Benevolent sexism

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She/her
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Ambivalent sexism
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Hostile sexism
Benevolent sexism
Hostile sexism

• Overt
• Objectifying, insulting and/or degrading

• Demeaning language
• Catcalling
• Discrimination
• Violence against women
Benevolent sexism

• Framed positively
• Condescending, patronising and/or reinforces gendered stereotypes
• Reference letter/appraisal focusing on personality not achievements
• Only caring about women when they are ‘mothers, wives and daughters’
• Believing women are more compassionate and nurturing
• Believing women need to be protected
Benevolent sexism

A real woman can do it all by herself. But a real man won’t let her.
• Countries with more benevolent sexism also have more hostile sexism
• Countries with more benevolent sexism have fewer women in leadership roles even when controlled for hostile sexism
• Women who endorse benevolent sexist ideas have lower career ambitions
• Men who endorse benevolent sexist ideas give women less challenging tasks
• Exposure to benevolent sexism decreases women’s work performance more than exposure to hostile sexism
Benevolent sexism is harmful because it reinforces gender stereotypes and norms, and limits people’s potential.
What can you do?

• Raise awareness of benevolent sexism
• Take the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory and encourage others to as well
• Examine your own attitudes and assumptions
• Split workplace ‘women’s work’ i.e. taking notes, planning team outings
• Think about the feedback you give
• Call out benevolent sexism
• Tackle hostile sexism
Remember: Benevolent Sexism is BS!

Any questions?
Further reading

• http://www.hbs.edu/faculty/conferences/2013-w50-research-symposium/Documents/glick.pdf

• https://www.themuse.com/advice/women-are-kind-and-men-are-strong-how-benevolent-sexism-hurts-us-all

• http://www.understandingprejudice.org/asi/take

• https://www.forbes.com/sites/sianbeilock/2020/01/07/how-to-address-subtle-friendly-sexism-at-work/#18d7e5b1350c

• https://www.bustle.com/articles/131418-7-examples-of-benevolent-sexism-that-are-just-as-harmful-as-hostile-sexism

• https://www.facebook.com/benevolentsexism/

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