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**The Personal/Group Discrimination Discrepancy:
The Role of Social Identity**

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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Abstract

Recent research has unveiled a robust and pervasive phenomenon: individual members of a group consistently perceive higher levels of discrimination directed at their group as a whole as compared to themselves personally as members of that group. This phenomenon has been labelled the "personal/group discrimination discrepancy". Two studies were conducted using female subjects to investigate possible explanations underlying the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. Study 1 examined the effect of question wording employed in previous research. Study 2 investigated the relationship between an individual's perceptions of personal and group discrimination and her personal and social identity with respect to women as a group. Contrary to the main hypothesis, those subjects who made stronger associations between themselves personally as women and women as a group demonstrated a larger discrepancy between ratings of personal and group discrimination as compared to those subjects who less strongly associated themselves personally with the group. This result is discussed in terms of Turner's (1982) concept of depersonalization.

Résumé

Des études récentes ont révélé un phénomène robuste et durable: des individus, membres de groupes stigmatisés, perçoivent la discrimination envers leur groupe à des niveaux plus élevés que celle envers eux-même comme membre de ce groupe. Ce phénomène a été nommé "différence dans la discrimination personnelle/groupe". Deux études furent réalisées avec des femmes afin d'évaluer certaines explications possibles de cette différence dans la discrimination personnelle/groupe. La première étude examina l'effet du vocabulaire des questions utilisées dans les recherches précédentes. La deuxième étude se concentra sur la relations entre les perceptions qu'a un individu de la discrimination, envers elle et envers son groupe, et son identité personnelle et sociale vis à vis des femmes comme un groupe en soi. Contrairement à l'hypothèse, les sujets qui firant les plus fortes associations entre elle-même comme femme et les femmes comme un groupe présentèrent des différences plus importantes entre les évaluations de de discriminations personnelle et de groupe comparativement aux sujets s'associant moins personnellement au groupe. Les étonnants résultats furent discuté en termes du concept de dépersonnalisation de Turner (1982).

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INTRODUCTION

Experiencing Societal Discrimination: The Personal/Group Discrimination Discrepancy

In North American society it is assumed that every individual is entitled to, and guaranteed, certain fundamental rights and freedoms. However, the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Liberation Movement, Native Peoples' intolerance of continued suppression, and the current "rise of ethnicity" in Western society are witness to the fact that the ideal of "equality for all groups" has been, and continues to be, grossly unrecognized. Yet, prior to the current reactance of such groups to societal inequality, there were long periods of inaction towards their perceived oppressors. What is it that prompts an individual, or group, to take action against perceived societal discrimination and injustice? What role does the perception of discrimination play in prompting a suppressed group to fight for societal change? These fundamental questions have begun to shift the focus of research away from the perpetrators of discrimination to those who are the perceived victims of discrimination. However, the vast majority of research on discrimination, both past and present, continues to examine how prejudice develops and is maintained while ignoring the reactions of the victims of such injustice. The sparse amount of research on the victims of prejudice focuses mainly on the victims' feelings of control, levels of life satisfaction and self-esteem, as well as on their affective reactions to discrimination (Birt & Dion, 1987; Crocker & Major, 1989; Crosby, 1982; 1984a; 1984b; Dibble, 1981; Dion, 1986; Dion & Earn, 1975; Major & Carnevale, 1984). The present research focuses on discrimination from the victims' perspective; in particular, women's perceptions of discrimination.

Discrimination is usually thought of as a *group* phenomenon - it is a particular

"group" that is discriminated against. However, it is individual members of that group who actually experience and interpret discriminatory treatment. Thus, it is of great importance to determine one's *perceptions* of discrimination, for it is precisely these perceptions that guide and determine consequent attitudes and behavior. Hence, one important distinction that needs to be made is between perceptions of *personal* discrimination by individual members of a group compared to perceptions of discrimination at the *group* level. This perceptual distinction is extremely important given the recent discovery of an intriguing and apparently fundamental phenomenon: individuals consistently perceive a higher level of discrimination directed at their group as a whole, as compared to themselves as individual members of that group. This phenomenon, labelled the "personal/group discrimination discrepancy" (Taylor, Wright Moghaddam, & Lalonde, 1991), has proven to be a robust and highly pervasive finding that has surfaced in several studies of differing theoretical purposes and varied subject populations. The personal/group discrimination discrepancy presents a fascinating enigma: How is it that members of a group can acknowledge a significant level of discrimination against their group in general, yet report virtually no discrimination against them personally as members of that group?

This robust and pervasive finding has both practical and theoretical implications. At the **practical level**, when trying to assess the extent of prejudice or discrimination, or when designing measures of prejudice, one must be acutely aware of the form of the question, personal or group. In other words, the nature of the question may well yield very different results depending on whether the question is targeted at the person or the group. Furthermore, our society is constantly engaged in what may be termed a "pulse-taking" of discrimination - levels of discrimination are continually being assessed and

compared to levels from previous years. If perceptions of personal discrimination are constantly different from perceptions of group discrimination, it is difficult to assess whether society is being more or less tolerant of racial, ethnic and religious diversity. Therefore, it is of great importance that the instruments used to measure the degree of discrimination be sensitive and valid since the results of such "pulse-taking" investigations greatly influence how one perceives, and is perceived by, other social groups. In fact, these results may well define the attitudes of the current "cultural milieu".

Aside from addressing the practical implications of the personal/group discrepancy, it is crucial to consider the **theoretical implications** as well. An important theoretical implication of the personal/group discrepancy is that it is difficult to determine which measure of discrimination (personal or group) reflects objective reality. The fact that personal and group ratings of discrimination are significantly different seriously undermines the research based on the assumption that discrimination is a singular or "unitary" phenomenon. Furthermore, it is crucial to determine one's perceptions of discrimination in predicting when and if consequent action will be taken to rectify the perceived injustice. If there is a significant difference between the amount of discrimination perceived at the personal and group levels, then the resultant behavior, if any, will be very different depending on the perception from which it ensued.

In order to fully conceptualize the personal/group discrimination discrepancy as a unique and fundamental finding, an overview of the literature demonstrating the pervasiveness of the phenomenon across a heterogeneous array of subjects populations will be reviewed. This will be followed by a review of the potential explanations for the

phenomenon that have been postulated to date. Finally, an overview of the present programme of research, which empirically investigated possible explanations underlying the personal/group discrimination discrepancy, will be presented.

The Personal/Group Discrimination Discrepancy: A Robust and Pervasive Phenomenon

The earliest documentation of this perceptual discrepancy arose in Crosby's (1982; 1984a; 1984b) study of working women in the Boston area. The theoretical focus of Crosby's work was the relative deprivation these women perceived at work and at home. While the female respondents overwhelmingly recognised that women as a group are discriminated against, these same respondents reported virtually no personal discrimination. Thus, while claiming that women as a group are significantly disadvantaged, the respondents also claimed that they, as women, were not personally disadvantaged. This finding gives rise to a logical incongruity: if all of Crosby's female respondents reported no personal discrimination, yet claimed that women in general were discriminated against, where are the women that are discriminated against? Crosby (1984a), the first to address this phenomenon, labelled such reasoning as "the denial of personal discrimination", since respondents readily acknowledged discrimination at the group level, but not at the personal level.

This phenomenon has been identified in several other studies in which the investigation of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy was not the primary purpose. Subject populations have included Francophones in the province of Quebec (Guimond & Dubé, 1983), women in both French Canada and France (Dubé & Abbondanza, 1985), and Anglophone Quebecers (Taylor, Moghaddam & Bellerose, 1989). In each of these studies, respondents claimed that they personally were not

discriminated against, yet acknowledged that their respective groups, in general, were discriminated against. The results from these studies lent further support to Crosby's (1984a) "denial of personal discrimination" hypothesis.

The pervasiveness of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy across a heterogeneous array of subject populations stimulated a more direct investigation of the phenomenon. Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam & Lalonde (1991) specifically investigated the personal/group discrimination discrepancy, and, in order to examine those individuals who are likely to have experienced a significant level of personal discrimination, focussed on a visible minority population - Haitian and Indian women residing in the Montreal area. Both groups of women, because of their race, cultural heritage, status as a newcomer to Canada, and gender, are targets for what has been labelled "multiple discrimination". Respondents were asked, in four separate questions, whether they had been *personally* discriminated against because of their race, culture, newcomer status to Canada, and gender. These were followed by four questions asking if Indians/Haitians *in general* are discriminated against because of their race, culture, newcomer status to Canada, and gender. In contrast to previous studies where virtually no personal discrimination was acknowledged, significant levels of personal discrimination were now reported. Furthermore, across all four sources of discrimination, the reports of personal discrimination were significantly lower than those reported for the group, thus providing strong evidence for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy.

In summary, the personal/group discrimination discrepancy has proven to be a robust and pervasive phenomenon. The variety of subject populations in which it has been demonstrated has been impressive: in addition to "women", this perceptual discrepancy has also been evidenced in two non-visible ethnolinguistic minorities

(Anglophones and Francophones in Quebec) and visible minority women (Haitian and Indian women). In addition, recent results from a wide variety of settings have provided unquestionable evidence for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy among minority groups as disparate as Jewish Montrealers, Middle-class and inner-city Black Americans from Miami, and the Inuit of Arctic Quebec (see Taylor, Wright, and Porter, in press, for a review). The phenomenon, therefore, seems impervious to gender, racial, and cultural boundaries.

