



2011

# Perceptions of a Deity and Corresponding Religious Group as Affected by Descriptions of Gender and Personal Characteristics

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## Recommended Citation

Jones, Hannah R., "Perceptions of a Deity and Corresponding Religious Group as Affected by Descriptions of Gender and Personal Characteristics" (2011). *Honors Projects*. Paper 149.  
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Gender and Personal Characteristics

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*Abstract*

One's social group is highly influential in structuring both personal and social identities. However, the values of such a group can come into question when they conflict with other aspects of personal identity. Religious groups can exert a great deal of influence over one's thoughts and beliefs. However, religion is often critiqued for being a reflection of the patriarchal context from which a religion often emerges. This source material potentially elicits and reinforces gender stereotypes and sexism within the religious group. This can be seen in the Abrahamic religions, as they maintain that their God does not claim biological sex nor gender, but their texts include predominantly masculine imagery as well as the convention to refer to their God as "He." In the present study, an experiment was designed to determine whether individuals would be willing to consider broadening their view of their deity to include feminine imagery and the option of referring to their God as "She". Participants were divided into six conditions and provided with a description of a hypothetical religious group and the deity around which the group is centered. Each condition varied in the pronoun used to describe the deity as well as gender stereotyped traits that were provided concerning the deity's attributes. Analyses were run to determine the impact of the labels and traits used to describe the deity on participants' views of the deity and the religious group. The data revealed a significant effect based on condition, and post hoc analyses showed that participants viewed deities who were described with stereotypically female traits significantly more favorably than deities who were described with stereotypically male traits over a range of subscales. No effects were found for the pronoun used to describe the deity or the sex of the participant, and the main effect persisted even when controlling for a variety of covariates. Implications and directions for further research are discussed.

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The individual's concept of self is composed of personal labels and associations that help the individual relate to the world. A highly influential personal label is one's gender, and an important association is association with various social groups. Gender is a personal label that is highly influential in the formation of the self-concept, and membership in various social groups also affects the ways in which people sees themselves (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Gender shapes the way individuals see themselves and others and also to a certain extent provides codes of conduct for how one is allowed to act. However, gender can also be a negative influence in that the presence of gender stereotypes and androcentricity in modern society can be limiting to those who identify as women (Ridgeway, 2001; Lupaschuk & Yewchuk, 1998). This often comes into play in social groups, both in membership and leadership. The religious group, a highly influential social group, is often criticized for its high levels of androcentrism and reinforcement of patriarchal attitudes (P. Young, 2010; S. Young, 1993).

Since the beginning of the Women's Liberation Movement, it has been pointed out that while many religions claim equality, freedom, and salvation, they do not provide equitable opportunities for women and in fact often serve to provide justification for modern patriarchal systems (Arthur, 1987; Plaskow, 1990). There are certainly many factors contributing to the reinforcement of such systems; one such factor is the way in which a god or supreme being is viewed. The common tendency among many Christians, Jews, and Muslims is to refer to their God as "He," viewing their supreme being as the almighty "Father" (1 Cor. 6:18). While the

official stances of the three Abrahamic religions is that their God is neither male nor female, a question that deserves to be asked is if the language restrictions that necessitate a label of “he” or “she” for a deity could be having an implicit influence on the way that deity is viewed (Gardini, 1987). Conversely, research on leadership suggests that it is not a matter of sex or gender, but a matter of the leadership traits that a specific gender is generally thought to possess. Does it matter if a religious follower refers to “His compassion” or “Her compassion,” or is it simply important that one’s god is compassionate? Would members of the American population be open to the idea of a loving Mother God as opposed to a Father to help emphasize a different set of God’s traits, or are patriarchal values still entrenched in modern American society to the point that a female portrayal of God cannot even be considered? The present study examines these questions by introducing the links between social identity and personal identity and then discussing the interaction of gender and social groups (specifically religion) in the context of gender roles and androcentricity in religion. The idea of effective leadership, both in religious groups and in modern society, is also discussed in the context of what types of traits would be expected in a deity, the leader of a religious group. The present study then outlines an experimental design in which opinions of the various labels that can be applied to a deity are explored, and results and implications are discussed.

### **Social Identity, Personal Identity, and Self-Concepts**

The importance of gender and the religious group are seen in their influence on the self, which is made up of one’s social identity as well as one’s personal identity. A main concept of social psychology is the idea that the environment – particularly the social environment – affects the behavior of an individual (Taylor, 1998). While the history of social psychology has tended

to view the self and the group as separate entities, researchers have more recently turned to a view that the self and the group both influence and rely upon each other. Turner and colleagues (1987) argue that membership in various forms of social groups has both social and psychological consequences on an individual's behavior.

One way in which the individual operates is by making social comparisons – both to one's own self as well as to other people (Abrams & Hogg, 2001). Membership in social groups allows the individual to examine others who may be similar to him or her and maintain social monitoring processes, thus regulating behavior and upholding what the individual believes is the proper social image. Additionally, Abrams and Hogg (2001) propose that while the self can be viewed from many different angles, a component that holds great importance within the formulation of the self is the existence of meaningful interpersonal relationships. Group membership is an important component of one's identity whether in a collectivistic or individualistic culture (Abrams & Hogg, 2001).

Recent research has shown that three main goals of the individual are “to form accurate perceptions of reality and react accordingly, to develop and preserve meaningful social relationships, and to maintain a favorable self-concept” (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004, pp. 591-592). Self-concepts are information and categorizations that are known about the self that combine and serve to provide one with a more comprehensive, unified view of who one is – a more accurate view of the self (Brewer, 2001). The self is defined by several components: reflexive consciousness, or awareness of the self; interpersonality, or the interaction of the self with others; and the ability to freely make decisions, act, and take responsibility for one's own actions (Baumeister, 1998). The idea of the self is also augmented by the presence of self-

concepts. Social identity, or categorizations that are formed on the level of group relationships and social ties, help form self-concepts and are a part of personal identity. Personal identity includes all the labels and categorizations that form the self-concept. Where personal identity forms an idea of the self and how the individual is both similar and differentiated from others, social identity deals with the conceptualization of an individual within a group. This includes how the individual is connected to other group members as well as how these connections differentiate them from individuals outside the group (Brewer, 2001).

Turner and colleagues' (1987) theory of self-categorization posits that there are multiple levels at which the individual's concept of his or her own self is organized. At one level the traits, attributes, and self-knowledge that form personal identity are found. At a second level the social ties, interactions, and membership in various groups that form social identity are found. This suggests that social identity and personal identity both serve to form the self-concept. It has also been suggested that since these concepts are constantly being formed and changing within the same environment, both social and personal identities directly interact and influence each other, making them distinct but connected phenomenon within social cognition (Turner et al., 1987; Pelham & Hetts, 1999).

One way in which personal identity is formed is through the application of specific labels to the self. These labels provide a concrete set of characteristics with which to define oneself; each label also provides distinct sets of stereotypes and assumptions about what it means to have such a label. One label with which a person may describe himself or herself is their occupation. A woman who works as a doctor, when asked about herself, may say, "I am a doctor." This not only provides, both to herself and others, a concrete description of what she does for a living, but

also calls to mind all the inherent assumptions and attributes that people generally ascribe to doctors. Therefore, when she tells a new acquaintance that she works as a doctor, the acquaintance learns what her occupation is, but also may assume that she makes a lot of money, leads a very busy lifestyle, or enjoys helping people, depending on what culture generalizes about doctors as well as what kind of doctors they have come in contact with in his or her own life. To become a member of an established religion is to adopt the cosmology, worldview, and standards of behavior of that religion as one's own; therefore, religion is very important in the development of personal identity. To adopt the label of a certain religious tradition is to represent its past, present, and future actions, as well as its basic principles and beliefs. Similarly, to identify as male or female is to adopt certain views and standards of behavior within that gender role and to help shape one's personal identity.

### **The Definition of Religion**

Religion as a concept operates under many diverse definitions and can be difficult to precisely describe (Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger, & Gorsuch, 2003). The academic study of religion is a relatively new concept that arose within predominantly Western scholarship, and therefore it is the tendency of leading Western scholars to define all world religions through the lens of a monotheistic, Christian lens (Smith & Green, 1995; Anderson & P. Young, 2010). For the purpose of this study, religion has been defined as a belief system based in the "sacred, supernatural, or superhuman" that concern the cause, nature, and purpose of life in the universe. These beliefs are translated into "practices, myths, and rituals" that are used in a social setting, often to dictate morality and personal conduct (Oxford, 2005; Smith & Green, 1995). For the purposes of this paper, only two of its many functions are scrutinized, as they pertain directly to



the foundation of this research. The first is that religion is often manifested in the form of a social group that functions to influence thoughts and behavior, especially in relation to others. The second is that religion as a social group functions as an element of personal identity that helps shape the self-concept and directly influences thoughts and behavior. The power of the religious community has been well documented (Spilka et al., 2003). Integration into a religious community usually implies integration into a group of like-minded people, which invokes the principles of group conformity and cohesion practices. (Spilka et al., 2003).

