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IDENTITY DIVERSITY AND FEMINIST IDENTIFICATION

by

Minhtri Truong, B.A., M.A.

A thesis submitted to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Psychology

Carleton University
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Identity Diversity and Feminist Identification

Submitted by

Minhtri Truong

In Partial fulfillment of the requirements for

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Chair

External Examiner

Thesis Supervisor

Carleton University
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Abstract

Two studies were conducted to examine the relationship between a group's awareness of contextual diversity and its cohesiveness as it applies to women's gender identity. In Study 1, the degree of similarity perceived among women (Gurin & Markus, 1986) was believed to constitute a predisposition for the interpretation of contextual information, which would manifest itself in terms of the meta-contrast ratios of differentiation (Turner, 1991) and the endorsement of system blame orientation (Miller, Hildreth & Simmons, 1988). Using a university student consultation scenario, contextual salience of gender issues was achieved through an interview session involving gender-related topics. In a second condition, these topics were combined with cultural and racial issues. Results showed an interaction between perceived similarity and contextual information in terms of the meta-contrast ratio of differentiation on the basis of attributes. The hypothesized interaction between perceived similarity and contextual information in terms of system blame was not obtained, suggesting that the participants' collective identity was not sufficiently accentuated.

Study 2 examined the effects of two contextual variables on women's gender identity, namely the salience of diversity information (as in Study 1) and situational discrimination, with system blame and volunteering behaviour as the dependent variables. It was believed that varying the discrimination basis from gender to gender and ethnicity would produce a corresponding generalization from an identification with women to an identification with social groups occupying a minority position. Results failed to support the hypothesized effects of awareness of diversity and shared discrimination.

Possible explanations are discussed involving the nature of the discrimination and the manageability of collective action.

Methodological improvements suggested for future research include sampling from non-student populations and adopting a longitudinal design. Conceptually, considerations of a context-driven social identity are discussed.

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Introduction

Issues related to diversity and minority representation in Canada have over the last decades gained greater visibility both at the governmental level, as in the creation of a federal portfolio dealing with the status of women and multiculturalism, and at other institutional as well as grassroots levels, as exemplified by ongoing debates on affirmative action and violence against women. In such contexts, reference to social diversity encompasses a range of minority identities whose main elements include gender and ethnicity. This meaning of diversity reflects the similar positions and demands that are believed to characterize both the women's movement and racially and ethnically-based movements in North America as they seek change to the individualistic and assimilationist status quo. The phrase "strength through diversity" has appeared in the last few years in social action rhetoric as an articulation of a vision of society as a whole.

Within minority groups, the same phrase may further take on dimensions of a mobilization formula. For example, in its efforts to promote social activism and change, the feminist movement has had to recognize the socially diverse makeup of its membership along such lines as ethnicity, class, and age in order to broaden its support base. While it may be true that recognition of diversity may elicit greater grassroots support, it appears equally likely that exploration and expression of constituency diversity may complicate the process of achieving a collective identity. The instigation of collective social action depends on psychological processes of social identification with the meaning of group membership. As diversity in such meaning may make identification problematic, it can therefore be asked whether the concept of strength through diversity represents an appealing but strictly rhetorical contradiction in terms.

Alternatively, shared identification and diversity may possess compatible social psychological bases, in that, for example, women's social identity may be achieved and constructed along gender lines in conjunction with other social dimensions. In Canada for example, the recent elections of minority women to the head of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women for two consecutive terms (The Globe and Mail, June 17, 1996) indicate that minority representation among women can be effectively incorporated and articulated into women's feminist agendas. It can be suggested that gender and feminist identification may in fact be constructed and reconstructed on the basis of shifts in definitional focus between commonalities and differences among women.

While the relationship between internal diversity and cohesiveness may be examined within any minority group, women in fact represent one of the larger existing groups holding the status and power usually ascribed to subordinate minority groups. In addition, and indeed as a likely consequence of their broad membership, women have had to deal with a higher level of demands and tensions originating from their diverse and heterogeneous constituencies. An attempt to explore the possible role of identity processes involved in the strength or cohesiveness that may be derived from greater recognition of diversity among women is proposed.

Shared Identity as a Basis for Recognition of Diversity

The process of achieving a sense of social identity is believed to constitute a critical step in the emergence of social and political consciousness (Tajfel, 1978a; Klein, 1984). Among women, a sense of affiliation and collective psychological attachment derived from the shared experience of discrimination may have largely contributed to the development of a feminist consciousness early in this century (Klein, 1984). In other words, shared

experiences of exclusion and discrimination among women tend to facilitate adoption of feminist attitudes through a social psychological process whereby common fate and group membership are perceived and disadvantage is attributed to unequal societal arrangements. In turn, identification with the feminist cause may in general facilitate attitudinal rejection of the gender status quo.

Identity or gender politics were in fact adopted by feminists in the sixties with some measure of success to facilitate articulation of common experiences of discrimination and oppression among women (Echols, 1994). The term 'gender politics' refers to the idea that gender minority identity, or being women and belonging to the social category 'women', constitutes a legitimate basis for demands for a greater share of power. Gender politics therefore represents an approach to social change known broadly as identity politics whereby membership in a marginalized group is articulated into a sense of agency aimed at achieving equality for that group. However, according to Echols (1994), underlying gender politics has been the assumption that women are a unitary social category with a core experience. As a result, such a monolithic conceptualization of identity has tended to favour focus on commonalities among women while minimizing differences among them.

Nonetheless, the promotion and eventual achievement of gender equality have been found to be intertwined with equality issues for other minority identities involving class, ethnicity, race, age, religion, and so on. In other words, given women's diverse backgrounds and experiences, their needs, aspirations, and priorities may also vary along multiple dimensions. In that sense, women's shared identity may provide a basis for understanding its associated elements of diversity, as both components of commonalities and

differences can be argued to represent socially constructed aspects of gender (Spelman, 1988).

According to Echols' critique (1994), subsequent attempts to recognize diversity may still operate on an implicit unitary model where class, racial and ethnic differences among women are accommodated as secondary identities added to a homogeneous core. Breakwell (1979) for example believes that while a woman's social self-definition may be susceptible to the interactions of alternative social identities underlying gender, gender identity in itself remains an important factor that can exert its own influence on a woman's self-definition as well as on the type of strategies she might consider to improve her status. Such a conceptualization allows for a definition of gender identity based on two directions of influence or interaction: a unitary perspective as spelled out by Echols (1994) that originates from gender-based commonalities and subsequently incorporates other dimensions of differences, and a diversified perspective which approaches gender from its constituents of ethnicity and class. It also appears that any major qualitative difference between a commonality versus a diversity perspective will likely reside in women's degree of focus on one element or the other, which may in turn correspond to the sense of social identity women derive from their gender group membership.

Spelman's (1988) criticism of existing feminist theory seems to address a social comparison process among women whereby class and racial lines constitute favourable comparison dimensions for certain groups of women. Insofar as such dimensions reflect patriarchal traditional arrangements, their rejection or a reformulation of their meanings may in fact facilitate the achievement of feminist and social change objectives. Spelman's perspective therefore called for more reexamination and deconstruction of gender issues

along with the adoption of a more diversified gender identity for women. Along similar lines, Harding (1987) argues that challenging androcentric norms and standards would require more than just adding women to existing arrangements; its starting point would have to involve redefining and reinterpreting a wide range of practices from the perspective of women of diverse cultural backgrounds so as to correct for men's dominance based on the latter's experience. Harding's point seems to underscore the need to construct a feminist identity that incorporates equally all of the social diversities among women. Thus, the process of achieving a pluralized gender identity appears to reflect social and political concerns among women who have expressed reservations regarding earlier forms of gender politics as a means of change in a social context of diversity.

In general, two distinct conceptual models may be adopted to define feminist approaches to social change and equality. One model favours the attainment of equality along gender lines as the main objective (Klein, 1984), and by implication considering other minority and diversity issues among women to be of secondary relevance. The alternative view does not dissociate women's issues from other minority issues and advocates a common and pluralized social change agenda for all disadvantaged groups (Spelman, 1988). In the long run however, the goal of both of these approaches is greater social equality for all, which seems to suggest that preference for one approach may not be necessarily incompatible with endorsement of the alternative. Gender identification and emphasis on diversity may be mutually reinforcing in the pursuit of social change in terms of social and political mobilization. Moreover, according to its proponents, the pluralized perspective does not necessarily rule out consideration of commonalities among women, but

proposes that recognition of the shared elements of women's identities be complemented by the promotion of its equally important elements of diversity.

Possible Social Psychological Differences Between a Gender-centred Versus a Diversely Defined Identity Among Women

With both the gender-centred identity and the diversity approaches, it appears that social identification may develop from women's experiences of disadvantage and awareness of their minority status. At the same time however, it can be proposed that individual experiences with disadvantage may lead to varying degrees and patterns of feminist identification. Variations in feminist identification may in turn be delineated along psychological as well as political variables. Psychologically, it has been suggested that women's self-definition might persist along lines of gender-based similarities as the criteria for a marginalized identity or it might shift to a broader frame of reference of minority versus majority status inequities with less emphasis on gender-relevant similarities among women. Politically, strategies focusing on gender or woman identities might generate pressures for convergence along feminist lines that could restrict latitudes of acceptance of diversity, so as to presumably maintain direction and effectively concentrate resources and demands on a determined range of issues that are viewed as of most relevance to women. Proponents of this approach might take steps to form intergroup alliances with other minorities to promote a common social agenda in women's interest. Proponents of the pluralist approach on the other hand may be more likely to recognize and encompass diversity as intragroup sources of women's legitimacy and agency.

In terms of predispositions to undertake collective action, there may be a distinct behavioural pattern associated with each type of feminist identification in view of influencing the dominant group or producing

change in the status quo. For instance, Klein (1984) suggested that women's feminist view was a significant predictor of their acceptance of collective strategies and tactics adopted by the women's movement. In a more direct assessment of women's perceived implications of their feminist identity, Foster and Matheson (1995) conceptualized and operationalized feminism in terms of concrete political actions that women may personally undertake. Such a pattern of relationship between feminist beliefs and approval or endorsement of collective action may appear to be more pronounced with a gender-centred rather than a pluralized minority identity to the extent that gender politics, understood as political solidarity and political activism on behalf of women, is argued to be primarily tied to a unitary gender identity.

However, according to Miller, Hildreth and Simmons (1988), gender identification in terms of recognized similarities may not necessarily lead to collective action to improve the group's status, but political consciousness may also be required. Politicized gender consciousness - understood as belief in the necessity for collective rather than individual action - entails adoption of a system blame orientation whereby women's disadvantaged condition is redefined as part of a societal context consisting of many bases for discrimination other than gender. Miller et al. (1988) observed for instance that in the U.S., black women's additional activist experience in the civil rights movement may have contributed to their high gender consciousness, which persisted from the mid 70's to the mid 80's, as shown by their degree of support for the women's movement. On the other hand, due to a probable lack of such politicization, white women's level of gender consciousness exhibited a significant decline during the same period. What appears to facilitate women's politicization and endorsement of a collective orientation may involve

heightened awareness of a shared subordinate status among women's diverse constituencies.

The pluralized alternative may be construed as representing a more dynamic and postmodernist approach to identity processes and would favour an emphasis on the socially and contextually constructed nature of women's self-definition which incorporates elements found in other aspects of their constituent identities. This approach assigns greater importance to a pluralist minority perspective that adopts gender issues only as a starting point and as a means to challenge the status quo without adopting a literally-defined gender framework. Critics have argued that a psychological and political framework that places gender-based similarities at the centre may be limiting in that it overlooks many important socially constructed bases of gender such as race, ethnicity and class, which may appear and be assumed to be peripheral because of their diversity among women but which nevertheless constitute defining elements of the traditional power hierarchy. The present research direction aims to examine whether a more far-reaching deconstruction of the traditional power hierarchy actually enhances women's psychological and political cohesiveness.

Present Research Direction

Existing conceptualizations of women's identity seem to suggest that greater cohesiveness may be achieved on the basis of common experiences which in turn may facilitate endorsement of collective action. What is presently proposed is a reformulation of these gender-centred conceptualizations to tentatively encompass diversity in identity and experience as an effective condition for enhancing feminist identification and women's involvement in collective action. By the same token, additional psychological and behavioural implications for the gender-centred pattern of

identity will also be derived. In view of the outlined objectives, an analysis and integration of several conceptualizations of gender identity appear necessary.

Social Identity and Social Categorization

Based on Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity Theory, women's gender identification may be explained as arising out of a dual process of categorization and differentiation whereby shared characteristics, experiences and common fate become primary criteria for ingroup membership in juxtaposition to the outgroup comprised of men. Such meanings of social identity are in turn incorporated to women's self-concept and may provide motivations for action in view of improving their collective minority condition and status. In addition, there are cognitive consequences postulated by Social Identity Theory. Perceived similarities and further ingroup identification are believed to be mutually reinforcing, in that perceived similarities among stimuli facilitate classification into common categories and categorization leads to perceived intra-category uniformity. By implication, any element of difference or diversity within a social group will likely dilute rather than enhance social identification and cohesiveness. Such a formulation of the content of social identity appears increasingly inadequate in view of existing developments within the women's movement toward recognition of diversity which did not necessarily hinder women's cohesiveness. As mentioned earlier, critiques of Social Identity Theory have pointed out its limitations in terms of accounting for intersected experiences and identities involving gender and other dimensions (Condor, 1989; Spelman, 1988). To the extent that Social Identity Theory may be reformulated to more adequately address the diverse and multiple content of identity, the theory's

premises in terms of the structure of identity as related to categorization and intergroup differentiation may also need to be re-examined.

Structural Dimensions of Gender Identity

Just as the meanings associated with gender identity may vary on the basis of its content dimensions involving interactions among gender, ethnicity and class (i.e., what an identity is about), these meanings may also be said to reflect patterns of identity organization. In other words, the structure of gender identity, or how it is made up, also determines its meanings. According to Gurin and Townsend's (1986) conceptualization of women's sense of identity, three key components are involved, namely perceived similarity to other women, sense of common fate, and centrality of gender to the sense of self. Their research obtained evidence that a sense of common fate was the strongest predictor of women's political consciousness. Consistent with notions of Social Identity Theory, this finding suggests that political activism on behalf of a minority group's identity may be derived from the shared meanings of the identity in question and its perceived common relevance.

However, Gurin et al.'s (1986) multidimensional conceptualization may also allow for an incorporation of ingroup diversity. Considering that a gender-centred identity involves high levels of three mentioned components, a pluralized minority identity may involve a slightly different pattern: As gender identity in this case is not dissociated from other minority identities, the recognition of differences among women would likely produce more perceived similarities among women, and they should be viewed as sharing a common fate given their collective minority status. In other words, a pluralized identity may involve perceptions of common fate not only with women of similar demographic background, experience and interests, but also with women who are different in those terms while at the same time

occupying a comparable minority and marginal status as a result of societal arrangements.

