Female and Feminine-Presenting Band Directors' Experiences With Gender Microaggressions

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**EXISTING RESEARCH ON FEMALE BAND DIRECTORS**

- Statistical minorities in the field of secondary band teaching, particularly at the HS level
- Lack of female role models
- Pressure to alter the way they dress or act to conform to expectations of traditional masculinity
- Isolation/exclusion (“Good Old Boys Club”)
- Explicit discrimination
- Perceptions of being judged differently at adjudicated events

“Microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership.”

— SUE & SPANIERMAN (2020) IN MICROAGGRESSIONS IN EVERYDAY LIFE (P. 36)
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY...

To explore female and feminine-presenting band directors’ experiences with gender microaggressions in their work.

- How frequently do respondents experience each of the nine types of gender microaggressions?
- Does frequency of microaggression experience vary by age, teaching level, or region?
- What are the most commonly described experiences within each type of gender microaggression?
- How stressful/bothersome do respondents find each type of gender microaggression to be?
- What is the relationship between frequency and perceived stressfulness/bothersomeness for each type of gender microaggression?

ONLINE SURVEY

- Demographics
- Description of microaggression type
  - Frequency? (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often)
  - Stressfulness/Bothersomeness? (Not at all, Minimally, Moderately, Very)
  - Experiences? (open-ended)

SAMPLING

- Emailed to members of WBDI and NAfME; Shared on social media
- Open to any individual who was NOT a cisgender man
- Open to those who taught band, had previously taught band, desired to teach band in the future, or previously desired to teach band

PARTICIPANTS (N = 974)

- Cisgender women = 948 (97.3%)
- Non-binary/genderqueer = 21 (2.1%)
- Transgender women = 3 (0.3%)
- Transgender men = 2 (0.2%)

- White = 905 (92.9%)
- Hispanic/Latinx = 19 (2.0%)
- Asian American = 15 (1.5%)
- Black/African American = 15 (1.5%)
- Amer.Indian/Alaska Nat. = 9 (0.9%)
- Nat.Hawaiian/Pac.Islander = 4 (0.4%)
- Other/Pref. not to say = 23 (2.3%)

- Midwest = 320 (32.9%)
- South = 313 (32.1%)
- Northeast = 187 (19.2%)
- West = 150 (15.4%)

- 20-29 yr. = 294 (30.3%)
- 30-39 yr. = 282 (29.1%)
- 40-49 yr. = 221 (22.8%)
- 50+ yr. = 172 (17.8%)

- High school = 466 (47.8%)
- Middle school = 589 (60.5%)
- Elementary school = 193 (19.8%)
- College/university = 46 (4.7%)
- Elementary general = 107 (11.0%)
- Not currently teaching in any of these settings = 78 (8.0%)
**Frequency?**

**Does Frequency Vary?**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Microaggression Type</th>
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</table>

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

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**Table: Mean Frequency Ratings for each Microaggression Type by Age, Level, and Region**

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<tr>
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<td>2.43*</td>
<td>2.10</td>
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<td>30-39 yr</td>
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<td>3.03***</td>
<td>2.97***</td>
<td>2.85**</td>
<td>2.75***</td>
<td>2.43*</td>
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<td>40-49 yr</td>
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<td>2.77**</td>
<td>2.57</td>
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<td>Northeast</td>
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<td>2.06</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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* *p < .05
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MOST COMMON EXPERIENCES?

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

495 total comments:
- Being ignored or not respected (171)

“At honor bands or high school competitions, when directors get together they talk to each other as if I’m not present in the group. This includes handshaking everyone except me, asking everyone about their program (except me), not making eye contact, and generally ignoring me.”

“When I met the president of the state marching band board, he shook the hands of every man in the room and completely ignored my existence when I reached out my hand. None of my male colleagues noticed or thought it was an issue.”

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

495 total comments:
- Being ignored or not respected (171)
- Having a male assistant, parent, or student assumed to be the director instead of them or being mistaken for someone else (e.g., assistant director, color guard instructor, parent) (157)

“Often, I am asked where the director is, even when my shirt or nametags say DIRECTOR in large lettering.”
SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

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“I am talked over frequently…. I’ve also ... had a male director say exactly what I said in the meeting. I very loudly said, ‘I’m pretty sure I said the exact same thing ten minutes ago, but it must sound prettier out of his mouth because he has a penis.’”