### **Gender and Personal Identity**

Gender is often easily made salient in social contexts and is an influential means of affecting behavior by inducing the use of broad categorizations in social situations (Hilliard & Liben, 2010; Palomares, 2008). Gender, which refers to the social constructs of masculinity and femininity and the roles, stereotypes, status, and cultural associations that are associated with them, is distinctly separate from one's sex, which refers to the biological makeup of a person (Sherif, 1982; Unger, 1979). When one speaks of a person of the male sex, they are talking about a human who has been biologically differentiated to have male genitalia, whereas someone who points out someone's gender as male not only assumes the presence of male genitalia, but also brings to mind everything else that one has associated with men, ranging from being adept at sports, to having facial hair, to being reserved in emotion. These assumptions are not definite; they do contain some flexibility in their implementation in that the individual is able to recognize that not all men are good at sports and not all women have long hair. Nonetheless, they help to categorize the world around us, but also tend to color interactions with people based on their gender, influencing assumptions and social actions even when these traits may not be accurate or

based on any type of available evidence (Jackson & Cash, 1985; Rudman & Glick, 2008). These categorizations are the basis for gender stereotypes and the idea of gender roles, which can prove problematic when one gender is stereotypically seen more favorably than another.

*Gender stereotypes and gender roles.* The types of everyday assumptions that are made about gender have been well documented. A generous number of cross-cultural studies have shown that men are generally categorized as having traits that are “instrumental and agentic”, such as being aggressive, decisive, dominant, and individualistic, while women are categorized as having traits that are “affective and communal”, such as being compassionate, submissive, and socially oriented (Deaux & Kite, 1993; Lueptow, Garovich-Szabo, & Lueptow, 2001; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 2008). Various measurements have been developed to determine the strength of the stereotypes that are tied to these traits, as well as pinpoint which traits provide the greatest basis for stereotypical assumptions (e.g., Bem, 1974). Additionally, research has shown that categorization based on gender not only suggests stereotypes in terms of personality, but also in terms of other characteristics, such as physical traits, gender roles, and the likelihood of holding certain occupations (Deaux & Lewis, 1984). Gender roles, or expectations and codes of conduct relating to one’s gender, have been shown to greatly influence behavior and can prove problematic when an individual expresses to fulfill a role outside the expectations of his or her gender (Jackson & Cash, 1985; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Ridgeway, 2001).

*Androcentricity.* Not only are people expected to adhere to gender roles, but male gender roles are seen as more valuable than female gender roles. There has been an established effect throughout the literature that both men and women value males over females. When people are

asked to attribute stereotypes to a specific nationality of people, the stereotypes of how people of that nationality act are more similar to a man's role in that society than a woman's (Eagly & Kite, 1987). In many countries, people prefer their firstborn child to be a boy, and in the United States, this difference is especially marked in men (McDougall, DeWit, & Ebanks, 1999). This tendency to emphasize the importance of males is seen at a very early age; researchers have found that people of all age groups, including young children, view boys as more important than girls and express the idea that it is easier to be a boy (Lupaschuk & Yewchuk, 1998).

This value placed on males in society can even be viewed in language. In the English language there is no neutral pronoun that can be used to refer to people; therefore, the convention is to refer to a generic person as “he”, both in spoken and written word. However, using “he” as a generic pronoun, rather than generating a person that could equally be male or female, evokes male imagery and reinforces the idea that men are the primary members of the population. This type of priming influences the perception of who is being discussed and reinforces sexism in placing a higher importance on the male image and evoking male imagery where both men and women have the possibility of being involved (Gastil, 1990; McConnell & Fazio, 1996). Many researchers have expressed concern as to the implicit effects of this convention and its role in reinforcing sexism in both thought and language (Briere & Lanketree, 1983; Gastil, 1990; Hamilton, 1998; Lupaschuk & Yewchuk, 1998; McConnell & Fazio, 1996).

### **Gender Roles and Androcentricity Within the Monotheistic Religious Group**

The role of women in religion is a varied subject and it can be hard to pinpoint one specific role or identity for women in any religion. In many religions, it is clear that women hold a lower social status than their male counterparts despite the fact that women are more likely to

hold strong religious beliefs as well as be more active within a religious group (Spilka et al., 2003). This is problematic for women's religious identity; studies have shown that greater levels of androcentricity within a religion are correlated with women having a significantly weaker religious identity and religious convictions than their male counterparts (Mishra, 2005). This lower social status can be seen in the context of the monotheistic religious groups with which many Americans are well acquainted.

It must be acknowledged that the focus of this study is based in American culture, and therefore the majority of the participants examined in this study will be affiliated with a monotheistic religion; according to the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life, 80.7% of the American population in 2007 reported an affiliation with one of the Abrahamic religions, or the religions known as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The percentage of Americans who are affiliated with Christianity is 78.4%, with Judaism constituting 1.7%, and with Islam constituting 0.6% (Pew, 2007). These three religions are commonly designated as the Abrahamic religions because they focus their monotheistic worship around the same god, the God of Abraham who is described in the Bible, the Torah, and the Qur'an. Efforts have been made within this study to provide a definition of religion that is specific enough to isolate the concept that is being studied, and yet not so restrictive that they exclude members of any major world religion from participation. Because these monotheistic groups constitute such a large majority of the population that is being studied, the focus of this experiment is based in the idea of a monotheistic religious group.

The roles and status of women have varied greatly throughout the years in all three Abrahamic religions. For example, there is no evidence that Jesus Christ supported any kind of

patriarchal leanings and evidence that he often included women in his ministry –even going so far as to give them the authority to preach, and there are writings that describe female deacons and apostles in the early Christian church (MacHaffie, 1986; P. Young, 2010; S. Young, 1993). There is evidence that women were allowed higher positions of leadership during second temple Judaism as well as in the early years of Christianity following the death of Jesus Christ, including the roles of elder, judge, and even priestess. However, any active role undertaken by women was eventually discouraged (MacHaffie, 1986; P. Young, 2010; S. Young, 1993). This discouragement against any active participation by women can be seen as early as in the writings of Paul, one of the most influential writers of the New Testament (e.g., 1 Cor. 14:34), and any favorable treatment of women within the Christian and Jewish churches appear to have been eradicated by the beginning of the Middle Ages (Kuikman, 2010; Peach, 2002; P. Young, 2010). Similarly, there is evidence that Muslim women were given a more equal status and sometimes even powerful positions in the days of Muhammad. Some women, especially Muhammad's wives, are often viewed as having significant influence in the prophet's life. Muhammad's first wife Khadija is credited with being the first Muslim. Additionally, some women are seen as sources of authority in learning about what the prophet said and did; the most notable of these is Muhammad's third wife A'isha, who is credited with being the source of numerous hadiths (Denney, 2005; S. Young, 1993). After the death of Muhammad, however, women's activities including public life, literacy, and styles of dress were greatly restricted, and a highly androcentric component within Muslim life is the practice of polygamy (Carmody, 1979; Smith & Green, 1995). This practice has been largely eradicated in the United States due to secular marital laws, but it remains unclear as to what extent it is still being carried out in other parts of the world. Recent news reports indicate that this practice is still being encouraged in some parts

of the world (BBC, 2001). More recent progress has been made with the onset of feminist movements within each of these religions; the first woman rabbi was ordained in 1972 in the United States and other opportunities for religious women have significantly increased, especially in American culture (Kuikman, 2010; Peach, 2002). However, it remains clear that the roles of women in Judaism and Islam are primarily restricted to being within the home and accompanying domestic duties, while men are allowed a more public role in addition to their duty of caring and providing for the women and children of their households (Ahmed, 1992; Kuikman, 2010; Peach, 2002). While many women in Christianity are allowed more freedom in their roles, women being treated as having lower social status is still an issue, as evidenced by the more recent clashes over authority within the church (for a particularly compelling example, [www.womenpriests.org](http://www.womenpriests.org) offers an argument for the ordination of women in the Roman Catholic Church).

Often the basis for patriarchal, androcentric behavior is rooted in the sacred texts of a tradition. Some scholars go so far as to claim that it is “superfluous to document patriarchy in [Jewish-Christian] scripture” (Trible, 1973, p. 30). For example, stories about influential and important women are included in the Jewish Bible, but they are not included as often as men and are often not given their own names (Kuikman, 2010). The role of Muslim women is made clear in the Qur’an (2:228) where it states, “Women shall with justice have rights similar to those exercised against them, but men have a rank above them.”

It should be acknowledged that these texts were written within specific cultural contexts for societies that were already extremely male-centered and patriarchal. Indeed, in some instances these texts improved the treatment of women within that society, such as the Qur’an's

strict prohibition of female infanticide, a practice that was popular before the days of Muhammad (Carmody, 1979). However, these texts in their positions of authority –often absolute authority – have not changed significantly since their canonizations and therefore have since served to reinforce the patriarchal systems for which they were written, even within the context of the more egalitarian systems that are beginning to exist today (Denny, 2005; Kuikman, 2010; P. Young, 2010). A strong reinforcement for these patriarchal systems is the description of God – the highest supreme being in the universe – as male.