To the extent that women adopt this pluralized outlook and identify with a perspective in which gender-based similarities occupy a less central place, their identity could be described as more adaptable to contextual influences and experience insofar as intergroup relations are concerned. In other words, a pluralized identity may correspond to a greater incorporation of and familiarity with combinations of minority identities in their various contextual manifestations. Recent research on social identity has in fact shown an increasing awareness of the interaction between an individual's identity and the context which may affect the relative salience of multiple existing identity dimensions (Deaux, 1992; Gardner, MacIntyre & Lalonde, 1995). In particular, Deaux (1992) suggested that individuals continually readjust their identity, in this case ethnic in nature, to the changing social contexts in which they find themselves. Such a process of "identity work" was believed to renew the links connecting identity and context, and was considered to be an indication of high ethnic identification. By implication, women's higher gender identification (with more centrality attributed to gender) may also correspond to a unique pattern of adjustment to intergroup contexts, as their sense of self as women needs to be asserted in relation to the majority group and other minority groups. In contrast, a pluralized identity may involve high gender identification as well, but because of its diversified basis, it would correspond to a more readily adaptable variant across contexts. Without a unitary core identity, such adaptation would require less assertion and less differentiation among minority status groups based on gender, race, and class. Differentiation in this case would primarily occur vis-a-vis the majority group.

The pluralized alternative to gender identity may also translate into distinct political implications. Specifically, a redefinition of gender identity or women's sense of social self within a broader framework of majority-minority group relations is suggested to more effectively challenge the explicit and implicit bases to gender inequality. For instance, this identity redefinition may correspond to a shift towards greater gender politicization as women adopt a 'system blame' orientation as they attribute their disadvantaged social status to broader patterns of societal arrangements that may affect other minority identities (Miller et al., 1988). Moreover, the shift to a pluralized identity may also represent a social change strategy whereby women actively construct a new group identity based on criteria of marginality (Breakwell, 1979). Such a group identity can be suggested to acquire increasing legitimacy and representativeness vis a vis the dominant group, the more diversely defined and diversely articulated its membership becomes.

That social psychological and political strategy may likewise be linked back to the proposed composite social self-definition characterized by less perceived intragroup similarity and where common fate among women is accompanied by equal centrality or importance assigned to gender and other bases of minority identity. As a result, comparisons with the majority group rather than among minorities across contexts will prevail. A further implication of examining the structural aspects of women's identity involves addressing the internal cognitive organization of social self-concepts. In other words, to the extent that identities may be conceptualized as hierarchically structured, they may also translate into different levels of importance and abstraction. Such levels of importance and abstraction in turn represent various degrees of self-relevance and frequencies of applications for information processing.

Cognitive Organization of Women's Social Identity

Conceptualizations of social self-concepts suggest that they are made up of knowledge structures that help organize information according to its relevance to the perceiver's identity. These knowledge structures, also known as schemas, serve to process and integrate information on the basis of existing experiences and in turn provide meaning to that information. It is also believed that the more frequently activated a schema is, the more developed it becomes in the sense that it can assimilate a broader range of information and interpret that information as relevant to its domain. Thus, a person with a well-developed schema in any given domain is considered an 'expert' in that he or she is more experienced in the area of interest and defines him- or herself in terms of that experience (Lau & Erber, 1985). Moreover, according to Markus, Smith and Moreland (1985), individuals who consistently describe and define themselves on the basis of a particular domain (such as masculinity, creativity, introversion, etc.) can be said to possess schemas in that domain and will likely apply such schemas when making inferences and generalizations about other individuals. In other words, as a result of greater personal familiarity with a particular domain, individuals tend to invoke their developed knowledge or expertise about the given domain to process information about others and more particularly, to formulate interpretations beyond the available cues and stimuli.

While the concept of cognitive expertise may not be the focus of this study, this perspective has several implications for the distinction between a gender-centred and a pluralized identity among women insofar as each type of identity may correspond to a different pattern of cognitive organization or expertise involving gender as a domain. This perspective may provide a framework for understanding the variations in meaning attributed to gender

as a dimension of women's identity. Identity based on gender and/or minority membership can both be construed in terms of cognitive predispositions, schemas or filters that serve to interpret social experiences. In fact, Gurin and Markus (1989) obtained evidence supporting the idea that gender identity is characterized by cognitive properties similar to any domain of expertise, and functions as a self-schema.

Given the outlined cognitive framework, higher identification with women, as indicated by the centrality of gender, may be related to the organization of experiences on the basis of gender and its meanings. The two types of identity in question may be differentiated in terms of the relative position occupied by gender within women's self-concept and that relative position will likely determine the difference in meanings associated with gender. First, it appears that within a gender-centred pattern, gender may occupy a higher and distinct level of abstraction compared to other dimensions such as class and ethnicity. In contrast, based on the predisposition view, a pluralized identity may involve a self-concept organized around a minority core element made up of equally central components, among which are gender and ethnicity. Second, where there is a less adequate and therefore less stable schematic basis for interpreting experience in terms of gender or minority membership and for defining one's identity, contextual factors and influences may be theorized to prevail due to the absence of relevant dispositional 'expertise'. Thus, it seems that contextual susceptibility may indicate lesser degrees of dispositional cognitive or schematic organization in certain aspects of the domain of gender. By implication, given the proposed qualitative difference in gender-relevant expertise between the gender-centred and the pluralized pattern of identity, contextual susceptibility among women may conceivably occur to a greater extent within the former

rather than the latter. Furthermore, a lesser degree of cross-context expertise may also attenuate tendencies to endorse collective action for the gender ingroup under circumstances where gender issues are intertwined with other minority issues.

Identity Diversity as Related to Categorization, Contextual Adjustment and Activism

To summarize the ideas thus far presented, the development and structure of women's identity may be conceptualized on the basis of two distinct approaches. According to the gender politics perspective, women's political consciousness and action are tied to the awareness of their common gender identity and its social status. Therefore gender is believed to constitute the overriding and salient interpretive dimension for women across social contexts. Associated with such an emphasis on gender is a common assumption of homogeneity on other dimensions, or where heterogeneity exists, it is of secondary importance to the common experiences defined by gender.

With greater recognition of diversity within women's membership, gender identification among women may develop into a more diversified minority self-definition that would incorporate such alternative minority categories as ethnicity, race and class. Diversity of identity in turn, as construed in terms of knowledge and cognitive representations of social groups, is premised upon the degree of cognitive organization that may characterize women's perceptions of themselves and others. Women's diversified social self-concept may resemble its gender-centred counterpart in its stable cognitive organization, and also consists of hierarchically structured representations. A hierarchically structured social identity may be defined in terms of women considering gender as a more central and self-relevant

minority dimension in relation to other ethnicity or class-based dimensions. However, identity may also be hierarchically organized around a sense of pluralized membership to groups of minority status which is abstracted from a range of specific minority categories, including gender. This pluralized identity thus involves at its core the recognition of heterogeneity among women.

In short, the ongoing construction of gender identity and gender relations seems to entail a psychological shift towards greater recognition and incorporation of diversity both as a means and an end. Such a shift, and theoretical perspectives that have accounted for that identity shift, may have overlooked the necessity and the reality of stable forms of identification as a crucial step in the instigation and sustenance of collective action leading to social change. The present research proposes to 1) assess the links between social and political indicators of stable gender identification and women's various cognitive patterns of self-definition within today's context of dynamic social and gender relations, and 2) to look for behavioural correlates to the mentioned patterns of gender identity. Ultimately, it is intended that some insight will be gained into the nature of intergroup relations in which, as Condor (1989) suggested, elements of continuity and change often co-occur and where processes of unification and diversification operate in synchrony. It is therefore expected that women's diverse and encompassing identity and their degrees of social cohesiveness and political activism will, as proposed, be positively interrelated.

Women's Social Categorization and Minority Identity

From a social cognitive perspective, the idea of self- and social categorization proposed by Turner (1991) may provide a useful framework for distinguishing between women's gender-centred and pluralized minority

identity. Turner's (1991) concept of categorization is based on notions of cognitive information processing involving social stimuli being perceived and organized to make up and fit within common or different categories. Specifically, according to the meta-contrast ratio principle, to the extent that the average perceived inter-category difference exceeds the average perceived intra-category difference, a perceptual unit such as a social group can be said to emerge from any collection of stimuli. In addition, according to Tajfel (1978a), intergroup differentiation may be motivated by the need to define the ingroup positively on attribute dimensions that are meaningful to oneself. A combination of Turner's and Tajfel's concepts provides a perspective for understanding how women's feminist identification may impact on and motivate the process of self-categorization on the basis of gender.

Gender-centred pattern of differentiation. With respect to women's identity, women may perceive gender differences on a number of attributes as meaningful and uniquely central to their social definition in relation to men. In other words, women's identity corresponds to the belief that women's social and political concerns represent core minority concerns. One implication of this form of high identification may involve differential perceptions of minority groups depending on their perceived relevance to gender relations. Specifically, to the extent that other minority groups do not evoke gender-relevant issues, women from such groups may not be perceived as sharing the same degree of fit within the category 'women' as do those from the majority or mainstream. For example, immigrant women may be perceived primarily on the basis of their cultural and ethnic backgrounds rather than on the basis of their gender. While still considered as belonging to the category of women,

the latter's unique needs may be viewed as ethnically defined rather than gender-related.

In terms of women's social perception, the salience of non-gender identity categories (such as in the identities of 'French-Canadian women' or 'Muslim women') may be viewed as decreasing the meta-contrast between women and men. Such a cognitive outcome is believed to result from *an increase in perceived intragroup differences or heterogeneity among women*. Thus, this pattern of perception construes ethnicity, race and class as separable social identities in terms along which women may differ, but that have limited relevance to gender.

Pluralized pattern of differentiation. Unlike the gender-centred pattern of perception and categorization, the alternative pluralized identity would involve little cognitive and motivational differentiation between women and other minority identity dimensions. In this case, feminist identification is believed to facilitate recognition of the societal arrangements responsible for women's and other minorities' shared subordinate status. Feminist identification will therefore correspond to identification with all groups of minority status, and women may define themselves as belonging to a minority category that equally includes ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, etc. Therefore, diversity among women along multiple and intersecting identity lines would not be perceived to undermine their common identity. In terms of meta-contrast, *perceived intragroup differences may not increase in relation to perceived minority-majority differences, but rather, there may be an accentuation of perceived minority versus majority (or intergroup) categorization*. This pattern of perception represents the view and belief that the minority status of women is constructed and perpetuated on the basis of

their gender identities in conjunction with other identities such as ethnicity, race and class.

Implications for a Contextualized Identity

Consistent with the notion of "identity work" and Deaux's (1992) idea of ongoing contextual adjustment, it is suggested that intragroup and intergroup differentiation as reflected in the meta-contrast ratios may represent one process whereby women's identity becomes adapted to a specific context. In other words, intra- and intergroup differentiation helps individuals organize their environment into more or less relevant categories of social stimuli. Furthermore, the implication that social identities with a pluralized core may be more flexible to contextual adaptation than a gender-centred unitary core could be linked to the extent of intragroup differentiation. Specifically, a lesser degree of intragroup differentiation may facilitate contextual adaptation and by the same token correspond to less "identity work". In terms of information processing, less intragroup differentiation seems to correspond also to a greater capacity to integrate and assimilate discrepant information on the part of the more central identity components. In other words, a pluralized identity is characterized by a broader gender-relevant expertise including a wider range of minority-related information and experiences than a gender-centred identity.

Gender Identities and Collective Action

To the extent that a social psychological distinction may be determined between a gender-centred and pluralized sense of identity among women, it is conceivable that each identity variation may not only manifest itself through perceptual processes but may also be delineated on the basis of behavioural patterns. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel et al., 1979) and Social Categorization Theory (Turner, 1991) formulate predictions that link minority membership to

various forms of social change strategies, including collective action. Among the theorized facilitating factors are common fate, which was examined by Gurin et al. (1986), and political consciousness and system blame, which were addressed by Miller et al. (1988). Along similar lines, Foster et al.'s (1995) investigation of women's sense of personal and collective deprivation suggests that women's heightened sense of deprivation in relation to men may translate into higher involvement in intergroup behaviour or collective action. Overall, findings seemed to confirm the idea of a reinforcing relationship between women's ingroup identification and differentiation from men and their adoption of collective action. In the present research, the extent of women's endorsement of collective action is further believed to reflect the degree of intragroup diversity incorporated to women's identity. Collective action is proposed to constitute a behavioural mechanism of adaptation to context in the same manner that intra- and intergroup differentiation operates at the perceptual and cognitive levels.

Study 1: Cognitive Basis of Gender Identification

The present study proposed to examine the following questions in view of exploring the differences between the outlined identity variations among women: First, in terms of women's intra- and intergroup differentiation as measured in meta-contrast ratios, is the gender-centred perspective distinguishable from its pluralized counterpart, and what may the implications be concerning women's interpretation and categorization of diversity among themselves? The approach adopted to assess any such a distinction involved comparisons of the responses of women adhering to either of the identity structures in contexts that varied in the degree of the social diversity made salient. Second, compared to the gender-centred pattern of identity, is the pluralized pattern accompanied by a more politicized collective orientation, such as a more pronounced endorsement of a system blame outlook?

Three approaches aiming to reformulate existing constructs of gender identity were proposed to distinguish between the gender-centred and pluralized identity pattern. The first approach involved re-examining Gurin et al.'s (1986) components of perceived similarity, sense of common fate, and centrality of gender. It was believed that Gurin et al.'s (1986) multidimensional conceptualization might allow for an incorporation of ingroup diversity on the basis of variability in perceived similarity. In particular, the degree of similarity perceived among women may constitute a predisposition for the interpretation of contextual information in relation to group membership and for the endorsement of a system blame orientation.

The second approach involved examining the degree of diversity incorporated into women's identity in terms of its relationship to their social categorization. Social categorization was defined as the process of classifying social information in a given context and of classifying people in that context

as more or less relevant to one's own group. It was suggested that the extent to which women recognize and identify with their diverse constituents may translate into criteria of relevance and inclusion which operate to shape their social perceptions and gender identity. Using social categorization as a distinguishing basis, it may be possible to discern the two patterns of gender dispositions previously mentioned, thereby showing convergence with perceived similarity. The measure for social categorization adopted was Turner's (1991) meta-contrast ratio of intergroup to intragroup differentiation. Greater perceived similarity, that is a more pluralistic identity, was expected to correspond to higher meta-contrast ratios (of differentiation from men to differentiation among women) across situational contexts.

The third approach aiming to discern a diversity-based pattern of gender identity involved examining system blame orientation. According to Miller et al. (1988), gender identification in terms of recognized similarities may not necessarily lead to collective action to improve the group's status, but political consciousness may also be required. Politicized gender consciousness was understood as a belief in the necessity for collective rather than individual action. Such belief in turn entails the adoption of a system blame orientation whereby women's disadvantaged condition is redefined as part of a societal context consisting of many bases for discrimination other than gender. In the present study, it was believed that ethnicity may contextually intersect with gender identity to enhance system blame orientation. In other words, higher incorporation and awareness of diversity was expected to be associated with higher system blame.

Thus, women who identify highly with the gender ingroup may be divided into two groups. Specifically, the gender-centred group would, by

definition, perceive less similarity with other women (or assume more homogeneity in the meaning of the concept 'woman') than the pluralized group. As argued earlier, a framework that views women as homogeneous, understood as a focus on expectations of similarities among women, was predicted to result in an attenuation of intergroup differentiation and endorsement of collective action within a context of diverse identities.

