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**Women in Philosophy:
A Qualitative Assessment of Experiences at the Undergraduate Level**

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Abstract

The underrepresentation of women in the field of philosophy has been a major concern for women in the discipline for at least the past ten years, and is increasingly gaining attention within academia. Current research at the undergraduate level suggests male and female enrollment occurs in relatively proportionate numbers in introductory philosophy courses but women's enrollment dramatically decreases with the progression to upper division courses (Paxton, Figdor & Tiberius, 2012). To date, very little research has focused on the experiences of women philosophy majors at the undergraduate level. The present study conducted in-depth interviews with women who were either senior philosophy majors or those who recently received a bachelor's degree in philosophy in order to better understand what factors may contribute to the retention of women in the discipline. Our findings suggests that women with non-traditional gender schemas may be more likely to continue to take courses in philosophy. This finding may be mediated by the following factors: (a) exposure to philosophy prior to college; (b) having mentors irrespective of gender; (c) the presence of female faculty; (d) a supportive environment and; (e) a strong sense of agency as a student.

Keywords: Philosophy, Gender, Women, Marginalization, Cognitive Schemas

Introduction

Current research suggests women continue to be underrepresented in traditionally male dominated fields (Monroe & Chiu, 2010; Ward, 2008). To date, there has been a substantial increase in research on gender disparity in the STEM fields (i.e., science, technology, engineering and math). However, very little research has focused on the marginalization of women in philosophy (Hill, Corbett, & St Rose, 2010; Maple & Stage, 1991; Murphy, Steele, & Gross, 2007; Stout, Dasgupta, Hunsinger, & McManus, 2011). As a discipline in the humanities, philosophy stands out as an outlier with a profile similar to STEM fields. That is, the retention of women in philosophy remains among the lowest of all disciplines within the humanities—an area women typically gravitate toward (Healy 2009). Much of the extant research on gender parity in philosophy is focused at the graduate and faculty level (Haslanger, 2008; Van Camp, 2010). For example, it is estimated that women earned an average of 27 percent of doctoral degrees in philosophy from 1997 to 2012 with 21 percent among those currently employed teaching philosophy at the college level (Norlock, 2009; Van Camp, 2010). A survey of the top 51 doctoral programs in philosophy shows, on average, 23 percent of tenure or tenure track positions are held by women (Van Camp, 2010).

A recent study by Paxton, Figdor and Tiberius (2012) shows the most significant decrease in women in philosophy occurs at the undergraduate level. They found that men and women enroll in introductory philosophy courses in relatively proportionate numbers, but women's enrollment dramatically decreases among those who pursue philosophy as a major.

Some research indicates that the lack of gender parity in philosophy may be attributed to factors synonymous to those found in STEM such as: gendered cognitive schemas, discrimination, stereotype threat, evaluation bias, and lack of female mentorship or visibility (Calhoun, 2009; Haslanger, 2008; Hill, Corbett, & St Rose, 2010; Thompson, Adleberg, Sims, & Nahmias, unpublished manuscript; Wylie, 2011). Given the research on women in the STEM fields, we think it plausible that a combination of all these elements are contributing to the marginalization of women in philosophy. However, as Paxton et al. (2012) point out, more empirical research is needed in order to accurately assess the factors responsible for the high attrition of female undergraduates in philosophy. Conversely, more research should examine what variables are responsible for the retention of women in the discipline. As such, this research aims to determine what factors may contribute to higher retention rates of women in philosophy. Our primary guiding hypothesis is that women who enter introductory philosophy courses with strong gendered schemas, that become confirmed, may be less likely to continue to take courses in philosophy, and by extension, women with non-traditional gender schemas may be more likely to continue to take courses in philosophy. The purpose of this study is to discover what, if any, commonalities female philosophy majors share in their backgrounds, experiences and perceptions that may shed light on the undergraduate career trajectories of female philosophy students.

Conceptual Framework

A schema is a cognitive network of associations that organize and guide an individual's perception. It is a process in which what is perceived is the product of an interaction between incoming information and stored information (Fiske & Linville,

1980). According to Bem (1981), gender schemas are mental templates that determine the expectation of gender roles in individuals according to biological sex and correlative social constructions. The development of gendered schemas begins in early childhood through socialization and varies by culture. Repeated observation or exposure to a particular gender schema may reinforce it as appropriate behavior to model (Perry, Davis-Blake, & Kulik, 1994). People who share similar backgrounds may also adopt similar schemas while others establish alternative schemas based on unique experiences (Crockett, 1988).