Possible Explanations for the Personal/Group Discrimination Discrepancy

There seem to be three general categories of explanation. The first category, and the focus of most explanations to date, is the **denial of personal discrimination** (Crosby, 1984a; 1984b; Taylor & Dubé, 1986). Since subjects, prior to the Taylor et al. (1991) study, reported virtually no personal experience with discrimination, this led researchers to believe that perhaps some form of personal "denial" was causing this discrepancy. Crosby (1984a; 1984b) outlines several reasons as to why an individual may be motivated to deny any personal discrimination. For example, it may be that the individual is avoiding the psychological discomfort that may arise from confronting or acknowledging his or her personal discrimination. Crosby believes that people are uncomfortable when they confront personal discrimination because it means blaming some other individual. Therefore, blame avoidance eliminates any psychological distress, and therefore may be a reason for denying personal discrimination. Crosby further suggests that an individual may deny personal discrimination because he or she is afraid of retaliation. Since acknowledging discrimination often involves specifying particular "villains", there is the possibility that the villains will retaliate if attacked.

Hence, the victims will simply deny that they are personally discriminated against in order to avoid any revenge from the villains. In addition, Crosby suggests that the individual may perceive himself/herself as different from the prototype of his/her group therefore discrimination aimed at the individual on the basis of his/her group membership is psychologically nullified. If an individual does not consider him/herself to be a typical member of his/her group, then that individual will not interpret unjust treatment directed at him/her personally as discrimination since group membership in a particular category is not a salient factor for that individual. Taylor and Dubé (1986) propose that the denial of personal discrimination reduces the psychological dissonance created by not having taken any specific personal action against discriminatory injustice. Since perceiving personal discrimination would rationally require an active response on the individual's part, and since most individual group members are not actively engaged in any direct form of action, dissonance may be experienced by that person. Consequently, a way to reduce this dissonance is to believe that, while the group may face injustice, they do not personally experience injustice and therefore do not feel obligated to take any action.

Implicit in the denial of personal discrimination explanation is the assumption that group ratings of discrimination reflect objective reality and that the discrepancy is caused, therefore, by the reduction of personal discrimination. Although numerous motivations for the denial personal discrimination have been postulated in the literature, none have been tested, muchless supported, with research.

A second possible explanation for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy proposed by Taylor et. al. (1991) may be that individuals are not denying personal discrimination, but rather, are **exaggerating ratings of discrimination at the group level**. This explanation for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy has not been

raised in previous research. The neglect of this explanation in the literature is probably due to the fact that it would be highly unpopular to suggest that minority group members falsely exaggerate ratings of group discrimination, though there may be legitimate motivations for doing so. One such motivation may be *equity appeal* (Taylor, Moghaddam, and Bellerose, 1989), which states that minority groups "may seek social comparison to legitimize appeals for a fairer distribution of resources" (p. 502). Thus, by exaggerating levels of group discrimination, a minority group may make a more effective appeal for what it believes to be a more equitable distribution of resources. As well, the exaggeration of group discrimination can be self-serving for individuals belonging to groups that are potential targets for discrimination: if they experience personal success in spite of discrimination against their group, they may claim they succeeded despite great odds; or, if they fail, they can blame their failure on the extreme amount of discrimination aimed at the group. Crocker and Major (1989) propose that "membership in a stigmatized group can protect one's self-esteem, not only from explicit prejudice or discrimination, but also in some cases, from daily setbacks, failures and rejections" (p. 612). Furthermore, "this self-protective mechanism is particularly powerful because it may be used not only in response to negative evaluations or outcomes that do, in fact, stem from prejudice against the stigmatized group, but also in response to negatives outcomes that do not stem from prejudice" (Crocker & Major, 1989, p. 612). It seems therefore, that the self-protective mechanisms afforded by membership in a stigmatized group is a powerful factor which could motivate individuals to exaggerate group levels of discrimination.

In the case of exaggerating group levels of discrimination, the assumption here is that it is personal levels of discrimination that reflect objective reality, and that it is group

ratings of discrimination that are subject to distortion. Again, this category of explanation has not been formally tested.

Cognitive or information processes constitute the third category of explanation which may account for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. The simplest and least interesting cognitive process which may mediate one's perception of personal and group discrimination is the "additive" strategy (Taylor et. al., in press). Here, an individual may simply add to his or her own personal experiences with discrimination those of his or her friends and relatives, thus consistently rendering the group level of discrimination as higher than the personal level of discrimination. A more psychologically interesting example of a cognitive mechanism which may underlie the personal/group discrepancy is "availability" (Tversky and Kahneman, 1973). According to this strategy, the accessibility or "availability" of an item in memory is used as a cue for estimating that item's frequency. In other words, the quicker an item comes to mind, the higher an individual will judge its frequency to be. Thus, an individual may find it easier to bring group instances of discrimination to mind, perhaps because of the media's focus on discrimination. This "availability" of group discrimination to memory would result in an overestimation of the frequency of group discrimination in comparison to personal levels of discrimination.

"Proportionality" is yet another possible cognitive mechanism that may underlie the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. According to this explanation, discriminatory treatment at the personal level, in light of the large number of experiences a person may have daily, represents only a small proportion of the behaviors directed toward an individual personally; yet at the group level, discriminatory experiences constitute a substantially larger portion of behavior directed at the group since, compared

to the wealth of experiences at the personal level, the individual has less information about the group in general. Hence, when asked about discriminatory treatment, an individual will have proportionally higher perceptions of group discrimination than personal discrimination.

In summary then, potential explanations for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy fall into three general categories: the denial of personal discrimination, the exaggeration of group discrimination, and cognitive or information processes. However, despite the wealth of explanations postulated in the literature, little empirical research has been conducted to investigate the validity of any of these explanations.

The Current Programme of Research Investigating the Personal/Group Discrimination Discrepancy

The current program of research aimed to examine potential explanations for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. Because it has proven to be so robust and pervasive across a heterogeneous array of subject populations, it seemed necessary to first eliminate the possibility of potential artifactual explanations. The aim of Study 1, therefore, was to rule out any artifactual explanations that may underlie the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. Hence, it was crucial to examine the specific wording of the discrimination questions themselves. By ruling out such methodologically artifactual, yet entirely plausible, explanations such as wording, the credibility of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy as an important psychological phenomenon would be further established.

Study 2 investigated a relatively more theoretically rich explanation for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy - that of the nature of people's identification with their group and its impact on the personal/group discrepancy. The overriding

hypothesis was that the stronger an individual's social identity with reference to a particular group (i.e., the stronger an individual associates him/herself with that particular group), the less the discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination. The basic rationale was that any attack against this individual personally should be perceived as a group attack and any attack against the group should be interpreted as an attack against the individual personally.

THE PERSONAL/GROUP DISCRIMINATION DISCREPANCY: THE EFFECT OF "WORDING"

Study 1 focussed on the wording of the questions that have been used in studies thus far to determine subjects' perceptions of personal and group discrimination. The purpose was to eliminate the possibility that the phenomenon may be an artifact of question wording: either of the general wording of the questions themselves, or, of the specific terms used in these questions. Firstly, it may be that the question "To what extent are you (is your group) discriminated against?" is much too abstract and vague to be answered concisely. A question phrased in such general terms leaves much to interpretation by the subject - exactly what does "to what extent" imply? When asked about particular events such as discrimination, the most likely, and the most common, interpretation one would make would be in terms of either the *frequency* or *intensity* of such discriminatory treatment: either how often one (one's group) has experienced discriminatory treatment, or alternatively, how extreme or intense that experience was. Therefore, in addition to the standard questions, question ambiguity was explored by asking subjects "how often" (frequent) and "how extreme" (intense) their experiences

with personal and group discrimination were.

Secondly, there is the possibility that specific words such as "personal" and "group" may prompt an individual to use a simple additive mechanism in conceptualizing the differences that the terms "personal" and "group" may connote, with "group" implying a large amount or number and "personal" implying a comparatively smaller amount or number. The plausibility of an additive mechanism was examined by asking subjects, in addition to their personal ratings of discrimination, to rate discriminatory experiences of the "average North American woman" as opposed to "women in general". The purpose of incorporating an "average woman" versus a "women in general" condition was to directly examine the "additive" hypothesis that group ratings are consistently higher than personal ratings of discrimination because of the "sheer numbers" that a group rating may represent. According to this hypothesis, group ratings are higher because the group question addressing "women in general" represents a large number of women whose discriminatory experiences, when "added" together, will ultimately result in a group rating of discrimination being higher than a personal (i.e. one individual's) rating of discrimination. By asking the subject to indicate the amount of discrimination that the "average" North American woman experiences, one can obtain an estimate of the larger group (women) represented by one "average" individual - thus eliminating the large number of women that "women in general" may suggest. The result is an individual-individual comparison of the self to an "average woman". If the additive hypothesis were to account for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy, it would be expected that asking subjects to rate personal versus the "average" woman's experience with discrimination, as opposed to the experiences of "women in general", would eliminate the personal/group discrimination discrepancy - group ratings would no

longer be significantly higher than personal ratings.

Method

Subjects

A total of 100 female subjects were sampled. The mean age was 24.6 years, with a range from 17 to 41 years of age. Seventy-two percent of subjects were students at a major Canadian university, with the remaining subjects represents a wide variety of occupations.

