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# Attitudes Toward Male Vegetarians: Challenging Gender Norms Through Food Choices

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Attitudes Toward Male Vegetarians: Challenging Gender Norms Through Food Choices

A thesis presented by  
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to the Department of Psychology  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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## Abstract

Research suggests that individuals learn to “do gender” and adhere to traditional gender norms from an early age. Those who do not do gender on a daily basis often experience adverse consequences (e.g., ridicule from others). The present study was designed to expand upon the literature regarding perceptions of a particular group of men who do not conform to gender norms – male vegetarians. Participants read one of four brief scenarios about a vegetarian or omnivore, male or female student who is vying for a student government position. After reading the scenario, participants 1) answered a series of questions about the scenario and 2) rated the fictitious individual about whom they read in the scenario using the Bem Sex Role Inventory. Because male vegetarians do not adhere to traditional gender norms, it was expected that the responses to both sets of questions would show that they are viewed more negatively than female vegetarians and omnivores of both genders. However, as male vegetarians were rated similarly to male omnivores and women in both categories, the hypothesis was not supported. The reasons behind the finding, as well as its implications, are discussed.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables.....	v
List of Appendices.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Method.....	23
Results.....	27
Discussion.....	40
References.....	46
Appendices.....	56

List of Tables

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for likelihood to Elect an Individual to a Leadership Position (Scenario Question 3) by Scenario Type (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D).....28

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Participants' Estimation of the Morality of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D).....29

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations for Participants' Estimation of the Health of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D).....31

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations for Participants' Estimation of the Likeability of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D).....32

Table 5: Means and Standard Deviations for Male Participants' (N = 34) Scores on the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory, the Scenario Questions, and the Attitudes Toward Vegetarians Scale (ATVS).....33

Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations of Female Participants' (N = 68) Scores on the

Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory, the Scenario Questions, and the Attitudes Toward Vegetarians Scale (ATVS).....	35
Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations for Male Participants' Scores on the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory.....	36
Table 8: Means and Standard Deviations of Participants' Estimation of the Femininity of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D).....	38

## List of Appendices

Appendix A: Scenarios.....	
Appendix B: Scenario Questions.....	
Appendix C: Bem Sex Role Inventory.....	
Appendix D: The Attitude Toward Vegetarian Scale.....	
Appendix E: Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory.....	
Appendix F: Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory.....	
Appendix G: Demographics Questionnaire.....	
Appendix H: Informed Consent Document.....	
Appendix I: Debriefing Statement.....	





Attitudes Toward Male Vegetarians:  
Challenging Gender Norms Through Food Choices

In 2008, a blogger for the *New York Times* wrote: “Vegetarianism may occupy the moral high ground, but among men it’s regarded as, if not a girl thing, then at least a girlie thing — an anemic regimen for sensitive souls subsisting on rabbit food and tofurkey. Meanwhile, meat-eating persists as a badge of masculinity, as if muscle contained a generous helping of testosterone, with the aggression required to slay a mammal working its way up the food chain” (*Discerning Brute*, 2009).

The above declaration demonstrates the importance of sex and gender in our world. Sex, one’s biological and physiological characteristics, form the basis for one’s gender assignment. Gender assignment, in turn, impacts expectations, roles, activities, and behaviors within society. These interconnected concepts influence nearly all facets of an individual’s life, including how men who consume or do not consume meat are perceived (Nordqvist, 2011).

### **Doing Gender**

Evidence suggests that individuals learn to adhere to their gender assignments from quite an early age. Sociologists Candace West and Don Zimmerman (1987) first used the phrase “doing gender” to describe people’s adherence to gender assignments. According to West and Zimmerman, gender is not something we have; it is something we do. We do gender every day, without fail, during social interactions via a wide array of actions. Girls, for example, are taught to value their physical appearance more than boys are. Moreover, children often are given clothes, toys, and names based on the gender that has been bestowed upon them. This fact was supported in a recent study (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009) in which 42 parents were interviewed. The researchers found that preschool students are frequently encouraged to play with gender-

appropriate toys and wear clothing suitable for their gender (e.g., Boys were discouraged from playing with dolls or wearing anything with the color pink) (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009).

### **Hegemonic Masculinity**

Girls and boys are not the only individuals who do gender; women and men are equally likely to conform to gender norms and act in a feminine or masculine manner. However, there is no consistent set of qualities that describes what constitutes masculinity or femininity because the qualities change across time and between cultures. What is more, demographic characteristics (e.g., age, class, ethnicity) can determine whether a given practice is considered masculine or feminine (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). The changing of the definitions of masculinity and femininity has shown researchers that there is no single concept of masculinity; rather, there are many possible ways to behave in a masculine manner. Therefore, researchers have increasingly proposed the idea of multiple masculinities. As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) explained: “Masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals. Masculinities are configurations of practices that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular setting” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 836).

Although the various masculinities may appear distinct, they are comparable in purpose; all masculine actions attempt to gain power and avoid maltreatment (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Furthermore, they are usually not characterized by physical attributes (Pompper, 2010). The masculinity that is most revered by society at any point in time is referred to as hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1999). Engaging in the practices set forth by hegemonic masculinity is often an effective way for men to acquire power (Connell, 2005).

Adverse ramifications await men who fail to partake in hegemonic masculinity practices. They are at risk of experiencing ridicule, hostility, and discrimination and will often be compared to individuals, such as women or gay men, who are lower down in the social hierarchy (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Taunting is one method used to preserve gender inequality and promote hegemonic masculinity. Pompper (2010) illustrated how effective this method is using the results of interviews with men from two generations. Both the younger generation (80 college men) and the older generation (27 of the college men's fathers or uncles) expressed their hesitance to embrace anything that is feminine because they would be called homosexual and, consequently, would lose their current privileges. The findings of a study conducted by Nath (2010) suggest the effectiveness of verbal taunts in sustaining hegemonic masculinity with regard to food. Food is frequently utilized as a means of doing gender; therefore, it is unsurprising that participants in Nath's study reported that verbal taunts were often employed as a way of ensuring that people consume gender appropriate foods (e.g., meat and potatoes). For example, the male vegetarians in Nath's study maintained that "criticisms, and comments expressing fault, bewilderment or severe disapproval, are the principal tools that nonvegetarian men use to ensure observance of, or obedience to, the established standard of consuming meat and animal products on a regular basis" (p. 266). Nath's meat-eschewing participants reported having being criticized by family members for failing to do gender through food (i.e., not eating what "real" men eat). Similarly, male vegetarians interviewed by Pierce (2010) reported that their food choices are frequently not supported by omnivores; often, their vegetarian diets are viewed as extreme and are verbally dismissed as a "diet" and not a way of life. Other methods of sustaining hegemonic masculinity include criminalizing homosexual behaviors, disallowing

criticism of the prevailing type of masculinity, and regulating the media (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

### **Maintaining the Status Quo**

Criminalizing homosexual behaviors has been an effective tactic for maintaining the current form of hegemonic masculinity. For example, many U.S. states have enacted laws to prevent marriage equality. Homosexual masculinities have also come to be seen as undesirable because some heterosexuals have made homosexuals the target of their violent acts (e.g., hitting, punching). In addition, homosexuals have been shunned by their heterosexual counterparts. The amalgamation of all of these tactics has resulted in the relegation of homosexual masculinities to the bottom of the masculine gender hierarchy; thus, homosexuality has come to be associated with femininity in the hegemonic view (Connell, 2005). In fact, homosexual masculinity is often perceived as so unfavorable that heterosexual men employed in vocations that are traditionally dominated by women (e.g., nurse) go to great lengths to demonstrate their sexual orientation (Harding, 2007).

Gender inequality and hegemonic masculinity have also been successfully maintained by censoring negative comments and ideas about the prevailing form of masculinity. Ignoring the flaws of a society's prevailing form of masculinity is simple if the flaws are never discussed. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) utilized the shootings that took place at Columbine High School as an example. Masculinity and aggression, the researchers stated, was not listed as a possible reason for the perpetrators' criminal actions.

Regulating the media is, perhaps, the most effective way of maintaining hegemonic masculinity and the status quo. A bombardment of propaganda that both promotes hegemonic masculinity and demeans femininity is constantly promulgated by the media. Sports news

anchors, for instance, frequently reinforce how important it is for men to play aggressive sports (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Moreover, the men in Pompper's (2010) study emphasized the media's part in upholding traditional gender roles. Male participants in a study conducted by Haug (as cited by Kivel & Johnson, 2009), for instance, reported that their beliefs about how men "should" behave have been impacted by images in the media that depict men as violent, "macho," and hegemonic. Further, Katz (2006) found that the media's depiction of men as violent has caused men to believe that they must utilize aggressive tactics such as coercion, intimidation, and humiliation in order to be considered masculine. Moreover, Hanke (1998) pointed to television sitcoms, such as *Home Improvement*, that feature stereotypically "masculine" characters as "one of the discursive strategies through which...[television] series reiterate and recuperate hegemonic masculinity" (p. 77). According to Hanke, the male protagonist of *Home Improvement* (Tim Taylor) "represents a 'pro-male' male stance within white, middle-class, domesticity" (p. 78). Taylor is able to assert his masculinity through the traditionally masculine vocation of handyman and by ridiculing the show's female and effeminate male characters.

### **Eating Habits**

Because the impact of social pressure on food preferences has been found to be particularly strong (Conner & Armitage, 2006), the promotion of gender roles and hegemonic masculinity is especially evident in food consumption; men and women display (or perform) their gender through their eating habits. Food is habitually chosen based on the likelihood that it will improve one's social standing (Sadalla & Burroughs, as cited by Vartarian, Herman, & Polivy, 2007). For example, in an attempt to appear feminine, most women consume less food than most men do (Mooney & Lorenz, 1997). One study showed that, in a cafeteria setting, women chose to eat

less food than men (Krantz, 1979). Similar studies have shown that men had the intention to eat more chocolate pudding and other snack foods than women did (Grogan, Bell, & Conner, 1997; Laessle, Lehrke, & Duckers, 2007).