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

495 total comments:

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- Having their ideas not valued or being interrupted, talked over, or not taken seriously (131)

“Having judges/referees/etc assume that my [male] middle school counterpart (when I was teaching high school) was in charge. I’ve even had Festival hosts/judges approach male students and assume they are the director before me.”

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

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- Having their ideas not valued or being interrupted, talked over, or not taken seriously (131)

“My opinions get ignored in meeting or worse a male will make the same suggestion as myself but will only be listened to because they are male.”

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“I can’t break in to things because I’m not part of the good old boys club. My husband and I co-chair a committee, and even though I sign the emails and everything, most responses go to my husband with no recognition of me being a part of it.”
SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

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- Having a male assistant, parent, or student assumed to be the director instead of them or being mistaken for someone else (e.g., assistant director, color guard instructor, parent) (157)
- Having their ideas not valued or being interrupted, talked over, or not taken seriously (131)
- Existence of the “good old boys club” (109)
- Being excluded or left out (80)

“Regarding the ‘old boys club’: that feeling was one of the reasons why I decided to pursue elementary general music as my desired teaching area rather than high school band.”

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

495 total comments:
- Being ignored or not respected (171)
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- Having their ideas not valued or being interrupted, talked over, or not taken seriously (131)
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“The men in the department often go out to eat together without inviting me.”

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

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- Existence of the “good old boys club” (109)
- Being excluded or left out (80)
- Lack of recognition or being passed over for opportunities (44)

“I wasn’t invited to my band professor’s office for one-on-one ‘shop talks’ like my male cohorts were.”

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

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- Being ignored or not respected (171)
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“I’m skipped over for opportunities while younger male counterparts are chosen instead.”

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SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP

495 total comments:

“In my area, a male music fraternity rules the career field. I have often been overlooked for opportunities in exchange for a fraternity member. My career really started taking off when I married a fraternity member. I was known as his wife for the first seven years of my career, even though he never worked a day as a band director. I finally started receiving offers for judging opportunities, clinic work, and leadership opportunities after our marriage.”

- Being ignored or not respected (171)
- Having a male assistant, parent, or student assumed to be the director instead of them or being mistaken for someone else (e.g., assistant director, color guard instructor, parent) (157)
- Having their ideas not valued or being interrupted, talked over, or not taken seriously (131)
- Existence of the “good old boys club” (109)
- Being excluded or left out (80)
- Lack of recognition or being passed over for opportunities (44)

RESTRICTIVE GENDER ROLES

**509 total comments:

- Being asked or having assumptions made about pregnancy, childrearing, or marriage (204)

“When applying for band director jobs in [County] I was regularly asked about my plans to have children, if I had children, if I planned on becoming pregnant in the near future.”

- Being asked or having assumptions made about pregnancy, childrearing, or marriage (204)

“It would be nice if people didn’t give a shit about my future and instead focused on the good work I am doing in the present moment.”
RESTRICTIVE GENDER ROLES

**509 total comments:**

- Being asked or having assumptions made about pregnancy, childrearing, or marriage (204)
- Assumptions about their teaching role or the kind of teaching role a woman should hold (151)

“I've had male high school band directors tell me that I am in the 'wrong' area and should be teaching middle school or elementary.”

“Even my graduate professors pressed me to take a MS job, as well as focus on the MS job market as I was finishing my degree.”

**509 total comments:**

- Being asked or having assumptions made about pregnancy, childrearing, or marriage (204)
- Assumptions about their teaching role or the kind of teaching role a woman should hold (151)
- Being perceived as bitchy, too aggressive/loud, or bossy (141)

“criticized for being too strong/bossy/loud instead of soft/demure”

“If I was loud in class or on the field, I was a bossy bitch. The male director could yell and not get the criticism.”