Cross-context variations in cognitive intra- and intergroup differentiation were hypothesized to be manifest only in the gender-centred group. The gender-centred pattern of identification was expected to be high on the meta-contrast ratios (reflecting perceptions of men versus women) when based on responses in a context involving only gender-relevant issues, relative to responses in a context involving gender as combined with minority issues, such that dimensions of race and ethnicity were also present and salient. On the other hand, the pluralized pattern was expected to show more cross-context stability.

As well, differences in the degrees of perceived similarity were expected to be associated with moderate system blame tendencies on the part of the gender-centred group. In contrast, the pluralized group was expected to exhibit high degrees of system blame which would remain unchanged with increased contextual diversity.

Method

Participants

Participants were selected from the Introductory Psychology classes at Carleton University in exchange for experimental credit. The participants consisted of 56 first year female students whose selection from an initial pool of women respondents was based on premeasures administered in mass testing.

These premeasures consisted of 11-point rating scales assessing self-reported attitudes to feminism (where 0 meant 'extremely unfavourable' and 100 meant 'extremely favourable') and self-identification with feminism (where 0 meant no identification and 100 meant a strong identification). The label 'feminism' was used on these scales based on Miller et al.'s (1988) suggestion that the term 'feminism' represents a more politicized collective orientation than a label such as 'women' which only evokes the respondents' gender identity. The sample consisted of respondents who scored higher than or equal to the median on both the attitude (65; $SD=20.71$) and identification scales (60; $SD=22.12$), that is those who reported high levels of feminist identification.

While this sample corresponded to a young segment of women (mean age=22.83, $SD=7.77$), their homogeneity in terms of North American cultural background and other demographic factors would allow for inferences regarding the majority of English Canadian women. Ninety-four percent of the sample (or 51 participants) reported that English was their first language. All participants included in the analyses ($N=54$) rated themselves as feeling very similar to English Canadians on the measure of perceived similarity ($M=6.78$, $SD=.46$; on a 7-point scale). Two participants were excluded from the analyses as their perceived similarity scores were over one standard deviation below the group mean.

Procedure

The participants were contacted over the telephone and invited to come to one-on-one interview sessions about university policies within the framework of a university student issues survey. Upon arrival for the interview, all participants were asked to read and sign a consent form which provided a brief description of the steps in the session (see Appendix A). Next, Gurin et al.'s (1986) measure of perceived similarity, centrality of gender, and

common fate was administered to determine women's gender identifications prior to the manipulation of identity salience.

The next step involved presentation of the stimulus material. The stimulus material was in the form of open-ended interview questions. The participants were randomly assigned to one of two context conditions. In the gender-salient context condition, the participants were only interviewed about women's issues whereas in the diversity condition, they were also made aware of the common issues related to minority cultures, ethnicity, race, and immigration.

The purpose of the interview was to make salient women's and other minority identities and to assess how the two types of identities may be integrated by the participants. However, to minimize reactivity to the manipulations and the measures, the experimenter or interviewer presented herself as an independent evaluator whose task involved assessing the university's overall performance, including its sensitivity to female and minority student concerns. The evaluation was described as part of a consultation series to help revise funding guidelines and priorities for the university. The participants were informed and led to believe that their responses were being tape-recorded and were also assured of the confidentiality of the entire process. As the taping only served to enhance the realism of the interview, the content of the participants' responses did not constitute a dependent variable in this study. To facilitate open communication, the interviewer was of the same gender as the participants. The interview lasted from 15 to 25 minutes depending on the length of the stimulus material in each condition and the length of each participant's responses.

Following the interview, participants were asked to complete a set of measures consisting of the perceived meta-contrast ratios of intra- and intergroup differentiation, and endorsement of a system blame perspective. The participants' cultural backgrounds and demographics were also recorded. Subsequently, the participants were verbally debriefed about the actual purpose of the study.

Interview schedule. There were two sets of interview stimulus questions aimed at eliciting discussion on the topic of choice; one to bring attention to women's issues and identity, and the other to make salient ethnic, racial, and multicultural issues. The gender-salient condition only discussed women's issues while the diversity condition discussed women's as well as other minority issues. Questions dealing with women's issues revolved around women's representation on campus, within the academic and non-academic staff and within the student bodies and organizations. Participants were surveyed about the adequacy of the university's existing programmes dealing with women's concerns on campus such as safety, sexual harassment, date rape, stereotypical portrayal of women, etc. These issues corresponded to areas of concern identified in the field of education in the report of the Canadian Panel on Violence against Women (1993). In the diversity condition, added to women's issues were questions dealing with ethnic, racial and multicultural issues which aimed to stimulate discussion of ethnic representation and the university's measures to address such minority concerns as negative attitudes and stereotyping, cultural clashes, criticism of multiculturalism, fears about immigrants, racially motivated incidents on campus, xenophobia, and so on (see Appendix B). These issues were derived from a survey of concerns among Canadian ethnic groups undertaken by the Canadian Ethnocultural Council

(1995). The effectiveness of the stimulus interview material had been piloted (see Appendix C).

Measures

Attitude to feminism and identification. The attitude to feminism measure consisted of an adaptation of the attitude thermometer in Miller et al. (1988) (see Appendix D). Respondents were asked to provide a rating of their feelings about "feminism as they define it", using an 11-point scale from 0 ('very unfavourable') to 100 ('very favourable'). The gender identification measure assessed the extent to which the respondents 'identify themselves with feminism as they define it' where '0' meant no identification with feminism, and '100' meant a great deal of identification. These scales were used as premeasures for selection purposes. Within the mass testing pool, the means for attitude to feminism and identification with feminism were 64.72 ($SD=20.28$) and 60.00 ($SD=22.26$) respectively, and the two measures were significantly correlated ($r=.84$, $p<.01$, $n=535$). As the medians on both premeasures coincided with their respective means, approximately half of the mass testing respondents met the median-split selection criteria for this study.

Gender identity structure. To assess perceived similarity, the participants were presented with a set of 10 category labels corresponding to ethnically-based groups of women such as 'English Canadian women', 'Aboriginal women', 'Hispanic women', 'South Asian women'. The following questions were asked of the participants: 'Which of these Canadian women groups do you feel particularly close to in terms of gender socialization, that is in the experiences of being a woman?' and 'Which of these Canadian women groups do you feel particularly different from on the basis of gender socialization, or in the experiences of being a woman?' The ethnic minorities selected corresponded to ethnic groups whose holidays and events were listed

in the Carleton University Undergraduate Handbook and Day Planner. The responses took the form of ratings on a scale from 1 ('not at all close' or 'not at all different') to 7 ('very close' or 'very different') (see Appendix E).

Perceived similarity to English Canadians was not included as it served as a pre-selection variable. The mean ratings obtained for separate target groups were aggregated into the index of similarity, yielding an alpha coefficient of .96, such that the higher the score on this index, the more similar to themselves the participants regarded the target ethnic groups of women ($M=3.14$, $SD=1.70$).

Mean ratings were obtained in terms of how different the same nine target groups were perceived by the participants. The same procedure as with the similarity index was used to compute an index of difference. The alpha coefficient for this index was .96. A high score on the index of difference corresponded to more difference perceived between the participants and the target ethnic groups of women ($M=4.50$, $SD=1.75$). The index of difference was significantly and negatively correlated with the index of similarity ($r=-.83$, $p<.001$), thus showing divergent validity of the latter. The significant negative correlation between these variables provided support for the construct of perceived similarity.

Measures of meta-contrast ratios. To assess women's cognitive differentiation among themselves and between themselves and men, the participants were asked to rate the extent of similarity or difference perceived between their personal selves as women and a number of target groups on the basis of 12 trait attributes derived from Gardner et al. (1995), a selection of 14 values from Rokeach (in Truong & Matheson, 1995), and a set of 10 social issues considered relevant to women's experiences (Foster, 1996). A 7-point rating scale was used where a rating of '1' corresponded to a low degree of difference

from the respondent and a rating of '7' corresponded to a high degree of difference. The attributes used included such stereotype differential scales as polite-impolite, industrious-lazy, patient-impatient, idealistic-realistic, etc, and the stereotypicality of these traits in relation to gender groups and ethnic groups (English and French Canadians) were established by Gardner et al. (1995). The values corresponded to a set of value stereotypes such as national security, social justice, family security, and spiritual life used by Rokeach and that have been found to differentially correlate with attitudes toward gender groups and ethnic groups (English and French Canadians) (Truong et al., 1995). Finally, the set of issues presented to the participants had been found by Foster (1996) to be reflective of women's concerns, and included such social experiences as "violence by men", "trying to conform to a type of body image", and "having to work harder than men to get ahead" (See Appendix F).

The target groups consisted of the category 'men' to assess outgroup perceptions, and the categories for perceptions among women corresponded to those used to measure 'perceived similarity' in gender identity (Gurin et al., 1986). Mean perceived differences were obtained for each target group by averaging across the items for each of the dimensions (i.e., attributes, values, and issues). Higher meta-contrast ratios would correspond to greater differentiation between the ingroup and the target group than within the ingroup itself.

Descriptive statistics suggested that the present results approximated past results from Foster (1996) in terms of women's overall meta-contrast ratios in relation to men. The overall mean meta-contrast ratios between women and men along attributes was 1.34 ($SD=.55$) as compared to 1.30 ($SD=.63$) in the present study and Foster (1996) respectively. In terms of social experiences, the results for the present study indicated a strong perception of

differences on social issues ($M=2.86$; $SD=1.54$). Furthermore, a t-test between mean overall meta-contrast ratios for attributes and experiences revealed a significant difference, $t(50)=-6.93$, $p<.01$. The descriptive statistics for the meta-contrast ratios on values ($M=1.32$, $SD=.48$) suggested that these may be conceptually closer to attributes, $t(50)=.25$, ns, rather than experiences, $t(50)=7.71$, $p<.01$.

Measure of system blame. This measure was derived from Miller et al. (1988) and assessed the extent to which women regard society as responsible for women's subordinate status. Using a 7-point scale, the participants were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with five statements, namely : "Our schools teach women to want the less important jobs", "Our society discriminates against women", "This country would be better off if we worried less about how equal people are", "Most people who don't get ahead should not blame the system; they have only themselves to blame", and "We have gone too far in pushing for equal rights in this country". The scale ranged from 1 to 7, where a rating of '1' meant disagreement with the given statement and a rating of '7' meant agreement (See Appendix G). An index score was computed by averaging across the ratings on the five statements such that a higher score reflected greater system blame ($M=4.85$, $SD=1.08$). Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the index of system blame was .71.

Manipulation checks. To assess the effectiveness of the contextual identity manipulations, the participants were asked to rate the importance of the various issues that may have been brought to their attention in the interview. The scale ranged from 1 'not at all important' to 7 'very important'. Seven issues were mentioned, namely childcare, lack of accessibility for women, sexual assault, date rape, cultural and racial differences among women, heterosexism, and sexual harassment/personal safety on campus. In

addition, the participants were asked to rate on a subsequent question, the extent to which the same issues had been explicitly addressed in the interview. On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 meant 'not at all explicit' and 7 meant 'very explicit', the ratings assigned to the issue of cultural and racial differences among women constituted a key check for manipulation effectiveness.

Results

Manipulation Checks

To assess the effectiveness of the contextual identity manipulations, the participants were asked to rate the importance of the various issues that may have been brought to their attention in the interview. The major difference between the two interview conditions (namely gender-focused vs. diversity-focused) consisted of discussing or not discussing cultural and racial differences among women; importance ratings of that issue were considered to reflect the effectiveness of the manipulation as induced by the interview.

To assess differences between the gender-focused and the diversity-focused conditions in terms of importance attributed to cultural and racial differences, a t-test was performed. No significant difference was found, $t(52) = -.01$, ns. The obtained means for this issue suggested that cultural and racial differences were considered equally important by participants in both the gender-focused ($M = 5.07$, $SD = 1.63$) and the diversity-focused conditions ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.64$).

To more directly assess the difference between the gender-focused and the diversity-focused conditions, a t-test was performed on the ratings of the extent to which cultural and racial differences had been more explicitly addressed. A significant difference was found between the conditions, $t(52) = 1.71$, $p(\text{one-tail}) < .05$. This result suggested that cultural and racial issues among women were made more salient to the participants in the diversity-

focused condition ($M=5.72$, $SD=1.27$) than in the gender-focused condition ($M=5.07$, $SD=1.67$).

Effects of Perceived Similarity on the Meta-Contrast Ratios.

It was hypothesized that the extent to which women perceived themselves to be similar would interact with the context as manifested in perceptions of intragroup and intergroup differentiation. In particular, when the context highlights only gender issues, the meta-contrast (MC) ratios assessing inter- and intragroup differentiation relative to men were expected to be approximately the same for women with either low or high perceptions of similarity with their ethnic subgroups. On the other hand, when the context highlights ethnic diversity (namely a diversity-focused context), meta-contrast ratios assessing inter- and intragroup differentiation were expected to decrease for women perceiving low similarity with their subgroups, and to remain high or increase for women perceiving high similarity with their subgroups.

Meta-contrast ratios between women and men were obtained on the basis of attributes, values, and experiences, and separate analyses of variance were conducted for these three categories. These analyses of variance involved 2 between-subjects factors, namely context (gender-focused vs. diversity-focused) and perceived similarity (low vs. high). The latter factor was made categorical by means of a median split on the measure of similarity, where the median was 2.88.

Meta-contrast ratios for attributes. No significant main effects were obtained for context, $F<1$, or perceived similarity, $F<1$. However, context significantly interacted with perceived similarity, $F(1, 46)=5.75$, $p<.05$, $\eta^2=.11$ (see Table 1). Simple effects analyses were performed within levels of context and levels of perceived similarity. Within the gender-focused context, those

perceiving low similarity among women did not differ from those perceiving high similarity on the meta-contrast ratios for attributes, $t(46)=1.52$, ns.

Within the diversity-focused context, as expected, participants perceiving low similarity showed lower meta-contrast ratios than those perceiving high similarity, $t(46)=-1.87$, $p(\text{one-tail})<.05$.

Within the low perceived similarity group, participants in the gender-focused context did not significantly differ from those in the diversity-focused context, $t(46)=1.30$, ns. However, within the high perceived similarity group, participants in the gender-focused context showed lower meta-contrast ratios for attributes than participants in the diversity-focused context, $t(46)=-2.16$, $p(\text{one-tail})<.05$. Thus, consistent with expectations, the participants characterized by high perceived similarity showed a higher ratio of intergroup versus intragroup differentiation in the diversity-focused context compared to the gender-focused context.

Table 1

Context by perceived similarity interaction on meta-contrast ratios for attributes

	Context	
	Gender-focused	Diversity-focused
Perceived Similarity		
Low		
<u>M</u>	1.45	1.18
<u>SD</u>	.62	.39
<u>n</u>	13	11
High		
<u>M</u>	1.13	1.59
<u>SD</u>	.44	.63
<u>n</u>	13	13

Note: Higher scores indicate higher meta-contrast ratios, which mean greater perceived intergroup than intragroup differences on the basis of attributes.