That women and men eat different amounts of foods has major implications for social comparisons. Vartanian, Herman, and Polivy (2007), for instance, found that people who eat large meals are perceived as more masculine than those who eat small meals. What is more, social appeal, femininity, and a preoccupation with physical appearance is inversely correlated with meal size (Basow & Kobrynowicz, 1993; Bock & Kanarek, 1995; Chaiken & Pliner, 1987).

Researchers have found that men and women not only consume different amounts of foods, but they eat different types of foods as well. Often, food choices are made based on the foods' perceived masculinity or femininity. Mooney and Lorenz's (1997) work lends support to the finding that particular types of foods are believed by society to suggest either femininity or masculinity. In their study, 136 undergraduate participants read one of four passages. The passages featured a male or female college student (Susan or John) and one of two descriptions of what the fictional college student ate on an ordinary day. One description was comprised of foods that the researchers believed would be perceived as feminine, and the other description was comprised of foods that the researchers believed would be perceived as masculine.

Participants' responses (to a question asking whether the particular day's meals represented foods preferred by a man or woman) showed that the researchers were successfully able to construct scenarios in which an individual ate a diet that was perceived as either feminine or masculine.

Other researchers have been able to show that the belief that a certain food is feminine or masculine will influence individuals' actions. For instance, women are more likely than men to

eat fruit -- a food classified as feminine (Roos, Prättälä, & Koski, 2002). Similarly, the Nuer men of southern Sudan consider eating eggs, another food classified as feminine, to be an effeminate act (Adams, 1991). In another study, men who eat pie, a type of food that is considered masculine because of its high caloric content, were rated as more healthy, athletic, and likeable than women who eat pie (Oakes & Slotterback, 2004). The conclusion that men and women eat different types of foods was also reached by other researchers. After having conducted seven surveys in six European countries, Beer-Borst et al. (2000) found that men reported consuming fewer fruits and vegetables than women did. Female participants in a study by Wardle et al. (2004) ate more fruits and vegetables than male participants did. Moreover, during their interviews with individuals from 23 countries, the researchers found that women are more likely than men to avoid foods that are high in fat. Interviews with adults in the United States conducted by Serdula et al. (1995) support the finding that women and men tend to eat different types of foods. For example, the researchers found that, on average, women eat 3.7 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Men, on the other hand, eat an average of 3.3 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. The results of interviews conducted in Stockholm also provide evidence to support the finding that women and men often eat different types of foods (Pederby, as cited by Jensen & Holm, 1999). Most Swedish men, for instance, do not eat cottage cheese due to its perceived feminine qualities. What is more, fish and fruits are believed to be unsuitable foods for French men because such foods are required to be eaten delicately (Bourdieu, 1984).

### **Eating: A Masculine Activity**

The variation in men's and women's eating habits can be better understood with a cursory understanding of the history of meat-eating. The history of human consumption of meat is long



and convoluted. At its core, however, is the desire of people to rule and control nature and their world (Fiddes, 1991). Analysis of fossils, for example, has shown that men hunted, ate, and thus, dominated other animals (Horton, as cited by Nath, 2010). As meat-eating has been theorized to be about control and domination, it follows that it has traditionally been the powerful members of a society who consume meat. To illustrate this point, Stavick (1996) cited a survey conducted in Britain in 1902 that showed that the working class consumed one-third the amount of meat the British aristocracy did.

Because it is the powerful who tend to eat meat, and men are usually the most powerful members of our society, it follows that meat-eating is primarily a masculine activity. Research has shown that this assumption has merit. For instance, in times of economic hardship, it is men who were provided with meat, whereas women and children ate more grains and vegetables (Adams, 1991). Furthermore, from at least the 1800s, people have connected vegetarianism and femininity (Twigg, as cited in Santos & Booth, 1996). Vegetarianism and femininity, for example, were closely linked in the Victorian era; pregnant Victorian women frequently abstained from meat-eating as a means of preserving their femininity (Stavick, 1996). Moreover, male athletes and soldiers were often provided with meat in order to cultivate their strength (Stavick, 1996).

More recently, Roos, Prättälä, and Koski (2002) supported the finding that men are more often given meat than are women by citing a study that showed that women in British families believed that men require more red meat than women do (Charles & Kerr, 1988). Additional evidence that meat-eating is a masculine activity comes from the fact that the average woman has been shown to dislike red meat, whereas the average man demonstrates a strong preference for it (Kubberød, Ueland, Rødbotten, Westad, & Risvik, 2001). Moreover, a series of studies

confirmed that men typically favor all types of meat (Roos, et al., 2002). In another study, women have reported feelings of discomfort in regard to eating meat, whereas men reported feelings of delight (Rousset, Deiss, Jullard, Schlich, & Droit-Volet, 2005). In addition, an analysis of available social science literature showed that meat consumption denotes masculinity in several cultures (Jensen & Holm, 1999). For example, Danish men eat a significantly greater amount of meat than do women.

Furthermore, a study (Adams, 1991) that supports the tendency of men to consume more meat than women involved a content analysis of cookbooks. The analysis showed that meat dishes were usually described in the barbecue section of the books, and men were typically the target audience of this section. A content analysis of cookbooks performed by another researcher yielded similar results. Neuhaus (2003) also found that cookbooks emphasize the masculine nature of meat. For example, cookbook authors assumed that men would be adept at barbecuing because of its association with the preparation of meat dishes.

Beerman, Jennings, and Crawford (1990) found that meat-eating was viewed as a masculine activity on college campuses as well; male undergraduate students consumed greater quantities of meat than did female undergraduate students. That meat-eating is a masculine activity was also supported in a study of British men. The men rejected a vegetarian diet due to their belief that such a diet would not be sufficiently able to satiate a man (Gough & Conner, 2006). Another subset of the British population -- undergraduate students -- also view meat-eating as masculine. In their study with 158 British undergraduate students, Santos and Booth (1996) reported that women more often than men avoided meat in a campus dining hall.

The tendency for men to eat more meat than women is also present in Finland. Prattala and colleagues (2007) found that Finnish men eat more meat and fewer fruits and vegetables than

Finnish women do. Moreover, researchers (Povey & Conner, 2001) who employed the Implicit Association Test (IAT) showed that meat-eating is a masculine practice because meat was habitually paired with masculinity by participants who took the IAT. So strong is the perception that meat-eating is a masculine practice that men are willing to jeopardize their own health in order to conform to the gender norm. For instance, many men would rather risk coronary heart disease and high blood pressure than eliminate meat from their diets (Nath, 2010). Chrisler's (2012) work considers some reasons why men often choose to eat meat without thinking about how the action impacts their health. She indicated that our society generally expects women to be health conscious. Therefore, women tend not to eat red meat, which is a high-calorie and high-cholesterol food. Men, on the other hand, are typically not expected to be health conscious and can frequently consume red meat without fear that they will be judged harshly for the weight they may gain.

When Kahle and Homer (1985) surveyed 84 men and 55 women, they determined that women eat more vegetarian foods than men do. In addition, women tend to eat meals without meat when not in the company of others, whereas men usually eat meat regardless of whether or not they are in the presence of others (Jansoon, as cited by Jensen & Holm, 1999). People in Indonesia generally believe that meat-eating is a masculine activity as well and consider meat to be the property of men (Adams, 1991). An additional piece of evidence supporting the notion that meat-eating is a masculine activity is the finding that it is not only people who do not eat meat who are viewed as feminine; the actual animals that humans consume are perceived as feminine as well (Adams, 1991). That animals are viewed as feminine is evidenced by advertisements that portray the animals as having feminine qualities (e.g., a barbecue restaurant that features a pig wearing a skirt) (Adams, 1991). Further evidence of the association between

animals and femininity is supplied by Garnett (2011), who noted that animal-related terms are often used to refer to women (e.g., chick, cow, vixen, bitch). This perception that animals are feminine reinforces the belief that meat-eating is a masculine activity because it suggests that, when one consumes meat, one is symbolically consuming and asserting one's dominance over women.

Adams (1991) called the postulation that eating meat is an activity for men "the sexual politics of meat" (p. 2). She suggested that the ideas discussed above may be so prominent because it is believed that meat-eating increases male virility. In addition, those who do not consume meat tend to be viewed as effeminate. As a result, women in several African and Asian cultures are not allowed to eat some types of meat, such as chicken (Adams, 1991).

### **Meat-Eating in the Media**

The masculine nature of meat-eating is consistently emphasized in the media. For example, as a means of asserting that meat and masculinity are linked, male vegetarians (and, indeed, any vegetarians) rarely appear in the media (Friedman, 1997). When vegetarianism is discussed in the media, the importance of meat-eating for men is generally stressed. A recent Burger King commercial, for instance, featured men consuming large quantities of meat. "I am man," those men declared (feeteh, 2007). The popular television show, *South Park*, also remarked upon the masculine nature of meat-eating. "If you don't eat meat you grow vaginas all over your body," one character proclaimed (Stone, 2002). Another television show that promoted the stereotype that men eat meat is *Seinfeld*. In one episode of the series, the protagonist feared that he would be viewed as a wimp if it is revealed that he has ceased eating meat for a short while (Adams, 1991). What is more, producers of the movie adaptation of the book *The Bridges of Madison County*, altered the main character's eating habits. The cowboy, who was described as a

vegetarian in the book, was transformed into an omnivore on the big screen. It was decided that audiences would not find a hyper-masculine, vegetarian cowboy a believable character (Friedman, 1997).