“Being perceived as bitchy, too aggressive/loud, or bossy (141)
RESTRICTIVE GENDER ROLES

**509 total comments:**

- Being asked or having assumptions made about pregnancy, childrearing, or marriage (204)
  
  “Often called on to run 'housekeeping' roles; all of these: being asked to provide hospitality or do clerical tasks (e.g., make copies, serve as secretary)” (141)

- Being assigned domestic tasks (e.g., copying, hospitality) (111)

- Being perceived as bitchy, too aggressive/loud, or bossy (141)

- Being expected to serve in a nurturing/caregiving capacity (27)

RESTRICTIVE GENDER ROLES

**509 total comments:**

“Often called on to run 'housekeeping' roles; all of these: being asked to provide hospitality or do clerical tasks (e.g., make copies, serve as secretary)” (141)

- Being assigned domestic tasks (e.g., copying, hospitality) (111)

RESTRICTIVE GENDER ROLES

**509 total comments:**

“People feel like they can put more on women. We’re expected to be nurturing caretakers of our students while also doing the same work as our male peers. I can’t be a mom to my students and also be their band director - I shouldn’t have to be”

- Being assigned domestic tasks (e.g., copying, hospitality) (111)

- Being expected to serve in a nurturing/caregiving capacity (27)
RESTRICTIVE GENDER ROLES

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- Being perceived as bitchy, too aggressive/loud, or bossy (141)
- Being assigned domestic tasks (e.g., copying, hospitality) (111)
- Being expected to serve in a nurturing/caregiving capacity (27)
- Being told to smile or be warmer (20)

“At my first position as a middle school director, I was criticized on a review for not seeming ‘warm’ and ‘nice’ enough.”

“After presenting a PD on Diversity & Inclusion Strategies session at the state conference, a retired male director approached me and said 'Nice session, but your information might be received better if you smiled more.'”

RESTRICTIVE GENDER ROLES

**509 total comments:

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- Assumptions about their teaching role or the kind of teaching role a woman should hold (151)
- Being perceived as bitchy, too aggressive/loud, or bossy (141)
- Being assigned domestic tasks (e.g., copying, hospitality) (111)
- Being expected to serve in a nurturing/caregiving capacity (27)
- Being told to smile or be warmer (20)

ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

381 total comments:

- Lack of women/female role models in the profession (206)

“It's troubling to see a lack of female representation among band directors, especially at the secondary level. Of my band director friends, few are women and none teach high school band.”

ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

381 total comments:

- Lack of women/female role models in the profession (206)

“I have never once played in an ensemble directed by a woman, even all through high school and college with several festivals and guest conductors- never a woman.”
ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

381 total comments:
- Lack of women/female role models in the profession (206)
- Lack of female judges/adjudicators (76)

“I saw one woman judging a festival this year and was very shocked. It was nice to see, but made me realize how underrepresented we are.”

“I have yet to perform for a female judge in a band competition, or see one as the guest clinician at a festival.”

ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

381 total comments:
- Lack of women/female role models in the profession (206)
- Lack of female judges/adjudicators (76)
- Lack of women in leadership (71)

“As a female, I have been secretary of our band board for 2 terms, but when I asked about president, I was told it, ‘wasn’t a good fit,’ and that I shouldn’t run.”

"I started playing my band instrument in 1979. During those 43 years, there have been only two female presidents of our state Band and Orchestra association. Two.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</table>

“*I am the only female HS band director in the county.*”

"*There are very few high school band directors that I know who are female. I can currently think of 1 out of the three states that I've lived in.*”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

“*Seeing a sea of white men on banners at Midwest*”

“*I constantly see posters on fb and instagram highlighting all of the male conductors in our field.*”
ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

381 total comments:

- Lack of women/female role models in the profession (206)
- Lack of female judges/adjudicators (76)
- Lack of women specifically in high school band positions (60)
- Lack of women portrayed as band directors in media representation (44)
- Lack of women recognized as guest conductors, honor band directors, clinicians, or award winners (33)
- Lack of women specifically at the college level or as head directors at the high school level (26)

“Am currently first and only female director of my college band. First female drum major was only recently appointed in last 3 years.”

“There are no lead female high school directors in band or orchestra in our district [in Michigan]. All the lead directors are white cisgender men.”

“The guest conductors brought into our region’s honor bands are almost always male and when there is a female she is the junior high director not the senior high.”
ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

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- Lack of women/female role models in the profession (206)
- Lack of female judges/adjudicators (76)
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- Lack of women recognized as guest conductors, honor band directors, clinicians, or award winners (33)
- Lack of women specifically at the college level or as head directors at the high school level (26)
- Lower pay (10)

I found out the assistant band director (male) was making more than me and I have one more year of experience.

ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

381 total comments:
- Lack of women/female role models in the profession (206)
- Lack of female judges/adjudicators (76)
- Lack of women in leadership (71)
- Lack of women specifically in high school band positions (60)
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- Lack of women recognized as guest conductors, honor band directors, clinicians, or award winners (33)
- Lack of women specifically at the college level or as head directors at the high school level (26)
- Lower pay (10)

“It’s not that we earn less outright, but additional paid opportunities (judging gigs, consultants, honor bands) seem to more often go to men”

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)

“I have also been ‘mansplained’ to multiple times by my supervisor about music curriculum and beginning band instruction, which are my specialities because he is the high school band director and thinks/acts like I am inferior to him.”

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)

“I was conducting and [my co-director’s] sub [who just graduated undergrad] didn’t agree with how I was conducting the section. So he said, ‘hey step off the podium and let me show you how it’s done’. This is literally one of the most insulting things that has happened to me, along with being told, ‘Let me show you how to teach a march’.”
ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- Being overlooked for a job or other opportunity in favor of a man (102)

“There are two jobs I have interviewed for, and was told that I did interview ‘exceptionally well,’ but they didn’t want to hire a woman.”

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- Being overlooked for a job or other opportunity in favor of a man (102)

“I have gotten beat out BY MEN TWO YEARS OUT OF COLLEGE FOR MULTIPLE HIGH SCHOOL POSITIONS. I can’t break through, and then I get told I need to ‘gain experience’ teaching 5-12… I have NO IDEA how to get a high school position and it’s made me INSANELY depressed, especially when I see men FRESH out of school getting jobs that I ‘don’t have enough experience for’.”

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- Being overlooked for a job or other opportunity in favor of a man (102)
- Others expressing surprise when they were successful or comments that they were “good for a girl” (59)

“Male directors saying how good my band is for having a female director, constantly asked how I get so many kids involved and such a good program being a female.”

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- Being overlooked for a job or other opportunity in favor of a man (102)
- Others expressing surprise when they were successful or comments that they were “good for a girl” (59)

“I had ‘You’re a great conductor for a woman’ said in front of my ensemble at clinic a few years ago. My students were positively STUNNED.”
ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- Being overlooked for a job or other opportunity in favor of a man (102)
- Others expressing surprise when they were successful or comments that they were “good for a girl” (59)
- Feeling they were rated lower at festivals or having their high rating questioned (49)

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- “ABSOLUTELY seeing trends (especially among judges who are college buddies with my colleague) of ALL women directors at certain festivals getting lower ratings than men.”
- or comments that they were “good for a girl” (59)
- Feeling they were rated lower at festivals or having their high rating questioned (49)

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- “I have had male students treat me like I know less than them, and I have had to tell them ‘trust me I have a 5 year degree in music and have been playing music for over 20 years.'”
- Parents, students, or administrators assuming they would not be as good as a man (28)

ASSUMPTIONS OF INFERIORITY

393 total comments:
- “Mansplaining” (139)
- “A middle school parent stopped me and said they had heard lots of good things about me. Which would have been great if they left it there. But they went on to say they had been worried about how the high school program was going to be after they heard Mr. [Surname] had left and a woman had taken over!!!”
- Parents, students, or administrators assuming they would not be as good as a man (28)
SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:
- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**

“Being called ‘the dress’”

SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:
- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**

“Going to festivals and the facilitators calling me sweetheart”

SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:
- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**

“Little lady’ on recorded judge’s comments”

SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:
- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**
- Being called a derogatory/offensive term (e.g., bitch) (108)

“I have been called a ‘bitch’ more times than I can count - mostly behind my back. What does it say about me when I just consider that ‘par for the course?’”
SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:

- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**
- Being called a derogatory/offensive term (e.g., bitch) (108)
- Being called another woman’s name or being mistaken for another woman (25)

“I am frequently called a different female directors [sic] name.”

SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:

- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**
- Being called a derogatory/offensive term (e.g., bitch) (108)
- Being called another woman’s name or being mistaken for another woman (25)

“I am constantly being called other names - often, an other name starting with the same letter as mine, but another name nonetheless. Honestly, I am almost always the only female around and yet no one can remember my name...”

SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:

- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**
- Being called a derogatory/offensive term (e.g., bitch) (108)
- Being called another woman’s name or being mistaken for another woman (25)

“I was referred to by my first name, while the males on staff that were the same age as me were called Mr. (last name).”