### **Masculine and Feminine Leadership**

If religious tradition is to view God as male, then the logical conclusion is that God should possess male traits. Research has shown that this is not always the case. Anthropological studies (e.g. Hofstede, 2001, Verweij, Ester, & Nauta, 1997) have discovered that a culture that is described as more “masculine” tends to gravitate towards an image of God or gods who are more autocratic and condone more domineering, stereotypically masculine behavior towards others, while a “feminine” culture follows a God or gods who both display and endorse compassionate, thoughtful, stereotypically feminine behavior towards others.

Research has also shown that cultures who display feminine values are more likely to secularize faster. Christianity provides for a more feminine outlook; while the Old Testament version of God shows Him as being domineering and wrathful, the New Testament view of God that is propelled by Christians shows Him being caring and compassionate towards the whole world. Given this evidence, it would be expected that American society, dominated by a Christian outlook, would endorse feminine values and also be highly secular in terms of governance. However, in this respect the United States proves problematic, as many Americans

endorse a “feminine” view of placing emphasis on caring for others, but American society is much less secular than one would expect given its value system. Nonetheless, it can be found that within American society, the feminine outlook is preferred in that positive relationships with others is stressed over other religious priorities, such as performing rituals and obeying strict codes of conduct within everyday life. The social aspect of one's life is expected to take precedence over many other aspects of one's life. God as a leader is expected to value social relationships more than strict laws of punishing nonbelievers (Hofstede, 2001). Given this evidence, it should be expected that the traits that Americans would prefer to see in their deity would be those that emphasize fostering positive social ties, compassion for others, and caring for individual needs – in other words, “feminine” traits.

This tendency to prefer traits that are stereotypically viewed as feminine can be found in research concerning leadership in general as well as the traits within a deity. Indeed, perceptions of masculinity and femininity are important in the emergence of leaders in society (Lord, De Vader, & Alliger, 1986). Chemers (2001) details three components that are important in the maintenance of effective leadership. The first is the establishment and management of a positive, capable image for both the leader and his or her followers – that is, the leader must *appear* to others as able to perform adequately. The second is the development of positive, effective relationships between the leader and his or her followers. The third component of effective leadership is the effective use of the resources that are provided to the group. When it comes to approaches in leadership, people hold clear opinions in their preferences. A transactional leader operates by offering rewards in exchange for satisfactory effort, praising accomplishments, and interceding when subordinates are not performing up to a standard. In other words, a transactional leader focuses on image management, the first component of effective leadership.



Conversely, transformational leadership is widely viewed as more effective and is marked by attending individually to subordinates, gaining the respect and trust of others, and effectively communicating goals and priorities (Bass, 2007). The transformational leader holds a role that functions upon the maintenance of positive social roles, whereas the transactional leader's role is authoritarian and demands obedience regardless of social relationships. An effective leader should be capable of maintaining a positive image – that is, looking like a competent leader as well as being able to act like one. However, an effective leader should also be able to foster strong interpersonal relationships and manage resources. A transactional leader is only capable of image management, while it is still possible to maintain a positive image while at the same time employ a transformational approach, emphasizing the fair and respectful treatment of all subordinates, earning respect and trust, and effectively communicating goals within a social context. The transactional approach is traditionally identified as masculine, being autocratic and task-oriented, whereas the transformational approach is traditionally thought of as more feminine, being democratic, socially oriented, and better at fostering relationships in group settings (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). Accordingly, the modern American approach to leadership is the transformational approach, which includes displaying behaviors that are stereotypically thought to be more effectively displayed by women and has been found to work exceedingly well in groups with diverse populations (Kearney & Gebert, 2009).

If Americans would theoretically prefer leaders who act in a feminine manner, then would the general population be opposed to referring to God, a major social leader, as “She” rather than “He”? Normal convention may contribute to a reluctance to modify this habit, but examination of current evidence surrounding leadership may also show why the current convention of referring to God as “He” might continue to persist. One of the three components

that are essential for strong leadership is image management (Chemers, 2001), which appears to be highly influential, even if at the expense of the other components of leadership. Despite the fact that women should theoretically be stronger leaders, evidence suggests that men are more likely than women to emerge as the leader of a group, regardless of personality style or level of dominance comparative to their female counterparts (Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller, 2003; Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Megargee, 1969; Nyquist & Spence, 1986). Research has also demonstrated a significant tendency for members of a group to view male leaders more positively than female leaders, even when the leaders being evaluated have displayed identical behaviors (Rudman & Glick, 2001; Appelbaum et al., 2003). This tendency to view women more negatively when in a leadership position is more pronounced when the woman is occupying a leadership position that is traditionally held by a man, and even more so when the group that is being led displays evidence of androcentrism (Eagly et al., 1992). Additionally, when women demonstrate leadership styles that are traditionally seen as masculine, they are evaluated negatively overall and suffer negative social consequences (Rudman & Glick, 2001). This is not the same for men, who are evaluated more positively than women in general and are evaluated similarly to women when they display leadership styles that are viewed as feminine. Overall, male members of the group are more likely to negatively evaluate a female leader, while female members of the group display no preference for either female or male leaders. (Eagly et al., 1992).

### **Viewing God as “He” or “She”**

Jewish, Christian, and Muslim authorities all claim that their God does not claim biological sex nor gender (Carmody, 1979; Plaskow, 1990; P. Young, 2010); the problem arises

in the lack of development of a proper language to describe a supreme being who does not claim being male or female, or perhaps claims both. The imagery used to describe God in various texts is predominantly masculine, despite efforts of some feminist scholars to introduce both goddess terminology (referring to their God as “She”) as well as neutral terminology, referring to their God with terms such as “lover, friend, creator, rock”, etc. (Kuikman, 2010; Plaskow, 1990).

Even when sacred texts and historical evidence are examined with the understanding that they were written for patriarchal, androcentric audiences and that special consideration has to be given to their interpretations due to this, the image of the monotheistic God is still viewed as male and these texts are still being used to reinforce patriarchal values in today's society (Arthur, 1987; Peterson, 1987; Plaskow, 1990). While a god may be described as “He” if only for lack of better language, the consequences of what these practices are changing about the implicit assumptions surrounding such a god remain to be fully explored.

Walter Gardini (1987), in his critique of the development of modern Jewish and Christian theologies, provides an explanation for the way in which a masculine view of God in Judaism and Christianity developed, beginning with the assertion that God's preferential treatment of biblical figures such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob over their female counterparts of Sarah, Rebecca, and Rachel meant that men and women were, from the very beginning, experiencing very different views of their deity. The unequal treatment of the sexes is further demonstrated in the doctrines of Christianity, most notably the birth of Jesus Christ. In Christian doctrine, the father-like deity produced a son who came to be known as Jesus Christ by way of a virgin human female, thus providing the masculine Jesus with an elevated position as the son of God, while his mother remains a simple albeit revered human. The structure of such a hierarchy – in that the

masculine was elevated to glory, while the female remains common – provided reinforcement to the already patriarchal structure that men were seen as closer to God and more worthy of serving as leaders to the Christian community and more worthy of making their way closer to God; these practices were also reinforced by the writings of Paul in the New Testament. After examining this evidence, Gardini argues that the masculine way in which God is generally viewed is inherently flawed. In tracing back to the very figures of Adam and Eve, it is found that the book of Genesis claims that God created both male and female “in his own image” (1:27), meaning that one cannot fully comprehend God unless one takes members of both sex into account. Gardini goes on to state that “God created a male and a female in his image. Therefore to discover the masculinity and the femininity is like perceiving the image of God. Not only man, but also woman is the image of God...Could one invoke him as Mother in the same way as we invoke him as Father? The answer seems affirmative” (1987, p. 58).

### **Purpose of the Present Study**

Evidence suggests that a leader with “feminine” traits would be preferable in American society, but traditional patriarchal systems clearly prefer a man’s image being projected as the leader of a large group. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the ways in which gender roles and expectations affect the way a deity, an extremely important leader, is viewed by the general population. This was done in a controlled experimental setting, in which participants were provided with a description of a hypothetical religious group that worships a deity who has been given both sexual differentiation (the distinction of being male or female) as well as specific traits that people tend to associate with either the male or female gender role. The types of sexual differentiation (male, female, or not specified) and gender roles (male or

female) were be presented in various combinations, and each participant was be randomly assigned to one of six conditions, between which only the combination of sexual differentiation and gender role of the deity varied. Participants were then asked to report on how favorably they viewed the group and its deity, assessed by examining approachability, appeal, credibility, relatability, and efficacy of both deity and religious group. Potential covariates were examined for their possible influence on participant views, as the main focus of the study was to investigate how labels and gendered traits specifically affect participant views with minimal influence from other factors.