Newspapers and magazines have also greatly contributed to the view that men should eat meat. When a *New York Times* reporter was asked “What do men want?,” the reporter wrote: “[G]reat sex and a great steak – and not necessarily in that order” (Adams, 1991, p. 17). Moreover, in the September 2009 issue of *Esquire* Magazine, an article entitled “How Men Eat” made the following declaration promoting the masculine nature of meat-eating: “People whine about some of them being made from dead horses... but they don’t know the Jujube eater’s darkest secret: By consuming dead horses we’re taking their power and virility and making it our own. Eating Jujubes is like eating powdered rhino horn or seal penis without any of the messy sociopolitical ramifications or bureaucratic hassle. Look! It’s just candy.... a candy that can be eaten in pin-drop quiet... without recrimination from wives or healthniks... We’ll eat our jujubes...in determined silence, growing ever stronger, until one day we will rise with the thunder of a thousand of those same dead horses, our bellies hard-packed with their souls and gelatin and our teeth stained by their blood, and we will trample your pesticide-free fields, an army of raging stallions once again” (*Discerning Brute*, 2009). *Men’s Health* magazine, has also promoted the masculine nature of meat-eating. In a content analysis of six issues of the publication, it was found that vegetables were depicted as feminine, whereas meat was portrayed as manly (Stibbe, 2004).

Even People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has succumbed to the belief that consuming meat is a masculine activity. Most of the animal-friendly clothes advertised on the organization’s website are directed toward women ([www.peta.org](http://www.peta.org)). The vegetarian recipes listed

on the website, too, targeted a female demographic. One recipe, for instance, was dubbed “Cutie Fruity Sushi.” Although the recipe was not explicitly geared toward women, it was clearly labeled with a female audience in mind (Forrest, 2011).

All of the aforementioned depictions of meat-eating in the media serve to promote hegemonic masculinity by characterizing meat-eating as masculine. That the media have portrayed vegetarianism as “homosexual” and “feminine” was confirmed after a cursory perusal of the internet search engine, Yahoo. Yahoo users have posted dozens of comments questioning the masculinity of men who do not eat meat (e.g., “Are majority of Vegetarian men Gay?,” “Have you ever met a heterosexual male vegetarian? I don’t think such a thing exists...one of my friends is a heterosexual vegetarian. Or atleast [sic] he claims to be heterosexual,” “Are all male vegetarians gay?,” “Why are people such pricks about male vegetarians?,” “Have you ever met a heterosexual male vegetarian who was mentally stable?,” and “How do I convince my girlfriend (whom [sic] is a vegan) Men NEED to eat meat, it a necessity?”).

### **Perceptions of Vegetarians**

The fact that male vegetarians are scarce comes as no surprise after this glimpse into the mindset of our society coupled with the previously described research on vegetarians. After all, not many men would willingly have their personas equated with individuals who are low on the social hierarchy. It is also not surprising in light of the finding that men who do not conform to gender norms are judged more harshly than women who do not conform to gender norms (Gal & Wilkie, 2010). However, there *are* men who subscribe to a vegetarian lifestyle. What can be said of the lives of such men? Presently, the answer is: not much. Little is known about how male vegetarians are perceived on a daily basis because the amount of research on the topic is as scant as the number of male vegetarians in our society. Rather, the focus has been two-fold; the

aim of most research has been to 1) characterize vegetarians and 2) assess attitudes toward vegetarians as a group. For instance, research has shown that vegetarians tend to be young, well-educated, middle-class, White women (Merriman & Wilson-Merriman, 2009). Moreover, vegetarians are more likely than their peers to be spiritual and unmarried (Misra, Balagopal, Klatt, & Geraghty, 2010) and less likely to support hierarchal domination (Allen, Wilson, Ng, & Dunne, 2000). Furthermore, after having surveyed 150 vegetarians and 150 omnivores, Freeland-Graves, Greninger, Graves, and Young (1986) found that vegetarians were more likely than omnivores to use nontraditional forms of medication. They also found that vegetarians believed themselves to be in better health than omnivores. In addition, vegetarians are more likely than omnivores to be diagnosed with an eating disorder (Perry, Mcquire, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2001). During their interviews with 85 women, Kwan and Roth (2011) found that vegetarian women were more likely than omnivore women to identify as a feminist, lesbian, or bisexual. Moreover, omnivores have a higher average body mass index (BMI) than vegetarians do (Key, Davey, & Appleby 1999). Furthermore, in comparison to individuals who consumed a vegetarian meal, individuals who consumed a meat-based meal were perceived as more likely to endorse social power, which was defined as the extent to which one “seek[s] to control or dominate people and resources” (Allen, Gupta, & Monnier, 2008, p. 298). Endorsement of social power was more often attributed to beef sausage eaters than to vegetable roll eaters by the 59 undergraduate students and university staff members in Allen, Gupta, and Monnier’s study.

Much more has been written about how vegetarians have been perceived throughout history. For example, during the Inquisition, the Roman Catholic Church believed vegetarians were heretics, and the Chinese government held a similar belief in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Kellman, as cited

in Ruby, 2011). Moreover, Individuals in Victorian England perceived vegetarians to be odd (Giehl, 1979). Views of vegetarians in many parts of the world were not any more favorable in the earlier half of the twentieth century, as “the decision not to eat meat [was] framed as deviant and worthy of suspicion” (Ruby, 2011, p. 146). It was even believed that stammering was a problem caused by a vegetarian diet that could only be remedied by consumption of beefsteak (Dunlap, 1944). In the present era there has been a slight shift in views of vegetarians. As Ruby (2011) noted: “[Vegetarians] are now viewed as good and principled if a bit weak and feminine” (p. 147). Monin (2007), for example, found that omnivores expect to be reprimanded by vegetarians for lacking morals; this expectation contributes to their belief that vegetarians are “good” but physically weak individuals. In addition, vegetarians were viewed as more feminine and moral than omnivores in a couple of between-subjects studies (Ruby & Heine, 2011). In the first of these studies, 273 participants read and then answered questions about a scenario featuring a fictional college student who was either a vegetarian or an omnivore. Analysis of the questions answered by participants showed that vegetarians were believed to be more virtuous and less masculine than omnivores were. The second of Ruby and Heine’s studies was similar to the first. In that study, however, the targets in the scenario were explicitly referred to as a vegetarian or omnivore, and no mention was made of the types of foods they ate. This precaution was taken so that participants’ answers would not be influenced by any preconceived values or stereotypes they may associate with certain food types. For instance, the results of study one may have been influenced by the inclusion of value-laden foods, such as tofu. The results of study two were not confounded by this problem because specific food items were not mentioned. The results of the second study were nearly identical to the results of the first.



Even though these studies seem to suggest that attitudes toward vegetarians are favorable, vegetarianism is still stigmatized, as evidenced by a study of children living in the northeastern region of the United States. In that study, it was found that the participants thought that not eating meat was as immoral as stealing (Hussar & Harris, 2009). Vegetarians are also believed to be unhealthy in relation to omnivores. For this reason, France has implemented policies that make it difficult for schools to serve children meatless lunches (*Guardian*, 2011), and a Greek vegetarian couple has been denied the right to adopt (*Trading Room*, 2011).

Other research on vegetarians' traits and assessments of perceptions of vegetarians has been less direct. For instance, a myriad of studies have been conducted to examine how perceptions of people are impacted as a result of the fat content of the meals they consume. These studies are indirectly related to attitudes toward vegetarians because vegetarians generally eat low-fat diets (Phillips, Hackett, Stratton, & Billington, 2004). In study of the effects of low- and high-fat diets, Ruby and Heine (2011) found that low-fat food eaters were given higher ratings than high-fat food eaters in the categories of intelligence and attractiveness. Thus, vegetarians can be said to be perceived as more intelligent and attractive than omnivores. Other research indicates that vegetarians may be viewed as more physically fit, fastidious, and self-absorbed than omnivores because people who eat low-fat diets were believed to possess these characteristics more often than were people who eat high-fat diets (Fries & Croyle, as cited by Ruby & Heine). Similarly, in a 2004 study, consumers of low-fat foods were viewed in an overall more positive light than high-fat food eaters (Oakes & Slotterback, 2004). This finding suggests that omnivores are generally viewed in an overall less positive light than vegetarians.

### **Perceptions of Male Vegetarians**

As can be inferred from the negative depictions in the media and the research on hegemonic masculinity, the results of the few studies that have been conducted on male vegetarians have not been encouraging. For example, after having conducted 22 semi-structured interviews with ethical vegetarians, Merriman and Wilson-Merriman (2009) found that most vegetarians were verbally taunted by their communities, but male vegetarians in particular were the recipients of cruel name-calling. "I get called a faggot or a pussy every day for being a vegetarian. I feel like I'm just as much a person as anyone else, I just choose not to eat meat," one male participant lamented (p. 2). Another participant added, "Some people ask [about your views] to get you pissed off about something...They ask you in order to start an argument" (p. 3). Besides verbal harassment, male vegetarians also reported that their needs (e.g., not being served vegetarian meals in campus dining halls) were not being met, and they felt misunderstood by others.

Merriman and Wilson-Merriman's study had several limitations. Because no omnivores were included in the interview process, only one side of the story was told. Perhaps omnivores were not aware that vegetarians had unmet needs and perhaps the actual instances of name-calling occurred with less frequency than the vegetarians indicated. Furthermore, it is uncertain how male vegetarians are judged in regard to specific qualities (e.g., Are they perceived as "risk-takers," "compassionate," or "sensitive"), and the issue of whether or not these judgments translate into discrimination remains to be seen.

Nath (2010) is another researcher who had attempted to identify negative experiences that male vegetarians may encounter. Subsequent to having interviewed 25 male vegetarians, Nath reported that men who do not eat meat believe that they are constantly viewed as effeminate. Though Nath's study contributed important information to our body of knowledge, it suffers

from many of the same limitations as Merriman and Wilson-Merriman's study, as only vegetarians were interviewed.