Meta-contrast ratios for values. The two-way analysis of variance involving values yielded no significant main effects, F 's < 1, nor an interaction effect, $F(1,46)=2.64$, ns. These results failed to support the hypothesized effects of perceived similarity across context on the participants' ratios of intergroup to intragroup differentiation based on values.

Meta-contrast ratios for experiences. The two-way analysis of variance involving experiences yielded no significant main effect for context, $F < 1$. A marginally significant main effect for perceived similarity was found, $F(1, 46)=3.72$, $p=.06$, $\eta^2=.08$, indicating that ratios of intergroup to intragroup differentiation on experiences were marginally higher among women perceiving high similarity among themselves ($M=3.27$, $SD=1.54$) than those perceiving low similarity ($M=2.43$, $SD=1.48$). Perceived similarity did not significantly interact with context on the basis of the meta-contrast ratios for experiences, $F < 1$. Thus, contrary to expectations, participants in neither group showed any cross-context variation in their meta-contrast ratios along experiences¹.

Effects of Identity on System Blame Orientation

It was hypothesized that in terms of predisposed gender identity, a high degree of perceived similarity may facilitate endorsement of a system blame orientation regardless of the kind of contextual information being made salient. On the other hand, low perceived similarity was believed to result in a drop in system blame orientation when the contextual focus shifts from similarities among women to diversity. A 2(context) X 2(perceived similarity) ANOVA was performed to address this hypothesis. Results showed no significant main effect for either context, $F < 1$, or perceived similarity, $F(1, 49)=1.48$, ns. Nor did context significantly interact with perceived similarity to affect system blame, $F < 1$. Thus, contrary to expectations, it appeared that the

context conditions and the levels of perceived similarity with other women's subgroups exerted no effect on the participants' endorsement of a system blame orientation ($M=4.85$; $SD=1.08$).

Discussion

The present study examined two questions. The first question involved distinguishing the groups of women on the basis of the meta-contrast ratios on attributes, values, and experiences in relation to men as the outgroup and ethnically-defined subgroups of women as intragroup targets for comparison. The second question dealt with the distinction of the gender-centred and pluralized groups on the basis of their system blame orientation. The results provided some support for the construct validity of perceived similarity, but they were much less conclusive in regards to the distinguishing bases between the proposed gender-centred and pluralized patterns of identity.

The proposed pattern of gender identity based on perceived similarity among diverse groups of women and the hypothesized interaction with contextual diversity was empirically supported only in terms of the meta-contrast ratios of differentiation for attributes. In this respect, it appeared that when information about cultural and racial differences was made salient, women with high perceived similarity were less likely to differentiate among women than they were to differentiate themselves from men, thereby increasing their meta-contrast ratios of intergroup differentiation from men. These women's predisposed high degree of perceived similarity with other groups of women may have allowed for an inclusive and self-defining interpretation of intragroup differences. Such an interpretation in turn may have reinforced their sense of group membership in relation to men. In fact, an opposite outcome resulted in the gender-centred group, under the

conditions that made salient intragroup cultural and racial differences. Under these conditions, despite perceptions of intergroup differences (from men) comparable to the pluralized group, perceptions of greater intragroup differences reduced the resulting meta-contrast ratio, which suggests that women's gender identity in relation to men was diluted.

The pluralized identity group also showed significantly higher meta-contrast ratios on attributes in the diversity-focused as opposed to the gender-focused context. It was initially hypothesized that this group's meta-contrast ratios would remain the same from one context to another. It was believed that women's differentiation from men would not change due to the salience of contextual information regarding differences among women because such information would be reinterpreted as relevant for the ingroup's membership. In light of the obtained results, it appears that the initial hypothesis may have underestimated the pluralized identity group's susceptibility to the context and the salience of contextual information regarding intragroup differences in fact produced a stronger sense of ingroup membership as manifested by higher meta-contrast ratios in relation to men. The cross-context shift observed in the pluralized group suggests that these women may be more sensitive to contextual information relevant to the makeup of their gender ingroup. In particular, in relation to the gender-centred group, the pluralized group may define themselves to a greater extent on the basis of a heterogeneous identity, which includes ethnic diversity. Contextual information highlighting women's intragroup diversity may have generated a sense that they were more representative of women in general. In contrast, women with a gender-centred pattern of identity may have interpreted information regarding intragroup diversity as an impediment to the process of achieving common ingroup definition.

The observed increase in the meta-contrast ratios on attributes in the pluralized group further implies that the latter was showing contextual adaptation (Deaux, 1992) in relation to women as ingroup members. To the extent that cross-context adaptation corresponds to a greater amount of information processing due to less expertise in the gender domain, it appears that the pluralized group may have manifested less of such expertise, and was more context-driven in their processing of intragroup information than the gender-centred group. By the same token however, the pluralized group's contextual adaptation may to a greater extent facilitate an ongoing and dynamic identity construction and revision.

The finding that attributes constituted the only differentiation basis that showed significant cross-context change suggests that the participants may have preferred to interpret intergroup differences in primarily individualistic terms rather than collective terms, considering that attributes represent personally idiosyncratic dimensions that become salient in inter-individual comparisons. Reid and Deaux (1996) for instance conceptualized personal identity as made up of personality traits or attributes which an individual can use in self-description as opposed to social identities made up of group memberships. This possibility may reflect the general tendency among disadvantaged group members, such as women and minorities, to endorse individualistic and normative action rather than collective and non-normative action to respond to unfair treatment and discrimination (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1987).

The participants' tendency to respond in an individualistic and normative manner may have resulted from the present study's experimental scenario. This scenario created a situation of consultation where change to the university as an institution was being sought with input from the

participants. To the extent that the scenario was perceived as realistic, it may have been understood by the participant to offer a normative channel for effecting structural change. The university scenario used may have presented conditions which, from a Social Identity Theory perspective, were neither sufficiently illegitimate and nor unstable to invoke intergroup differentiation on a basis that would facilitate collective action. According to Tajfel et al. (1979) and Taylor et al. (1987), under conditions where positive change to the intergroup situation is achievable through normative means and individualistic social mobility, collective action is less likely to be attempted. Thus, as a result of the setting where the contextual manipulations occurred, participants in the present study were not prompted in the interview contexts to challenge the university's role as a social institution. Given the recognition of the university as an accepted frame of reference, any perceptions of gender and ethnic discrimination that may have taken place during the interview and discussion session may have been interpreted and explained in individualistic terms, which made salient personality differences believed to typically characterize women versus men.

However, the larger meta-contrast ratios obtained on experiences indicated that participants in the present study did differentiate themselves from men on this basis. Nonetheless, intergroup differentiation on the basis of experiences only occurred insofar as perceived similarity with other women was high, which corresponded to the pluralized pattern of identity. The lack of an interaction effect involving context in terms of this type of meta-contrast ratio suggests that the participants did not or were not able to relate the experimental contextual manipulations to their gender identity defined on the basis of women's unique experiences. Thus, the responses to the meta-contrast ratio measure on experiences may have reflected the

participants' perceptions of gender relations, but those perceptions were not deemed necessary to make sense of the setting created in the present study. It may have been that, at a personal level, the participants' collective identity was not sufficiently invoked in the normative and stable context of the study scenario.

Regarding the meta-contrast ratios for values, these also showed no cross-context change and were overall low in magnitude. Contrary to what was expected, women and men were not differentiated or categorized on the basis of values. The low meta-contrast ratios also indicated that values provided no basis for women's collective identification. This finding was intriguing in light of the fact that values have commonly been associated with differences in gender role socialization. Lott (1997) for instance noted that society's traditional ideology of gender inequality prescribes that women's role primarily involves household chores and child care, whereas men's role is the provider whose status is defined by their paid employment. As a result of this division of labour and roles, women are typically viewed as valuing care as opposed to men who are expected to value achievement in the workplace.

However, the present study suggests that the participants might not be aware of the extent to which gender roles are based on or reflect different values. The lack of relevance of values as bases for gender differentiation might once again be explained as due to the normative and stable context of the study scenario. This scenario of a university consultation focused on small scale change, and did not address large scale institutional change where relations between the individual and social institutions along with their values would have been made salient and questioned.

In terms of system blame orientation, the patterns of identity were not distinguishable either as a main effect or an interaction with the context. In other words, a pluralized identity among women may not increase their tendency to blame the social structure or to believe in the need for collective action. Likewise, contextual information highlighting intragroup diversity did not produce any decrease in system blame orientation in the gender-centred group. Also contrary to expectations, system blame orientation seemed to manifest no variation similar to the meta-contrast ratios of inter- and intragroup differentiation on attributes. A possible reason for the above finding may have been the preselection of the participants on the basis of high gender consciousness and identification which may have resulted in a range restriction in terms of system blame.

In summary, the results of Study 1 indicated that the hypothesized interaction between perceived similarity and contextual salience of diversity was limited to attributes as a basis of inter- and intragroup differentiation. In addition, the pluralized and gender-centred identity patterns were not distinguishable on the basis of system blame. These findings were explained in terms of a number of limitations of the research, among which the normative nature of the study setting was believed to account for the participants' tendency to endorse an individualistic perception of outgroup members. It was therefore proposed that the study setting may make more salient the collective self and prompt more collective responding to the extent that it could involve an intergroup context where members of a disadvantaged group experience an unfair treatment that at the same time is seen as impacting on members of other disadvantaged groups.

Study 2: Behavioural Manifestation of Women's Identity

Possible differences between a gender-centred and pluralized identity may be discerned and verified on a behavioural basis by acting on options that may effect change to the ingroup's status. As with the first study, this second study attempted to assess the extent to which gender identification corresponded to more or less awareness and incorporation of social diversity. However, a different framework was adopted to situationally and more explicitly evoke women's patterns of gender identification by means of exposure to discriminatory treatment. It was believed that experience of discrimination involving an arbitrary treatment would elicit perceptions of 'cognitive alternatives'. In other words, women targeted by the discrimination would be likely to perceive an element of illegitimacy and unfairness to the intergroup situation. They may in turn be inclined to consider actions that are not normatively sanctioned. In the present study, endorsement of collective action was also more directly assessed.

According to Miller et al. (1988) and Foster et al. (1995), besides gender identification, several additional facilitating factors may operate to enhance women's political consciousness and actual collective political participation. These factors include women's recognition of their subordinate status and their belief in the necessity and effectiveness of collective action. The present study proposed that awareness of diversity among women may play a similar facilitating role in political consciousness and involvement in collective action. It was hypothesized that higher degrees of gender identification would be related to more pronounced preferences for collective action, but that such a relationship would be mediated by a pluralized identity pattern invoked by a diversity-focused context, rather than a gender-centred pattern invoked by a gender-focused context. In other words, it was believed

that high feminist identification may be conducive to collective action under conditions where gender identity was construed as encompassing multiple identity dimensions rather than a unitary core. Based on women groups' increasing awareness of their internal heterogeneity, an adoption of multiple identity dimensions to define gender may allow for a more adequate articulation of pervasive and systemic gender discrimination which in turn calls for a higher and more unified collective response.

In dealing with the role of diversity in the instigation of women's collective action within women's organizations, the present study sought to refine and expand on existing models of social identity (Tajfel et al., 1979; Gurin et al., 1986) as they were posited to account for social group's collective behaviour. The gender-centred and pluralized patterns of identity were operationalized on the basis of situational factors that heightened awareness about shared gender discrimination among women (as opposed to men) versus a common experience of discrimination shared by women and minorities. According to Tajfel et al. (1979), one step leading to the instigation of social change by women involves the incorporation of experiences of discrimination and criteria of marginality into women's identity. In other words, bases for gender discrimination such as traditional stereotypical attributes and experiences may also provide a basis for defining the group's identity. Along the same lines, it was believed that women's minority identity would be differentially defined as a function of varying criteria of marginalization, insofar as differences from the mainstream in such terms as ethnicity and class may also be involved. To the extent that discrimination and marginalization explicitly affect women's diverse constituencies encompassing alternative dimensions such as race and ethnicity, the resulting gender identification was further expected to be articulated through a more

diversified and pluralized membership among women. It was proposed that such a shift to pluralized gender identification may be specifically mediated by a process of reinterpretation of common fate among otherwise dissimilar women. This reinterpretation may be facilitated by contextual factors that make explicit the pervasiveness of systemic discrimination. Discrimination was also believed to be more readily recognized when discriminatory treatment was unambiguous and arbitrary, thereby highlighting the illegitimate nature of existing intergroup relations (Tajfel et al., 1979). The process of recognizing common fate among diverse segments of women may in turn translate into a system blame orientation whereby the conditions of different subordinate groups are attributed to a common set of societal and structural factors.

The adopted rationale was based on past findings on the categorizing effect of stereotype-based and discriminatory treatment of disadvantaged group members (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1987). Just as individual women may become aware of their common social identity as a result of gender-based discrimination directed at them, they may also come to feel a sense of common fate with diverse minorities when their shared minority position in the social hierarchy is made salient by comparable forms of unfair treatment. Consequently, the experience of gender-based discrimination would likely give rise to the gender-centred pattern which in turn may lead to high collective action under circumstances where gender constituted the only salient identity. On the other hand, the pluralized gender identification as prompted by discriminatory treatment targetting diverse identities may be hypothesized to facilitate the application of a system-blame interpretation to a wide range of social settings, which in turn would translate to a higher degree of collective action across contexts.

Method

Participants

Fifty-seven undergraduate women participants were selected on the same bases as in the first study, namely by relying on the thermometer rating scale assessing self-reported attitudes to feminism and a rating scale assessing self-identification with feminism. Using a median split based on the mass testing data for Study 1 (greater than or equal to 65/100 and 60/100 for attitudes to feminism and self-identification respectively), the sample consisted of randomly selected respondents scoring in the upper half of the distributions. All participants in the sample reported to speak English as their first language.

Procedure

The procedure for the present study (or Study 2) was similar to that of Study 1. However, it involved two sets of manipulations, namely a two-level (gender-based vs. gender and ethnicity-based) discrimination treatment variable and a two-level (gender-focused vs. diversity-focused) context variable, which resulted in a 2 X 2 between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. As the program evaluation scenario was adopted as in Study 1, the participants were interviewed about the university's various policies. Prior to the interview however, the 'discrimination' variable was introduced in which the participant was asked to fill out a self-interest inventory. This inventory was described as a standard control procedure for tendencies to provide exaggerated responses vis-a-vis one's own self-interests which might bias the evaluation findings. In one condition, the participant was told by the interviewer that self-interest biases are most common to women's responding as opposed to men's, and the inventory therefore needed to be administered to screen out such a group-

related bias. In the diversity-focused condition, self-interest biases were said to be characteristic of women and minorities, and the inventory was therefore administered to screen out biases related to women's and minorities' interests. In both conditions, the rationale for guarding against biased responses was described as based on the necessity to accurately assess needs in the evaluation process. In particular, it was stated that women and/or minority members may typically lack objectivity and, may exaggerate their current experiences of discrimination so as to gain a greater share of attention and resources. Therefore, the administration of the inventory served to screen out those manifesting any group-based biases. After completing the self-interest inventory, the interviewer proceeded with the interview. The context manipulations in the interview consisted of making salient gender issues or gender and multicultural issues as described in Study 1.