Procedure

Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: Condition 1 (Standard-general), which measured personal discrimination and discrimination against the group in general; Condition 2 (Standard-average), which measured personal discrimination and discrimination against the average North American woman; Condition 3 (Frequency/Extremity-general), which measures frequency and extremity of personal and group *in general* discrimination; and Condition 4 (Frequency/Extremity-average), which measures frequency and extremity of personal and the *average* North American woman's discrimination. These questions were answered on an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (indicating absolutely no level of discrimination) to 10 (very extreme or very frequent discrimination).

In addition to rating levels of personal and group discrimination, a subjective component of the questionnaire asked subjects to think of what they considered the to be the "worst" (the most extreme or intense) instance of personal and group discrimination, and then to indicate when this event occurred by checking off one of the following: 1) happens all the time, 2) within the last week, 3) within the last month, 4) within the last

year, or 5) over a year ago. They were then asked to briefly describe what happened.

Results

Once again, the personal/group discrimination discrepancy proved to be a highly significant phenomenon using the basic personal/group discrimination questions in the Standard condition [$F(1,48) = 19.14, p < .001$]. It was of primary interest to next determine whether there was any significant differences between the standard "women in general" and "average"-woman conditions (condition one versus two, and three versus four). There was no significant difference between the Standard-"women in general" and Standard-"average woman" conditions, nor was there any significant difference between the "in general" and "average" conditions of the frequency and extremity measures. Therefore, the "in general" and "average" conditions were eliminated from successive analyses, in which subjects in conditions one and two and subjects in conditions three and four were combined.

As Figure 1 illustrates, the personal/group discrimination discrepancy was significant in each of the Standard, Frequency and Extremity conditions. Subjects not only reported higher group ratings in the Standard condition [$F(1,48) = 19.14, p < .001$], but also in the frequency and extremity conditions [$F(1,48) = 63.22, p < .001$; and $F(1,48) = 22.39, p < .001$]. Thus, the personal/group discrepancy is salient not only in more global measures of discrimination (as in the Standard condition) but also in frequency and extremity measures as well.

T-tests were performed to determine whether measures of personal and group discrimination significantly differed across the Standard, Frequency and Extremity conditions. Since the subjects in the Frequency and Extremity conditions were the same, t-tests between these two conditions were relatively straight-forward. The analyses

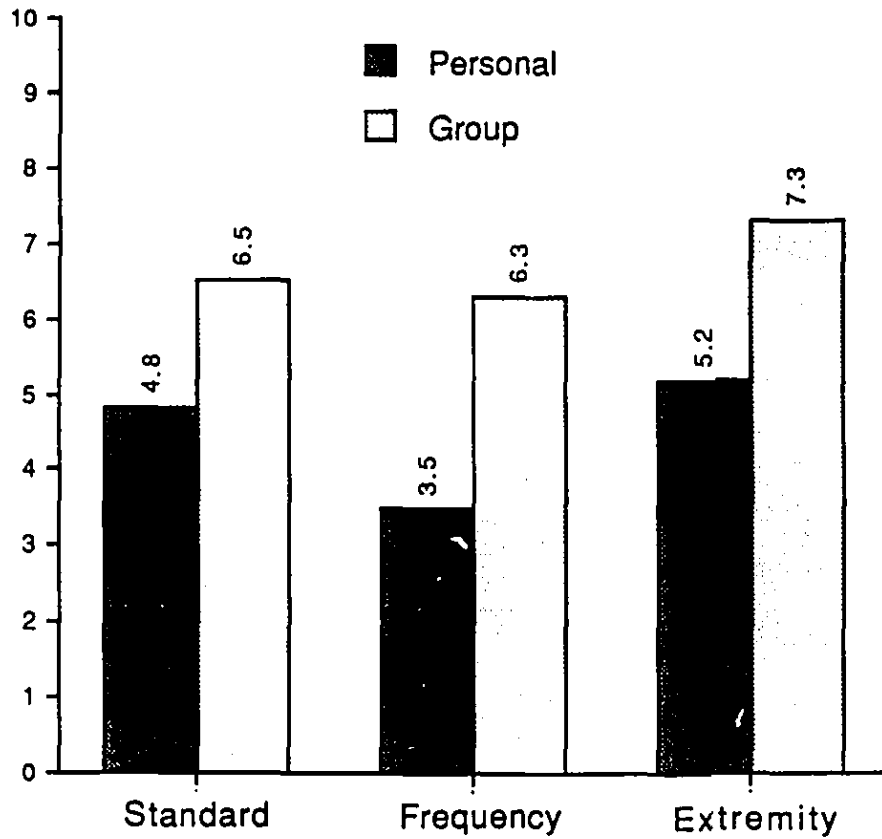


Figure 1. Ratings of personal and group discrimination for the Standard, Frequency and Extremity conditions.

revealed that personal-Frequency ($M = 3.52$) and personal-Extremity ($M = 5.24$) were significantly different ($t(49) = -4.01, p < .001$) (see Figure 1). Furthermore, group-Frequency ($M = 6.28$) and group-Extremity ($M = 7.34$) were also significantly different ($t(49) = -3.38, p < .001$). Because subjects in the Standard condition were different from those in the Frequency and Extremity conditions, t-tests were conducted using a pooled variance estimate. As illustrated in Figure 1, personal-Standard ($M = 4.80$) proved to be significantly different from personal-Frequency ($M = 3.52$) [$t(98) = -2.02, p = 0.046$]. Group-Standard ($M = 6.50$) and group-Frequency ($M = 6.28$) means were almost identical, and surprisingly, the group-Standard means were not significantly different from the group-Extremity mean ($M = 7.34$) [$t(98) = 1.61, p = 0.111$]. At first, this does not seem rational because group-frequency and group-extremity are significantly different, therefore it should follow that group-Standard (being almost the same as group-frequency) would be different from group-extremity (see Figure 1). It seems that this enigma is a statistical artifact of the different subjects in the group-Standard and group-Extremity conditions, while subjects were the same in both the group-Frequency and group-Extremity conditions.

In summary then, personal and group ratings of discrimination in the Standard condition were not significantly different from personal and group ratings in the Extremity condition, although group ratings did approach significance ($t(98) = 1.61, p = .111$) (see Figure 1). Ratings of group discrimination in Standard condition were also not significantly different from group ratings in the Frequency condition. However, ratings of personal discrimination in the Standard condition were significantly different from those in both the Frequency and Extremity conditions with personal-Frequency being the lowest ratings and personal-Extremity being the highest ratings of personal

discrimination (see Figure 1).

Subjects were asked to think of what they considered to be their "worst" instance of personal and group discrimination, and to indicate when this instance occurred (either "happens all the time", "within the last week", "within the last month", "within the last year", or "over a year ago"). Subjects overwhelmingly indicated that the "worst" instances of group discrimination "happen all the time" (58% of subjects). In contrast, only 16% of subjects reported that their "worst" personal experience with discrimination "happen all the time", with the majority of subjects reporting their "worst" personal experience to have happened "within the last year" (26% of subjects) or "over a year ago" (25% of subjects). It seems that personal experiences with discrimination are more "isolated incidents", whereas group experiences with discrimination are ongoing and "happen all the time", implying that discrimination at the group level may be "systemic" in nature. Group discrimination seems to be part of the fabric of society - it may be inextricably woven into the very structures and processes that define it.

When asked to briefly describe the worst personal and group experience with discrimination, the most common description of the "worst" instance of group discrimination further reinforced the notion that group discrimination may be "systemic" in nature: subjects reported such instances as salary inequities between male and female workers, sexist hiring practices, and females being regulated to menial jobs. To a lesser degree, subjects reported "sex"-related discriminatory incidents, such as rude or disgusting comments, unwanted advances by males, and rape as being the worst form of discrimination against women. To an even lesser degree, subjects reported that the male ideology of females being the "dumber" and "weaker" sex was the worst form of discrimination against women. In addition, abortion regulations, a sexist judicial system,

and "everywhere" were also reported as examples of the worst discriminatory incident against women, whereas none of the subjects reported experiencing these incidents personally.

On the personal level, discrimination was reported to be more of an isolated, personal phenomenon - personal character denigrations (females are dumb, weak and lack moral fibre), unwanted sexual advances, sexual assaults, and sexist treatment inside the home (e.g., females having an earlier curfew and being "servants" to the males). There was no overwhelming report of "systemic" discrimination as was in the descriptions of the "worst" group discrimination. In contrast, the "worst" discriminatory incident reported at the personal level seemed to be an isolated event - in fact, 19% of subjects reported that they experienced no personal discrimination at all.

Therefore, at the group level, discrimination was reported to be more of a "systemic" phenomenon - sexist hiring practices, inequitable salaries, a sexist judicial system, and just plain "everywhere". Personal experiences of discrimination, if acknowledged at all, were generally reported to be isolated events, often in the form of sexual insults and sexist treatment predominantly inside the home.

Discussion

The present study confirmed the saliency of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy - group ratings of discrimination were significantly higher than personal ratings. However, evidence for a simple "additive" hypothesis was not found in the present study - there was no significant difference between the "women in general" and "average woman" conditions, thus eliminating the possibility that higher group ratings are due to the "sheer number" of individuals that the word "group" represents.

An interesting result became apparent when examining the Standard vs.

Frequency vs. Extremity conditions: measures of frequency and extremity do not eliminate or reduce the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. In fact, measures of frequency alone seem to inflate the discrepancy to a degree. It seems that subjects not only view the group as experiencing more discrimination on a global level, but also on more specific levels - the group experiences discrimination more often than they do personally, and in a more extreme form than they do personally.