For the present study, four main hypotheses are presented that concern how favorably participants will view a deity based on the sexual differentiation and gendered traits with which the deity is described. In terms of sexual differentiation, it is hypothesized that in a condition in which a deity is specifically labeled as male (i.e., referring to the deity as “he”), the deity will be viewed as more personally similar, appealing, efficacious, and relatable and the group will be viewed as more approachable, appealing, and credible than in a condition where a deity is labeled as female (referring to the deity as “she”) by both male and female participants, even when all the other information provided about the deities is identical. In terms of expressed gender roles, it is hypothesized that in a condition in which a deity is described with traits that are stereotypically female, the deity will be viewed as more personally similar, appealing, efficacious, and relatable and the group will be viewed as more approachable, appealing, and credible than in a condition where a deity is described with traits that are stereotypically male by both male and female participants. Since sexual differentiation and gendered traits are presented in combination and the male sex is seen as preferable while female traits are also seen as preferable, it is hypothesized that a deity will be viewed most personally similar, appealing,

efficable, and relatable and the corresponding group will be viewed most approachable, appealing, and credible by both male and female participants if the deity is labeled as male but described with traits that are stereotypically female. Similarly, it is hypothesized that a deity will be viewed least personally similar, appealing, efficable, and relatable and the corresponding group will be viewed least approachable, appealing, and credible by both male and female participants if such a deity is labeled as female but described with traits that stereotypically male.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Participants were 126 undergraduate students at Illinois Wesleyan University (77 females and 49 males). The sample was primarily White (N=104, 83.2%) and the majority of participants were 18 years old, but the sample ranged in age from 18-22 with a mean age of 18.75. When asked if they currently identified with any religion, 42.7% identified as Roman Catholic (N=53), 31.5% identified as Protestant Christian (N=39), 9.7% identified as Agnostic or Atheist (N=12), 5.6% identified with a different religion (N=7), and 10.5% did not identify with any religion (N=13). Participants were recruited by offering participation as course credit or by offering a chance to be randomly chosen to receive a gift certificate to a university restaurant.

### **Materials**

**Experimental stimuli.** In order to achieve the desired manipulation, vignettes were crafted that describe a new emerging religious group and the deity around which it is centered. These fictional vignettes described the group as an emerging social group and provided both positive and negative traits about the deity. Six versions of the vignettes were written to provide

for six different conditions between participants. The only difference between each of the vignettes was the combination of specific sex pronoun (using no pronouns or referring to the deity as “he” or “she”) used to refer to the deity and gender-stereotyped traits (stereotypically male or female traits) used to describe the deity.

***The use of specific sex pronouns.*** Within each vignette, the deity was either of unspecified sex, in which no pronouns were used in their description, or the deity was given a specific pronouns to refer to the deity either being male or female (i.e., using the words “he” or “she” when describing the deity).

***Traits used to describe the deity.*** The traits used to describe the deity were derived from the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974), which contains subscales of common personal traits that have been shown to describe either male or female gender-role expectations. These traits, which were shown to be balanced for desirability by Sandra Bem when they were originally gathered, describe male and female attributes as they are stereotypically seen by the population. For example, male descriptions include dominance, decisiveness, and self-sufficiency in accordance with the stereotype that men are instrumental and agentic, and female descriptions include compassion, warmth, and sensitivity to the needs of others in accordance with the stereotype that women are affective and communal.

***Combinations of traits and pronouns.*** The six different combinations were male pronoun/male traits, female pronoun/female traits, male pronoun/female traits, female pronoun/male traits, no specified pronoun/male traits, and no specified pronoun/female traits. The template for each vignette was as follows:

*You are talking to a friend who is telling you about a religion they heard about that is receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. The followers of this religion are eager to tell everyone about their new deity, a \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ god. These followers are quick to praise their deity as \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_, and always/and He is unfailingly/and She is unfailingly \_\_\_\_ . This divine being/He/She is always \_\_\_\_ . Later that day, you catch part of a news segment about this religion while watching TV. The news segment says that while this religious group has been criticized as following a deity that is \_\_\_\_, the general consensus is that this trait is outweighed by the fact that this divine being/He/She is supposedly overall quite \_\_\_\_ . Your current events course requires you to write a paper on a religious group in the media, so you decide to learn more about this group and its beliefs to use as a possible paper topic.*

The possible combinations of pronouns and traits used are listed in Table 1. For the full written version of each vignette, see Appendix A.

**Questionnaires.** The questionnaire consisted of five sections: questions directly investigating thoughts, impressions, and attitudes toward a specific deity and his or her followers; the Personal Attributes Questionnaire; a personality questionnaire; a positivity measure; and a demographics questionnaire.

**Questions directly concerning the vignette.** Questions were developed based on concepts presented in current literature concerning how participants evaluated the deity and corresponding religious group described in the vignette. These were presented to the participants directly after they read the vignette and worded as statements of individual belief (e.g., “I would consider joining this religious group”) and participants were asked to rate how much they agreed with



each statement on a 7-point scale. The questions concerning the vignette fall into three general groups: views and attitudes toward the deity, views and attitudes toward the group, and perception of the group dynamic based on biological sex of group members. Questions were then divided into nine subscales within these three general groups. Subscales concerning views and attitudes toward the deity included: (1) level of perceived personal similarity to the described deity (Personal Similarity, 2 items,  $\alpha = .93$ ); (2) level at which the described deity appeals to the individual participant (Deity Appeal, 5 items,  $\alpha = .72$ ), (3) perceived level of deity's ability to carry out and represent group goals and ideals (Deity Efficacy,  $\alpha = .55$ ); and (4) the level at which the individual feels they can relate to the deity (Deity Relatability, 2 items,  $\alpha = .60$ ). Subscales concerning approachability of the group and perceived group dynamic included: (1) how approachable the religious group is seen to be (Group Approachability, 3 items,  $\alpha = .71$ ); (2) level at which the described religious group appeals to the individual participant (Group Personal Appeal, 5 items,  $\alpha = .66$ ); and (3) the level at which the group's ideals and goals are viewed as valid and believable (Group Credibility, 5 items,  $\alpha = .57$ ). Subscales concerning sex-related issues at the group level included: (1) level at which the participant believes members of their own biological sex will be attracted to the religious group (Same Sex Group, 2 items,  $\alpha = .65$ ) and (2) level at which the participant believes members of the opposite sex will be attracted to the religious group (Other Sex Group, 2 items,  $\alpha = .45$ ).<sup>1</sup> For a list of the included questions within each subscale, see Appendix B.

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<sup>1</sup> The subscales that assessed participants' perception of the group dynamic based on biological sex of group members (Same Sex Group and Other Sex Group) were initially gathered for analysis. However, upon further consideration of the content of these subscales, questions of construct validity led the researchers to drop these subscales from further analyses.

***Personality questionnaire.*** The items for this questionnaire were drawn from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP), a collaborative database of free domain personality items with similar constructs to widely accepted personality measures. The subscales used were Spirituality/Religiosity ( $\alpha = .91$ ), Conservatism ( $\alpha = .77$ ), Liberalism ( $\alpha = .72$ ), Judgment/Open-Mindedness ( $\alpha = .78$ ), Self-Esteem ( $\alpha = .84$ ), Tolerance ( $\alpha = .73$ ), Traditionalism ( $\alpha = .87$ ), Dependence ( $\alpha = .49$ ), Self-Acceptance ( $\alpha = .70$ ), Compassion ( $\alpha = .89$ ), and Self-Esteem ( $\alpha = .33$ ). The items in each subscale can be found in Appendix C. Due to internal reliability issues, only a few scales whose internal reliabilities were .70 or higher were used in later analyses.

***The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ).*** The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp 1974) consists of 55 items drawn from the Sex Role Stereotype Questionnaire. Each item shows the presence of a “sex-role stereotype” for both males and females. It is administered both to test for sex stereotypes in each participant as well as testing how many sex-stereotyped behaviors each participant exhibits. The PAQ is unique in that it tests for masculinity and femininity on two different scales and treats them as separate measurable dimensions, allowing these traits to coexist within a single personality, whereas traditionally masculinity and femininity were measured as opposites and a person was labeled as either “masculine” or “feminine”. The original PAQ exhibited internal reliability for measuring sex-role stereotypes with alphas of  $\alpha = .91$  for male participants and  $\alpha = .90$  for female participants and internal reliability for self-measurement with alphas of  $\alpha = .73$  for men and  $\alpha = .91$  for women. In this study, Cronbach’s alpha was calculated for internal reliability of self-measurement and reliability for the masculine subscale was found to be  $\alpha = .80$ , while the female subscale showed an alpha level of  $\alpha = .78$ . The PAQ was administered to participants after the

personality questionnaire to measure levels of each participant's gender expression. For the full version of the PAQ, see Appendix D.