Individuals who adhere to behavior according to social expectations of biological sex use more traditional schemas to define their identity and experience while those who deviate from this pattern use non-traditional schemas to define themselves (Bem, 1993). For example, a woman who identifies with more traditional or strong gender schemas may believe women are inherently nurturing and men inherently tough. By contrast, a woman who identifies with non-traditional schemas may view such attributes as existing on a continuum across all individuals regardless of sex. Individuals may develop new schemas when fundamental elements of their pre-existing schemas become modified, such as when they encounter new information that challenges or dispels current schemas (Perry et al., 1994).

Calhoun (2009) argues that the high attrition of females in philosophy may be attributed to gendered schemas made about philosophy prior to college (e.g. associating philosophy with masculinity). In other words, women may enter introductory philosophy courses primed to perceive philosophy from a gendered perspective and therefore may be more sensitive to perceiving information as gendered despite whether

or not such instances occur frequently. Thus any discriminatory encounter would serve to confirm the schema as indicative of the field (Calhoun, 2009). For instance, women who associate philosophy with logic, and logic with math, may also believe the capacity for logic to be a masculine trait since math has traditionally been an area men gravitate toward and excel in. If this schema is confirmed upon their initial experience with a philosophy course, these women may conclude that they lack the capacity to develop skills in philosophy, and as a result, decide not to continue to take courses in it. Further, the absence of female faculty may serve to perpetuate the schema that philosophy is inherently a man's field. If more empirical evidence supported this hypothesis, it would be plausible then, based on the research of women in STEM, that pre-existing gender schemas, coupled with instances of discrimination may be perpetuated by stereotype threat, evaluation bias and lack of mentorship or female visibility, resulting in the low retention of women in the discipline.

Methodology

Relying on the work of Bem (1981) and Calhoun (2009), we developed a methodological approach that solicited interviews from female philosophy majors about their experiences as undergraduates. The interview questions were designed to draw out narratives about participant's experiences in ways that might reveal any gender schemas that may have influenced the interpretation of their experiences.

Further, this research builds on the work of Paxton et al. (2012)—which showed the highest attrition of women in philosophy occurs at the undergraduate level—by qualitatively assessing the experiences of female undergraduate philosophy majors in order to gain a better understanding of what factors may be responsible for the retention

and attrition of women in the discipline. The goal of this project is to enhance understanding of this phenomenon from the perspective of the actual experiences of women in philosophy by exploring how they reflect on their careers as undergraduate students. By analyzing these reflections, this research hopes to shed light on the factors that led to these outcomes.

We conducted 11 interviews over a period of 4 weeks during the summer of 2014. The sample included female seniors majoring in philosophy, or those who recently earned a Bachelor's degree in it (N = 11, Age range: 18-31). Participants were recruited via email by convenience sampling at colleges and universities in the United States. Relying on an initial contact at Portland State University (PSU), we employed a snowball approach to enlist the assistance of professors. Some of these professors, in turn, reached out to other colleagues within PSU and to other universities to help identify potential participants. The purpose of this study was disclosed in the email. The number of participants accepted was based on those who responded and met the above criteria. All interviews were done by phone and audio recorded. The interviews took approximately 45 to 85 minutes, on average. The interview design was semi-structured and open-ended to facilitate discussion of participant's experiences as philosophy majors as well as specific issues such as how they relate to the discipline of philosophy. All participants provided verbal and written informed consent as required by PSU Institutional Review Board. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and summarized. Emergent themes across interviews were identified and cross-checked in the final analysis.

Findings

Out of 11 participants, three were first-generation college students and eight identified as Caucasian. The analysis of interviews revealed several themes that may be responsible for the retention of women undergraduates in the field of philosophy such as: (a) exposure to philosophy prior to college; (b) having mentors irrespective of gender; (c) the presence of female faculty; (d) a supportive environment and; (e) a strong sense of agency as a student. Furthermore, we found that participants exhibited elements of non-traditional gender schemas.