### **Court Cases**

It is likely that male vegetarians are, in fact, subjected to prejudice and discrimination. Two recent court cases illustrate this likelihood. The cases are prime examples of the effects of hegemonic masculinity and the consequences of non-adherence to gender norms. The first case concerns a vegan named Jerry Friedman. Friedman maintained that he was fired from his job on hospital-based job subsequent to having refused to be vaccinated with a vaccine grown in chicken embryos. Although it was not necessary that Friedman be vaccinated because he would never come into contact with patients, his superiors did not appreciate his noncompliance. Friedman was subsequently fired because vegetarians are not a protected group; therefore, discrimination against them is tolerated (Soifer, 2004).

In the second case, a man named Ryan Pacifico filed a lawsuit against his former employer. Pacifico claimed that he was not fired for incompetence or negligence, but for his eating habits. A long-time vegetarian, Pacifico reported numerous instances of being verbally assaulted by his boss and coworkers for declining to eat meat. He was often accused of being homosexual, and it is this stereotype (i.e., that male vegetarians are gay) that led to his termination. Thus, Pacifico claimed to have been compared to a homosexual man for engaging in actions that are traditionally feminine (Martinez, 2009).

Jerry Friedman and Ryan Pacifico are two of a relatively small group of men who have elected to adhere to a meatless diet. Many men within this group have had negative experiences due to their non-conformity to masculine norms; thus, it may be surprising that powerful individuals are increasingly choosing to observe a vegetarian lifestyle. Stein (2010) argued that

the existence of male vegetarians (more specifically, the existence of male vegans) is not as uncommon among men with clout as it once was. Influential men -- such as former U.S. president Bill Clinton and the CEO of Upromise, Tom Anderson -- have gradually begun to eliminate meat from their diets. The reason behind this eschewing of meat, according to Stein, is the desire of influential men in positions of authority to use their eating habits to set themselves apart from the general populous. After all, vegans only make up one percent of the United States' inhabitants; thus, consuming a relatively expensive diet of vegetarian-friendly meals is an effective means of reinforcing one's authority and proving that one has the financial resources to adhere to this meatless diet. Vegetarianism "affords [powerful men] the opportunity to control their own health with the same manic id with which they control everything else" (Stein, p. 2).

Stein's argument that high-status men can engage in feminine behaviors without repercussions has found support from researchers. Men in traditionally feminine jobs, for instance, reported during in-depth interviews a belief that their masculinity was in question (Henson & Rogers, 2001). Those 68 men feared that they may be mistaken for homosexual; as a result, they asserted their masculinity by engaging in masculine norms whenever they could. Many of the men, for example, refused to partake in niceties (e.g., smiling) with, or to take orders from, their superiors. The men Stein (2010) wrote about are able to refrain from such behaviors because they need not be worried about being perceived as homosexual or effeminate.

More evidence that suggests that lower-status men, as opposed to higher-status men, need to partake in masculine activities in order to avoid being viewed as feminine comes from the results of 40 semi-structured interviews with male carpenters and engineers in Finland (Roos, et al., 2002). The engineers expressed a significantly higher affinity for vegetarianism and other feminine practices than the carpenters did. The engineers, men who are higher in the social

hierarchy than the carpenters, do not have to adhere to gender norms as strictly or accept hegemonic masculinity as readily as the carpenters do.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) would not be surprised that lower-status men must assert their masculinity with greater urgency than higher-status men. They maintained that hegemonic masculinity is often not the most common form of masculinity. Frequently, only a small portion of men truly behave in accordance with hegemonic masculinity, and those men serve as models for what is most masculine.

Mills and D'Alfonso (2007) provided a formal explanation for the motives behind some men's unwillingness to embrace feminine practices. They analyzed the worth of threatened masculinity theory, which posits that women are increasingly succeeding in areas once exclusively controlled by men and, as a result, men have begun to assert their masculinity whenever possible. In an experiment that involved providing 66 undergraduate male students with false feedback after they performed a physical task against a male or female opponent, the value of the theory was supported because men felt less masculine after losing to a woman. Gal and Wilkie (2010) also found evidence for threatened masculinity theory in their study that showed that men are more likely than women to make "gender-appropriate" choices when their gender identities are threatened (Gal & Wilkie, 2010).

The increase in the number of powerful, vegan men could be an indication that vegetarianism's perception as a feminine act will soon transform; the act of adhering to a vegetarian diet may come to be regarded as neither feminine nor masculine in the near future. This possibility is supported when one analyzes the vegetarian movement today. The movement has been traced as far back as Plato's Greece, but it did not gain traction until Peter Singer published *Animal Liberation* in 1975 (Merriman & Wilson-Merriman, 2009). Subsequent to the

book's publication, individuals of many backgrounds have eliminated meat from their diet, and some professionals, such as the members of the American Dietetic Association, have come out in support of the vegetarian movement (Maurer, 1995).

Though advocates of vegetarianism have much to be hopeful about, it is likely that male vegetarians will continue to be seen as effeminate for quite some time. Yes, the popularity of the movement has markedly increased since its origins in ancient Greece. Yes, there are over 4.7 million vegetarians today in the United States alone (Chin, Fisak, & Sims, 2002). And, yes, more vegetarian options are being sold in restaurants and stores than ever before. But the statistics reported by investigators suggest that the vegetarian movement has a long way to go before its perception as feminine is shed. For instance, Misra, Balagopal, Klatt, and Geraghty (2010) found that female Asian Indians were significantly more likely to be vegetarians than were male Asian Indians. It was also found through survey research that there are twice as many female vegetarians as there are male vegetarians (Ruby, 2011; Shickle, Lewis, Charny, & Farrow, 1989; Shriver, 2009).

### **The Present Study**

The research and theory reviewed thus far allows us to understand much about the impact of gender on behaviors and perceptions. Men and women are expected to engage in certain practices, and, if they do not, unfavorable consequences are likely to arise. Men who are not "sufficiently" masculine, for instance, risk being viewed as effeminate or as homosexual. Groups of nontraditional men, such as male vegetarians, have reported experiencing prejudice and discrimination. However, no research has empirically examined the extent to which society holds prejudices and discriminates against male vegetarians. In order to address this issue, the present study was designed to investigate prejudice and discrimination against male vegetarians.

It was expected that the results would show that male vegetarians are more likely to be discriminated against than are female vegetarians and omnivores of both genders. More specifically, it was expected that male vegetarians will be less likely than omnivores or female vegetarians to be elected to a leadership position. Similarly, it was hypothesized that participants would rate vegetarians as more moral and healthy, but less likeable, than omnivores.

The relationship between adherence to gender norms and perceptions of vegetarians also was investigated. It was expected that individuals who conform to gender norms would have less favorable attitudes toward male vegetarians. Participants who score high on the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI) or the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI) (and do, therefore, generally adhere to gender norms) were expected to rate male vegetarians more harshly than female vegetarians or omnivores. Moreover, based on prior findings that vegetarianism is not a masculine activity, it seems likely that individuals with high scores on the CMNI would not be likely themselves to adhere to a vegetarian lifestyle. Furthermore, male vegetarians were expected to be viewed as more feminine than male omnivores. That is, participants were expected to attribute more feminine characteristics to male vegetarians than to male omnivores on the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) and seven of the scenario questions (i.e., questions 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, and 21).

## Method

### Participants

Participants were 34 male and 68 female undergraduate students at Connecticut College. They ranged in age from 18 to 24, with a mean age of 19.35. The majority of the participants was European American (83.5%); 2.9% were African-American, 5.8% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 6.8% were Hispanic. Moreover, a small percentage of the participants (16.5%) were vegetarians. A larger percentage of the participants (31.1%) reported having a vegetarian family member, and an even larger percentage of the participants (92.2%) indicated that they had a vegetarian friend. With regard to sexual orientation, 94.2% of the participants were heterosexual and 2.9% were gay or lesbian. Most participants were recruited through the Psychology Subject Pool and offered 30 minutes of course credit. Other students were recruited at Shain Library or Harris Refectory and offered candy or donuts as an incentive.

### Materials

Participants read one of four brief scenarios about a vegetarian or omnivore, male or female student (Steve / Stephanie) who is vying for a student government position (See Appendix A). The scenario also mention the dish (lentil burger / hamburger) that the student will prepare for guests at a party if he / she is victorious in the election. After having read the scenario, participants answered a series of questions, such as “Steve / Stephanie is bold” and “Steve / Stephanie is pleasant” (See Appendix B). The responses to these questions were used to determine whether male vegetarians are viewed differently than female vegetarians and omnivores or both genders.

*Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI).* The Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) (See Appendix C) is a 60-item measure used to determine whether male vegetarians are viewed differently than



female vegetarians and omnivores. The instructions to this inventory were slightly altered to ask participants to rate the fictitious individual about whom they had read in the scenario rather than to rate themselves as is usually done. The BSRI examines masculinity (e.g., aggressive, leadership qualities) and femininity (e.g., kind, patient) along two discrete dimensions. Each of the adjectives (20 masculine, 20 feminine, 20 neutral) are rated on a likert-type scale of 1-7, where 7 means most like the individual. High scores on both dimensions suggest that participants believe that whomever they are rating is androgynous, and low scores indicate that the individual who is being rated is seen as undifferentiated. A high score on the femininity scale and a low score on the masculinity scale indicates that the person being rated is viewed as feminine. Similarly, a high score on the masculinity scale and a low score on the femininity scale indicates that the person being rated is viewed as masculine. The BSRI is a commonly used and reliable measure. Holt and Ellis (1998) reported the Cronbach's alpha for masculinity to be .86 and for femininity .82. Cronbach's alphas for the present study were .93 for masculinity and for femininity .88.