The extremity condition is not significantly different from the Standard condition with regards to both personal and group discrimination. The frequency condition significantly differs from the Standard and extremity conditions with regards to personal discrimination. It seems that by asking an individual about the frequency of personal discrimination (thus partialling out extremity information), one gets a dramatic decrease in personal discrimination. In fact, although the Extremity and Standard conditions are not significantly different (although group measures approach significance at $p = 0.1$ level), it is apparent in Figure 1 that the Standard condition represents a "combination" or "average" of the Frequency and Extremity conditions. Information only about the extremity of discriminatory instances at both the personal and group level inflates Standard measures of discrimination, while frequency information alone deflates personal and group Standard measures (significantly at the personal level). Thus, when considering personal and group instances of discrimination, subjects' responses to global (Standard) measures of discrimination may reflect an "averaging" of frequency and extremity information, especially with respect to personal ratings of discrimination.

It seems, therefore, that information about the extremity of discriminatory instances may be an important component in what one considers personal discrimination. Experiences of personal discrimination may be isolated but powerful instances - they

may have occurred "over a year ago" but the perceived extremity or intensity of such an event may more than compensate for the lack of frequency in considering its impact on the individual.

Study 1 demonstrates the saliency of the phenomenon across several dimensions - not only was the discrepancy evident in the Standard question format, but also in questions regarding the extremity and frequency of discrimination. In searching for a possible explanation for the personal/group discrepancy, the results of Study 1 eliminated the possibility that the discrepancy was the result of the specific wording of the questions used thus far in the literature. In addition, the results seemed to rule out the possibility of a simple cognitive explanation, the additive hypothesis, as the mechanism underlying the discrepancy. Therefore, the personal/group discrimination discrepancy seems to be a robust and salient psychological phenomenon that is not the result of some artifact of the specific wording of the question.

SOCIAL IDENTITY AND THE PERSONAL/GROUP DISCRIMINATION DISCREPANCY

The most fundamental characteristic of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy is the very nature of the relationship between the person and group. Thus, in order to explore potential psychologically important explanations for the personal/group discrimination discrepancy, it would seem plausible to focus on the impact that individual differences in the perception of this relationship have on the personal/group discrimination discrepancy. Because the personal/group discrimination discrepancy has

proven to be so pervasive and robust, it seemed logical to examine the phenomenon from an individual difference perspective.

Dion (1986, p.176) has indicated that "a sense of group belonging and identification is known to be necessary before perceived discrimination or inequity generalizes from individual to group" (Vanneman & Pettigrew, 1972; Dibble, 1981). Therefore, it seems possible that individual differences among group members' *identification*, or association, with their particular group may have a differential impact on their perceptions of personal and group discrimination. In considering the identification process with respect to perceptions of discrimination at the personal and group level, it seems imperative to delineate the meaning of *personal* and *social* identity. According to Brewer (1990, p. 5), "**Personal identity** is the individuated self - those characteristics that differentiate one individual from others within a given social context. **Social identities** are categorizations of the self into more inclusive social units that depersonalize the self concept, where 'I' becomes 'WE'".

The relationship between personal and social identity with respect to a particular group may have important implications for the perception of discrimination at the personal and group level. Specifically, it might be expected that the stronger the associations between these two identities with respect to a particular group, the smaller the personal/group discrimination discrepancy, since any attack at the group level would be viewed as an attack at the personal level and any attack at the personal level would be viewed as an attack against the group. For example, a radical feminist may have synonymous personal and social identities with respect to being a woman - the associations between these two identities would then be reciprocal. For her, any discrimination aimed at her personally would also be considered an affront against all

women, and any discrimination toward women as group would also be considered a personal affront.

The present study aimed to investigate the nature of the relationship between personal and social identification by questioning individuals about whether discrimination aimed at them personally will be transferred to (associated with) the group and whether group discrimination will be transferred to (associated with) themselves personally. Specifically, it was hypothesized that the more associations an individual makes between themselves personally as a member of a group and the group in general, the less the discrepancy between that individual's perceptions of personal and group discrimination. Instead of merely asking subjects "To what extent do you associate (identify) with women in general?", subjects were questioned about their association with women in general in a much more concrete and specific manner. Interpersonal scenarios were constructed to assess the degree to which each subject associated discrimination targeted against them *personally as a woman* with *women in general*, and conversely, the degree to which that subject associated discrimination against *women in general* as an attack against them *personally as a woman*. This method of discerning an individual's identification with the group does not operate under the commonly held assumption that identification with a particular group is a unidirectional process. It seemed crucial to examine not only the individual's identification with the group, but also the individual's perception of the group's identification with the herself personally.

Furthermore, the degree to which subjects *dissociated* discrimination targeted at themselves personally as a woman, from women in general, and conversely, the degree to which they dissociated discrimination at the group level from themselves personally as a woman, was also assessed. Questioning subjects about their degree of dissociation from

the group in addition to their degree of association would provide further insight into individual differences in the perception of the relationship between oneself personally as a member of the group and the group in general. Hence, the associations and dissociations between oneself personally as a member of a group and the group in general, and, their effect on the perceptions of personal and group discrimination, were examined.

Method

Subjects

A total of 164 subjects were sampled. The mean age was 21 years with a range from 18 to 26 years of age. Subjects were recruited through undergraduate classes in psychology at a major Canadian university. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, with each subject being eligible for a \$100 lottery.

Procedure

Subjects completed a questionnaire entitled "Survey on Interpersonal Relations in the Workplace". The title was chosen in order to prevent subjects from being sensitized to issues of discrimination, thus reducing the possibility of response bias. Two target questions embedded in a set of filler questions included: "I am personally discriminated because of my sex" and "North American women in general are discriminated against because of their sex". These questions were answered on an 11-point Likert scale with subjects rating the extent to which they agreed with the statement (from 0 being "definitely no" to 10 "definitely yes").

Four interpersonal scenarios were also constructed in order to measure the degree to which the subject associated/dissociated herself personally as a woman with women as

a group. Each scenario described an interaction between two co-workers of the opposite sex. In two of the scenarios, the male co-worker offended women as a group whereas in the other two scenarios his comments were directed at the woman personally because of her sex. The scenarios were presented in pairs, with each pair consisting of one associative and one dissociative scenario. For each pair of scenarios, the male co-worker's comment was the same. For example, one of the pairs consisted of the male co-worker exclaiming that "Women just never do their share of the work!" while the female co-worker either perceived his comment as a personal offense *and* also as an attack against women in general (demonstrating an association person and group), while the second scenario in the pair had the woman perceive the comment as a personal offense but *not* as a group one (demonstrating a dissociation person and group) (see Appendix I).

After reading each scenario, subjects answered four questions relating to the scenario on an 11-point Likert scale. The key question, "How likely is it that you might think as the woman did in this scenario?" sought to measure the extent to which the subject agreed with the woman's associative and dissociative reaction. The remaining three questions were incorporated to measure the validity of the scenario. These three questions included "How likely is it that a man might act like this in real life?", "How likely is it that a woman might act like this in real life?", and "Estimate what percentage of North American women might think as the woman did in the scenario."

Following each pair of scenarios, subjects were asked to choose which of the pair most closely reflected the way they would react (in effect, choose to associate or dissociate). Therefore, for each of the two pairs, the subject could either choose to associate or dissociate, thus yielding one of four possible profiles (two choices x two

options (association/dissociation): 1) associate person with group and group with person; 2) associate person with group but dissociate group with person; 3) dissociate person from group but associate group with person; or 4) dissociate person from group and group from person.

The last measure consisted of Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp's (1973) shortened version of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (AWS). This version is comprised of 25 statements dealing with the rights of women in educational, occupational, social, sexual, and marital situations. Using a four-point Likert scale, respondents indicated the degree to which they agreed with the statement, with total scores ranging from zero (extremely traditional) to 75 (extremely non-traditional, i.e., feminist). This measure was included to assess whether feminists and traditional women differed in their perceptions of the amount of discrimination at the personal and group levels.

All the questionnaires were identical although the order of presentation of the scenarios and the two target questions was randomized. Furthermore, the two target questions (embedded in a set of filler questions) and the AWS were either presented before or after the interpersonal scenarios in order to control for order effects.

Results and Discussion

The results will be presented in four sections. The first section examines the manipulation checks employed to determine the utility of the scenarios. The second section is comprised of a descriptive analysis of the frequencies with which the sample of women students (vis-a-vis the scenarios) associate or dissociate themselves personally from women in general, and, conversely, women in general from themselves personally. Finally, the relationship between subjects' patterns of association/dissociation between

person and group in terms of the scenarios and the perceptions of personal and group discrimination is presented from two perspectives. Firstly, subjects were classified into four categories based on their associations/dissociations between person and group vis-à-vis the scenarios, and their corresponding personal and group ratings of discrimination were compared. Secondly, subjects classified into varying degrees of the personal/group discrepancy (e.g., a large versus small discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination) were compared to investigate any systematic differences in their endorsement of associative/dissociative scenarios.

Manipulation Checks

Prior to addressing the substantive issues, it was necessary to establish that the scenarios presented to the subjects were considered to be relatively realistic. The scenarios were designed to measure the extent to which individual subjects associated or dissociated themselves with the social category "women". Because the scenarios were constructed with the purpose of measuring identity, assessing how realistic subjects perceived them to be was of primary importance. Following each scenario, a set of three questions was inserted specifically for the purpose of assessing the reality of the scenario.