*Positivity measure.* The traits derived from the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) for use in the vignettes were balanced for positivity and social desirability by Bem (1974). However, considering the amount of time that has passed since its publication, an additional check was made to ensure that the positivity of these traits remains at an equal level. Each participant was presented with a list of all of the traits that were used in each condition (both male and female) to describe the deity and asked to rate how much they generally like each trait on a scale of 1 to 7. The balance between male and female traits was then examined to check for possible confounds between the traits themselves. Internal reliability for the male traits was found to be  $\alpha = .79$  and for the female traits was found to be  $\alpha = .84$ .

*Demographics questionnaire.* A brief demographics questionnaire was then administered to participants inquiring as to the age, biological sex, ethnicity, major, and religious affiliation of the participant.

## **Procedure**

Data was collected in a medium size classroom in sessions of up to 30 people at a time. Participants were seated in the desks of the classroom but separated by an empty seat left on either side of each participant in order to allow for a sense of privacy without making any participant feel isolated.

In the informed consent, participants were told that they were participating in a study that focuses on the perception of social groups in general. They were told that they were randomly

assigned to read about any of a number of social groups, including political groups, socioeconomic groups, friendship groups, and religious groups. They were told this in order to reduce the amount of religious bias present in the participants' thoughts while they were completing the study -- since they were not "randomly assigned" to read about a religious group, it was less likely that they would suspect that this study deals specifically with religion. After completing the informed consent, each participant was presented with a vignette. The pairings of type of pronoun and type of traits were randomly assigned to each participant. After reading the vignette, participants were presented with the questions directly concerning the content of the vignette (see above).

After completing the first part of the experiment, participants were given a packet of questionnaires consisting of the IPIP subscales, the PAQ, the positivity measure, and the demographics questionnaire.

At the end of the study, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

## **Results**

### **Descriptive Statistics**

After assessing reliability levels and subscale cohesion, two subscales of questions directly concerning the vignette were dropped from further analyses. The remaining subscales were analyzed for internal reliability and descriptive statistics were calculated and sorted by condition. Due to the exploratory nature of these subscales, all 7 were analyzed in the primary analyses, including those with lower levels of internal reliability. The issue of lower levels of internal reliability was accounted for when conclusions were formed about the results of the

conducted analyses. For means, standard deviations, and correlations of the subscales, see Tables 2-9.

### **Main Effects of Condition and Sex**

A 2 (Participant Sex) X 6 (Condition) MANOVA was conducted on the seven dependent variable subscales and revealed significant differences based on condition ( $F(45, 545) = 2.57, p < .001$ ) but not for sex of participant,  $F(9, 105) = 1.74, n.s.$  These differences based on condition remained significant even when MANCOVAs were conducted to control for belief in organized religion, psychological gender, spirituality, and levels of traditionalism. The Tukey post hoc test was calculated to explore the significant differences by condition within each subscale.

**Subscales concerning the deity.** Post hoc tests revealed a significant effect of condition for three of the four deity-related subscales. For the subscale of Personal Similarity to the Deity, participants reported being more personally similar to a deity who was described with stereotypically female traits (the Female/Female, Male/Female, and Neutral/Female conditions) than a deity who was described with stereotypically male traits (the Male/Male, Female/Male, and Neutral/Male conditions),  $F(5, 120) = 10.82, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .30$ . For the subscale of Deity Appeal, participants found a deity who was described with stereotypically female traits to be more appealing than a deity who was described with stereotypically male traits,  $F(5, 121) = 17.27, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .42$ . For the subscale of Deity Relatability, participants reported a deity who was described with stereotypically female traits to be more relatable than a deity who was described with stereotypically male traits,  $F(5, 121) = 6.74, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .22$ . For Deity Efficacy, there was no significant difference in participant ratings based on traits assigned to the deity  $F(5, 120) = 1.34, n.s.$

**Subscales concerning the group.** Post hoc tests revealed a significant effect of condition for two of the three group-related subscales. For the subscale of Group Approachability, participants found the religious group surrounding a deity with stereotypically female traits to be more approachable than the group surrounding a deity with stereotypically male traits,  $F(5, 120) = 10.82, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .30$ . For the subscale of Group Personal Appeal, participants found the group surrounding a deity with stereotypically female traits to be more appealing than the group surrounding a deity with stereotypically male traits,  $F(5, 121) = 3.64, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .13$ . For Group credibility, there was no significant difference in participant ratings based on traits assigned to the deity,  $F(5, 121) = .93, n.s.$

### **Examining Main Effect of Sex Pronoun**

While there was a main effect of condition for five of the seven subscales, post hoc tests revealed that all of these effects were due to the deity traits and not to the specific sex labels applied to the deity. There was no significant difference in rated favorability based on sex pronoun (“he”, “she”, or no pronoun) used to describe the deity within any of the subscales,  $F(5, 121) < 1.64, p > .279$ . The Male/Male, Female/Male, and Neutral/Male conditions were all viewed similarly by participants, as were the Female/Female, Male/Female, and Neutral/Female conditions.

### **Differences in Ratings Produced by Specific Combinations of Pronouns and Traits**

There was no condition that was rated significantly more favorably than all other five conditions, nor was there a condition that was significantly lower than all other five conditions. The main effect existed in the difference between using stereotypically male traits and stereotypically female traits.

### **Examining Positivity of Traits as a Possible Confound**

An ANOVA was run to test positivity levels between the sets of stereotypically gendered traits taken from the BSRI for use in the vignettes. In the positivity questionnaire, there was no significant difference between mean ratings of the subscales. Traits designated as “Male” ( $M = 5.13, SD = .77$ ), “Female” ( $M = 5.70, SD = .79$ ), and “Neutral” ( $M = 5.83, SD = .65$ ) by the BSRI were not rated differently by male or female participants, even when accounting for condition ( $F < .83, p > .53$ ).

### **Participant Qualities as Possible Moderators**

A 6 (Condition) X 5 (Religious Identification: Roman Catholic, Protestant Christian, Agnostic/Atheist, Other, Does Not Identify) MANOVA was run analyzing differences in participant ratings based on condition and religious identification to determine whether participants of differing religious identification responded differently within any of the conditions. The MANOVA was found to be significant for religious identification,  $F(28, 360) = 2.06, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .14$ . Post hoc tests showed that participants who identified as Protestant Christian ( $M = 3.36, SD = 1.48$ ) reported lower levels of being able to relate to the deity than participants who identified with a religion in the “Other” category ( $M = 4.36, SD = 1.03, p < .05$ ) and participants who did not identify with any religion ( $M = 4.11, SD = 1.43, p < .05$ ). This did not affect the original significant differences found by condition. Responses among participants of any other religious identification did not significantly differ.

A 2 (Condition X Ethnicity) by 7 (Deity and Group Subscales) MANOVA that was run to analyze difference in participant ratings based on condition and ethnicity was not significant,  $F(42, 606) = 1.16, n.s.$

### Discussion

The point of this study was to investigate the implications of labeling a deity as “he” or “she” on the way this deity and a corresponding religious group is viewed by both male and female participants, as well as to assess the influence of the traits attributed to a deity. Since the traditional convention amongst many in the Abrahamic religions is to refer to their god as “He”, a main question within the literature is whether this simply is convention or reflects a deeper level of implicit understanding concerning gender roles within the religious group. Determining if the label given to a deity (“he” vs. “she”) is more or less important than the traits used to describe the deity (stereotypically male, which would reflect a more traditional frame of thought, or stereotypically female, which would reflect a preference for a more progressive leadership style as well as support what has been asserted in previously published literature) would help discern how Americans are willing to view a deity and how this can be modified to reflect a more egalitarian outlook in general.

The first hypothesis was that a description of a deity who is specifically labeled as male (i.e., referring to the deity as “he”) would be viewed more personally similar, appealing, efficacious, and relatable to the participant and that the corresponding religious group would be viewed as more approachable, appealing, and credible than when a deity is labeled as female (referring to the deity as “she”) by both male and female participants, even when all the other information provided about the deities is identical. However, this hypothesis was not statistically supported. Changing the type of sex pronoun used (“He”, “She”, or no pronouns used) did not significantly affect the way in which the deity was rated by participants.



The second hypothesis was that a deity who is described with traits that are stereotypically female would be viewed more personally similar, appealing, efficacious, and relatable to the participant and that the corresponding religious group would be viewed as more approachable, appealing, and credible than when a deity is described with stereotypically male traits. This hypothesis was statistically supported on five of the seven dimensions. A deity that was described with stereotypically female traits (Female/Female, Male/Female, Neutral/Female) was rated significantly more personally similar, appealing, and relatable to participants and the group was seen as more approachable and appealing than when a deity was described with stereotypically male traits (Male/Male, Female/Male, Neutral/Male) by participants.