*The Attitude Toward Vegetarians Scale.* The Attitude Toward Vegetarians Scale (Chin, Fisak, & Sims, 2002) (See Appendix D) is used to measure whether participants view vegetarians negatively or positively. There are 33-items on this measure. Sample items include "People who refuse to eat meat are childish and immature," "I avoid interacting with vegetarians whenever possible," and "It's not O.K. to tease someone for being vegetarian." Participants respond to the items on a likert-type scale of 1-5, where 5 means that the individual strongly agrees with the item. High scores on this scale indicate that participants hold favorable attitudes toward vegetarians and low scores suggest that participants hold unfavorable views toward

vegetarians. The Cronbach's alpha for the scale was reported as .87 by Chin, Fisak, and Sims (2002). Cronbach's alpha for the present study is .85.

*Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI).* The Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (Mahalik et al., 2003) (See Appendix E) was completed only by male participants. As the name of the inventory implies, the CMNI assesses how strongly male participants adhere to gender norms. It has 38-items that make-up 11 subscales (Winning, Emotional Control, Risk-taking, Violence, Power over Women, Dominance, Playboy, Self-reliance, Primacy of Work, Disdain for Homosexuals, Pursuit of Status). Among these items are "I like fighting," "I enjoy taking risks," and "I hate asking for help." High scores on the CMNI mean that participants are likely to conform to masculine gender norms, and low scores mean that participants are not likely to conform to masculine gender norms. The CMNI has a reported cronbach's alpha of .94 (Chitkara, 2011). Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .85.

*Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI).* Female participants were evaluated in a similar manner with the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (Mahalik et al., 2005) (See Appendix F). High scores on the CFNI mean that participants are likely to conform to feminine gender norms, and low scores mean that participants are not likely to conform to feminine gender norms. It has 84-items that make up eight subscales (Nice in Relationships, Thinness, Modesty, Domestic, Care for Children, Romantic Relationship, Sexual Fidelity, and Invest in Appearance). Among the items on the CFNI are "I am terrified of gaining weight," "I try to be sweet and nice," and "I regularly wear makeup." The CFNI has a reported Cronbach's alpha of .88 (Mahalik et al., 2005). Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .93.

*Demographics Questionnaire.* The demographics questionnaire (See Appendix G) asked about age, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation.

**Procedure**

Sign-up sheets were posted on the Psychology Subject Pool bulletin board. The sign-up sheet indicated that the topic of the study was “Attitudes Toward Student Leaders.” Participants were offered course credit for their participation. Sessions took place in classrooms in Bill Hall. The investigator distributed consent forms were distributed to the participants, which they signed and returned (See Appendix H). They were then provided the surveys and a demographics questionnaire, which they completed while seated in the classroom. Once the participants had returned their completed surveys, they were handed a debriefing statement (See Appendix I). This concluded their participation. Sessions lasted about 30 minutes.

Participants were also recruited in Shain Library and Harris Refectory on the Connecticut College campus. Those participants were offered donuts or candy to thank them for their participation. Participants were asked to sign consent forms prior to their participation and were also given debriefing statements upon their completion of the surveys. Participants completed their surveys inside of Shain Library or Harris Refectory, and then they returned them to the investigator.

## Results

### Hypothesis 1

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of male vegetarianism on likelihood of being elected to a leadership position, as measured by the third question about the scenario (“I would vote Steve/Stephanie for President”). Participants were divided into four groups according to the scenario they read (Group 1: Read about a male omnivore; Group 2: Read about a male vegetarian; Group 3: Read about a female omnivore; Group 4: Read about a female vegetarian). There were no statistically significant differences,  $F(3, 98) = .81, p = .49$ , which indicates that male vegetarians were as likely to be elected to a leadership position as omnivores and female vegetarians; therefore, hypothesis 1 was not supported. Table 1 displays the means and standard deviations.

### Hypothesis 2

A two-way between-groups analysis of variance (i.e., a 2x2 ANOVA) was conducted to explore the hypothesis that vegetarianism would impact perceptions of an individual’s morality, health, and likeability. The influence of the participants’ gender was also analyzed. There were no significant differences between scenario type and ratings of agreement with scenario question 9 (“Steve/Stephanie is more moral than other individuals”),  $F(7, 94) = 2.27, p = .07, \eta^2 = .067$ , which indicates that vegetarians and omnivores were rated similarly by female and male participants. Table 2 displays the means and standard deviations.

A two-way between-groups analysis of variance indicated no significant differences between scenario type and ratings of agreement with scenario Question 10 (“Steve/Stephanie is as healthy as other people”),  $F(7, 94) = 3.08, p = .03, \eta^2 = .090$ , which indicates that vegetarians and omnivores were rated similarly by female and male participants.

Table 1.

*Means and Standard Deviations for likelihood to Elect an Individual to a Leadership Position (Scenario Question 3) by Scenario Type (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D)*

Group	N	Leadership	
		Mean	SD
A	24	3.33	.70
B	29	3.28	.59
C	23	3.17	.72
D	26	3.46	.65

(Note: Means reflect a 1-5 scale)

Table 2.

*Means and Standard Deviations for Participants' Estimation of the Morality of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D)*

Group	N	Morality	
		Mean	SD
<u>Female Participants</u>			
A	17	2.65	.70
B	17	2.59	.69
C	15	2.87	.52
D	19	2.95	.52
<u>Male Participants</u>			
A	7	3.00	.58
B	12	3.08	.79
C	8	2.75	.71
D	7	2.57	.79

(Note: Means reflect a 1-5 scale)

Table 3 displays the means and standard deviations.

A two-way between-groups analysis of variance indicated no significant differences between scenario type and ratings of agreement with Question 39 on the *Bem Sex Role Inventory* (Steve/Stephanie is as “likeable” as other people),  $F(7, 94) = 1.03$ ,  $p = .38$ ,  $\eta^2 = .032$ , which indicates that vegetarians and omnivores were rated similarly by female and male participants. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported because vegetarians and omnivores are perceived to be equally moral, healthy, and likeable. Table 4 displays the means and standard deviations.

### **Hypothesis 3**

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to ascertain whether individuals who conform to traditional gender norms (i.e., people who score high on the *Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory* or the *Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory*) are likely to attribute more negative attributes to male vegetarians than positive attributes (as measured by the scenario questions). Participants' responses to the scenario questions were summed and utilized as the dependent variable to provide the data for analyses. There was no significant difference in scores on the scenario questions for male participants who were likely to conform to gender norms and male participants who were not as likely to conform to gender norms,  $M = 69.00$ ,  $SD = 9.23$ ;  $t(32) = .25$ ,  $p = .80$  (two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = .382, 95% CI: -2.634 to 3.399) was very small (eta squared = .091). Table 5 displays the means and standard deviations.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the scenario questions scores for women who conform to traditional gender norms and women who do not conform to gender norms,  $M = 69.38$ ,  $SD = 6.02$ ;  $t(66) = .25$ ,  $p = .80$  (two-tailed).

Table 3.

*Means and Standard Deviations for Participants' Estimation of the Health of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D)*

Group	N	Mean	Health	SD
<u>Female Participants</u>				
A	17	2.82		.73
B	17	3.24		.44
C	15	3.27		.46
D	19	3.16		.60
<u>Male Participants</u>				
A	7	3.57		.97
B	12	3.17		.72
C	8	2.88		.35
D	7	3.14		.69

(Note: Means reflect a 1-5 scale)



Table 4.

*Means and Standard Deviations for Participants' Estimation of the Likeability of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D)*

Group	N	Likeability	
		Mean	SD
<u>Female Participants</u>			
A	17	4.82	1.33
B	17	4.59	1.37
C	15	5.00	1.41
D	19	4.95	1.22
<u>Male Participants</u>			
A	7	4.86	1.35
B	12	4.75	1.36
C	8	4.00	1.07
D	7	4.29	1.11

(Note: Means reflect a 1-7 scale)

Table 5.

*Means and Standard Deviations for Male Participants' (N = 34) Scores on the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory, the Scenario Questions, and the Attitudes Toward Vegetarians Scale (ATVS)*

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Measures	Mean	SD
<i>CMNI</i>	108.91	12.56
Scenario Questions	69.00	9.23
<i>ATVS</i>	84.79	11.92

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(Note: Means reflect a 1-5 scale)

The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = .382, 95% CI: -2.634 to 3.399) was very small (eta squared = .091). Table 6 displays the means and standard deviations.

Two independent-samples t-tests were also conducted to determine whether people who conform to gender norms (as measured by the *Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory* or *Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory*) possess more negative attitudes toward vegetarians (as measured by participants' total scores on the *Attitudes Toward Vegetarians Scale*) than do people who do not conform to gender norms. No significant differences were found between men who conform to gender norms and men who do not conform to gender norms,  $M = 88.06$ ,  $SD = 12.68$ ;  $t(32) = 1.276$ ,  $p = .206$  (two-tailed). Table 5 displays the means and standard deviations. Furthermore, no significant differences were found between women who conform to gender norms and women who do not conform to gender norms,  $M = 84.79$ ,  $SD = 11.916$ ;  $t(66) = 1.250$ ,  $p = .21$  (two-tailed). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was not supported. Table 6 displays the means and standard deviations.

#### **Hypothesis 4**

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the relationship between adherence to vegetarianism and conforming to masculine gender norms; it was expected that men who conform to gender norms would be less likely to follow a vegetarian lifestyle. There was no significant difference in scores on the *Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory* between male vegetarians ( $M = 109.75$ ,  $SD = 7.23$ ) and male omnivores,  $M = 108.80$ ,  $SD = 13.20$ ;  $t(32) = .14$ ,  $p = .89$  (two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = .950, 95% CI: -12.879 to 14.779) was very small (eta squared = .091). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported. Table 7 displays the means and standard deviations.

Table 6.

*Means and Standard Deviations of Female Participants' (N = 68) Scores on the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory, the Scenario Questions, and the Attitudes Toward Vegetarians Scale (ATVS)*

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Measures	Mean	SD
<i>CFNI</i>	295.81	24.61
Scenario Questions	69.38	6.02
<i>ATVS</i>	88.06	12.68

---

(Note: Means reflect a 1-5 scale)

Table 7.