To begin, six out of 11 participants said they were exposed to philosophy prior to college. Of note, only two participants explicitly indicated that their experience with philosophy prior to college was positive. The most common form of exposure mentioned was in a high school course.

My high school actually offered a philosophy course in place of general humanities course. I don't think I had a formed idea about what philosophy was but it sounded like you addressed deeper questions and I thought that was cool so I took the class. (Participant 2)

In AP English my senior year we did a unit on existentialism and that really stuck with me. (Participant 4)

When I was in High school, I had a friend who arranged an independent study with a teacher, both ancient Greek and Greek philosophy, so I just sort of tagged along to that class and it was great. (Participant 7)

Among those who weren't exposed to philosophy prior to college only one participant said that she did not have a peer or mentor who influenced her decision to major in it. Out of the 11 participants, 10 said that their decision to major in philosophy

was influenced by another person. The most common answer was a philosophy advisor or professor, followed by philosophy peers.

I talked to Dr. X, our philosophy Chair at X University and she encouraged me and made sure I could do it in that amount of time. No one really pushed me to do it but they said you're doing well, you might as well go for it. They were supportive. Steered me in the right direction. (Participant 3)

When I was first at X State I was dating a guy who was a philosophy major and that had a huge effect on me. A couple of his friends were philosophy majors and we would all get together, and you know, hang out. (Participant 9)

Participant's answers to the question regarding their favorite course in philosophy differed but in response to the question of which course they had the most difficulty with, the most frequently cited answer was modern philosophy.

Overall, participants said that they enjoyed philosophy because it encouraged critical thinking, it was challenging, helped them develop better reading and writing skills and fostered personal growth.

It's very challenging. It has forced me to examine what I believe and what I choose to stand up for and given me a more solid knowledge of who I am as a person. It has helped my critical thinking and writing skills immensely. It's helped me in talking to people. (Participant 4)

I love the perspective. I love the challenge. I love the fact that I never have to accept anything as fact. It's a discipline that's constantly evolving whereas other disciplines are a little more static and you learn what you learn and take the test. In philosophy there is always room for growth. I have incorporated that into my life personally. It's so refreshing that it's a subject that we can continually do research on, there are always new perspectives, always a challenge, always searching for something. (Participant 1)

Most participants had at least two female philosophy professors during their careers as undergraduate philosophy students. More than half said that having a female presence in front of the class was influential but that they did not experience any differences between male and female faculty. All participants said it was important to have teachers of the same sex as role models, and six of the 11 participants added that having mentors, regardless of sex, was important.

Below, Participant 8 addresses the significance of having a female mentor in a male-dominated field.

Her name was Professor X and she definitely, like seeing her as a strong female voice in a man's field was cool, like in science and philosophy. I feel like she kind of took me under her wing and I was always in her office hours. (Participant 8)

In the following two quotes, Participant 1 and Participant 3 discuss the importance of female visibility at the faculty level for retaining female students in philosophy. Of equal importance, both participants demonstrate an appreciation for mentorship regardless of sex.

I have always thought that was important just because when you see someone you can relate to that might attract you a little more to a class, or to a subject area. I have always thought that was important but I don't think it is necessarily the end all be all because there have been male professors who I've got along with famously and just because they are a man and I am a woman, you know they've been able to mentor me or encourage me in my studies. I think it is very important to have that bond with other female professors especially, I know on my campus there are not many female philosophy professors, so just to see other women in the discipline is really helpful because for some women it can keep them there but I don't think it is like the end all be all. I think sometimes it depends on who you connect with and maybe personality or interests, things like that. I think it's important at a first glance thing. (Participant 1)

I don't feel any more comfortable with men or women in a higher placement than me. It doesn't suddenly intimidate me but I can say that for

others in my classes having a female teacher or advisor definitely helped them and they were much more comfortable with them. (Participant 3)

Below, Participant 2 highlights that a lack of female mentorship or visibility can negatively affect a female student's perception of what is possible for her in a given field. For example, a student may feel inadequate or that they lack a particular quality they believe necessary for success in philosophy. Participant 2 says this type of internalization may occur in a female student without her conscious awareness until she has an experience which illuminates it.

