4. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?
   a. HS diploma or less
   b. Some college through a Bachelor's degree
   c. Graduate work through a graduate degree
5. What is your race/ethnicity?
   a. White
   b. Black or African American
   c. Latinx/Hispanic
   d. American Indian or Alaska Native
   e. Asian/Asian American
   f. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   g. Another race/ethnicity not listed above
6. What is your sexual orientation?
   a. Heterosexual
   b. Lesbian
   c. Gay
   d. Bi/Pansexual
   e. Another sexual orientation not listed above
   f. Prefer not to say
7. Do you currently work for a job for pay (other than being an MTurk worker)?
   a. No
   b. Yes, part time (less than 30 hours per week)
   c. Yes, full time (30 or more hours per week
8. Have you ever worked for a company with sexual harassment policies?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not sure
9. Have you received training from your employer on sexual harassment?
   a. Yes
   b. No

c. Not sure
10. Do you have any reactions to this study?

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

(PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988)
This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you <u>normally feel on a typical day during the COVID-19 pandemic</u>. Use the following scale to record your answers:
(1 = Not at all, 5 = Extremely)
- Interested
- Distressed
- Excited
- Upset
- Strong
- Guilty
- Scared
- Hostile
- Enthusiastic
- Proud
- Irritable
- Alert
- Ashamed
- Inspired
- Nervous
- Determined
- Attentive
- Jittery
- Active
- Afraid

Moral Crediting

Adapted from Lin, Ma, & Johnson (2016)
After reading the scenario, please indicate your agreement with the statements below:
(1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree)

- Troy earned credit for performing a good behaviors
- Troy's previous good deeds earned him credit as a moral person
- Acting good built up Troy's account of moral credits

- Each good deed Troy performed added to his moral credit
- Acting in an ethical manner gave Troy a surplus of credit

Moral credentialing

Adapted from Dinh (2020)

Instructions: The following statements discuss certain behaviors at work. Please answer using the scale provided to what extent do you think these behaviors are appropriate **for Troy** to enact in the workplace.

(1 = Definitely not appropriate for Troy to do, 7 = Definitely appropriate for Troy to do)

- Adjust his work schedule to accommodate his other coworkers' requests for time off.
- Go out of his way to make newer employees feel welcome in the work group.
- Give up time to help other coworkers who have work or non-work problems.
- Assist other coworkers with their duties.
- Share personal property with others to help their work.
- Make fun of someone at work.
- Play a prank on someone at work.
- Publicly embarrass someone at work.
- Put down or be condescending to someone at work.
- Pay little attention to a coworker's statement or show little interest in their opinion.
- Make demeaning or derogatory remarks about a coworker.
- Address a coworker in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately.
- Ignore or exclude a coworker from professional camaraderie.
- Doubt a coworker's judgment on a matter over which they hold responsibility.
- Make unwanted attempts to draw a coworker into a discussion of personal matters.
- Make attempts to draw a coworker into a discussion of sexual matters.
- Make remarks about a coworker's appearance, body, or sexual activities.
- Make gestures or used body language of a sexual nature at work.
- Make attempts to establish a romantic sexual relationship with a coworker despite their efforts to discourage it.
- Make unwanted attempts to stroke, fondle, or kiss a coworker.

Sexual Harassment Severity

Adapted from Bhattacharya & Stockdale, 2016
After reading the scenario, please indicate your agreement with the statements below:
(1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree)

- The alleged harassments that Alicia claimed happened to her in the scenario are very threatening.
- The alleged harassments described in this scenario are likely to cause physical, psychological, and/or economic harm to the person who is the target of the behaviors.
- The alleged harassments that Alicia reportedly experienced were really aggravating and stressful.

Guilt Judgments

Adapted from Bhattacharya & Stockdale, 2016
After reading the scenario, please indicate your agreement with the statements below:
(1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree)

- Troy misused his powers as Alicia's supervisor and sexually harassed her.
- After reading the scenario I definitely think that Troy sexually harassed Alicia.
- Troy is guilty of sexual harassment.