Overall, subjects seemed to view the various scenarios as relatively realistic. Table 1 illustrates the means of these three questions for each of the four scenarios: person associated with group (denoted by P-->G), person dissociated from group (P/->G), group associated with person (G-->P), and group dissociated from person (G/->P). For the first question "How likely is it that a man would act like this in real life", the means (with zero being "not at all likely" and ten being "extremely likely") ranged from 5.1 (for the person associated with group scenario) to 5.4 (for both the group associated with person and the group dissociated with person scenarios). For the second question

Table 1: Mean ratings of the three validity questions for the four interpersonal scenarios: person associated with group (P-->G), person dissociated from group (P-/->G), group associated with person (G-->P), and group dissociated from person (G-/->P).

	SCENARIO			
	P-->G	P-/->G	G-->P	G-/->P
How likely is it that a man might act like this in real life?	5.1	5.2	5.4	5.4
How likely is it that a woman might act like this in real life?	7.1	3.7	7.0	4.4
Estimate what percentage of North American women might think as the woman did in reaction to the man's comments?	68.5%	37.5%	66.1%	40.0%

"How likely is it that a woman might act like this in real life", the means ranged from 3.7 (for the person dissociated from group scenario) to 7.1 (for the person associated with group scenario), and for the third question "Estimate what percentage of North American women might think as the woman did in reaction to the man's comments", the means ranged from 37.5% (for the person dissociated from group scenario) to 68.5% (for the person associated with group scenario). Thus, it appears that the scenarios were perceived by the respondents as being both realistic and plausible.

In comparing the means for the three questions across the four scenarios, it is apparent that for the first question which assessed how realistic the man appeared to be in each scenario, the means are fairly consistent - the man's behavior appeared to be relatively realistic regardless of the scenario. However, for the remaining two questions which assessed the plausibility of the woman's reactions to the man's comment as well as the percentage of women who might think as the woman did in the scenario, a clear pattern emerges: the means of these two questions for the associative scenarios in which person is associated with group (P-->G) and group is associated with person (G-->P) are evidently higher than the means for the corresponding dissociative scenarios. This pattern is to be expected since in light of the fact that 70.1% of subjects endorsed both the associative scenarios (the frequencies of endorsement are subsequently discussed). Hence, it is rational for a subject, who has chosen the associative scenarios as best reflecting herself personally, to also rate those associative scenarios as high on other measures of validity. However, despite this trend, the dissociative scenarios were still considered to be relatively realistic - the mean ratings of the validity questions for the dissociative scenarios were well above zero (the smallest mean being 3.7 out of ten for how realistic the woman was in the person dissociated from group scenario).

Patterns of Personal and Group Association/Dissociation

Having established that the scenarios were perceived to be relatively realistic, it was possible to now explore the frequencies with which subjects endorsed the associative and dissociative scenarios.

The number of subjects endorsing varying patterns of association and dissociation between person and group is illustrated in Figure 2. The vast majority of subjects (70.1%) made a reciprocal association between personal and group discrimination - an attack at the personal level based on group membership (women) was perceived as an attack against women in general, and, an attack against women in general was also perceived to be an attack against the subject personally as a woman. At the other extreme, 7.3% of the subjects reciprocally dissociated personal discrimination from group - an attack personally on the basis of being a woman was not considered an attack against women as a whole, and, an attack against women in general was not perceived as a personal attack.

It is important to note that there was also a number of women (22.6%) who did not endorse a reciprocal pattern of association or dissociation between person and group. Of these women, almost three times as many made an association from person to group, but not from group to person, rather than the reverse (i.e., dissociating person from group but associating from group to person). Therefore, it seems that more subjects were likely to perceive discrimination aimed at them personally as a woman as an attack against women in general, than interpreting an attack against women in general as an attack against them personally as a woman.

The overwhelming pattern of endorsement, however, is a reciprocal association between person and group. But, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that 30% of

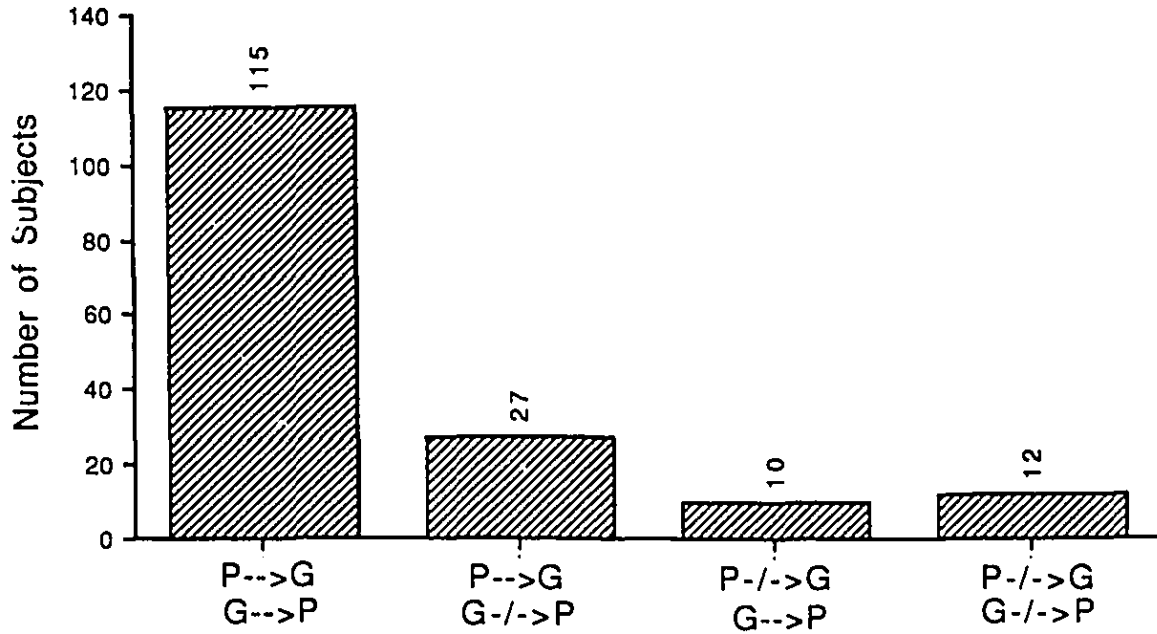


Figure 2. Number of subjects endorsing (1) reciprocal associations (-->) between person (P) and group (G); (2) association from person to group (P-->G) but dissociation from group to person (G-/->P); (3) dissociation from person to group (P-/->G) but association from group to person (G-->P); or (4) reciprocal dissociation (-/->) between person (P) and group (G).

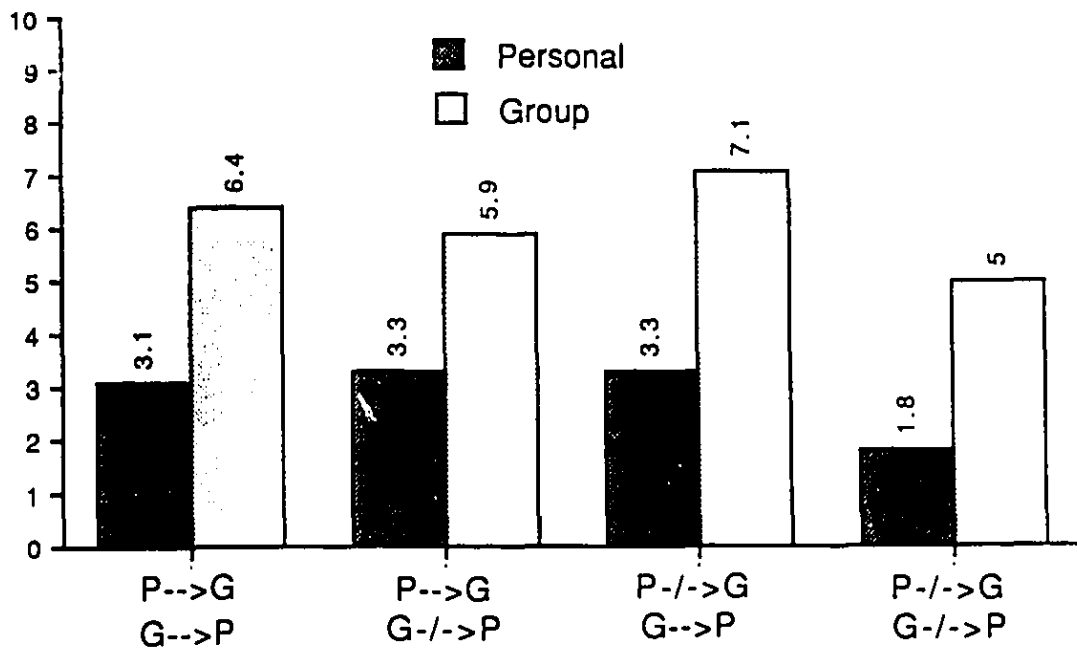


Figure 3. Ratings of personal and group discrimination for profiles described in Figure 2 above.

the subjects in this study did not make a reciprocal association, and in fact, some even reciprocally dissociated person and group. This is surprising considering that one would naturally assume that a member of a particular group would associate themselves with that group, and that this association would be a reciprocal process. This finding further reinforces the notion that when examining an individual's association with a particular group, it must not be assumed that association is a unitary and reciprocal process, and, further, that an association between an individual and that individual's respective group even exists. Hence, it is crucial to examine individual differences in the extent to which an individual will associate/dissociate him/herself personally as a member of a group from the group in general.