If this was a field where it was all men I don't think I would be able to get myself out of certain moments when I do get upset at like there's all these men thinking these great things. You know if you are talking to a bunch of professors and graduate students and they are all male, you wonder 'okay I want to go forward with this, I want to be able to be able to be a graduate student or professor but how? Like do I have to sacrifice something or is something missing in me or what do I have to do to be this thing which seems to be something that I am not.' That's hard to deal with. And I don't know that that is still explicit, that kind of thinking until you have a female professor or female graduate student because once you have that you realize that she was able to do it. She found a way and maybe there are different ways that she tried but I know concretely that this is something I can do. It doesn't have to reflect any deficiency in me from my being a woman or inability or something. (Participant 2)

In the subsequent quote, Participant 9 reflects on her experience as a female in academia. She says she previously felt pressured to repress her ideas and opinions in the classroom. She attributes the pressure she experienced to her perception of the social expectations surrounding how women ought to behave in an academic setting. Moreover, she says she adhered to these expectations despite that they conflicted with her personality.

Honestly I think, when I reflect back on feeling uncomfortable in sharing my opinions, I think, and to be honest, this makes me sad to say, but,

being a girl, I think I have always I think been subconsciously aware of this pressure to not speak up too loud, you know, and not rock the boat, and that's partially, I mean, that's kind of my family, and my culture, and all these different factors. That was a big thing with it, was, well, I don't want to challenge the boy's ideas. That's terrible but I thought of it like a fifties, just totally oppressive attitude of women, to kind of be docile and you know, whatever. I just don't want to cause too much trouble. My personality isn't like that but I definitely felt that pressure at school, and in class, and so, that was a factor, was being a female and feeling like I wasn't, for whatever reason, qualified enough to share my opinion or to speak out when I disagreed, or something like that. (Participant 9)

Despite being in an environment where they were a minority, most participants said they felt comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions in class but noticed other women did not participate as much.

I think definitely there is a big gap in participation between male and female students in philosophy, by far, I would say. It seems like sometimes male voices can be louder and intimidating. There is usually like 3 males in the class that have these dominant voices and don't let other people participate as much. I think I have to make a conscious effort sometimes to think I can participate too, it's not just them. It's maybe 20% of the time a female student is asking a question and 80% of the time it's a male. It's pretty off. (Participant 8)

I had one class last year, Epistemology and there were quite a few other vocal females, probably four or five. But that was surprising. I can recall where I was like 'wow, it's me and these five guys, who are discussing Kant, and that's it.' Everybody else, I mean there are other girls in the class but they were not participating at all. (Participant 9)

In the following quote, Participant 9 states that while she is comfortable being a vocal participant in class; that has not always been the case. She says it wasn't until she became aware that her traditional notions of what constitutes appropriate behavior for a woman in an academic setting were adversely affecting her academic performance that she decided to be her own agent of change—suggesting an evolution in her gender schema.

I do now feel comfortable sharing my opinions and my thoughts, but that has not always been true... . I think the biggest change was really, like my own process, figuring out who I was as a person, and that also happened outside of school. A lot of that was seeing that pattern, that I described where I didn't feel I could be vocal about my opinion, or too smart, or, you know, all of these things, because I was supposed to be a girl. And that was a big generalization. That has really actively held me back in my academics. When I came back to school I was like 'Okay, we're done with that. No more of that.' That's, that's you know, one of those things where once I realized that I was living under that pattern and perpetuating a pattern by my own habits, I was like 'oh my god, that is like the most absurd, intellectually it is the most absurd thing I have ever heard.' But for whatever reason, I was emotionally kind of perpetuating that dichotomy: male/female academic dichotomy. So, that was a big disadvantage, I think. (Participant 9)

Finally, more than half of participants reported that they felt a strong sense of agency as a student prior to majoring in philosophy.