Following the interview, the manipulation checks and dependent measures were administered. The manipulation checks were similar to those used in Study 1 and asked the participants to rate the importance and salience of the various issues that may have been brought to their attention in the interview. The dependent measures assessed the participants' degree of system blame with respect to the social structure (as defined by Miller et al.) and their preference, if any, to identify with and behaviourally endorse more or less diversely defined women's groups. The latter was conveyed as an opportunity to volunteer assistance to alleged co-sponsors of the evaluation. These co-sponsors were said to be largely comprised of campus groups and organizations that believed they might be adversely affected by cutback decisions based on the evaluation findings. It was further explained that these campus groups and organizations had therefore asked to be represented to ensure the participants' awareness of the former's mandates and activities.

Furthermore, the co-sponsors also allegedly played a monitoring role in the evaluation process.

The participants were given a brief description of each of the co-sponsoring organizations and were requested to consider volunteering for activities for these organizations. Finally, the participants were given a verbal debriefing.

Materials

Discrimination Treatment . The self-interest inventory used to make salient the mentioned identities consisted of a selection of 20 items derived from the Personality Questionnaire (Tellegen, 1976). The respondent answered by indicating whether each statement was true or false. The 20 items selected for the 'self-interest inventory' corresponded to assessments of assertiveness and style of judgement or decision-making which were consistent with the instrument's portrayed purpose. The inventory includes such items as: 'When I work on a committee, I like to take charge of things and determine the agenda', 'Some people go out of their way to keep me from getting ahead', 'When someone hurts me, I try to retaliate (get even) at any cost', 'People have often tried to take advantage of me', and 'My opinions are always completely reasonable' (See Appendix H). Some items were modified to better suit the mentioned purpose of measuring concern for self-interest. This inventory served only as stimulus material and did not represent a dependent measure in the present study. Therefore, responses to the inventory were not included in subsequent analyses.

In the gender-centred condition, the self-interest questionnaire was presented to the participant with a description of purpose stating that it was to be administered as a standard procedure to control for biases such as self and group-based interests, particularly common among women on campus. In the

diversity-focused condition, a similar description of purpose was included with the addition of 'ethnic and cultural minorities' as the groups concerned. In either condition, the alleged purpose of the self-interest inventory and its administration was intended to dismiss the concerns and experiences of the target group(s) mentioned and thereby make salient the unitary or diversified basis of women's disadvantaged status. To further underscore the identity or identities in question, the experimenter explained to the participants prior to completion of the inventory that "while there is no intent to discriminate against the group(s) involved (women or women and minorities), tendencies to respond in an interest-driven way have been consistently documented in previous social research among those groups and therefore these biases have to be assessed and removed. Typically, a substantial number of women and/or minority members in past research have been found to lack objectivity in assessing their own needs. Their biased responses have for example led to exaggerations of their experiences of discrimination which in turn resulted in a greater share of attention and resources allocated to them than is actually necessary. Therefore, the present inventory serves to screen out those manifesting such group-based biases."

System Blame. The system blame orientation measure (Miller et al., 1988) was the same 5 -item questionnaire as that administered in Study 1 (see Appendix F). The mean on system blame in the present study was 4.41 (SD = 1.00), and the measure's reliability was .65.

Behavioural Measure. After the interview, participants were told that the evaluation process they were involved in was also being sponsored by various student groups and organizations to ensure that diverse student constituencies were adequately represented in the evaluation process. Four campus groups or organizations were mentioned, namely the feminist campus

radio program 'Off the Pedestal' , the anti-racism committee, the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Centre, and the Disability Centre (Paul Menton Centre). The participants were then given a brief written description of each of the co-sponsoring organizations based on information available from the Carleton University Student Association.

Next, the experimenter mentioned that these organizations were currently seeking volunteer help for their activities. The activities involved three options of increasing difficulty for each of the organizations mentioned. They consisted of distributing an information pamphlet about the organization, circulating a petition for increased funding for the organization, and taking part in an interview or event to endorse and raise awareness about the student constituency of interest.

The latter option differed for each organization and was specifically described as follows: "Carleton's feminist radio program "Off the Pedestal" (which focuses on women's shared ideas, interests and goals) is interested in the participants' responses in the evaluation interviews." The participants were asked whether they would like to volunteer to repeat their interviews for the specified program, and thereby support women students' voices. "The anti-racism committee is interested in holding a rally and is currently conducting a survey to determine the range of issues to be addressed as well as to estimate potential attendance to this event." The participants were asked whether they would like to be part of the rally. The Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual and Transgendered Centre was seeking help from the participants to hold an "open house" event, as it may run short of staff. The Disability Centre (Paul Menton Centre) was seeking volunteer help for its volunteer programs which provided assistance to students with disabilities.

For each of the four organizations, the participants could agree to volunteer by providing their names and telephone numbers to the experimenter/interviewer on a separate volunteer form on which the three options for each group were listed. In addition, the participants' availability in terms of time for each activity was assessed and recorded on the volunteer forms. It asked how many hours or days the participants were willing to spend volunteering for the mentioned organizations. For the first two options, namely distributing pamphlets and circulating a petition, the participants were asked to provide an availability estimate in terms of the number of days or weeks that could be spent volunteering within the semester. Availability for the third behavioural option was measured in minutes or hours of interview time or volunteer participation time.

Commitment to collective action as represented by volunteering behaviour was assessed quantitatively through the number of activities selected and the time availability. Qualitatively, the nature of the activities selected was taken to reflect the extent to which diversity was incorporated and represented in the participants' identity. Choosing to volunteer for the feminist radio program and the antiracism committee was considered to be committing to options that were directly related to the experimental manipulations. On the other hand, choosing to volunteer for the events organized by groups that represented disabled persons and diverse sexual orientations signified endorsement of identity dimensions not explicitly articulated in the study. However, these options would reflect a generalized identification with alternative social groups of minority status.

Results

Manipulation Checks

To assess the effectiveness of the contextual manipulations, the participants were asked to rate the importance of seven issues presented in the interview. As the key difference between the two interview conditions (namely gender-focused vs. diversity-focused) involved the additional discussion of cultural and racial differences among women in the diversity-focused condition, importance ratings of that issue and perceptions of their explicit discussion were considered to represent the effectiveness of the discussion as induced by the interview.

To assess differences between the gender-focused and the diversity-focused context conditions on the basis of importance attributed to cultural and racial differences, a t-test was performed on the importance ratings. No significant difference was found, $t(53) = .67$, ns. The obtained means for this issue suggested that it was considered equally important by participants in both the gender-focused ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.53$) and the diversity-focused conditions ($M = 5.13$, $SD = 1.41$). These means were also comparable to the importance ratings of the same issue in Study 1. A 2(study) X 2(context) ANOVA in fact yielded no significant differences on this manipulation check, $F's < 1$.

To assess differences between the gender-focused and the diversity-focused conditions on the extent to which cultural and racial differences had been explicitly addressed, a t-test was performed. This analysis revealed a significant difference, $t(53) = -7.48$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .52$. Cultural and racial issues among women were perceived to be substantially more salient in the diversity-focused condition ($M = 5.70$, $SD = 1.42$) than in the gender-focused condition ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.66$), thus suggesting that the contextual manipulation in the diversity-focused interview condition was effective. In comparison to

Study 1, it appears that cultural and racial issues in the gender-focused condition were perceived as less salient in Study 2, $t(51)=-5.39$, $p<.01$. A comparison between the diversity-focused conditions in Studies 1 and 2 showed no significant difference, $t(56)=.35$, ns.

To assess the extent to which the discrimination treatment might differentially affect the importance and salience of cultural and racial issues, t-tests were performed on the importance and salience ratings of the mentioned issues. Results showed that discrimination targeting women and that targeting women and minorities did not differ on the basis of importance ratings, $t(53)=.023$, ns, or salience ratings, $t(53)=-.10$, ns, of cultural and racial issues.

Differences on System Blame Orientation

It was expected that the participants in the diversity-focused condition would show a higher degree of system blame than the gender-focused condition. In addition, the discrimination treatment involving women and minorities was expected to produce a greater endorsement of system blame than the discrimination targeting only women. In other words, a two-way interaction effect between context and discrimination treatment was hypothesized, with the most system blame expected in the diversity-focused context involving discrimination against both women and minorities.

A 2(context) X 2(discrimination) ANOVA was performed on system blame orientation. Contrary to expectations, no significant two-way interaction was obtained, $F<1$. Also contrary to expectations, context exerted a significant main effect, $F(1,53)=5.72$, $p<.05$, $\eta^2=.10$, where system blame orientation was higher in the gender-focused condition ($M=4.75$, $SD=.91$) than in the diversity-focused condition ($M=4.13$, $SD=.99$). No significant main effect was found for discrimination, $F<1$.

Behavioural Options

It was hypothesized that a three-way interaction would be obtained between context, discrimination, and organization seeking support in that a diversity-focused context combined with discrimination targeting both women and minorities would elicit more endorsement of all the volunteering options provided. Volunteering was analyzed using two approaches, the first on the basis of a continuous interval scale, and the second on the basis of total counts of responses.

Interval scale. Endorsements of the volunteer options were transformed into a continuous variable with 'yes' responses on the volunteering form being coded as 1, 'maybe' responses as 0, and 'no' responses as '-1'. Responses to the 3 different options for each organization were combined to produce a mean response for each target campus organization. This was done because volunteering behaviour overall yielded low response rates that could not be analyzed on the basis of separate response categories. The present transformation yielded a measure of behavioural intention, which constitutes a less direct assessment than the initial volunteering measure.

A 2(between-subjects: context) X 2(between-subjects: discrimination) X 4(within-subjects: campus volunteer organizations) mixed ANOVA was performed. Contrary to expectations, the three-way interaction between context, discrimination, and types of volunteer organizations was not significant, $F < 1$. Nor were there any significant two-way interactions between context and volunteer organizations, $F(3, 159) = 2.09$, ns, discrimination and volunteer organizations, $F < 1$, or between context and discrimination, $F < 1$.

A significant main effect for volunteer organizations was found, $F(3, 159) = 4.47$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Follow-up pairwise comparisons showed that the participants were more likely to volunteer for the centre for persons with

disabilities ($M=-.66$, $SD=.59$) compared to the feminist radio program ($M=-.79$, $SD=.49$), $t(56)=-2.36$, $p<.05$, or the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgendered centre ($M=-.86$, $SD=.39$), $t(56)=-2.83$, $p<.01$. In addition, volunteering for the antiracism committee ($M=-.72$, $SD=.52$) was higher than that for the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgendered centre, $t(56)=2.12$, $p<.05^2$. In terms of main effects for context and discrimination, neither was significant, $F's<1$.

Sum of responses. An alternative approach to measuring volunteering behaviour was to obtain the sum of each type of responses across all target organizations, yielding total counts of 'yes', 'no', and 'maybe' responses. This approach generated separate total counts for 'yes', 'no', and 'maybe' responses for each participant, but no differentiation was made among target organizations. A high count of 'yes' responses reflected a high number of behavioural responses and more action, whereas a high count of 'no' responses meant an inclination for non-action. On the basis of the total counts, a 2(between-subjects: context) X 2(between-subjects: discrimination) X 3(within-subjects: response categories) mixed ANOVA was performed.

Contrary to expectations, the three-way interaction between context, discrimination, and types of responses was not significant, $F<1$. Nor were the two-way interactions between context and discrimination or between discrimination and response type significant, $F's<1$. However, a marginally significant two-way interaction was obtained between context and response type, $F(2,106)=2.82$, $p=.064$, $\eta^2=.05$. Follow-up simple effect comparisons revealed that there were fewer mean 'no' responses in the diversity-focused condition ($M=4.58$, $SD=4.92$) than in the gender-focused condition ($M=7.00$, $SD=5.07$), $t(55)=1.52$, $p(\text{one-tail})<.05$. The remaining comparisons yielded no significant differences either for the 'yes' responses, $t(55)=-1.17$, ns, or the 'maybe' responses, $t(55)=1.24$, ns. The finding in terms of 'no' responses lent

partial support to the above hypothesis in the sense that the refusal rate to volunteer was lower in the diversity-focused condition where cultural and racial differences were more salient.

In terms of between-subjects main effects, no significant differences were found with either context, $F(1,53)=2.59$, ns, or discrimination, $F(1,53)=1.38$, ns. However, there was a significant within-subjects main effect of response type, $F(2,106)=36.55$, $p<.01$, $\eta^2=.41$. Follow-up t-tests showed that overall, the number of 'no' responses ($M=5.68$, $SD=5.09$) was significantly higher than the number of 'yes' responses ($M=.89$, $SD=2.11$), $t(56)=6.26$, $p<.01$, as well as the number of 'maybe' responses ($M=1.21$, $SD=1.84$), $t(56)=-6.03$, $p<.01$. The number of 'yes' and 'maybe' responses did not significantly differ, $t(56)=.94$, ns.

The amount of time participants were willing to allocate for the volunteering options was also measured. However, the response rate for this particular measure was low and the data were not sufficient to allow any statistical analysis. Analyses for this measure were therefore not performed.

To examine the extent to which system blame orientation was associated with volunteering behaviour for any of the organizations mentioned, zero-order correlations were calculated between volunteering (kept as a continuous variable on an interval scale) for each of the four organizations and system blame endorsement. The correlations revealed that only volunteering for the antiracism committee was significantly and positively correlated with system blame, $r=.30$, $p<.05$. Volunteering for the remaining organizations was not significantly correlated with system blame.

Discussion

The present study primarily examined the behavioural manifestations of women's identity under varying conditions of salience in women's intragroup ethnic diversity and of shared discrimination with minority

members. In terms of contextual manipulations, the contextual salience of cultural diversity as induced in Study 1 was successfully re-created and differentially perceived by the participants. However, the contextual discrimination treatment that targeted both women and minorities appeared to have been ineffective in terms of either producing higher levels of system blame endorsement or collective action as compared to the discrimination targetting women alone.

The results for Study 2 did not support the hypothesized interaction effects involving increased contextual diversity and discrimination directed at more than one group. Salience or explicitness of cultural and racial differences among women, which was higher in the diversity-focused context condition, was associated with reduced rather than greater system blame. This drop in system blame might be explained in terms of the diluting effect of intragroup differences among women. In other words, women may feel less cohesive as a group due to the perceived salience of their ethnic diversity, which may have reduced the extent to which they attributed their collective status to structural societal arrangements. Interestingly, to the extent that the women were endorsing a system blame orientation, they may also be inclined to volunteer for the anti-racism committee, as shown by the significant correlation between the two variables. Thus, to the extent that contextual information highlighted only gender-relevant information, the participants may have adopted a collective orientation that might in turn facilitate action in support of minorities. Nevertheless, there was no evidence that such an action could be directly induced by the salience of cultural diversity. These results concerning system blame orientation should be considered in conjunction with the lower reliability of the system blame measure in Study 2

as compared to Study 1. Such low reliability may reflect the measure's reactivity due to characteristics specific to the sample of participants.