Patterns of Association/Dissociation and the Personal/Group Discrepancy

Before examining the personal/group discrimination discrepancy for subjects classified by their patterns of association/dissociation, it was imperative to examine the extent of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy for the subject sample as a whole. The overall ratings of personal and group discrimination for 164 subjects were 3.1 and 6.3, respectively. Thus, the personal/group discrepancy for the entire sample proved to be highly significant [$F(1,160) = 102.83, p < .001$].

It was hypothesized that the more associations a woman made between personal and group discrimination (vis-a-vis the scenarios), the smaller the discrepancy between her ratings of personal and group discrimination would be. For example, a woman who reciprocally associated person and group was hypothesized to have less of a discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination than a woman who reciprocally dissociated person and group. Therefore, ratings of personal and group discrimination for the four associative/dissociative profiles (described in Figure 2) were examined and

are presented in Figure 3. It is readily apparent that the magnitude of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy is consistent across the four associative/dissociative profiles. Thus, the hypothesis that women who were more associative would show less of a discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination was not confirmed - those women who made more associations between person and group (reciprocally associated) showed as much of a discrepancy as those women who made no associations between person and group (reciprocally dissociated). It is apparent, however, that those women who reciprocally dissociated person and group had the lowest ratings of personal and group discrimination, but this result must be interpreted with caution due to the small number of subjects that endorsed this profile.

Despite the slight variation in levels of personal and group discrimination, the discrepancy between these personal and group ratings remains surprisingly consistent across the associative/dissociative profiles. In comparing the two most disparate associative/dissociative profiles, the personal/group discrimination discrepancy for those who reciprocally associated person and group was 3.3; for those at the other extreme who reciprocally dissociated person and group, the discrepancy was essentially same (3.2). Hence, whether an individual chooses to reciprocally associate or dissociate person and group, or some combination in between, bears no impact on that individual's perceptions of personal and group discrimination.

Magnitude of Personal/Group Discrepancy and Association/Dissociation

It has become evident thus far that the number of associations/ dissociations a subject makes between person and group bears no relationship to the personal/group discrimination discrepancy - the discrepancy remains constant across all patterns of association/ dissociation. Therefore, it was decided to examine the relationship between

association/dissociation and the personal/group discrepancy from the opposite perspective - would subjects displaying little or no personal/group discrepancy evidence any systematic differences in association/dissociation patterns from those subjects who had comparatively larger personal/group discrepancies?

Subjects were divided into six categories of personal/group discrimination discrepancy ranging from those who exhibited a reverse discrepancy (those who had personal ratings of discrimination *higher* than group ratings) to those who had an extreme discrepancy of seven or more (those whose group ratings were at least seven points higher than personal ratings of discrimination). The ratings of personal and group discrimination for these six profiles are illustrated in Figure 4. Although these six categories were based on the magnitude of the personal/group discrimination discrepancy, an interesting pattern emerges over and above this categorical artifact - as the magnitude of the discrepancy increases, group discrimination increases, while personal discrimination decreases. Kruskal-Wallis' non-parametric statistical procedure was performed on personal and group ratings separately since the discrepancy between these ratings for each category was artificially created. There was an overall significant difference for personal ratings of discrimination ($\chi^2(5) = 67.44, p < .001$) as well as for group ratings ($\chi^2(5) = 29.58, p < .001$) across categories. What is interesting to note is that although magnitude necessarily increases across categories (since categories were chosen based on discrepancy magnitude), it is both an increase in group ratings and, even more so, a decrease in personal ratings that produces this discrepancy. The discrepancy is not, for example, the result of personal ratings remaining constant while group ratings continue to increase, or vice versa. A closer investigation of personal ratings of discrimination using Mann-Whitney non-parametric analyses revealed that personal

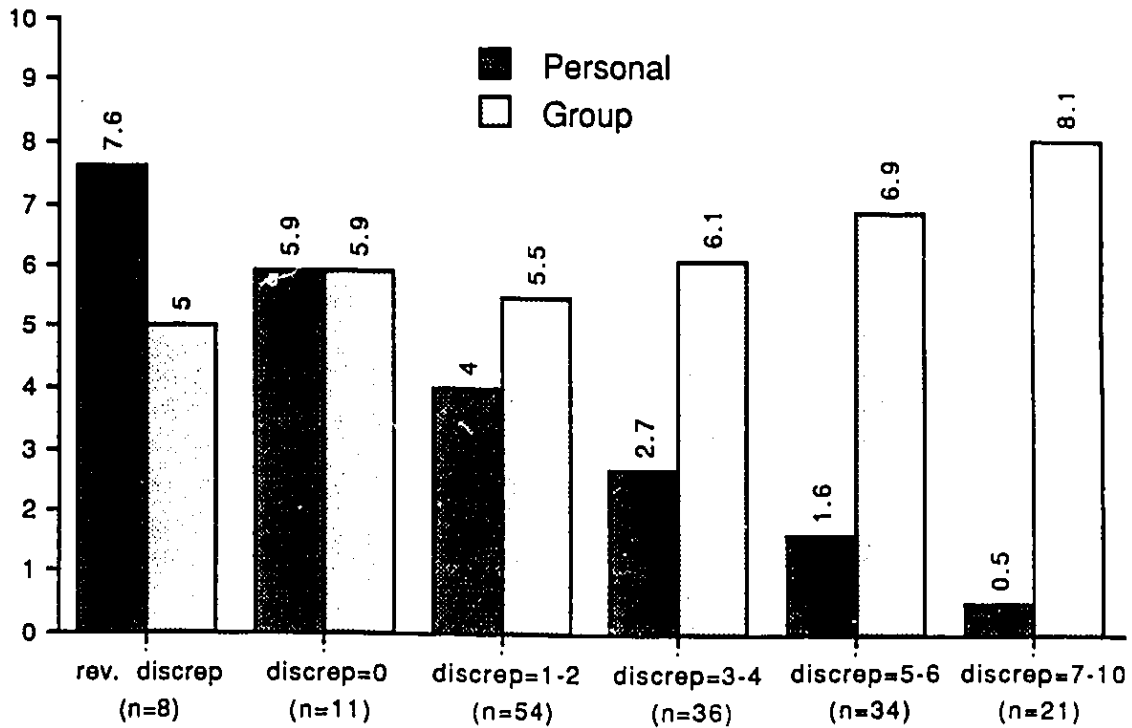


Figure 4. Ratings of personal and group discrimination for subjects classified by degree of personal/group discrepancy.

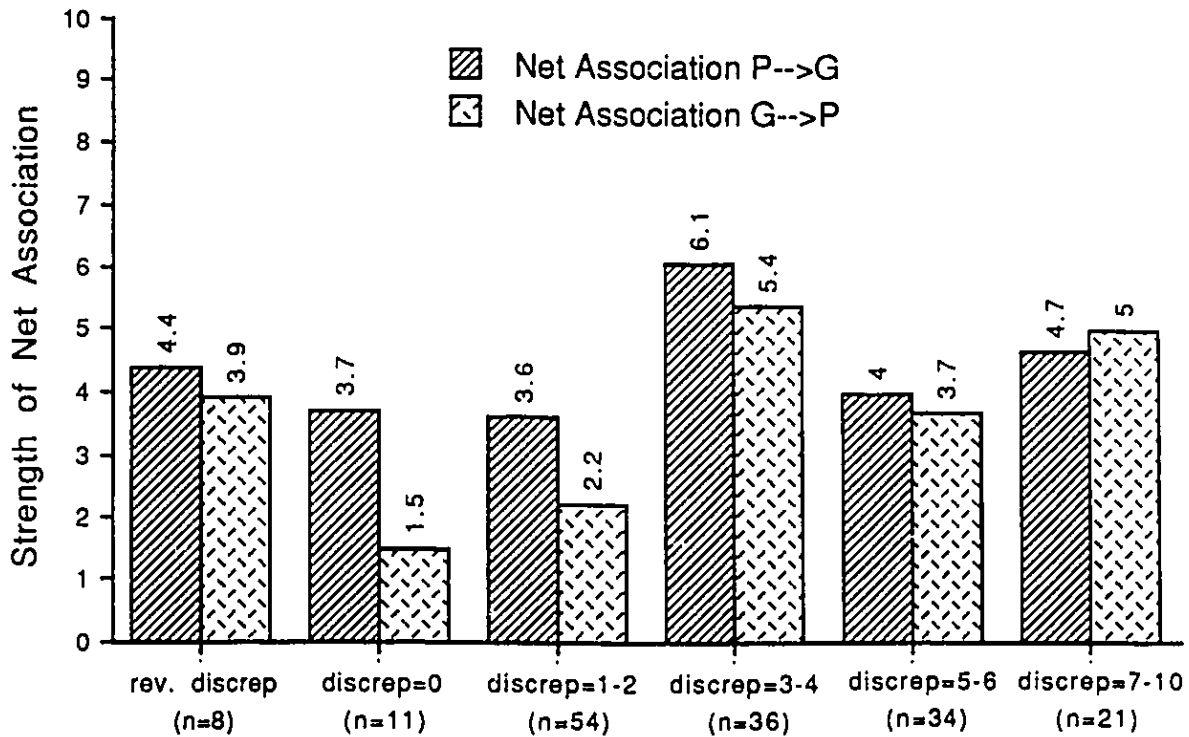


Figure 5. Strength of net association for person to group (P->G) and group to person (G->P) for subjects classified by degree of personal/group discrepancy.

ratings of discrimination did not significantly differ between those who had a reverse discrepancy and those who had no discrepancy, but significantly differed between each of the remaining categories - personal ratings of discrimination significantly decreased from category to category. Examination of group ratings of discrimination using the same statistical procedure revealed that there were no significant differences among group ratings for the first four discrepancy categories - those who had a reverse discrepancy, no discrepancy, or a discrepancy of 1-2 or 3-4 reported the same amount of group discrimination. However, these four categories significantly differed from those who had a discrepancy of 5-6 and 7 or greater. As well, those who had a discrepancy of 5-6 significantly differed in their ratings of group discrimination from those who had a discrepancy of 7 or greater. Therefore, group ratings of discrimination were significantly higher for those who had a discrepancy of 5-6, and were even significantly higher again for those who had a discrepancy of 7 or greater. It seems, then, that increased ratings of group discrimination may occur at the "expense" of personal ratings of discrimination, since as group ratings increase, personal ratings of discrimination decrease.