The third hypothesis reflected a combination of the first two hypotheses and stated that a deity will be viewed most personally similar, appealing, efficacious, and relatable and that the group will be viewed most approachable, appealing, and credible if the deity is labeled as male but described with traits that are stereotypically female by both male and female participants (the Male/Female condition). However, this was not fully statistically supported. While the Male/Female condition was rated significantly higher than the conditions with stereotypically male traits (Male/Male, Female/Male, Neutral/Male) for Deity Personal Similarity, Deity Appeal, Deity Relatability, Group Approachability, and Group Appeal, it was not rated significantly higher than the other conditions that implemented stereotypically female traits (Female/Female, Neutral/Female).

The fourth and final hypothesis also reflected the first two hypotheses and stated that a deity will be viewed least personally similar, appealing, efficacious, and relatable and that the group will be viewed least approachable, appealing, and credible if the deity is labeled as female but described with traits that are stereotypically male by both male and female participants (the

Female/Male condition). While the means suggest that this condition received the lowest ratings overall, this is only partially supported by statistical evidence. While the Female/Male condition had the lowest means for Deity Personal Similarity, Deity Appeal, Deity Relatability, Group Approachability, and Group Appeal, this mean was only statistically lower than the conditions that implemented stereotypically female traits (Female/Female, Male/Female, Neutral/Female) and was not statistically distinct from the other conditions that implemented the use of stereotypically male traits (the Male/Male and Neutral/Male conditions).

These results suggest that the traits used to describe a deity are more important than whether a deity is referred to as “he” or “she”. This is true for both men and women who are presented with identical information. This could be positive for feminist thinkers, as it suggests that the transition to calling God “She” could be easily made without affecting the other ways God is viewed. While this is only one part of the reforms proposed by feminist thinkers, it is a step in the direction of empirically testing theories concerning feminist reform and providing new directions for thought and research in this particular field.

According to an anthropological study by Hofstede (2001), Americans' religious views emphasize positive social relationships over traditional religious priorities such as strict doctrines and adherence to ritual and practice. America's roots in Protestant Christianity are seen in a general preference for God's more “feminine” traits, including mercy, forgiveness, and love, and emphasize that religious followers display, along with a belief in a loving God, sensitivity to and care for others within the community. Hofstede concluded that Americans prefer deity traits that tend toward the “feminine”, with emphasis on compassion and care for others. This is consistent with the findings of this study, which found that participants preferred a deity who was described

with feminine traits over a deity who was described with male traits, regardless of whether the deity was explicitly described as “he” or “she”.

According to evidence in the literature concerning gender and leadership, a male image is preferred for positions of leadership and a variety of studies have shown a significant tendency for a male leader to be evaluated more positively than a female leader, even when their behavior is identical (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Chemers, 2001; Eagly et al., 1992; Rudman & Glick, 2001). This difference is more pronounced in men (see Eagly et al., 1992). However, the current study did not find any difference in the evaluation of a deity, a leader in an extremely prominent position, based on the described sex of the deity, even when all other information provided about the deity was identical. The current study also failed to detect a significant difference in the evaluation of the deity based on the sex of the participant. It is not known why these differences that have been so well-demonstrated by literature did not appear in this study. It is unlikely that this was due to underrepresentation of male participants, as male and female participants were relatively well-distributed across all six conditions. A number of possible explanations include that as time is passing in modern society, the implicit stereotype of a male leader being overall more desirable is disappearing; however, this is more likely a form of wishful thinking for egalitarians. The discrepancy could also be attributed to the fact that a deity is a unique type of leader and should be evaluated in a way that is different from traditional leadership studies. Another possibility is that the manipulation of labeling the deity with a biological sex was not clear enough and that future research could produce this effect. Sampling biases could also be affecting the results of this study.

The methodology of this study is unique. The experimental vignettes were created based on theories presented in recent literature and the stereotypically gendered traits from the BSRI

(Bem, 1974). The subscales of questions directly concerning the vignette were inspired by concepts of group processes and perceptions commonly used in the field of social psychology. The manipulation check for positivity of the gendered traits was created out of necessity to ensure that the gendered traits that were balanced for positivity by Sandra Bem in 1974 are still seen as equally favorable by both men and women. The other supplementary questionnaires (PAQ, IPIP subscales, demographics questionnaire) are free-domain measures that were inspired by widely-accepted measures of gender and personality, important psychological constructs. This study was based in theoretically driven experimental hypotheses and supplemented by previously validated measures. Since this methodology was created specifically for this study, it is unique in that it takes a widely-disputed concept – the repercussions of labeling God as male – and places it into a directly experimental, quantifiable context. In doing so, it has allowed the researchers to directly evaluate the consequences of labeling a deity as male or female, as well as how the traits that are applied to deity (not just the label), affect the way in which the deity and its corresponding religious group is viewed by members of the general population.

For the conditions in which the effect of trait was significant, levels of partial eta squared ranged from .13 to .42 (for a full list of effect sizes by subscale, see Table 10). This means that even for the smaller effect sizes, the amount of (effect + error) variance that can be attributed to the effects of trait on any of the significant subscales is at least 13%. This shows that some subscales (Deity Appeal and Group Approachability) are responsible for a higher proportion of the variance than others and warrant further investigation as to why these subscales have a higher effect. Nonetheless, all five significant subscales accounted for a significant proportion of the variance and warrant further investigation. An analysis of the effect sizes of the nonsignificant

subscales may be helpful in future directions if one were to investigate other aspects of the participants' views or to strengthen internal reliability in the nonsignificant subscales.

Power levels for analyses involving the effect of condition on the subscales of questions directly concerning the vignettes ranged from .24 to 1.00 (see Table 10). In the subscales that were found to be statistically significant for the main effect of condition, the lowest power level was .89, indicating an acceptable level of power for these subscales and a very low chance of Type II error within the analyses.

The methodology of this study could greatly benefit from a restructuring of the subscales directly concerning the vignette so that they all reflect acceptable levels of internal reliability. For the subscales that indicated significant effects, Cronbach's alpha was found to be acceptable for three subscales and marginally acceptable for two (being at .60 or above). The four subscales that were either dropped from analyses or not found to be significant were all below acceptable levels of internal reliability, and it is likely that this affected the possibility of finding any significant differences within these subscales.

As is often a problem when testing on college campuses, the diversity of the sample tested was extremely limited. The majority of participants were self-selected from a general psychology pool; additionally, the sample consisted of mostly White Catholic or Protestant Christian women within a very specific age group. While 127 participants is a satisfactory number for an experimental study with a newly developed manipulation, it would be beneficial to replicate this study with a more diverse sample of men and women from different ethnic groups, more varied religious groups, and a wider age range.

While the research design proved to be strong in that the manipulation produced significant effects, it could be strengthened by revising the questions directly concerning the

vignette for increased internal reliability and relating these questions more strongly to preexisting questionnaires that measure impression formation.

The results of this study suggest that the traits applied to a deity are more important than a label of biological sex. This is promising in that it could be applied to theoretical feminist and egalitarian models of change concerning the use of language to reflect societal norms and ideals, at least in terms of referring to a deity in general. Further directions would include presenting the deity in a context that would directly ask people about their views as if this deity were their own object of worship. If actually referring to one's deity as "he" or "she" does not change the way that the deity is viewed, then this could be put forward in the present literature to reinforce the notion that rather than simply changing one's views to worship a goddess instead of a god, it would be useful to further investigate as to what kind of traits are preferred in a deity, why these traits are preferred, and how they can be adapted to broaden traditional views of one's god in a more egalitarian direction. Further study in a wider variety of cultures would also be beneficial, as it is possible that the effect of trait is due to a cultural influence other than religious upbringing. The results of this study could also be applied in the realm of leadership perception. While it is generally accepted in the literature concerning leadership that men are seen as better leaders than women, this study suggests that it may be more beneficial to concentrate upon the ways in which our views of masculine and feminine behavior reinforce implicit stereotypes about leadership positions. It could also encourage researchers to investigate why feminine traits are preferred in the context of a deity and religious group, whereas in traditional leadership positions some levels of masculine traits are generally seen as essential in order for a leader to be competent.

While the limitations of this study are clear, its strengths lie in the fact that the researchers were able to take a widely disputed concept in religious scholarship and place it in the realm of experimental design. A straightforward, clean manipulation was developed to isolate one specific facet of the myriad of problems surrounding the perception of one's deity, and the manipulation was successful in showing what aspects of a deity's description are most influential in the evaluation of a deity as a religious leader. Additionally, this study showed that while the traits used in the BSRI are to some extent dated, they are still seen as equally positive by members of the general population and can be used in the formation of experiments such as this one.

In future research, it would be beneficial to construct subscales that have acceptable levels of internal reliability and serve to further isolate the different facets of a deity that are evaluated in determining how one sees the deity. Another interesting direction would be to evaluate why female traits are seen as preferable in this context, whereas they are evaluated similarly to male traits when taken out of this context. Are female traits really preferable for a deity to display, or was this a function of the way in which the deity was presented in this specific study? Additionally, while many possible covariates were collected for examination in their role of moderating the way in which the deity was perceived, having a clearer direction for the covariates that are collected in future studies might serve to isolate what factors of one's personality are the most important in evaluating a deity or a religious group.