The discrimination treatment was intended to produce a sense of common fate, which was to be experienced in relation to other women or in relation to women and minorities. The discrimination manipulation was however not effective in affecting system blame or volunteering behaviour. Although no direct manipulation check was included in the study, significance tests could indirectly assess the effects of discrimination treatment in terms of the perceived importance and salience of cultural and racial differences among women. It might be expected that shared discrimination with minority members would decrease the importance and salience of cultural and racial issues. However, the results of these analyses showed that discrimination treatment targeting women did not significantly differ from that targeting women and minorities either in terms of importance of cultural and racial diversity or in terms of its perceived salience.

One possible reason for the lack of effect by the discrimination treatment was the fact that the manipulation may not have been sufficiently vivid and personally involving to the participants. Another reason may have been the participants' tendency to dissociate themselves from their group membership being targeted by the discrimination, as documented by the personal/group discrimination discrepancy (Taylor, Ruggiero, & Louis, 1996). As a result, the participants might notice the discrimination but would minimize it as personally relevant. Under such circumstances, no responses would have been deemed necessary. Motivational explanations advanced by Taylor et al. (1996) to account for the minimization of personal discrimination include the maintenance of optimism and maintenance of self-esteem in the

social domain. Protection of one's self-esteem was believed to enhance disadvantaged group members' perceptions of personal control over social feedback.

Thus the participants in the present study may have felt that the portrayal of women and members of minority groups as 'lacking in objectivity' was an overgeneralization. Many of the participants may have believed they were exceptions which did not fit the basis for the discrimination treatment. They may have sought to avoid the negative labelling of their group by de-emphasizing their gender identity.

In relation to the effect of diversity salience on behaviour, there was only partial evidence that salience of cultural and racial diversity may lead to more volunteering behaviour. In particular, a lower refusal rate (or number of 'no' responses') was obtained in the diversity-focused condition. However, this finding was not sufficiently conclusive to support any proposed positive effect of diversity salience on collective action. Moreover, volunteering behaviour or collective action as measured as a continuous variable only yielded significant differences regarding the volunteering organizations. With the most volunteering tendency obtained for the centre for persons with disabilities and the least for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered centre, it appeared that the obtained main effect may reflect the participants' general preference to volunteer for more mainstream campus organizations.

The link between recognition of systemic discrimination and collective action may need to be more closely examined. Foster and Matheson (1999) found for instance that personally relevant group discrimination was not as highly associated with collective action as predicted. Thus, attributing gender discrimination to societal factors may not necessarily produce participation in collective action.

Future research may assess the extent to which collective action as behaviours to effect social change is perceived as feasible and manageable. While various forms of collective action may be perceived as meaningful as they appear to help meet a group's need in terms of improving its status, these actions may also be deemed difficult and challenging. A trade-off between meaning and manageability has been observed by Little (1988) where projects believed to be more value-congruent and meaningful to the actors were also associated with low degrees of manageability. Value congruence was defined in terms of the actors being able to indicate why the projects were considered, whereas manageability was defined by the extent to which the actors knew how to go about accomplishing the projects (Little, 1988). However, it was further pointed out by Little (1989) that 'socially competent' individuals may be able to maximize both meaning and manageability in their projects. In regards to the participation in collective action, high ingroup identification along with other mediating variables such as intragroup perceived similarity and common fate may interact to make possible the maximization of both meaning and manageability of behaviours relevant to social change. In this process, diversity of ingroup identity may, as hypothesized in this research, enhance a group's inclusiveness in terms of identity definition under particular contextual conditions, thereby rendering that collective identity personally meaningful to members from a wider range of constituencies. However, such inclusiveness of ingroup identity may not readily lend itself to manageable actions to improve the group's status due to its large scale and heterogeneous nature. Given its diversified membership, any collective action to be undertaken may require elaborate debate, negotiation and competition among the subgroups before consensus is achieved, or the action in question will be considered less collectively meaningful in scope. To examine the

process of collective organization and mobilization for collective action, a longitudinal field research framework may be required to adequately follow the group's internal workings. Taking into account the time and historical dimension of the group's internal organization would also help researchers contextualize processes that might in themselves in a laboratory setting be interpreted as "dilution" or "fragmentation" of the group's identity and membership.

It can be hypothesized that each subgroup within a group is initially motivated to concentrate on actions that achieve its immediate and specific goals. Once these goals have been achieved, more collective issues may then be targeted. In this sense, collective action may be conceptualized as a stepwise process where small scale actions are first undertaken to articulate sub-identities before larger scale actions are considered. A determining factor in the shift to large scale actions may involve the development of a sense of efficacy among the membership in addressing issues of increasing scope. Along these lines, a key research variable to examine in the prediction of collective action would be individuals' existing degrees of social activism in association with their degrees of efficacy in effecting change of varying scales.

General Discussion

The main question raised and addressed by the present research involved the relationship between a group's internal diversity and its cohesiveness, as defined in terms of differentiation from an outgroup and in the tendency to act on behalf of the ingroup. The present research question was formulated on the basis of observed trends within Canada's institutions and organizations toward social and political representations of women that have been increasingly incorporating this group's cultural heterogeneity.

Concurrently, feminist discourse and research have evidenced growing awareness and concerns regarding differences among women. To the extent that this intersection of gender and ethnicity has resulted in greater gains for women, it was asked how social psychological factors may account for the achievement of "strength through diversity" in the context of Canadian intergroup relations.

Conceptual distinctions between two variations of gender identity were proposed. It was advanced that women may define their gender identity either in terms of commonalities in background, interests, and experiences, or in terms of commonalities and differences. These two types of self-definition were believed to result in a gender-centred versus a pluralized identity among women. The present research had the objectives to 1) relate the distinction between the gender-centred and the pluralized patterns of identity to mechanisms of cognitive categorization, contextual adjustment, and political consciousness, and 2) to examine the behavioural manifestations of these identity patterns.

Social Psychological Distinctions Between Identity Patterns

The adopted conceptualization and operationalization of women's gender identity and their feminist identification were to account for the diverse constituencies that make up women's social identity. Moreover, it was believed that an operationalization of gender identity should place emphasis on its structure, which in turn would play a major part in shaping its content. Gurin et al.'s (1986) construct of perceived similarity, was therefore used and its measures was found to possess adequate reliability and validity. Preselection on the basis of self-reported attitudes and feminist identification measures ensured that the participants' degrees of centrality and common fate were high.

As well, the contextual diversity manipulation was effective as indicated by the pilot and the manipulation checks in both studies. In other words, the participants perceived the conditions as they were intended, that is as qualitatively different contexts of diversity.

Social Categorization. One major component of the present research involved the suggestion that gender identity among women may correspond to two types of cognitive representation. These were also believed to constitute two patterns of identity and were proposed to consist of variations of expertise or knowledge regarding gender identity in terms of women's knowledge about their ingroup and outgroup. The proposed variations of expertise in turn may predispose women to differentially interpret contextual information about intragroup diversity on the basis of how such information is deemed as self-relevant.

The gender-centred pattern of self-categorization was hypothesized to involve an assumption of homogeneity among women with English Canadian women constituting the mainstream. In addition, ethnicity may be perceived as a separable entity from gender. As a result, if ethnicity becomes a salient category, as in the case of women of minority ethnicities in Canada, the relevance of these women as social stimuli may be reduced in relation to the gender ingroup. Such process of intragroup differentiation was derived from Tajfel's (1978a) notion of the need to define the ingroup positively, which may by the same token determine the extent to which criteria of relevance for ingroup categorization are selected by women. It was proposed that perceived similarity as a dispositional factor may mediate the extent to which criteria of relevance for women consist of gender only or gender and alternative dimensions.

In contrast, women with a pluralized pattern of self-categorization were hypothesized to define themselves in terms of gender as well as ethnicity. They are in other words motivated to categorize women of diverse ethnic backgrounds as equally relevant to the gender ingroup. As a result, in a context where ethnicity becomes a salient category, women of this pattern were hypothesized to experience a equally high sense of gender identity as compared to other contexts.

The finding on the meta-contrast ratios on attributes confirmed the above hypothesized distinction. As a measure of social and self-categorization, meta-contrast ratios reflect the extent to which intergroup differentiation exceeds intragroup differentiation. It was found that in terms of attributes, women predicted to possess a pluralized pattern of identity in fact displayed a significantly greater intergroup to intragroup ratio of differentiation compared to women with the gender-centred pattern in a context of diversity.

To the extent that the patterns of identity were initially distinguished on the basis of perceived similarity among women, the mentioned finding on the meta-contrast ratios on attributes along with the main effect of perceived similarity on the meta-contrast ratios on experiences confirmed the prediction that perceptions of intragroup similarity may mediate the process whereby incoming social stimuli are categorized into ingroup and outgroup members. In the present research, the evidence further indicated that attributes may provide a useful basis for social comparison where stimuli are processed and differentiated. A perception of high similarity with diverse ethnic groups among women tends to facilitate more intergroup differentiation on the basis of attributes with men than intragroup differentiation (on the same basis) with other women, under circumstances where diversity among women is made salient.

Given that social comparison occurs at both the intra and intergroup levels, an existing cognitive representation of women of diverse backgrounds as equally relevant and similar may attenuate any subsequent internal (or intragroup) differentiation. Such cognitive representation could also be described as a diversified expertise regarding women's membership, which in turn may motivate a comparison oriented toward achieving intragroup similarity. Alternatively, a less diversified cognitive representation of women may not incorporate ethnic diversity. Contextual stimuli highlighting ethnic diversity may activate further intragroup differentiation in the social comparison process.

The evidence on meta-contrast ratios in terms of attributes in the present study was consistent with previous social categorization research findings (e.g., Hogg & Hains, 1994) and suggested that ingroup similarity may be sufficient to produce a degree of depersonalized social identification and differentiation in large-scale social groups in addition to what had been established in small groups where intragroup interpersonal contact may more readily exist (Hogg et al., 1994). The salience of the participants' gender identity in the present studies produced a degree of categorization in relation to general gender groups and subgroups of women without any interpersonal interaction with ingroup and outgroup members occurring in the experimental setting. As such, the similarity the participants reported to perceive with other women was also group-based and depersonalized, as there was no opportunity provided for interaction among the participants.

Thus, women characterized by a high degree of similarity with other women (i.e., with pluralized gender identity) may also possess a higher degree of depersonalization as compared to those perceiving lower degrees of similarity (or belonging in the gender-centred group). This predisposition in

terms of depersonalization may in turn motivate the perception of relevance across a range of diverse ingroup constituencies. Thus, in addition to the focus on intragroup homogeneity found in the gender-centred group, identification with intragroup diversity may constitute an alternate cognitive strategy to enhance the ingroup's social identity. However, delineating one type of strategy from the other will require future research to examine the effectiveness of each strategy and the associated conditions that lead to collective action from either type of identity pattern.

System Blame and Gender Political Consciousness. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1981) proposed that members of a disadvantaged group are more likely to undertake collective action under conditions where inequities are recognized and attributed to the social structure rather than the limitations of individuals. Along the same lines, Miller et al. (1988) believed that the attribution of the ingroup's disadvantaged status to the social structure may be best captured by the construct of system blame orientation. System blame was defined as a collective orientation in terms of outlook of the intergroup situation rather than an individualistic orientation where self-blame would result. System blame orientation was found to significantly contribute to women's politicization and their tendency to take collective action (Miller et al., 1988). In other words, a system blame orientation further connects gender consciousness to actual political collective behaviour.

Another of Miller et al.'s (1988) findings of importance was the higher degree of politicized gender identification among African American women, which suggested that an intersection of gender and race may result in higher levels of system blame orientation than gender alone. Along the same lines, minority women in Canada have received greater endorsement from women's groups in their bids for positions of national leadership. The present research

therefore examined the hypotheses that perceived similarity (in Study 1) and shared discrimination (in Study 2) with ethnically diverse women may lead to more system blame among Canadian women. However, no support was obtained for these hypotheses. Nor was system blame linked to endorsement of collective action.

Future replication may be required to re-examine this question, especially in light of the finding on the meta-contrast ratios of categorization which provided partial support for the idea that a pluralized identity may in situations of salient diversity enhance intergroup differentiation. Several factors may account for the lack of significance in the hypothesized direction concerning system blame orientation. Methodologically, what may have been more desirable especially regarding Study 2 would have been a sample consisting also of non-student participants and a more personally-involving manipulation of discrimination.

A sample composed of participants from segments other than the student population would have been more representative of women and their experiences in terms of encountering gender-related institutional inequities and barriers. Greater scope and depth in experienced discrimination may enhance awareness of the underlying institutional causes to women's difficulties, which conceptually amounts to a more pronounced tendency for system blame.

In specific relation to the manipulation of common fate through discrimination, the negative labelling on the basis of the personality measure used in the present study may have caused the participants to distance themselves from the targeted group or groups. Simon's (1998) research suggests that negative value connotations associated with a group, as achieved through the listing of negatively valenced attributes about a group, resulted

in a weaker emphasis on the collective self and a stronger emphasis on the individual self, as compared to the condition involving positive connotations. Thus, perhaps a condition of positive labelling or positive treatment may have produced the intended accentuation of collective self among the participants by making the group identity in question positively valenced.

In addition, the behavioural measures could include a larger range of options outside a university setting which may incorporate political behaviours similar to items from Foster et al. (1995) that are tied to women's experiences as articulated in the measure for meta-contrast ratios along social experiences in the present research. These behaviours should also encompass such issues as child care availability, anti-poverty and pay equity activism, and patterns of mobilizing and voting behaviour in election campaigns. The mentioned changes may help provide a more ecologically valid and realistic operationalization of both the process that may give rise to system blame as well as its behavioural correlates.

Further Implications

The present studies were premised on the idea underlying Social Identity Theory and also adopted by Gurin et al. (1986) and Miller et al. (1988) that the combination of high ingroup identification, or the awareness of who one is, and group consciousness, or the perception that the ingroup lacks power in society, will result in collective action to seek social and political change. This premise may be referred to as that of identity politics, which often implies that a more cohesive sense of identity tends to result in greater politicization and precipitate more collective action. By additional implication however, qualitatively different identities may differ as to the factors and circumstances necessary for any resulting politicization and action.

Conceptualizations and examinations of qualitative distinctions of social identity may bring forth a number of dimensions some of which may involve variables in the present research while others can serve to provide future research directions. Each dimension can be considered in terms of its main focus, which addresses identity from either a dispositional or contextual perspective, or in terms of an interaction between disposition and context. Following is an outline of the conceptual frameworks within which social identity patterns or variations may conceivably be distinguished. It is believed that these dimensions, which range from the intersection of multiple identities to the impact of historical contexts, would help articulate the implications of the present research in the study of gender and social identity.

The general framework adopted in the study of social identity has essentially been an interactive model that examines the individual in a given social context. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978) and social categorization theory (Turner, 1991) posit that an individual's identity is susceptible to influences exerted by the social context. As a result, a person becomes aware of an existing social identity to the extent that that identity is made sufficiently salient and meaningful by the context.