It was imperative to next examine the degree to which individuals classified into these six categories of personal/group discrimination discrepancy associated and dissociated person and group vis-a-vis the scenarios. It was hypothesized that the more association a subject makes between person and group on the scenarios, the less the discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination. As demonstrated earlier, this hypothesis was not confirmed when examining the relationship between patterns of association/dissociation and the personal/group discrepancy - those who reciprocally associated person and group had as much of a discrepancy as those who reciprocally dissociated person and group. Consequently, an examination of this

hypothesis from the reverse perspective was undertaken - do those who have little or no discrepancy associate more (dissociate less) than those who have a larger discrepancy? Figure 5 illustrates the six categories of discrepancy and their levels of "net association".

Net association refers to the extent to which a subject endorsed an associative response (rating from one to ten) minus the extent to which that the subject endorsed the complementary dissociative response (rating from one to ten). For example, if a subject chose to endorse an association from person to group (P->G) with a magnitude of seven out of ten, and chose to dissociate person from group (P-/>G) with a magnitude of three out of ten, then that subject's net associative response for person to group would be four out of ten. Net association scores were calculated for both person to group and group to person. Evident in Figure 5, and contrary to the hypothesis, is that those who have little, or no, or even a reverse discrepancy, associate *less* than those who have larger discrepancies. This result is completely contradictory to the prediction that those who strongly associate person and group would demonstrate a reduction in the personal/group discrepancy. Mann-Whitney's non-parametric statistical procedure for net association from person to group and group to person amongst the six discrepancy categories revealed that differences between these six categories were significant between two general categories of discrepancy - those who had a reverse, or no, or little discrepancy (1-2) as compared to those who had a discrepancy of 3-4, 5-6 or 7-10. Therefore, for statistical purposes (since the number of subjects in each category differed greatly, and was particularly small in some of the categories) these six categories were collapsed into these two categories of personal/group discrimination discrepancy. The first category consisted of those subjects who demonstrated a personal/group discrimination discrepancy of two or less, and the second category was comprised of those subjects who

demonstrated a discrepancy of three or more.

Figure 6 illustrates ratings of personal and group discrimination for two categories of personal/group discrepancy - those with a discrepancy of two or less, and those with a discrepancy of three or more. A 2x2 one-repeated-factor MANOVA was performed for these two categories and their ratings of personal and group discrimination. There was a significant 2-way interaction between category and personal/group ratings [$F(1,162) = 383.86, p < .001$]. Therefore, as would be expected, the personal/group discrimination discrepancy was significantly larger for those who had a discrepancy of three or more. But what is interesting is that this larger discrepancy is the result of *both* deflated personal ratings and inflated group ratings of discrimination: personal ratings are significantly lower than those who have a discrepancy of two or less [$F(1,162) = 113.06, p < .001$] while group ratings are significantly higher [$F(1,162) = 155.81, p < .001$].

It is interesting to now consider the net association for person to group and group to person for these two categories. The levels of net association for person to group and group to person for the two categories of personal/group discrimination discrepancy are presented in Figure 7. A 2x2 one-repeated-factor MANOVA (two levels of net association by two discrepancy categories) revealed that there was a significant main effect for net association - person to group association was stronger for both categories than group to person association [$F(1,162) = 5.51, p = .02$]. Surprisingly, and once again contrary to the main hypothesis, the main affect for category was highly significant [$F(1,162) = 9.01, p = .003$]. This finding indicates that those who have a relatively small personal/group discrepancy associate significantly *less*, not *more*, than those who have comparatively larger personal/group discrimination discrepancies. Although the

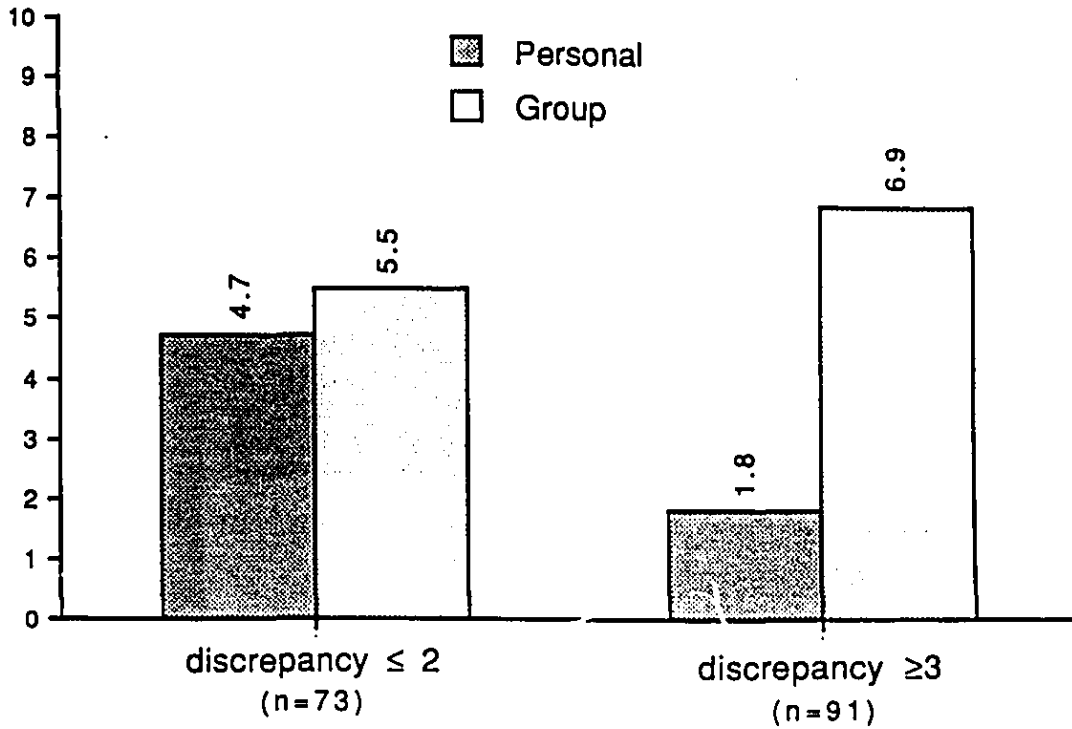


Figure 6. Ratings of personal and group discrimination for subjects classified into two discrepancy categories.

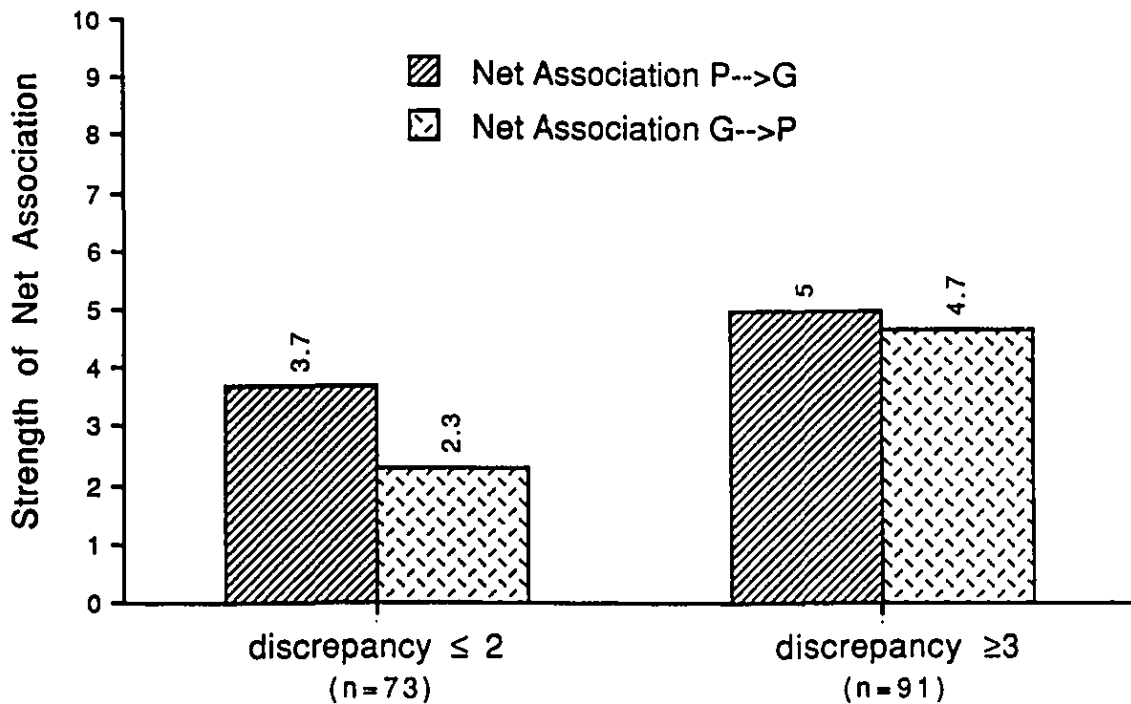


Figure 7. Strength of net association for person to group (P->G) and group to person (G->P) for subjects classified into two discrepancy categories.

magnitude of net association from person to group is evidently larger than net association from group to person for those who had a discrepancy of two or less, this difference did not prove to be statistically significant (there was no significant interaction between net association and category).