*Means and Standard Deviations for Male Participants' Scores on the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory*

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	N	Mean	SD
Male Vegetarians	4	109.75	7.23
Male Omnivores	30	108.80	13.20

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(Note: Means reflect a 1-5 scale)

*Hypothesis 5*

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of male vegetarianism on perception of femininity, as measured by the femininity subscale of the *BSRI* and 6 scenario questions (i.e., Question 7 – bold, Question 8 -- strong, Question 12 -- fit, Question 17 – emotionally stable, Question 19 -- confident, and Question 21 – self-sacrificing). Participants were divided into four groups according to the scenario they read (Group 1: Read about a male omnivore; Group 2: Read about a male vegetarian; Group 3: Read about a female omnivore; Group 4: Read about a female vegetarian). There were no statistically significant differences on *BSRI* scores,  $F(3, 98) = 1.10, p = .35$ . There were also no statistically significant differences for scenario question 7,  $F(3, 98) = .35, p = .79$ ; Question 8,  $F(3, 98) = .84, p = .48$ ; Question 12,  $F(3, 98) = .68, p = .57$ ; Question 17,  $F(3, 98) = .28, p = .84$ ; Question 19,  $F(3, 98) = .88, p = .45$ ; or Question 21,  $F(3, 98) = 1.23, p = .30$ . These results suggest that an equal amount of “feminine” characteristics were attributed to male vegetarians, male omnivores, and women; thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported. Table 8 displays the means and standard deviations.

Table 8.

*Means and Standard Deviations of Participants' Estimation of the Femininity of the Scenario's Target Person (Male Omnivore = A, Male Vegetarian = B, Female Omnivore = C, Female Vegetarian = D)*

	N	Mean	SD
<i>Bem Sex Role Inventory (Femininity subscale)</i>			
A	24	73.42	9.60
B	29	72.07	10.11
C	23	77.78	10.97
D	26	75.04	15.25
<b>Boldness</b>			
A	24	3.38	.77
B	29	3.48	.83
C	23	3.57	.59
D	26	3.38	.75
<b>Strength</b>			
A	24	3.08	.50
B	29	3.17	.66
C	23	3.35	.49
D	26	3.38	.63
<b>Fitness</b>			
A	24	2.88	.74

B	29	3.00	.54
C	23	3.04	.37
D	26	3.12	.71
Emotional Stability			
A	24	3.25	.61
B	29	3.14	.69
C	23	3.17	.58
D	26	3.27	.53
Confidence			
A	24	3.04	.55
B	29	3.24	.58
C	23	3.00	.60
D	26	3.19	.75
Self-sacrificing			
A	24	3.00	.30
B	29	3.00	.60
C	23	2.47	.69
D	26	2.85	.61

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(Note: Means reflect either a 1-7 scale or 1-5 scale)



## Discussion

In the present study, I sought to expand upon the literature regarding perceptions of vegetarians, with a particular emphasis on attitudes toward male vegetarians. It was thought that, because male vegetarians do not adhere to traditional gender norms, they would be more likely to experience prejudice and discrimination and, in this case, less likely than omnivores or female vegetarians to be elected to a leadership position. In addition, it was posited that participants would rate vegetarians as more moral and healthy, but less likeable, than omnivores. Similarly, it was hypothesized that individuals who conform to gender norms would have less favorable attitudes toward male vegetarians. Participants who scored high on the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI) or the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI) were expected to rate the target person lower on the scenario questions. Furthermore, it was expected that men with high scores on the CMNI would not adhere to a vegetarian lifestyle. Moreover, male vegetarians were expected to be viewed as more feminine than male omnivores and, therefore, it was thought that more feminine characteristics would be attributed to male vegetarians than to male omnivores on the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) and seven of the scenario questions.

The results of the present study did not support the first hypothesis that male vegetarians would be less likely than omnivores or female vegetarians to be elected to a leadership position. Vegetarians and omnivores, regardless of gender, were equally likely to be elected to a position of power. This result was likely due to the tendency for Connecticut College students to subscribe to a liberal ideology. Perhaps, because of this ideology, Connecticut College students possess fewer stereotypes of how a “real” man should behave. Moreover, Connecticut College students may have fewer stereotypes about how men should behave because of the college’s

vegetarian dining hall. When eating in the dining hall, students are apt to encounter male vegetarians who are masculine, effeminate, or somewhere in between; consequently, any preconceived notions about male vegetarians would likely be expunged, and students would become open-minded about male vegetarianism. In addition, Connecticut College students tend to have friends who are vegetarians (92.2% of the sample utilized in the study reported having at least one vegetarian friend). Might not having friends who subscribe to a vegetarian lifestyle foster open attitudes toward vegetarians? Further, participants may have been as likely to elect a male vegetarian to a leadership position as omnivores or female vegetarians because of the recent increase in the number of powerful male vegetarians. The presence of powerful male vegetarians, such as Mike Tyson and Alec Baldwin, might have successfully reduced stereotypes of male vegetarians in the general population (Stein, 2010).

The second hypothesis also was not supported. Vegetarians were not viewed as more moral, healthier, or less likeable than omnivores. The finding that omnivores and vegetarians were viewed similarly in terms of morality, health, and likeability is not consistent with previous research (Oakes & Slotterback, 2004; Ruby & Heine, 2011), and suggests that 1) perceptions of vegetarians may be changing and / or 2) participants thought their vegetarian friends were as moral, health, and likeable as themselves.

In addition, the third hypothesis that tested whether individuals who conform to gender norms would be likely to view male vegetarians in a negative light was not supported. In general, both participants who conform to gender norms and participants who do not conform to gender norms attributed the same number of positive and negative traits to male vegetarians as they did to omnivores and female vegetarians. Once again, the liberal nature of the participants utilized in the study, the access participants had to a vegetarian dining hall, the fact that the majority of the

participants had vegetarian friends, and the recent rise in the number of powerful male vegetarians could account for this finding.

The hypothesis that men who conform to traditional masculine gender norms would be unlikely to consider themselves vegetarians was not supported. Both men who conform to masculine norms and men who do not conform were equally likely to adhere to a vegetarian diet. This result may have been found because male vegetarians may feel the need to conform to gender norms in order to assert their masculinity. This result may also have been found because only 4 male vegetarians took part in the study; such a small sample of male vegetarians may not have been sufficient to ascertain whether men who conform to gender norms are unlikely to adhere to a vegetarian lifestyle.

The final hypothesis that male vegetarians would be viewed as more feminine than male omnivores was not supported. Participants perceived both groups of men to be similar in terms of their femininity and masculinity. The participants' liberal nature and the current prominence of male vegetarians could account for this finding. The finding could also be explained by the vegetarian dining hall the participants are likely to frequent and the fact that most participants indicated that they had a vegetarian friend.

### **Implications**

The findings of the present study have several implications for male vegetarians and society in general. For example, although previous research suggests that different traits would be attributed to meat-eaters and non-meat-eaters (Merriman & Wilson-Merriman, 2009; Monin, 2007; Nath, 2010; Oakes & Slotterback, 2004; Ruby & Heine, 2011), present day vegetarians and omnivores may no longer be perceived as possessing distinct characteristics. It appears that vegetarians and omnivores may be able to display their eating habits openly at Connecticut

College without having certain characteristics associated with them (e.g., Vegetarians will not necessarily be viewed as healthier than omnivores).

Moreover, the finding that male vegetarians are no more likely to be discriminated against or stereotyped than omnivores or female vegetarians has positive implications for men. Certainly one implication is that men who do not eat meat can adhere to a vegetarian lifestyle without fearing that they will be viewed negatively. Perhaps a more broad implication, however, is that men might be able to partake in other practices that do not conform to traditional masculine gender norms without worrying that they will be thought of poorly by others. It might be that case that society is becoming more tolerant of men who do not adhere to gender norms and, as a result, men are slowly gaining the ability to refuse to conform to gender norms without being perceived as effeminate or gay.

This ability for Connecticut College students to refuse to adhere to gender norms without being thought of as effeminate or gay may be aided by the college's LGBTQ Resource Center. The Center has had a strong presence in the last several years and has done much to raise awareness about issues related to sexuality and gender identity. Such consciousness-raising may have successfully helped to make Connecticut College students' gender identity less rigid.

### **Limitations**

Despite my efforts to control for all confounding variables, the study had several limitations. One such limitation was the small sample size. As just 102 participants were utilized in the study, each scenario was read and analyzed by fewer than 30 individuals. Another limitation was the homogeneity of the participants; participants were roughly of the same age, race, and sexual orientation. Furthermore, it is possible that participants who read a scenario featuring a vegetarian did not realize that they read about a vegetarian. Perhaps participants thought the

individual in the scenario simply does not eat meat at every meal. As, a manipulation check was not conducted, it cannot be said with absolute certainty that participants read the assigned scenario carefully enough to realize that some targets would prepare a vegetarian meal at their victory party.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

In addition to correcting for the above limitations, future studies should be conducted in an environment that is known to be less liberal. Perhaps, in a more conservative setting, participants would demonstrate more preconceived notions about male vegetarians because they may have had less contact with such men. Furthermore, future studies should expand upon the current body of research about men who do not conform to traditional masculine gender norms. Such research would be useful in ascertaining whether society is becoming more tolerant of men who do not conform to gender norms. For example, future researchers could compare attitudes toward stay-at-home fathers with attitudes toward male vegetarians to provide a better understanding of hegemonic masculinity's strength. Future researchers might also consider asking participants about the gender of their vegetarian friends because people who are friends with male and female vegetarians may hold different views than people who are only friends with female vegetarians.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the present study are inconsistent with previous research (Merriman & Wilson-Merriman, 2009; Nath, 2010; Oakes & Slotterback, 2004; Ruby & Heine, 2011) on vegetarians and men who do not conform to gender norms. Participants, in general, had the same attitudes toward vegetarians and omnivores, regardless of gender. Moreover, male vegetarians were no more likely to be discriminated against than omnivores or female

vegetarians were. Male vegetarians were also not seen as particularly effeminate. These results may indicate that preconceptions of vegetarians – and male vegetarians, in particular – are being eradicated. If so, this is a positive step for society.