The phenomena of interest to Social Identity theorists involve identifications with such large scale dimensions as class, ethnicity, political affiliation, and gender. Social Identity Theory has focused on identity construction processes involving an interaction between individuals and social contexts. However, the importance assigned to contextual factors in the process of categorization suggests that within the theory's framework, the construction of social identity is believed to be context driven. Thus, according to Social Identity Theory, qualitative distinctions among identities are conceived on the basis of frames of reference, where the meaning of any

given social identity is definable only in relation to a context, be it within or between groups.

The present studies focused on the contextual salience and the subjective meaning of gender identity. The examination of meta-contrast ratios as linked to degrees of perceived similarity among women addressed the process whereby the meaning of gender identity is derived from an interpretation of the varying contextual conditions. The hypothesized and partially supported difference between the gender-centred and the pluralized pattern of identity raised the possibility that qualitative distinctions among identity patterns or variations may be considered in terms of the types of contextual influences these identities are susceptible to.

Deaux (1993) discussed the sociological concept of role-identities by McCall and Simmons which emphasizes the "when" and "where" of identity. According to this view, each identity is believed to become more readily salient in particular domains. Proshansky's sociological concept of place identity goes further and situates the sense of self in a geographical or environmental context (Deaux, 1993). In the present research, it was the social context, or specifically the types of issues raised during the interview, that was hypothesized to exert different influences on the women participants depending on their predisposed gender identity pattern. Furthermore, the present research proposed to offer an insight into the mechanism whereby one type of gender identity may change into the other. In particular, to the extent that an individual of the gender-centred gains exposure to diversity-focus contexts that highlight ingroup heterogeneity, such experience with the context will conceivably be incorporated into the individual's gender identity by means of an increase in the similarity perceived with other

subgroups. As a result, a shift from the gender-centred to the pluralized pattern of identity may occur through experience with the context.

The proposed idea of a mechanism of social identity change through experience with a social context is based on the premise that influences exerted by the context can impact not only on the makeup and meaning of identity, but also on the structure of identity, or how it operates to process stimuli and interpret experiences, as in the process of categorization. A third aspect of identity when contextual input may impact is the component of social behaviour where manifestations may also be expected. Future empirical examinations may focus on steps and variables in this mechanism of social identity change to for instance better understand the link between identity content and structure. Such a research focus will also provide a needed direction for the investigation of qualitatively different identity patterns, namely to determine whether and how one pattern may change into the other and for what reason.

Variables and processes from such areas as information processing and self-schemas (e.g., Smith, 1998) as well as attitude change (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993) may be of significant relevance to the understanding of social identity change. Other areas of relevance involve lines of research on the relationship and distinction between the personal and social self or identity. Reid et al. (1996) for instance obtained evidence for an integration model of personal and social identities rather than a segregation of these entities. These researchers also suggested that any social identity or affiliation to a group acquires meaning on the basis of personal attributes, and this process of personal meaning acquisition operates on the basis of experience over time with a given group membership. It may be added that the process of meaning acquisition is also by definition context-dependent. As a result, as new

experiences are encountered across a range of contexts, the meaning of an individual's can be expected to change.

A parallel line of research on the integration of personal and social identities by Foster et al. (1999) re-examined the process initially proposed by self-categorization theory whereby depersonalization occurs and a person defines him or herself as an interchangeable exemplar of a group. Of particular interest is the distinction made by Foster et al. (1999) between a gender identity based on personality attributes and that based on social experiences in women's interpretation of gender discrimination. The qualitative distinction made between the two types of social identity was based on the degree of integration of personal and social selves, which was found to be greater when the group identity was defined in terms of social experiences rather than attributes. Furthermore, the experience-based identity was found to correspond to a greater participation in collective action.

The process believed by Foster et al. (1999) to determine whether gender identity is defined in terms of traits or experiences was that of internal versus external attribution. What may be interesting to examine would be the conditions under which a group member's attributional style changes. In relation to a context-driven mechanism of identity change, it is conceivable that a shift between a trait-based to an experience-based social identity may also be determined by contextual influences that impact on the individual's attributional style.

Finally, any examination of contextual influences on large scale social groups should consider the historical dimension of social identities. For instance, since their beginnings, the labour, civil rights and women's movements have followed their own paths of evolution which reflect the specificity of each movement's circumstances and constituencies. With

respect to the women's movement, it is likewise conceivable that differences exist between women's organizations in the U.S. and their counterpart in Canada, due to their respective unique circumstances, interests, and experiences. As a result, research on gender relations in the U.S. may not necessarily apply in Canada and conceptual as well as operational gaps may occur as constructs are adapted from one context to another. System blame orientation, gender consciousness, and collective action may be variables that require closer adaptation in terms of construct and ecological validation.

Historical changes to social identities may be best understood in terms of large scale collective experiences that constitute the focal point of generations. The generations growing up in the 1960s and 1970s were able to identify with far-reaching mobilization and social change movements, whereas those of the 1980s and 1990s primarily experienced a prolonged period of economic uncertainty. It seems that women's identity today is no longer shaped by the high levels of activism that characterized the women's movement three decades ago. Instead, with more societal and institutional stability prevailing, social change toward gender equality is increasingly attempted and achieved through institutionally sanctioned and normative means and channels. One implication of the shift toward normative change may be less polarized inter-gender relations. Thus, intergroup differentiation may become increasingly trait-based rather than experience- and value-based.

At the same time however, the increased heterogeneity of women's constituencies and women's susceptibility to cues of intragroup diversity as observed in this research may make relevant and visible new sets of issues such as poverty, the environment, and health care accessibility, that overlap with challenges experienced by other minority status segments of society. As

a result, activism and collective action will likely require greater alliances between women and other disadvantaged groups.

In conclusion, it can be paraphrased from Breakwell (1979) that women's challenge of the existing status quo will also threaten any future status quo, including the makeup of women's gender identity. In other words, the same process that may unite women in their attempt at social change in relation to men may also impact back on women's ingroup identity and possibly leading to the group's fragmentation due to intragroup differentiation on such dimensions as age, class, and race. It may therefore be true that the broader the membership, the more challenging it may become to attain cohesiveness. At the same time, it may be argued that a group's diverse membership corresponds to greater representativeness, and ultimately, greater legitimacy. The challenge therefore seems to lie in the mobilization of the group's diverse constituencies. One step toward such mobilization involves the understanding that identity construction is a dynamic, ongoing, and context-driven process.

In particular, the present research suggested that in the identity construction process, contexts highlighting intragroup diversity may help enhance the ingroup's sense of distinctiveness in relation to an outgroup, thereby explaining in part how diversity may facilitate social identification. However, to understand the remaining steps in mobilization where intergroup differentiation translates into collective action would require conceptual and methodological adjustments that take into account dispositional variables such as self-efficacy and attribution, and contextual variables, such as institutional

stability and the increased availability of normative means to pursue intergroup change.

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Footnotes

¹As a follow-up to the analyses on the meta-contrast ratios, 2(context) X 2(perceived similarity) ANOVAs were performed to assess the extent to which the target group was perceived as similar to the participants in terms of attributes, values, and experiences. The target groups being rated were men as the outgroup (which corresponded to intergroup perceptions) and women as the ingroup (which corresponded to intragroup perceptions). The latter was the composite of similarity ratings obtained in relation to the ethnic subgroups included in the study. These analyses served to explore the extent to which the results on the meta-contrast ratios reflected variations in intergroup similarity ratings and intragroup similarity ratings.

Attributes

In relation to intergroup similarities, a main effect for perceived similarity was found, $F(1,49)=7.47$, $p<.05$, $\eta^2=.11$, where participants perceiving higher degrees of similarity among women rated men as less different to their ingroup ($M=3.05$; $SD=1.25$) than participants perceiving lower degrees of similarity among women ($M=3.75$; $SD=.93$). The main effect for context was not statistically significant, $F<1$. Nor was the interaction between context and perceived similarity, $F<1$.

In relation to intragroup similarities, a main effect for perceived similarity was also found, $F(1,46)=8.56$, $p<.01$, $\eta^2=.16$, where participants perceiving high similarity among women rated their ingroup members as less heterogeneous ($M=2.4$; $SD=.91$) than participants perceiving low similarity ($M=3.15$; $SD=1.05$). No statistical significance was obtained for either the main effect of context, $F<1$, or the interaction between context and perceived similarity, $F(1,46)=3.66$, ns.

Values

In relation to intergroup similarities, no statistical significance was found for either the main effect for context, $F < 1$, or and perceived similarity, $F(1,49)=2.93$, ns. Nor was the interaction between context and similarity, $F < 1$.

In relation to intragroup similarities, a main effect for perceived similarity was found, $F(1,46)=8.07$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .15$, where participants perceiving high similarity among women rated their ingroup members as less heterogeneous ($M=2.45$; $SD=.81$) than participants perceiving low similarity ($M=3.15$; $SD=1.02$). Statistical significance was not obtained for either the main effect of context, $F < 1$, or the interaction between context and perceived similarity, $F(1,46)=3.44$, ns.

Experiences

In relation to intergroup similarities, statistical significance was not obtained for either the main effect for context, $F(1,49)=1.61$, ns, or and perceived similarity, $F < 1$. Nor was the interaction between context and perceived similarity, $F < 1$.

In relation to intragroup similarities, a main effect for perceived similarity was found, $F(1,46)=9.94$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .18$, where participants perceiving high similarity among women rated their ingroup members as less heterogeneous ($M=1.90$; $SD=.75$) than participants perceiving low similarity ($M=2.8$; $SD=1.16$). Statistical significance was not obtained for either the main effect of context, $F < 1$, or the interaction between context and perceived similarity, $F < 1$.

The separate analyses involving the numerators (intergroup ratings) and denominators (intragroup ratings) of the meta-contrast ratios revealed that these elements did not in themselves significantly vary across context whether the dimension for similarity rating was attributes, values, or

experiences. Attributes provided the only basis where intergroup comparison significantly varied, as shown by a main effect of perceived similarity levels, whereas values and experiences prompted no differential comparisons with men as the outgroup, given different levels of similarity perceived with women. On the other hand, intragroup similarities on all three rating dimensions varied as a function of existing high versus low degrees of perceived similarity with women. These results confirmed the findings on the meta-contrast ratios that contrary to expectations, only attributes constituted a relevant dimension in women's intergroup differentiation from men.

² However, following Tukey's control for family-wise error at $p=.05$, only the difference between the centre for persons with disabilities and the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgendered centre remained significant.

Appendix A

Informed Consent

The purpose of an informed consent is to insure that you understand the purpose of the study and the nature of your involvement. The informed consent must provide sufficient information such that you have the opportunity to determine whether you wish to participate in the study.

Research Title: Student Issues Survey

Research Personnel: The following people are involved in this research project and may be contacted at any time. For questions/concerns about the study, contact:

Minhtri Truong (Researcher, 520-2600, extension 2683)
Dr. K. Matheson (Faculty researcher, 520-2600, extension 2648)

For ethical concerns/questions, contact:

Dr. M. Gick (Chair of Ethics, Dept. of Psychology, 520-2600, extension 2664)
Dr. K. Matheson (Chair, Dept. of Psychology, 520-2600, extension 2648)

Purpose, Task Requirements, Duration and Location: The purpose of this study is to assess your attitudes and perceptions regarding various social issues and social groups. The tasks will involve completing one questionnaire, followed by a 20 minute interview regarding your student experiences at Carleton University. After the interview, you will be completing two other questionnaires. The whole session will last approximately 50 minutes and will take place in A304 Loeb at Carleton.

Potential Risk/Discomfort: There are no physical or psychological risks in this study.

Anonymity/Confidentiality: The answers and data you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Only researchers associated with the project have access to the data. Only group data will be used and your individual answers will not be examined.

Right to Withdraw: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study, you have the right to not answer any questions or to withdraw with no penalty whatsoever. At any point in the study, should you experience any discomfort due to the material being presented, or if you feel you are being treated in an unacceptable manner, you have the right to withdraw with no penalty whatsoever.
(See other side)

Signatures: I have read the above description of the study concerning the survey of student issues. The data in this study may be used in research publications or for teaching purposes. My signature indicates that I agree to participate in the study, and this in no way constitutes a waiver of my rights.

Full Name (Print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Name: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Appendix B

Stimulus Material

Gender-Salient Condition

To start with, we would like to get your general impression of the university in terms of making education accessible to women. This could be approached in a number of ways, for example, it could be broken down into a number of features for discussion, so we can discuss academic versus non-academic matters, we can talk about the different facilities, activities and types of support, social, financial and otherwise, and we can discuss what goes on in the classroom and in your courses, and that may include relations with other students, with faculty and so on. The idea of this survey is to assess the extent to which sexism or gender discrimination may still persist on campus, we want to know what forms such sexism may still take, and ultimately we want to know if the university's resources have been allocated effectively, and if not, how should those allocations of resources be revised, what are the priorities that should be adopted in the next few years. Since I mentioned the term sexism, I'll ask you what comes to mind when you hear that term, or more generally, what comes to mind when I say the term 'women's issues'. As a woman, what were your expectations when you first came here to the university; as far as gender equality goes, were you surprised or disappointed in any way in your student experience.

What we want to assess is how the university as an institution is aware of women's presence and concerns. We want to see if you think the university is accessible to women, if it is a safe and friendly environment for women. We will divide the survey into four areas of concern where university policy is most likely to be evident.

1) The university's curriculum or the content of the courses offered: we want to know if there is discrimination in the material that you learn, and whether women are adequately represented. Related to that is the teaching of that material, is it conducted in an unbiased way, or in a way that is fair to women, say in the use of language, and so on. In addition, the conduct of male faculty towards women, specifically female students, that would also be of interest to us. A further factor seems to be the proportion of women among the faculty, do you think this might have an effect on the way courses are delivered, what kind of effect? How might an underrepresentation of women affect the quality of education? Can you provide personal examples?

2) Human resource management: This involves employment equity programs to achieve male/female balance, and hiring practices. Would you find the university a more comfortable learning environment if women are better represented on campus, or do you think that the university has more or less achieved a satisfactory balance in terms of fair representation among its students and teaching staff. Is it important for you to have women faculty as role models?

3) Facilities and services: Issues that often concern women on campus range from safety, such as the degree of lighting and the presence and readiness of security personnel or foot patrol, to the representation and portrayal of women on different campus media material, be it the campus newspaper or radio station to the many newsgroups on the internet, the itv channel. What are your comments? You are probably aware that a portion of your tuition is allocated to the facilities and services on campus, you feel that you get a fair share out of them? Also, there are a number of clubs sponsored by the student association, do you feel that these clubs and associations are responsive to women's concerns and open and accessible to women? Are you aware of the

programs and documents on campus produced by the 'status of women and equity services', for example the brochures on date rape and sexual harassment, what are your comments, do you feel they are adequate? Do you think that existing sources of financial support is satisfactory, do they discriminate against women? Have you personally experienced discrimination based on gender on campus, for example, being targetted by hate propaganda, being restricted access to services and facilities, receiving unfair evaluation in your course work, or in terms of difficulties in your personal relationships?

4) Overall, do you see any needs for improvement or policy change. What would you recommend? What kinds of activities or special initiatives could be developed and implemented or should be maintained (e.g., awareness programs, guest speakers, sensitivity workshops and seminars, support groups, advocacy groups)? Any change at the administrative level, such as setting up advisory and monitoring groups on hiring practices, teaching performance, etc.?