False Accusation Beliefs

Adapted from Bhattacharya & Stockdale, 2016
After reading the scenario, please indicate your agreement with the statements below:
(1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree)

- From the scenario, it seems that Alicia was only trying to tarnish her supervisor Troy's reputation
- Alicia lied about Troy sexually harassing her
- Alicia's accusations against Troy were mostly false

Job Punishments

Exploratory measures created for this study

- Based on the scenario, which of the following actions do you think is the most appropriate for Troy's company to take against him following this complaint
    - No action
    - Issue a verbal warning
    - Issue a written warning
    - Require Troy to attend training
    - Demote Troy
    - Fire Troy

- Rate how severe you think the action you selected for the company to take against Troy is on a scale from 1 (not at all severe) to 10 (very severe)

Manipulation and Attention Checks

- What award did Troy receive at work?
    - Excellent leader & mentor
    - Most likely to promote himself
    - A small bonus for reaching company-wide goals
    - Most customers signed up for rewards program
- What is your impression of Troy? Please write at least one sentence.
- Which of these was a complaint Alicia had against Troy?
    - Refusing to pay her salary
    - Inappropriate touching in front of coworkers
    - Ignoring her emails

APPENDIX B. MATERIALS

Self-focused Power

Troy Smith is a mid-level manager at a U.S. pharmaceutical company. Last year at the firm's end-of-year party, Troy was awarded "Most likely to promote himself" by his coworkers. Recently he met with a group of senior leaders to pitch a proposal for an important strategic initiative that, if successful, would not only significantly increase his firm's profitability, but would also position Troy for a significant promotion.

After Troy's meeting, he finished his performance reviews of his direct reports. One of them had been off the mark all year and hadn't hit their numbers. Troy decided that it's time for this employee to consider a different career path, so he recommended that they be terminated from their current position. Troy knew the firm cannot afford to string along people like this who are not making a contribution. Mostly, Troy did not want the employee's poor performance to reflect poorly on him as a manager, especially with this big proposal as a possibility.

Responsibility-focused Power

Troy Smith is a mid-level manager at a U.S. pharmaceutical company. Last year at the firm's end-of-year party, Troy was given an award by the company for being an excellent leader and mentor. Recently at work he met with a group of senior leaders to pitch a proposal for an important strategic initiative that, if successful, would not only significantly help the firm reach its goal to be a "best place to work", but would also position his team members for important engagements in the future, which will be great for their careers.

After the meeting Troy finished performance reviews of his direct reports. One of them, Becky, had been off the mark all year and hadn't been hitting their numbers. Troy decided that he was going to give this employee extra attention and mentoring so they had a better understanding of how to leverage their talents. Mostly, Troy knows how important it is in the firm for leaders to take personal responsibility for the professional development of their mentees. Troy feels a particular responsibility to mentoring his junior employees.

Control

Troy is a mid-level manager at a U.S. pharmaceutical company. Last year, at the firm's end-of-year party Troy received a small bonus for reaching firm-wide goals. Recently at work, he met with a group of senior leaders to listen to a proposal for an important strategic initiative that, if successful, will not only significantly help the firm reach its goals, but will also make the firm more profitable.

After the meeting, Troy worked on his performance reviews of his direct reports. One of them had been off the mark all year and hadn't hit their numbers. Troy decided to set this review aside and work on it another day.

Sexual Harassment Scenario

Alicia Johnson was a research technician at the pharmaceutical company. Troy Smith was her direct supervisor. After working for two years in the organization, Alicia filed a formal complaint against Troy Smith claiming sexual harassment. Alicia complained that Troy inappropriately touched her in front of other co-workers. She stated that he would also frequently try to discuss his sexual life with her even with her expressed disdain. Alicia stated that Troy would often discuss how he had dreamed about her 'sexy dresses' and that he would often force her to talk about her personal problems with her boyfriend and even call her repeatedly at home. She complained that if she took a day off he would repeatedly call her or drive by her house. She insisted that she kept quiet in fear of losing her job since Smith was her supervisor. The company conducted an investigation.

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