While the modification of labels applied to a god is only one facet of changing the stereotypes within a religion, this study is a first step to evaluating what is truly important when one examines a deity and how it can be changed to reflect a greater level of egalitarianism in a religious group, a social group that is of great importance to many people worldwide. It is indeed

promising that it appears that the traits applied to a deity are more important than the biological label, and that the traits that are preferred are the ones that are typically associated with women. In the religious group where women constitute the majority, if that both men and women truly prefer a god who displays traits that are associated with women says something about the value that is placed on God in modern society and how this value reflects upon the worth of a woman in modern society.

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Table 1

*Combinations of Pronouns and Traits Used in Vignettes*

---

	<u>Condition</u>					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Described Sex Pronoun Used	Male (He)	Female (She)	Male (He)	Female (She)	No Pronoun Used	No Pronoun Used
Traits Used	Male	Female	Female	Male	Male	Female

---

Male Traits:

Dominant

Ambitious

Self-sufficient

Good defender

Decisive

Willing to take a stand

Aggressive

Strong Leader

Female Traits:

Warm

Gentle

Tender

Loyal

Compassionate

Eager to soothe hurt feelings

Childlike

Sensitive to the needs of others



Table 2

*Mean(SD) Participant Ratings of Personal Similarity to Deity Subscale by Condition*

---

	<u>Male Pronoun</u>	<u>Neutral Pronoun</u>	<u>Female Pronoun</u>
Male Trait	2.65(1.34) <sup>a</sup>	2.60(1.04) <sup>a</sup>	2.83(1.34) <sup>a</sup>
Female Trait	4.19(1.23) <sup>b</sup>	4.08(1.29) <sup>b</sup>	4.63(1.29) <sup>b</sup>

---

<sup>a,b</sup> Groups that share a superscript letter did not have differing means of statistical significance.

Table 3

*Mean(SD) Participant Ratings of Deity Appeal Subscale by Condition*

	<u>Male Pronoun</u>	<u>Neutral Pronoun</u>	<u>Female Pronoun</u>
Male Trait	3.50(.74) <sup>a</sup>	3.54(1.02) <sup>a</sup>	3.67(.87) <sup>a</sup>
Female Trait	5.03(.78) <sup>b</sup>	4.70(1.12) <sup>b</sup>	5.31(.84) <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a,b</sup> Groups that share a superscript letter did not have differing means of statistical significance.

Table 4

*Mean(SD) Participant Ratings of Deity Relatability Subscale by Condition*

	<u>Male Pronoun</u>	<u>Neutral Pronoun</u>	<u>Female Pronoun</u>
Male Trait	2.20(.90) <sup>a</sup>	2.45(1.16) <sup>a</sup>	2.83(1.34) <sup>a</sup>
Female Trait	3.40(1.19) <sup>b</sup>	3.45(1.54) <sup>b</sup>	3.75(1.38) <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a,b</sup> Groups that share a superscript letter did not have differing means of statistical significance.

Table 5

*Mean(SD) Participant Ratings of Deity Efficacy Subscale by Condition*

	<u>Male Pronoun</u>	<u>Neutral Pronoun</u>	<u>Female Pronoun</u>
Male Trait	3.77(.81) <sup>a</sup>	3.85(1.12) <sup>a</sup>	3.40(1.17) <sup>a</sup>
Female Trait	3.14(1.33) <sup>a</sup>	3.25(1.27) <sup>a</sup>	3.27(1.09) <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a,b</sup> Groups that share a superscript letter did not have differing means of statistical significance.

Table 6

*Mean(SD) Participant Ratings of Group Approachability Subscale by Condition*

---

	<u>Male Pronoun</u>	<u>Neutral Pronoun</u>	<u>Female Pronoun</u>
Male Trait	3.68(.98) <sup>a</sup>	3.67(1.07) <sup>a</sup>	3.70(1.01) <sup>a</sup>
Female Trait	4.98(.79) <sup>b</sup>	5.38(1.03) <sup>b</sup>	5.07(.92) <sup>b</sup>

---

<sup>a,b</sup> Groups that share a superscript letter did not have differing means of statistical significance.

Table 7

*Mean(SD) Participant Ratings of Group Appeal Subscale by Condition*


---

	<u>Male Pronoun</u>	<u>Neutral Pronoun</u>	<u>Female Pronoun</u>
Male Trait	2.93(.84) <sup>a</sup>	2.99(.75) <sup>a</sup>	2.54(.73) <sup>a</sup>
Female Trait	3.33(1.22) <sup>b</sup>	3.66(.98) <sup>b</sup>	3.39(1.06) <sup>b</sup>

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<sup>a,b</sup> Groups that share a superscript letter did not have differing means of statistical significance.

Table 8

*Mean(SD) Participant Ratings of Group Credibility Subscale by Condition*

---

	<u>Male Pronoun</u>	<u>Neutral Pronoun</u>	<u>Female Pronoun</u>
Male Trait	4.10(.81) <sup>a</sup>	4.13(.81) <sup>a</sup>	3.65(1.00) <sup>a</sup>
Female Trait	3.89(1.00) <sup>a</sup>	4.12(.88) <sup>a</sup>	4.01(.94) <sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a,b</sup> Groups that share a superscript letter did not have differing means of statistical significance.

Table 9

*Correlations of Subscales of Questions Directly Concerning the Vignette*


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	<u>Deity Similarity</u>	<u>Deity Appeal</u>	<u>Deity Relatability</u>	<u>Deity Efficacy</u>	<u>Group Approachability</u>	<u>Group Appeal</u>	<u>Group Credibility</u>
Deity Similarity	1	.684**	.743**	.143**	.644**	.444**	.318**
Deity Appeal	-	1	.680**	.119	.662**	.442**	.311**
Deity Relatability	-	-	1	.424**	.537**	.649**	.477**
Deity Efficacy	-	-	-	1	-.022	.318**	.608**
Group Approachability	-	-	-	-	1	.367**	.285**
Group Appeal	-	-	-	-	-	1	.543**
Group Credibility	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

---

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).



Table 10

*Reported Power Levels and Effect Size ( $\eta_p^2$ ) for Impact of Condition on Subscales of Questions Directly Concerning the Vignette*

Subscale	Power	Effect Size
Personal Similarity to Deity*	1.00	.301
Deity Appeal*	1.00	.424
Deity Efficacy	.438	.053
Deity Relatability*	.997	.223
Group Approachability*	1.00	.415
Group Appeal*	.886	.128
Group Credibility	.378	.367

\*Denotes the subscales that demonstrated a significant effect of condition.

## Appendix A

*Vignettes*

## A1. Condition 1 -- Male Pronoun/Male Traits

You are talking to a friend who is telling you about a religion they heard about that is receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. The followers of this religion are eager to tell everyone about their new deity, a dominant and ambitious god. These followers are quick to praise their deity as self-sufficient and a good defender, and He is unfailingly decisive. He is always willing to take a stand. Later that day, you catch part of a news segment about this religion while watching TV. The news segment says that while this religious group has been criticized as following a deity that is aggressive, the general consensus is that this trait is outweighed by the fact that He is supposedly overall quite a strong leader. Your current events course requires you to write a paper on a religious group in the media, so you decide to learn more about this group and its beliefs to use as a possible paper topic.

## A2. Condition 2-- Female Pronoun/Female Traits

You are talking to a friend who is telling you about a religion they heard about that is receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. The followers of this religion are eager to tell everyone about their new deity, a warm and gentle god. These followers are quick to praise their deity as tender and loyal, and She is unfailingly compassionate. She is always eager to soothe hurt feelings. Later that day, you catch part of a news segment about this religion while watching TV. The news segment says that while this religious group has been criticized as following a deity that is childlike, the general consensus is that this trait is outweighed by the fact that She is supposedly overall quite sensitive to the needs of others. Your current events course requires you

to write a paper on a religious group in the media, so you decide to learn more about this group and its beliefs to use as a possible paper topic.

### A3. Condition 3-- Male Pronoun/Female Traits

You are talking to a friend who is telling you about a religion they heard about that is receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. The followers of this religion are eager to tell everyone about their new deity, a warm and gentle god. These followers are quick to praise their deity as tender and loyal, and He is unfailingly compassionate. He is always eager to soothe hurt feelings. Later that day, you catch part of a news segment about this religion while watching TV. The news segment says that while this religious group has been criticized as following a deity that is childlike, the general consensus is that this trait is outweighed by the fact that He is supposedly overall quite sensitive to the needs of others. Your current events course requires you to write a paper on a religious group in the media, so you decide to learn more about this group and its beliefs to use as a possible paper topic.