SEXIST LANGUAGE

437 total comments:

“Being called sweetheart and honey, and my colleague is referred to as Mr.______. It happens a lot when the boys club gets together at S&E. For awhile I tried to brush it off like they may not know my name and are trying to do the southern polite thing, but when I taught in Texas my colleagues and heads of our professional organizations called me [first name] or Ms. [last name]. So why can’t we do that in Michigan? “
**SEXIST LANGUAGE**

437 total comments:
- Being called a demeaning name (e.g., sweetie, honey, dear, young lady) (237)**
- Being called a derogatory/offensive term (e.g., bitch) (108)
- Being called another woman's name or being mistaken for another woman (25)
- Being called by their first name or a demeaning name while men were called by their honorific and surname (7)
- Sexist metaphors (e.g., “like a girl,” “play with balls”) (7)

**DENIAL OF THE REALITY OF SEXISM**

231 total comments:
- Blaming women (e.g., “If women didn’t have babies...”, “Women just don’t want to do high school”) (53)

“Men band directors telling kids to play music ‘like a man’. Also telling kids not to wimp out ‘like a girl’.”

“While I was applying for jobs, and even now, I am often told that sexism is a thing of the past and now people are no longer biased toward women in this career. I am also told that the lack of women in leadership roles is because ‘women don't want them’ and if more women worked as hard as men do, then they would be on an even playing field. Being gaslit is a real thing that happens often.”

“People do talk about how much better representation has gotten over time, which is definitely a positive. However, that is used to try to discredit how much the issue still exists.”

“While I was applying for jobs, and even now, I am often told that sexism is a thing of the past and now people are no longer biased toward women in this career. I am also told that the lack of women in leadership roles is because ‘women don't want them’ and if more women worked as hard as men do, then they would be on an even playing field. Being gaslit is a real thing that happens often.”

“I had a former mentor (female, successful director) who told me that I shouldn't waste my time with any women's organizations within the music field because sexism doesn't exist in this state anymore.”
DENIAL OF THE REALITY OF SEXISM

231 total comments:
- Blaming women (e.g., “If women didn’t have babies...”, “Women just don’t want to do high school”) (53)
- Statements that sexism has improved or does not exist anymore (49)
- Dismissal (e.g., ignore it, you’re overreacting) (36)

“Very few men wish to see the systemic issues prevalent in our profession. They roll their eyes and say it is an imagined problem and quickly change the subject.”

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)

“A judge at festival who told my students they need to watch more, and why shouldn’t they ‘I’m nice to look at’.”

DENIAL OF THE REALITY OF SEXISM

231 total comments:
“When I explain to people my experiences as a female band director many don’t seem to believe it until they witness it themselves. A band dad/volunteer didn’t realize how much sexism I experience until a parade official shook his hand and thanked him for bringing his band to the parade.”

- Ignorance or lack of empathy (e.g., “I haven’t seen it”) (35)

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)
- Sexual comments or advances (119)

“While working a band camp, a high school band director said to me be sure to wear your ‘tight yoga pants tomorrow for the boys.’”
SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)
- Sexual comments or advances (119)

“At my first concert as a high school director, an audience member provocatively whistled at me when I walked on stage.”

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)
- Sexual comments or advances (119)
- Uninvited touching (e.g., hand on back) (104)

“Men will always put their hand on my back or shoulder to talk to me or walk past rather than say excuse me.”

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)
- Sexual comments or advances (119)
- Uninvited touching (e.g., hand on back) (104)
- Comments about their or another woman’s body (96)

“My undergrad conducting professor was gross with the way he leaned over my back and pressed his body against mine.”

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)
- Sexual comments or advances (119)
- Uninvited touching (e.g., hand on back) (104)
- Comments about their or another woman’s body (96)

“At the start of my career I can remember it being said ‘What are her qualifications, other than the obvious?’ I was wearing a V-cut tank top and they were alluding to my breasts. This was IN a regional band meeting.”
SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)
- Sexual comments or advances (119)
- Uninvited touching (e.g., hand on back) (104)
- Comments about their or another woman’s body (96)

“I once had a clinician in a sight reading room comment ‘nice bottom... you know, bass clarinets, bari sax, tuba.’ He clearly was not talking about the band and made the comment in front of my students.”

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

412 total comments:
- Comments about their or another woman’s appearance (187)
- Sexual comments or advances (119)
- Uninvited touching (e.g., hand on back) (104)
- Comments about their or another woman’s body (96)
- Having parts of their body stared at (69)

“I have experienced men staring at only my chest, completely avoiding eye contact, when they speak to me in professional settings.”