Once I found my footing and really ran with it, I had a lot of confidence in myself because basically whatever class I was in, some of them were harder and some easier courses but I've always excelled in whatever I put my mind to. I always had a lot of confidence in myself. (Participant 3)

I think going in, my sense of doing academic work because I come from an academic family. Once you grow up in a setting like that it's like 'obviously you'll go to college, obviously you'll go to a graduate program, and obviously you'll get all A's. What else would you be doing?' When you go in with that assumption you're already operating from a really privileged space in terms of how you learned about yourself in an education system... . I went in thinking of course I'll do this well because that's what I have to do in an academic setting... . (Participant 10)

Analysis and Discussion

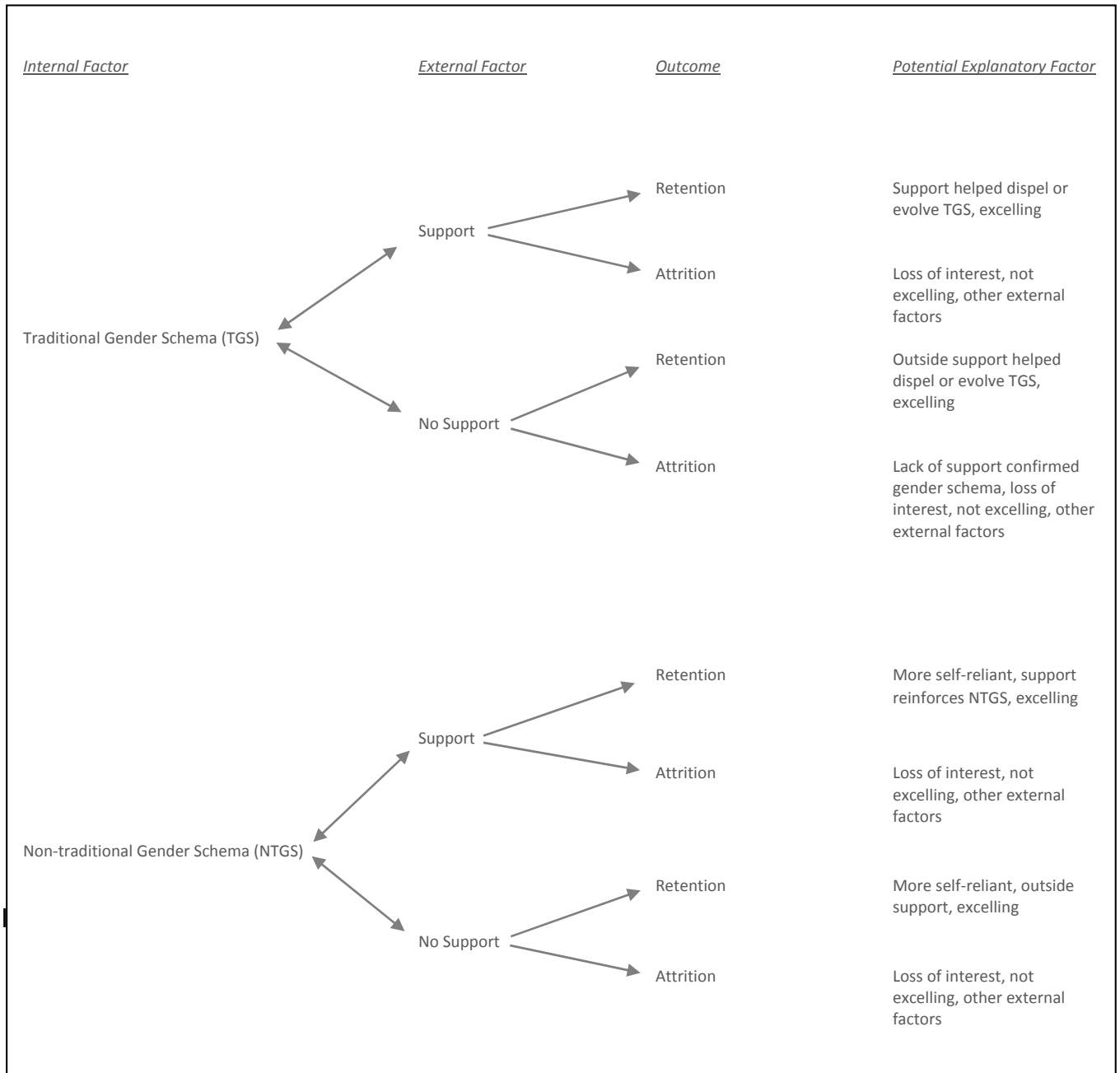
We hypothesized that women who enter introductory philosophy courses with traditional gender schemas, that become confirmed, may be less likely to continue to take courses in philosophy, and by extension, women with non-traditional gender schemas may be more likely to continue to take courses in it. We found that participants