Stimulus MaterialDiversity condition

To start with, we would like to get your general impression of the university in terms of making education accessible to women and minorities. This could be approached in a number of ways, for example, it could be broken down into a number of features for discussion, so we can discuss academic versus non-academic matters, we can talk about the different facilities, activities and types of support, social, financial and otherwise, and we can discuss what goes on in the classroom and in your courses, and that may include relations with other students, with faculty and so on. The idea of this survey is to assess the extent to which sexism and racism may still persist on campus, we want to know what forms such discrimination may still take, and ultimately we want to know if the university's resources have been allocated effectively, and if not, how should those allocations of resources be revised, what are the priorities that should be adopted in the next few years. Since I mentioned the term sexism and racism, I'll ask you what comes to mind when you hear those terms, or more generally, what comes to mind when I say the term 'women's issues' and 'minority issues'. As a woman, what were your expectations when you first came here to the university; as far as gender equality goes, were you surprised or disappointed in any way in your student experience. What about equality on the basis of race and ethnicity?

What we want to assess is how the university as an institution is aware of minorities' presence and concerns. We want to see if you think the university is accessible to minority groups, if it is a safe and friendly environment for women and minorities. We may divide the survey into four areas of concern where university policy is most likely to be evident.

1) The university's curriculum or the content of the courses offered: we want to know if there is discrimination in the material that you learn, and whether women and minorities are adequately represented. Related to that is the teaching of that material, is it conducted in an unbiased way, or in a way that is fair to women and minorities, say in the use of language, and so on. In addition, the conduct of faculty towards minorities, specifically women and minority students, that would also be of interest to us. A further factor seems to be the proportion of women and minorities among the faculty, do you think this might have an effect on the way courses are delivered, what kind of effect? How might an underrepresentation of women and minorities affect the quality of education? Can you provide personal and/or specific examples?

2) Human resource management: This involves employment equity programs to achieve male/female balance, proportional minority representation, hiring practices. Would you find the university a more comfortable learning environment if women and minorities are better represented on campus, or do you think that the university has more or less achieved a satisfactory balance in terms of fair representation among its students and teaching staff. Is it important for you to have women faculty as role models? Is it important that members of minority groups have their own role models among the faculty?

3) Facilities and services: Issues that often concern women on campus range from safety, such as the degree of lighting and the presence and readiness of security personnel or foot patrol, to the representation and portrayal of women on different campus media material, be it the campus newspaper or radio station to the many newsgroups on the internet, the itv channel. What are your comments? You are probably aware that a portion of your tuition is allocated to the facilities and services on campus, you feel that you get a fair share out of them? Also, there are a number of clubs sponsored by the student

association, do you feel that these clubs and associations are responsive to women's concerns and open and accessible to women? Are you aware of the programs and documents on campus produced by the 'status of women and equity services', for example the brochures on date rape and sexual harassment, what are your comments, do you feel they are adequate? Do you think that existing sources of financial support is satisfactory, do they discriminate against women? Have you personally experienced discrimination based on gender on campus, for example, being targetted by hate propaganda, being restricted access to services and facilities, receiving unfair evaluation in your course work, or in terms of difficulties in your personal relationships?

Are you aware of any recent race-related incidents on campus? Do you think that students are sufficiently educated about race and ethnic relations? Do you think that minority and immigrant students might be at a disadvantage in class because of language and cultural barriers? Some say that cultural diversity may make understanding and communication difficult, others believe that cultural diversity is an asset, what are your comments? Do you think that a separate office should be set up by the administration to address ethnic issues on campus, or are the existing equity services satisfactory?

4) Overall, do you see any needs for improvement or policy change. What would you recommend? What kinds of activities or special initiatives could be developed and implemented or should be maintained (e.g., awareness programs, guest speakers, sensitivity workshops and seminars, support groups, advocacy groups)? Any change at the administrative level, such as setting up advisory and monitoring groups on hiring practices, teaching performance, etc.?

Appendix C

Pilot Study of Contextual Manipulations

The purpose of the present pilot study was to assess the effectiveness of the contextual manipulations of dimensions salience in women's identity. Specifically, the manipulation involved presentation of stimulus discussion material that raised issues concerning either gender or gender and cultural diversity. The material focusing on gender issues was intended to situationally produce a 'gender-focused' and a 'diversity-focused' condition. The gender-focused condition involved raising awareness of commonalities among women whereas the diversity-focused condition attempted to situationally produce an awareness of commonalities and differences among the women.

As the scenario adopted for the main study involved gathering students' opinions on a number of issues of concern, the stimulus material was also piloted in terms of its consistency in addressing common issues across both experimental conditions. In other words, it was expected that only issues made explicit and salient by the gender-focused or diversity-focused manipulation would be attributed differential importance across conditions by the participants. In particular, the additional component of cultural and racial differences among women were mentioned and emphasized in the diversity-focused manipulation.

The issues addressed in both experimental conditions involved concerns assumed to be of equal importance to women. These included childcare, accessibility, sexual assault, harassment, and heterosexism. These issues were not expected to elicit differential perceptions of importance whether the discussion focused on gender only or on gender and cultural diversity. In addition, in relation to measures of perceived similarity and difference, it was

expected that exposure to diversity issues would increase perceived similarity and decrease perceived difference in relation to ethnic groups of women.

Method

Participants

Participants were 13 first year English-speaking female undergraduate students selected on the basis of high feminist identification as assessed by the mass testing measures used for the main study. Participation was elicited in exchange for experimental credit. The participants were randomly assigned to either the gender-focused ($n=7$) or diversity-focused condition ($n=6$).

All but one participant rated themselves high in terms of perceived similarity or closeness to English Canadians, ($M=6.61$; $SD=.87$). As the present study aimed to assess English Canadian women's perceptions, it was important to operationalize membership to the English Canadian category. To that end, a high degree of perceived similarity was used as a condition for classifying participants in the English Canadians. One participant from the gender-focused condition was identified as an outlier with a score over 2 standard deviations below the sample mean. This case was removed from subsequent analyses, leaving 6 participants in each condition.

Procedure

The participants were contacted over the phone and invited to a survey interview regarding their student experiences. Upon their arrival, they were presented with the informed consent form which restated the purpose of the upcoming interview (see Appendix A for the consent form). The interviewer presented himself as an independent evaluator whose task involved assessing the university's overall performance, including its sensitivity to female and minority student concerns.

The context manipulations in the interview consisted of making salient gender issues or gender and multicultural issues by means of different sets of stimulus material (see Appendix B). The stimulus material served as a general guide for the interviewer and the interview itself was only moderately structured. In other words, the interviewer did not need to read the stimulus material script word for word, and where necessary, the interviewer also prompted the participants for elaboration. Following the interview, the dependent measures were administered.

Material

The dependent measures assessed the component of perceived similarity and difference as described in the main study (see Appendix E). The target groups presented consisted of 10 ethnic groups of women considered as most representative of the student population at Carleton University. The responses took the form of ratings on a scale from 1 ('not at all close' or 'not at all different') to 7 ('very close' or 'very different').

Furthermore, a manipulation check was included where the participants were asked to rate the importance of the racial/cultural differences brought to their attention in the interview. Importance ratings were obtained on a 7 point scale ranging from 1('not at all important') to 7 ('very important'). In addition, the participants were asked to rate on a subsequent question, the extent to which the same type of issue had been explicitly addressed in the interview. Ratings were also obtained on a 7 point scale ranging from 1 ('not at all explicit') to 7 ('very explicit'). It was expected that racial/cultural differences would be considered more important and rated as more salient in the diversity-focused than in the gender-focused condition.

Results and Discussion

Perceived Similarity and Difference

Mean ratings of similarity and difference perceived in relation to the 10 target groups are presented in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. The ratings indicated the extent to which the contextual manipulations may have produced greater similarity in the diversity condition and greater difference in the gender-focused condition (with perceptions of English Canadians expected to remain unchanged).

Sign tests were performed on perceived similarity and difference ratings. In terms of perceived similarity, as expected, minority ethnic groups were rated as more similar in the diversity-focused condition than the gender-focused condition, $p < .01$ (one tail). In terms of perceived difference, the expected findings in the opposite direction was found, $p < .01$ (one tail), with minority ethnic groups being rated as more different in the gender-focused condition than in the diversity-focused condition. These patterns of findings suggest that the experimental manipulation involving the stimulus material used was effective in differentially affecting the perceptions of target groups in the desired direction.

Table 1. Mean ratings of perceived similarity to target groups

	Condition			
	Gender-focused		Diversity	
Target groups	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
English Canadian	7.00	.00	6.66	.51
Hispanic Canadian	2.33	1.75	3.83	.75
Chinese Canadian	2.50	2.07	4.33	1.03
Aboriginal Canadian	2.33	1.75	4.16	1.72
South Asian Canadian	3.00	2.00	3.66	1.03
French Canadian	5.33	1.21	4.83	1.47
Jewish Canadian	4.00	2.00	4.83	.98
African Canadian	2.66	1.63	3.83	1.17
Muslim Canadian	2.00	1.27	3.83	1.47
Ukranian Canadian	2.83	2.04	4.16	.98

Table 2. Mean ratings of perceived difference to target groups

	Condition			
	Gender-focused		Diversity	
Target groups	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
English Canadian	1.20	.45	1.00	.00
Hispanic Canadian	4.60	1.52	3.50	1.76
Chinese Canadian	4.40	1.82	3.66	1.21
Aboriginal Canadian	5.00	2.00	4.00	1.89
South Asian Canadian	5.00	1.41	4.50	1.76
French Canadian	2.60	1.14	2.16	.98
Jewish Canadian	4.20	2.59	2.50	1.38
African Canadian	4.83	2.04	4.00	1.67
Muslim Canadian	6.33	.82	4.66	1.75
Ukranian Canadian	4.80	2.28	3.66	1.86

Manipulation Checks

T-tests were performed to compare ratings of issue importance between the two experimental conditions. No significant difference was found, $t(10) = -.28$, ns. This lack of difference across condition may suggest that issue importance may not so much assess the effects of contextual manipulations as it may represent the participants' existing perceptions of this type of issue.

T-tests were also performed to compare the same issue on the extent to which it was addressed in each condition. While no statistical difference was obtained, $t(10) = -.69$, ns, a marginal difference was observed for cultural/racial differences among women. These differences were rated a less explicitly addressed in the gender-focused condition ($M = 3.83$; $SD = 2.86$) than in the diversity condition ($M = 4.83$; $SD = 2.14$). The obtained differential salience of cultural and racial differences was consistent with expectations, and the effect observed on this issue was expected to be further accentuated with a larger sample in the main studies.

Appendix D

Premeasure

Name: _____ Sex: Male / Female (circle one)

Student number: _____

Phone number : _____

Attitude scales

1) Using the scale below, please provide a number between 0 and 100 to indicate how you feel about FEMINISM (as you define it) _____

2) Using the scale below, please provide a number between 0 and 100 to indicate the extent to which you identify with FEMINISM (as you define it)

Appendix E

Perceived Similarity

Which of these Canadian women groups do you feel particularly close to in terms of gender socialization, that is in the experiences of being a woman?

(Using the following scale, place the number that best reflects your opinion in the space beside each statement.)

- 1 not at all close
2
3
4
6
7 very close

- _____ 1) English Canadian women
_____ 2) Hispanic Canadian women
_____ 3) Chinese Canadian women
_____ 4) Aboriginal women
_____ 5) South Asian Canadian women
_____ 6) French Canadian women
_____ 7) Jewish Canadian women
_____ 8) African Canadian women
_____ 9) Muslim Canadian women
_____ 10) Ukrainian Canadian women

Which of these Canadian women groups do you feel particularly different from in terms of gender socialization, that is in the experiences of being a woman?

- 1 not at all different
2
3
4
5
6
7 very different

- _____ 1) English Canadian women
- _____ 2) Hispanic Canadian women
- _____ 3) Chinese Canadian women
- _____ 4) Aboriginal women
- _____ 5) South Asian Canadian women
- _____ 6) French Canadian women
- _____ 7) Jewish Canadian women
- _____ 8) African Canadian women
- _____ 9) Muslim Canadian women
- _____ 10) Ukrainian Canadian women

Appendix F

Meta-contrast Ratios

Using the characteristics/issues below, indicate the extent to which you think yourself as a woman are different from members of the given comparison group. Place in the space labelled "Women/ (comparison group)" a number that best represents your opinion on how women and (members of the comparison group) are.

- 1 not at all different
2
3
4
5
6
7 extremely different

Attributes	Women/
Polite-Impolite	_____
Religious-Irreligious	_____
Industrious-Lazy	_____
Rugged-Delicate	_____
Easy-going-Serious	_____
Artistic-Inartistic	_____
Unselfish-Selfish	_____
Patient-Impatient	_____
Idealistic-Realistic	_____
Modern-Traditional	_____
Quiet-Talkative	_____
Unemotional-Emotional	_____
Values	
Exciting life	_____
National security	_____
Unity with nature	_____
Authority	_____
Social justice	_____
Self-respect	_____
Meaning in life	_____

Family security	_____
Belongingness	_____
Self-discipline	_____
Detachment	_____
Pleasure	_____
Mature love	_____
Spiritual life	_____

Social Experiences

1) Being expected to juggle family, career, homemaking	_____
2) Experience with violence by men (rape, abuse)	_____
3) Trying to conform to a type of body image	_____
4) Being paid less than men for equal work	_____
5) Feeling unsafe (e.g., walking alone; after dark)	_____
6) Having to work harder than men to get ahead	_____
7) Having fewer educational opportunities than men	_____
8) Having fewer career opportunities than men	_____
9) Experience with sexual harassment	_____
10) Not being appreciated for being a homemaker	_____

Appendix G

System Blame

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

(Using the following scale, place the number that best reflects your opinion in the space beside each statement.)

1 completely DISagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 completely agree

_____ 1) Our schools teach women to want the less important jobs.

_____ 2) Our society discriminates against women.

_____ 3) This country would be better off if we worried less about how equal people are.

_____ 4) Most people who don't get ahead should not blame the system; they have only themselves to blame.

_____ 5) We have gone too far in pushing for equal rights in this country.

Appendix H

Self-Interest Inventory

When I work on a committee, I like to take charge of things to determine the agenda. True False

Some people go out of their way to keep me from getting ahead. T F

When someone hurts me, I try to retaliate (get even) at any cost. T F

People have often tried to take advantage of me. T F

My opinions are always completely reasonable. T F

When I have to stand in line, I often try to get ahead of other people. T F

I often monopolize a conversation. T F

People often just use me instead of treating me as a person. T F

I am not always treated fairly. T F

I am quite effective at talking people into things. T F

I have always been completely fair to others. T F

I am not interested in obtaining positions of leadership. T F

It is very important to me that some people are concerned about me. T F

People consider me forceful. T F

I tend to value and follow a rational, "sensible" approach to things. T F

I am ready for a fight when someone tries to take advantage of me.
T F

I generally rely on careful reasoning when making up my mind.
T F

When I am with someone else, I do most of my decision-making.
T F

People rarely try to take advantage of me. T F

On social occasion, I usually allow others to dominate the conversation.

T F