LEAVING GENDER AT THE DOOR

263 total comments:
- Pressure to dress/look more masculine (160)

“When I dress more ‘manly’ and have shorter hair, I always get better ratings.”

LEAVING GENDER AT THE DOOR

263 total comments:
- Pressure to dress/look more masculine (160)
- Pressure to act more masculine (e.g., lower voice) (57)

“I’ve even been told to lower my voice when speaking so I don’t come out too squeaky and perky.”
LEAVING GENDER AT THE DOOR

263 total comments:
- Pressure to dress/look more masculine (160)
- Pressure to act more masculine (e.g., lower voice) (57)
- Pressure to not talk about their children or ever bring them to work (33)

“If I bring up my children it’s like I’ve yelled a slur. If I talk challenges or maternity leave or juggling the job or pregnancy, I’m a leper.”

DENIAL OF INDIVIDUAL SEXISM

149 total comments:
- Comments like “I don’t see gender” or “I treat everyone the same” (27)

“I’ve heard the ‘I treat everyone equally regardless of gender’ more times than I can count. Usually right before something sexist happens.”

LEAVING GENDER AT THE DOOR

263 total comments:
- Pressure to dress/look more masculine (160)
- Pressure to act more masculine (e.g., lower voice) (57)
- Pressure to not talk about their children or ever bring them to work (33)
- Pressure to police their emotion or tone (13)
- Neglect of female needs (e.g., bathroom, pumping space) (10)

“I was expected to attend Solo and Ensemble even though it was THREE DAYS after my due date, and I was penalized for not finding a sub.”

LEAVING GENDER AT THE DOOR

“I have been told that I am ‘dramatic - and this was not a compliment.’”
DENIAL OF INDIVIDUAL SEXISM

“This is the most frustrating because it is often the men participating in passive sexism that feel this way; they never directly contribute to the problem, but they also do nothing to stand up for others when it happens around them. One particularly awful experience of mine was with my college drumline instructor, who constantly made horrible sexist remarks to, about, and around me in a drumline full of other men. Several years later, he married a woman with daughters and I now see him preaching all over social media about how much he loves and supports women in music because of his step-daughters.”

DENIAL OF INDIVIDUAL SEXISM

149 total comments:
- Comments like “I don’t see gender” or “I treat everyone the same” (27)
- Comments like “I have a daughter (wife, mother, sister)” (20)

STRESSFULNESS/BOTHERSOMENESS?

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WHAT CAN WE DO?

- **Individual Intervention:**
  - Become aware of your own biases and stereotypes!
  - Model breaking traditional role constraints.
  - Become an ally, activist, and/or member of groups that focus on eliminating oppression toward women and non-binary persons.

- **Organizational Intervention:**
  - Have a policy/vision statement reaffirming nondiscrimination policies in hiring, promotion, and retention of female and non-binary employees.
  - Foster a positive climate for women and non-binary persons and do not tolerate hostility.
  - Provide education and training on gender microaggressions and discrimination.
  - Transform the “old boys’ network” to include women and non-binary persons (e.g., PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES!).

- **Societal/Cultural Intervention:**
  - Pass policy/legislation to promote equal access and opportunity for women and non-binary persons.
  - Re-envision education to create a culture that values the contributions of all genders.

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(Sue, 2010)
**TRY MICROINTERVENTIONS...**

(Sue & Spanierman, 2020)

1) **Make the “Invisible” Visible.**
   - Name the oppression.
   - Challenge the stereotype.
   - Ask for clarification of a statement or action.
   - Make the metacommunication explicit by restating/rephrasing the statement.
   - Undermine the metacommunication.

2) **Disarm the Microaggression.**
   - Interrupt the communication and redirect it.
   - State values and set limits
   - Express disagreement.
   - Use an exclamatory short expression (e.g., “Yikes!”).

3) **Educate Offenders.**
   - Help microaggressors differentiate between good intent and harmful impact.
   - Contradict the stereotype with opposing evidence by personalizing it.
   - Promote empathy.

4) **Seek External Intervention/Support When Needed.**
   - Alert leadership and/or report the incident.
   - Establish a buddy system and/or establish or join a support group.

---

“As long as microaggressions remain hidden, invisible, unspoken, and excused as innocent slights with minimal harm, we will continue to insult, demean, alienate, and oppress marginalized groups”

(Sue, 2010b, p. 19)