In summary, then, the hypothesis that the greater the association between person and group the smaller the personal/group discrimination discrepancy was not only disconfirmed, but was completely contradictory to, the results obtained: those who made stronger associations from person to group and group to person had a significantly larger personal/group discrimination discrepancy. At first this result seems completely counter-intuitive in light of the fact that it seems almost mundane to expect that the more one associates with one's group, the less the discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination would be. How is it that those who make stronger associations between person and group evidence a *larger* discrepancy between their perceptions of personal and group discrimination? Furthermore, the increase in the discrepancy is due not only to reduced levels of personal discrimination, but also to increased levels of group discrimination. It would seem that inflated levels of group discrimination occur in accordance with, or at the "expense" of, deflated personal levels.

Therefore, it appears that those who associate more with the group demonstrate a larger personal/group discrimination discrepancy by the very nature of the fact that, in comparison to those who associate less, these individuals report significantly higher group ratings of discrimination but significantly lower personal ratings. Why is it that individuals who associate *more* with the group actually demonstrate *more* of a discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination? A possible answer to the present findings may lie in a more careful examination of the subtleties contained in

the conceptualizations of personal and social identity, particularly those of Brewer (1990) and Turner (1982, 1987). Variations in the degree to which individuals will associate, or identify, with a particular group is an individual difference variable that is best conceptualized in terms of variations in the saliency of one's *social identity*. Recall Brewer's (1990) definition of social identities as "categorizations of the self into more inclusive social units that *depersonalize* the self-concept, where 'I' becomes 'WE'". Implied in this definition is that the very characteristics that differentiate the self from others, one's *personal identity*, is no longer salient when the focus switches to one's social identity as a frame of reference for comparison. Therefore, it seems that an increase in the saliency of one's personal identity is at the expense of the saliency of one's personal identity.

The subtlety of the relationship between personal and social identity is made even more explicit by Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher and Wetherell (1987, p. 50) who indicate that, in considering one's social identity, one must "shift towards the perception of self as an interchangeable exemplar of some social category and *away* from the perception of self as a unique person...". Therefore, in considering the subjects surveyed in the present study, it may be that those individuals who maintain a strong social identity in terms of "I am part of women as a group" (i.e., make stronger associations between person and group vis-a-vis the scenarios) do so at the expense of their personal identity (those characteristics that define "Me personally as a woman").

This switch away from personal identity when social identity becomes salient has been termed *psychological depersonalization* by Turner (1982). According to this concept of depersonalization (Turner, 1982), for those who strongly associate with the group as a whole, it would be logically impossible to rate both personal and group

discrimination high because one's personal identity (based on a particular group membership) and social identity (identification with the group as whole) may be considered diametrically opposed on a continuum. Consequently, group ratings of discrimination, presumably based upon one's social identification with that group, increase only as personal ratings of discrimination, presumably based on one's personal identification as a woman, decrease.

Conversely, for those who manage to dissociate themselves personally (as a woman) from the group in general (women as whole), it may be easier to rate both personal and group ratings of discrimination equally because their social identity with the group (their conception of themselves as being part of a larger group) is not strong. Therefore, these subjects acknowledge discrimination at the group level (though not as much as those who associate more strongly) while *also* acknowledging equal, if not greater, ratings of personal discrimination since they do not tend to associate themselves "personally as a woman" with "women in general". If there is no connection between oneself as a woman (one's personal identity) and women in general (one's social identity), then it should follow that there will be no "sacrifice" of personal ratings of discrimination when acknowledging discrimination at the group level.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The personal/group discrimination discrepancy has proven to be a highly robust and salient phenomenon across a diversity of subject populations - respondents consistently perceive higher levels of group discrimination as compared to themselves

personally as members of that group. The possible explanations underlying the phenomenon that have been cited in the literature to date can be classified into three general categories: the denial of personal discrimination, the exaggerations of group discrimination, and cognitive or information processes. Despite the wealth of explanations postulated in the literature, none of have been tested, muchless supported, with research.

Before examining the more complex psychological explanations that may have produced the personal/group discrimination discrepancy, it was considered necessary to investigate a relatively more simple explanation, that of question wording. Study 1 investigated the effect of wording used in questions assessing the perceived amounts of personal and group discrimination. It was determined that question wording bore no effect on the robustness of the phenomenon - questions about the frequency and extremity of personal and group experiences of discrimination produced little variation in the discrepancy between personal and group discrimination. In addition, questioning subjects about discriminatory experiences of the "average" woman as compared to "women in general" had no impact on the magnitude of the discrepancy. Thus, the personal/group discrimination discrepancy proved not to be an artifact of question wording, thus reinforcing its credibility as an important psychological phenomenon.

Study 2 proceeded to examine individual differences in the perception of the relationship between the individual as a member of a group and the group in general, and the effect of these individual differences on perceptions of personal and group discrimination. It was hypothesized that the more association an individual made between themselves personally as a member of a group and the group in general, the less their discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination would be. This

seemed to be a logical deduction since any attack at the personal level would be perceived as an attack against the group, and any attack against the group would also be perceived as a personal attack. Contrary to the hypothesis, it was found that those individuals who made *stronger* associations between person and group demonstrated a *larger*, not smaller, discrepancy between personal and group discrimination. As compared to those subjects who associated significantly less, and illustrated a comparatively smaller personal/group discrimination discrepancy, the increase in the magnitude of the discrepancy of the strong associators was due to an increase in group ratings of discrimination and a simultaneous decrease in personal ratings. This unexpected result was discussed in terms of Turner's (1982) concept of "depersonalization", which states that an increase in the saliency of one's social identity entails a shift of focus away from one's personal identity, thus producing a simultaneous reduction in the saliency of one's personal identity.

The fact that it is those individuals who make comparatively stronger associations between person and group who evidence a larger personal/group discrimination discrepancy has important implications when considering if members of an oppressed group will take action against perceived discrimination. As stated previously, the increase in the discrepancy between personal and group ratings of discrimination is due to a significant increase in levels of group discrimination and a significant decrease in personal levels. One may assume, then, that for these individuals, the saliency of their social identity would be greater than that of their personal identity as evidenced by the increased levels of group discrimination that occur at the "sacrifice" of personal ratings. It would seem that these individuals put the interests of the group in general ahead of their personal interests.

In predicting which individuals would take action against perceived discrimination, it is important to consider the evidence supporting the relative potency of group identity over personal identity. For example, as Brewer (1990, p. 13) indicates, "studies of the growth of social movements reveal that activism is better predicted by feelings of *fraternal deprivation* (i.e., the perception that one's group is disadvantaged relative to other groups) than by feelings of personal deprivation (Dubé and Guimond, 1986; Vanneman and Pettigrew, 1972). In addition, Taylor, Moghaddam, Gamble, and Zeller (1987) and Wright, Taylor and Moghaddam (1990) have determined that it is perceptions of group discrimination, not personal discrimination, that motivate participation in collective action. Hence, it would seem likely that those individuals who make stronger associations between person and group, who are also those who demonstrate a larger personal/group discrimination discrepancy produced by higher group levels and lower levels of personal discrimination, would be the most likely candidates to take action in face of perceived injustice.

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Appendix I

PAIR #1

Scenario #1: (P --> G)

Bob: "You know, Carol, you're really holding us up on the Solomon Report. Just because you're a woman doesn't mean you don't have to do your share of the work."

Carol (to co-worker off-screen): "I don't know how I got stuck working with Bob on this report. I really resent having him attack me on the basis of being a woman. And, actually, I think that his comment against me personally as a woman is also meant to be some kind of attack against women in general."

Scenario #2: P -/-> G

Bob: "You know, Carol, you're really holding us up on the Solomon Report. Just because you're a woman doesn't mean you don't have to do your share of the work."

Carol (to co-worker off-screen): "I don't know how I got stuck working with Bob on this report. I really resent having him attack me on the basis of being a woman. But I don't think that his comment against me personally as a woman is meant to be some kind of attack against women in general."

PAIR #2

Scenario #1: G --> P

Bob (while throwing a stack of folders on Carol's desk, and muttering loud enough for Carol to hear): "Women just never do their share of the work!"

Carol (to co-worker off-screen): "I don't know how I got stuck working with Bob on this report. I really resent how he attacked women in general like that. And, actually, I think his comment against women in general was meant to be some kind of attack against me personally as a woman."

Scenario #2: G -/-> P

Bob (while throwing a stack of folders on Carol's desk, and muttering loud enough for

Carol (to hear): "Women just never do their share of the work!"

Carol (to co-worker off-screen): "I don't know how I got stuck working with Bob on this report. I really resent how he attacked women in general like that. But, I don't think that his comment against women in general was meant to be some kind of attack against me personally as a woman."