### A4. Condition 4-- Female Pronoun/Male Traits

You are talking to a friend who is telling you about a religion they heard about that is receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. The followers of this religion are eager to tell everyone about their new deity, a dominant and ambitious god. These followers are quick to praise their deity as self-sufficient and a good defender, and She is unfailingly decisive. She is always willing to take a stand. Later that day, you catch part of a news segment about this religion while watching TV. The news segment says that while this religious group has been criticized as following a deity that is aggressive, the general consensus is that this trait is outweighed by the

fact that She is supposedly overall quite a strong leader. Your current events course requires you to write a paper on a religious group in the media, so you decide to learn more about this group and its beliefs to use as a possible paper topic.

#### A5. Condition 5-- No Specified Pronoun/Male Traits

You are talking to a friend who is telling you about a religion they heard about that is receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. The followers of this religion are eager to tell everyone about their new deity, a dominant and ambitious god. These followers are quick to praise their deity as self-sufficient and a good defender, and unfailingly decisive. This divine being is always willing to take a stand. Later that day, you catch part of a news segment about this religion while watching TV. The news segment says that while this religious group has been criticized as following a deity that is aggressive, the general consensus is that this trait is outweighed by the fact that this particular divine being is supposedly overall quite a strong leader. Your current events course requires you to write a paper on a religious group in the media, so you decide to learn more about this group and its beliefs to use as a possible paper topic.

#### A6. Condition 6-- No Specified Pronoun/Female Traits

You are talking to a friend who is telling you about a religion they heard about that is receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. The followers of this religion are eager to tell everyone about their new deity, a warm and gentle god. These followers are quick to praise their deity as tender and loyal, and unfailingly compassionate. This divine being is always eager to soothe hurt feelings. Later that day, you catch part of a news segment about this religion while watching

TV. The news segment says that while this religious group has been criticized as following a deity that is childlike, the general consensus is that this trait is outweighed by the fact that this particular divine being is supposedly overall quite sensitive to the needs of others. Your current events course requires you to write a paper on a religious group in the media, so you decide to learn more about this group and its beliefs to use as a possible paper topic.

## Appendix B

*Questions Directly Concerning the Vignette*

The following is a list of statements concerning how you feel about this social group. On a scale of 1 to 7, indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements, with 1 being “Strongly Disagree”, 7 being “Strongly Agree”, and 4 being “Neither Agree Nor Disagree.

1. I would consider joining this religious group.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
2. I would expect members of this group to be friendly and welcoming.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
3. I would expect members of this group to be tolerant of others who did not share in their beliefs.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
4. It would be easy to join this group.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
5. I would be comfortable hanging out with members of this group.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
6. I would expect members of this group to try to convert me.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
7. The beliefs expressed by this group seem credible.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
8. I think that this group has the potential to attract many followers.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
9. I could see one of my friends or family members being attracted to this group.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
10. I would expect converts to this religion to be very devoted to their deity.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
11. I believe that this new religion will be successful.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
12. Joining this group would give me a strong support system to rely on.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
13. The deity described is powerful.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
14. The deity described seems like someone I could relate to.      1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

15. I would expect this deity to be forgiving. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
16. I would expect this deity to be merciful. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
17. I could see myself believing in this deity. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
18. This deity would help me solve my problems in life. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
19. The deity described would be influential in today's society. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
20. There are certain traits this deity possesses that many people would find unappealing. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
21. This deity possesses many qualities that I think are important in a leader. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
22. This deity possesses many qualities that I find appealing in a leader. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
23. I do not think that any type of new religion talked about in the media is credible. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
24. I would expect the members of my own sex to be overrepresented in this group. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
25. I would expect the members of the opposite sex to be overrepresented in this group. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
26. I would expect the members of my own sex to be welcome in this group. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
27. I would expect the members of the opposite sex to be welcome in this group. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
28. I share many traits with this deity. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
29. This deity is a lot like me. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
30. My friends and family would support my decision if I decided to join this group. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

31. Does this group sound like a religion already in existence? If so, which one(s)?

32. Would you be interested in learning more about this group and its deity? Why or why not?



## Appendix C

*IPIP Questionnaire*

For each of the following statements, rate how much you think that that statement accurately describes you. Items are rated on a 7-point scale, with 1 being “Does not accurately describe me,” 7 being “Describes me very accurately,” and 4 being “Neither accurate nor inaccurate.”

In general, I...

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Believe in a universal power or God.                              | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 2. Try to identify the reasons for my actions.                       | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 3. Try to please everyone.   | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 4. Respect the opinions of others.                                   | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 5. Am open to change.  | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 6. Try to forgive and forget.  | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 7. Tend to vote for conservative political candidates.               | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 8. Believe in one true religion.                                     | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 9. Believe that there is no absolute right or wrong.                 | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 10. Feel comfortable with myself.                                    | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 11. Do not practice any religion.                                    | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 12. Don't think about different possibilities when making decisions. | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 13. Don't care what others think.                                    | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 14. Am out for my own personal gain.                                 | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 15. Hold a grudge.   | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |
| 16. Do things out of revenge.  | 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 |

17. Tend to vote for liberal political candidates. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
18. Don't consider myself religious. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
19. Believe that too much tax money goes to support artists. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
20. Dislike myself. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
21. Am a spiritual person. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
22. Make decisions only after I have all of the facts. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
23. Follow directions. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
24. Take things as they come. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
25. Find it hard to forgive others. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
26. Believe that criminals should receive help rather than punishment. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
27. Doubt the value of religion. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
28. Am less capable than most people. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
29. Keep my faith even during hard times. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
30. Am valued by others for my objectivity. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
31. Do what others want me to do. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
32. See other people as competitors . 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
33. Believe in equality between all races. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
34. Accept others' weaknesses. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
35. Believe laws should be strictly enforced. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
36. Am devoted to religion. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

37. Just know that I will be a success. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
38. Do not believe in a universal power or a God. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
39. Don't think about more possibilities than the one I like first. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
40. Give in to no one. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
41. Seek status. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
42. Don't like the idea of change. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
43. Get back at others. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
44. Believe in the importance of art. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
45. Guide my life using religious scriptures. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
46. Believe we coddle criminals too much. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
47. Feel that my life lacks direction. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
48. Know that my beliefs make my life important. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
49. Am a firm believer in thinking things through. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
50. Hate to seem pushy. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
51. Look down on any weakness. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
52. Understand people who think differently. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
53. Am inclined to forgive others. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
54. Believe that we should be tough on crime. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
55. Know my strengths. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
56. Have spent at least 30 minutes in the last 24 hours in prayer or meditation. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
57. Weigh the pros and the cons. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

58. Quickly recognize possibilities. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
59. Am preoccupied with myself. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
60. Try to forgive and forget. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
61. Get even with others. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
62. Like to stand during the national anthem. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
63. Question my ability to do my work properly. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
64. Am who I am because of my faith. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
65. Try to have good reasons for my important decisions. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
66. Want to be different from others. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
67. Use flattery to get ahead. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
68. Sympathize with the homeless. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
69. Get angry easily. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
70. Seldom feel blue. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
71. Know that my life has no strong purpose. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
72. Am valued by my friends for my good judgment. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
73. Follow orders. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
74. Feel that I'm unable to deal with things. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
75. Believe that each person has a purpose in life. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
76. Don't tend to think things through critically. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
77. Believe only in myself. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
78. Believe in sexual modesty. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7
79. Believe in an eye for an eye. 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

80. Look down on others.

1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

81. Believe that there is no absolute right and wrong.

1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

82. Like to take responsibility for making decisions.

1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7

## Appendix D

*Personal Attributes Questionnaire*

The items below inquire about what kind of a person you think you are. Each item consists of a pair of characteristics, with the letters A-E in between. Each pair describes contradictory characteristics. That is, you cannot be both at the same time, such as very artistic or not at all artistic.

The letters form a scale between the two extremes. You are to choose a letter that describes where you fall on the scale. For example, if you feel you have no artistic ability, you would choose A. If you feel you are pretty good, choose D. Medium might be C, and so on.

1. Not at all aggressive	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very aggressive
2. Not at all independent	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very independent
3. Not at all emotional	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very emotional
4. Very submissive	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very dominant
5. Not at all excitable in a major crisis	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very excitable in a major crisis
6. Very passive	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very active
7. Not at all able to devote self completely to others	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Able to devote self completely to others
8. Very rough	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very gentle
9. Not at all helpful to others	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very helpful to others
10. Not at all competitive	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very competitive
11. Very home oriented	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very worldly
12. Not at all kind	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very kind
13. Indifferent to others' approval	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Highly needful of others' approval
14. Feelings not easily hurt	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Feelings easily hurt
15. Not at all aware of feelings of others	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very aware of feelings of others

16. Can make decisions easily	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Has difficulty making decisions
17. Gives up easily	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Never gives up easily
18. Never cries	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Cries very easily
19. Not at all self-confident	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very self-confident
20. Feels very inferior	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Feels very superior
21. Not at all understanding of others	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very understanding of others
22. Very cold in relations with others	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very warm in relations with others
23. Very little need for security	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Very strong need for security
24. Goes to pieces under pressure	A.....B.....C.....D.....E	Stands up well under pressure