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## Appendix A

## Scenarios

**Please read the following scenario**

## Condition 1 - Female Omnivore

Stephanie is a twenty-year-old woman. Currently, she is in the process of running for the position of Junior class President at her college. "I've always wanted to be class President," she explains. Stephanie served as Vice President during her Sophomore year and hopes again to come out victorious in the upcoming Student Government Association election. Once the results of the election have been announced, she will host a party for all of her friends. The meals served at Stephanie's parties are usually well received. In fact, people still speak fondly of the hamburgers served at her last gathering.

## Condition 2 - Female Vegetarian

Stephanie is a twenty-year-old woman. Currently, she is in the process of running for the position of Junior class President at her college. "I've always wanted to be class President," she explains. Stephanie served as Vice President during her Sophomore year and hopes again to come out victorious in the upcoming Student Government Association election. Once the results of the election have been announced, she will host a party for all of her friends. The meals served at Stephanie's parties are usually well received. In fact, people still speak fondly of the lentil burgers served at her last gathering.

## Condition 3 - Male Omnivore

Steve is a twenty-year-old man. Currently, he is in the process of running for the position of Junior class President at his college. "I've always wanted to be class President," he explains. Steve served as Vice President during his Sophomore year and hopes again to come out victorious in the upcoming Student Government Association election. Once the results of the election have been announced, he will host a party for all of his friends. The meals served at Steve's parties are usually well received. In fact, people still speak fondly of the hamburgers served at his last gathering.

## Condition 4 - Male Vegetarian

Steve is a twenty-year-old man. Currently, he is in the process of running for the position of Junior class President at his college. "I've always wanted to be class President," he explains. Steve served as Vice President during his Sophomore year and hopes again to come out victorious in the upcoming Student Government Association election. Once the results of the election have been announced, he will host a party for all of his friends. The meals served at Steve's parties are usually well received. In fact, people still speak fondly of the lentil burgers served at his last gathering.

## Appendix B

## Questions for Scenario

**Based on the scenario you have just read, please respond to the following questions. There are no right or wrong responses to the statements. You should give the responses that most accurately describe your personal actions, feelings and beliefs. It is best if you respond with your first impression when answering.**

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
1. I would enjoy attending Steve's victory party.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Steve is likely to win the election.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I would vote Steve for President.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Steve would be a competent President.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Steve is competent in most of his endeavors.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I would like to be friends with Steve.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Steve is bold.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Steve is strong.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Steve is more moral than other individuals.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Steve is as healthy as other people.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Steve is pleasant.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Steve is fit.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Steve is attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Steve is kind.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Steve is organized.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Steve is likely to be successful in life.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Steve is emotionally stable.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Steve is environmentally conscious.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Steve is confident.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Steve is intelligent.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Steve is self-sacrificing.	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix C

## Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI)

**Rate Steve / Stephanie on each item. Choose the numbers from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (almost always true) that you think best describes Steve / Stephanie.**

- |                        |                                   |                                    |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. self-reliant        | 21. reliable                      | 41. warm                           |
| 2. yielding            | 22. analytical                    | 42. solemn                         |
| 3. helpful             | 23. sympathetic                   | 43. willing to take a stand        |
| 4. defends own beliefs | 24. jealous                       | 44. tender                         |
| 5. cheerful            | 25. leadership ability            | 45. friendly                       |
| 6. moody               | 26. sensitive to other's<br>needs | 46. aggressive                     |
| 7. independent         | 27. truthful                      | 47. gullible                       |
| 8. shy                 | 28. willing to take risks         | 48. inefficient                    |
| 9. conscientious       | 29. understanding                 | 49. acts as a leader               |
| 10. athletic           | 30. secretive                     | 50. childlike                      |
| 11. affectionate       | 31. makes decisions easily        | 51. adaptable                      |
| 12. theatrical         | 32. compassionate                 | 52. individualistic                |
| 13. assertive          | 33. sincere                       | 53. does not use harsh<br>language |
| 14. flatterable        | 34. self-sufficient               | 54. unsystematic                   |
| 15. happy              | 35. eager to soothe hurt          | 55. competitive feelings           |
| 16. strong personality | 36. conceited                     | 56. loves children                 |
| 17. loyal              | 37. dominant                      | 57. tactful                        |
| 18. unpredictable      | 38. soft spoken                   | 58. ambitious                      |
| 19. forceful           | 39. likable                       | 59. gentle                         |
| 20. feminine           | 40. masculine                     | 60. conventional                   |

## Appendix D

## Attitudes Toward Vegetarian Scale

**Please choose the number from 1 to 7 that best represents your agreement or disagreement with each item.**

- | 1. Strongly disagree                                                                                  | 2. Disagree | 3. Neutral | 4. Agree | 5. Strongly Agree |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. Vegetarians preach too much about their beliefs and eating habits.                                 |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 2. Vegetarians should not try to hide their eating habits.                                            |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 3. Vegetarians are unconcerned about animal rights.                                                   |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 4. Vegetarian's eating habits are harmful to the traditions of this country.                          |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 5. Individuals who don't eat meat are "wimpier" than individuals who do eat meat.                     |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 6. You can eat a balanced diet without meat.                                                          |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 7. Vegetarians are overly concerned about gaining weight.                                             |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 8. Vegetarians are psychologically unhealthy.                                                         |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 9. Restaurants do not provide enough selection to satisfy all tastes.                                 |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 10. In some cases, people have no choice but to be vegetarian.                                        |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 11. One of the best things that could happen to me is if I could no longer eat meat or meat products. |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 12. It's not O.K. to tease someone for being vegetarian.                                              |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 13. Refusing to eat meat is just a phase.                                                             |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 14. There are some good reasons not to eat meat.                                                      |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 15. Vegetarians are too idealistic.                                                                   |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 16. I would approve if my children turned out to be vegetarians.                                      |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 17. Many vegetarians secretly crave meat.                                                             |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 18. It is acceptable for individuals to refuse to eat meat that they have been served.                |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 19. Vegetarians respect the rights of others who choose to eat meat.                                  |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |

20. Vegetarians believe that eating like vegetarian is the only moral way to eat. 1 2 3 4 5
21. Vegetarians use their eating habits to attract attention to themselves. 1 2 3 4 5
22. Vegetarians would refuse to eat meat even if it were a matter of life and death. 1 2 3 4 5
23. Being a vegetarian is only an option for people living in modern society. 1 2 3 4 5
24. People who order vegetarian food often are just being cheap. 1 2 3 4 5
25. Many vegetarians secretly eat meat in private. 1 2 3 4 5
26. Humans are not above all other creatures. 1 2 3 4 5
27. I avoid interacting with vegetarians whenever possible. 1 2 3 4 5
28. If vegetarians had their way, companies that sell animal products would be put out of business. 1 2 3 4 5
29. Vegetarians believe that they are better than others are. 1 2 3 4 5
30. Vegetarians are especially kind and gentle. 1 2 3 4 5
31. I would feel guilty if I were to eat meat in front of a vegetarian. 1 2 3 4 5
32. People who refuse to eat meat are childish and immature. 1 2 3 4 5
33. Vegetarians often appear sickly and unhealthy. 1 2 3 4 5

## Appendix E

## Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI)

**Please choose the number from 1 to 7 that best represents your agreement or disagreement with each item.**

- | 1. Strongly disagree                                                     | 2. Disagree | 3. Neutral | 4. Agree | 5. Strongly Agree |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. It is best to keep your emotions hidden.                              |             |            |          |                   |
| 2. In general, I will do anything to win,                                |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 3. If I could, I would frequently change sexual partners.                |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 4. If there is going to be violence, I find a way to avoid it.           |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 5. It is important to me that people think I am heterosexual.            |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 6. In general, I must get my way.                                        |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 7. Trying to be important is the greatest waste of time.                 |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 8. I am often absorbed in my work.                                       |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 9. I will only be satisfied when women are equal to men.                 |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 10. I hate asking for help.                                              |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 11. Taking dangerous risks helps me to prove myself.                     |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 12. In general, I do not expend a lot of energy trying to win at things. |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 13. An emotional bond with a partner is the best part of sex.            |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 14. I should take every opportunity to show my feelings.                 |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 15. I believe that violence is never justified.                          |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 16. Being thought of as gay is not a bad thing.                          |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 17. In general, I do not like risky situations.                          |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 18. I should be in charge.                                               |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 19. Feelings are important to show.                                      |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 20. I feel miserable when work occupies all my attention.                |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |

- |                                                                       |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 21. I feel best about my relationships with women when we are equals. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 22. Winning is not my first priority.                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 23. I make sure that people think I am heterosexual.                  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 24. I enjoy taking risks.                                             | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 25. I am disgusted by any kind of violence.                           | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 26. I would hate to be important.                                     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 27. I love to explore my feelings with others.                        | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 28. If I could, I would date a lot of different people.               | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 29. I ask for help when I need it.                                    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 30. My work is the most important part of my life.                    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 31. Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing.                    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 32. I never take chances.                                             | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 33. I would only have sex if I was in a committed relationship.       | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 34. I like fighting.                                                  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 35. I treat women as equals.                                          | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 36. I bring up my feelings when talking to others.                    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 37. I would be furious if someone thought I was gay.                  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 38. I only get romantically involved with one person.                 | 1 2 3 4 5 |

## Appendix F

## Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI)

**Please choose the number from 1 to 5 that best represents your agreement or disagreement with each item.**

- | 1. Strongly disagree                                                        | 2. Disagree | 3. Neutral | 4. Agree | 5. Strongly Agree |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. It is important to let people know they are special.                     |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 2. I would baby-sit for fun.                                                |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 3. I would be happier if I was thinner.                                     |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 4. I would feel extremely ashamed if I had many sexual partners.            |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 5. I feel uncomfortable being singled out for praise.                       |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 6. When I am in a romantic relationship, I give it all my energy.           |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 7. It is important to keep your living space clean.                         |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 8. I spend more than 30 minutes a day doing my hair and make-up.            |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 9. Putting energy into friendships is a waste of time.                      |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 10. I participate in activities that include kids.                          |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 11. I don't tend to worry about gaining weight.                             |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 12. If I was single, I would want to date a lot of people.                  |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 13. Being mean gets you ahead in life.                                      |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 14. I tell everyone about my accomplishments.                               |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 15. Whether I'm in one or not, romantic relationships are often on my mind. |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 16. I clean my home on a regular basis                                      |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 17. I feel attractive without makeup                                        |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 18. I believe that my friendships should be maintained at all costs         |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |
| 19. I find children annoying                                                |             |            |          | 1 2 3 4 5         |



20. Being thin is important. 1 2 3 4 5
21. I prefer long-term relationships to casual sexual ones. 1 2 3 4 5
22. There is nothing wrong with bragging. 1 2 3 4 5
23. I pity people who are single. 1 2 3 4 5
24. I am comfortable when my living space is a little cluttered. 1 2 3 4 5
25. I'd feel superficial if I wore make-up. 1 2 3 4 5
26. I feel good about myself when others know that I care about them. 1 2 3 4 5
27. Taking care of kids is just not for me. 1 2 3 4 5
28. I would only diet if a doctor ordered me to do so. 1 2 3 4 5
29. I would feel guilty if I had a one-night stand. 1 2 3 4 5
30. When I succeed, I tell my friends about it. 1 2 3 4 5
31. Having a romantic relationship is essential in life. 1 2 3 4 5
32. I enjoy spending time making my living space look nice. 1 2 3 4 5
33. Being nice to others is extremely important. 1 2 3 4 5
34. I regularly wear makeup. 1 2 3 4 5
35. I don't go out of my way to keep in touch with friends. 1 2 3 4 5
36. Most people enjoy children more than I do. 1 2 3 4 5
37. I would like to lose a few pounds. 1 2 3 4 5
38. It is impossible to be nice to others. 1 2 3 4 5
39. It is not necessary to be in a committed relationship to have sex. 1 2 3 4 5
40. I hate telling people about my accomplishments. 1 2 3 4 5
41. I can be happy without being in a romantic relationship. 1 2 3 4 5
42. I haven't cleaned my living space in the past week. 1 2 3 4 5
43. I get ready in the morning without looking in the mirror very much. 1 2 3 4 5
44. I would feel burdened if I had to maintain a lot of friendships. 1 2 3 4 5

45. When I want to relax, I don't want to be around kids. 1 2 3 4 5
46. I tend to watch what I eat in order to stay thin. 1 2 3 4 5
47. I would feel comfortable having casual sex. 1 2 3 4 5
48. I make it a point to get together with my friends regularly. 1 2 3 4 5
49. I always downplay my achievements. 1 2 3 4 5
50. Being in a romantic relationship is important. 1 2 3 4 5
51. I don't care if my living space looks messy. 1 2 3 4 5
52. I never wear make-up. 1 2 3 4 5
53. I always try to make people feel special. 1 2 3 4 5
54. Caring for children adds meaning to one's life. 1 2 3 4 5
55. I'd look better if I put on a few pounds. 1 2 3 4 5
56. I frequently change sexual partners. 1 2 3 4 5
57. I am not afraid to tell people about my achievements. 1 2 3 4 5
58. My life plans do not rely on my having a romantic relationship. 1 2 3 4 5
59. I do all of the cleaning, cooking, and decorating where I live. 1 2 3 4 5
60. It is important to look physically attractive in public. 1 2 3 4 5
61. If a friendship isn't working, I'll end it. 1 2 3 4 5
62. I would feel empty if my life did not involve children. 1 2 3 4 5
63. I try to be sweet and nice. 1 2 3 4 5
64. I am always trying to lose weight. 1 2 3 4 5
65. I would only have sex with the person I love. 1 2 3 4 5
66. I don't seek recognition for my efforts. 1 2 3 4 5
67. When I have a romantic relationship, I enjoy focusing my energies on it. 1 2 3 4 5
68. There is no point to cleaning because things will get dirty again. 1 2 3 4 5
69. I am not afraid to hurt people's feelings to get what I want. 1 2 3 4 5

70. Taking care of children is extremely fulfilling. 1 2 3 4 5
71. I would be perfectly happy with myself even if I gained weight. 1 2 3 4 5
72. It would be enjoyable to date more than one person at a time. 1 2 3 4 5
73. I enjoy being in the spotlight. 1 2 3 4 5
74. If I were single, my life would be complete without a partner. 1 2 3 4 5
75. I rarely go out of my way to act nice. 1 2 3 4 5
76. I actively avoid children. 1 2 3 4 5
77. I am terrified of gaining weight. 1 2 3 4 5
78. I would only have sex if I was in a committed relationship like marriage. 1 2 3 4 5
79. I am only nice to people I like. 1 2 3 4 5
80. I like being around children. 1 2 3 4 5
81. I tend to eat whatever I want. 1 2 3 4 5
82. I don't feel guilty if I lose contact with a friend. 1 2 3 4 5
83. I feel uneasy around children. 1 2 3 4 5
84. I would be ashamed if someone thought I was mean. 1 2 3 4 5

## Appendix G

## Demographics Questionnaire

**For questions 1-10, please fill-in the appropriate box.**

1. What is your sex?

- Woman
- Man

2. What is your religious affiliation?

- Christian
- Roman Catholic
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your race / ethnicity?

- White / European American
- Black / African American
- Asian-Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Hispanic / Latino/a

4. How often do you play sports either for fun or competitively?

- I frequently play sports
- I occasionally play sports
- I never play sports

5. Are you a vegetarian?

- Yes
- No
- I used to be a vegetarian.

6. Do you have a family member who is a vegetarian?

- Yes
- No

7. Do you have a friend who is a vegetarian?

- Yes
- No

8. Have you ever restricted your diet (i.e., The *types* of foods you eat)?

- I frequently restricted my diet in the past.
- I occasionally restricted my diet in the past.
- I currently restrict my diet.
- I have never restricted my diet

ATTITUDES TOWARD MALE VEGETARIANS

9. Have you ever restricted your food intake (i.e., The *amount* of food you eat)?

- I frequently restricted my food intake in the past.
- I occasionally restricted my food intake in the past.
- I currently restrict my food intake.
- I have never restricted my food intake.

10. What is your current household income in U.S. dollars?

- Under \$10,000
- \$10,000-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$29,999
- \$30,000-\$39,999
- \$40,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-\$150,000
- Over \$150,000
- Would rather not say
- Don't know

**Please write your responses for questions 11 and 12 in the spaces provided.**

11. How old are you?

---

12. What is your sexual orientation?

---

Appendix H  
Informed Consent

I hereby consent to participate in Brooke Browarnik's research about attitudes toward student leaders. I understand that this research will involve reading a scenario, answering a series of questions about the scenario, and completing several questionnaires. I understand that this research will take about 30 minutes. I have been told that there are no known risks or discomforts related to participating in this research. I have been told that Brooke Browarnik can be contacted at Brooke.Browarnik@conncoll.edu. I understand that I may decline to answer any questions as I see fit and that I may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time. I understand that all information will be identified with a code number and NOT my name. I have been advised that I may contact the researcher who will answer any questions that I may have about the purposes and procedures of this study. I understand that this study is not meant to gather information about specific individuals and that my responses will be combined with other participants' data for the purpose of statistical analyses. I consent to publication of the study results as long as the identity of all participants is protected. I understand that this research has been approved by the Connecticut College Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Concerns about any aspect of this study may be addressed to Professor Ann Devlin, Chairperson of the Connecticut College IRB (439-2333).

-----

I am at least 18 years of age, and I have read these explanations and assurances and voluntarily consent to participate in this research about student leaders.

Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix I  
Debriefing Form

Thank you for your participation in this study. In this research, I am investigating perceptions of male vegetarians. Researchers have previously investigated the tendency for vegetarians to be viewed as more moral, more health conscious, and less likeable than omnivores. This study employs a new focus. It looks specifically at male vegetarians because many people believe that masculinity is associated with heavy, calorie-laden foods (e.g., Meat and potatoes) and femininity with high, low-calorie foods (e.g., Fruits, vegetables). I ask that you please not share any information about this study until the end of the year when my study is complete.

If you would like to learn more about this topic, please contact the investigator: Brooke Browarnik: (954) 649-0341 [Brooke.Browarnik@conncoll.edu](mailto:Brooke.Browarnik@conncoll.edu)

Or contact Professor Joan Chrisler at (860) 439-2326 or at [joan.chrisler@conncoll.edu](mailto:joan.chrisler@conncoll.edu)

The Chair of the IRB (Institutional Review Board), Professor Devlin, may also be contacted: (860) 439-2333 or [ann.devlin@conncoll.edu](mailto:ann.devlin@conncoll.edu)

If you would like to learn more about the topic, please utilize any of the following resources:

Basow, S.A., & Kobrynowicz, D. (1993). What is she eating? The effects of meal size on impressions of a female eater. *Sex Roles, 28*, 335-344. doi: 10.1007/BF00289889

Feirstein, B. (1982). *Real men don't eat meat: A guidebook to all that is truly masculine*. Pocket Books.

Vartanian, L.R., Herman, C.P., & Polivy, J. (2007). Consumption stereotypes and impression management: How you are what you eat. *Appetite, 48*, 265-277. doi: 10.1016/j.appet.2006.10.00