who were selected for persistence in their major demonstrated elements of non-traditional gender schemas. For instance, participants showed an appreciation for mentorship irrespective of gender. Women with non-traditional gender schemas tend to identify with mentors according to similarity in attributes as opposed to gender (Markus, 1977; Wood, 1989). Participants also showed a willingness to actively participate and express ideas in an environment where they were the minority. Individuals at risk for stereotype threat (i.e., minorities) are often overly concerned with performance in a particular domain and thus will refrain from participation in order to avoid confirming the stereotype associated with that domain (Aronson, Quinn, & Spencer, 1998). Further, participants sought and enjoyed philosophy despite that they said it was challenging. For example, many participants said that modern philosophy was the most difficult course they took but that they enjoyed it a great deal. Challenge-seeking is a characteristic traditionally associated with masculinity (Green & Foster, 1986). Finally, many participants were interested in or pursued other majors or minors in STEM fields, or disciplines that rely heavily on math, such as economics.

In reflecting on the theoretical framework that informed this research, and considering the evidence collected, the following diagram maps out what the analysis seems to suggest is occurring. In this conceptual understanding, we propose the internal factors *traditional gender schemas* and *non-traditional gender schemas* may each be mediated by the external factors *support* or *no support* resulting in *attrition* and *retention*. We define support as any assistance or encouragement experienced by students that positively influences the participation and retention of female students in philosophy.

Diagram 1

Pathways of Retention and Attrition



In the first path of the diagram we propose traditional gender schemas as the internal factor and support as the external factor resulting in retention of the female student in philosophy. A potential explanation for this outcome is that support may help

dispel or evolve traditional gender schemas women have about philosophy by altering their perception of it. For example, support may prompt a female student with more traditional gender schemas to see that the capacity to excel in philosophy is relative to the individual and not based according to sex-linked characteristics.

The first path in the second half of the diagram maps out our findings. That is, participants who were selected for persistence in philosophy demonstrated elements of non-traditional gender schemas. Furthermore, participants indicated several factors that may have contributed to their success in philosophy, collectively referred to here as *support*.

Our findings suggest a relation between non-traditional gender schemas and support in the retention of female students in philosophy. Due to limitations of time and of resources, such as access to a wider range of philosophy departments, we were unable to identify a larger sample of participants. As such, future research should seek a larger sample in order to further examine the effects of support in the recruitment and retention of female undergraduates in philosophy.

Conclusion

Our findings suggests that women with non-traditional gender schemas may be more likely to continue to take courses in philosophy. This finding may be mediated by the following factors: (a) exposure to philosophy prior to college; (b) having mentors irrespective of gender; (c) the presence of female faculty; (d) being in a supportive environment and; (e) a strong sense of agency as a student. Future research, perhaps

in the form of a survey, could focus on establishing how widespread these findings might be.

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Appendix

1. Were you exposed to philosophy prior to college?
 - a. What did you think about philosophy prior to majoring in it?
2. When did you decide to major/minor in philosophy?
 - a. Did you know you wanted to major/minor in philosophy before you began college?
 - b. What factors do you think contributed to your interest in philosophy prior to attending college?
3. Why did you decide to major/minor in philosophy?
 - a. Was there anyone who influenced your decision to major in philosophy?
 - b. What other subjects are you majoring/minoring in?
 - c. What were some other subjects that you considered majoring in? Why?
4. In your opinion, what is a philosopher?
 - a. What qualities or characteristics make a good philosopher?
5. What was your favorite class in philosophy?
 - a. Why did you like this class?
 - b. What did you appreciate about it?
 - c. How was your experience in it different from that of other classes?
6. What class or classes did you have the most difficulty with?
 - a. Why?
7. Who is your favorite Philosopher?
 - a. Why?
8. Which female philosophers/authors have you been exposed to throughout your study of philosophy?
 - a. How have these philosophers influenced you?
9. What do you like most about philosophy?
10. What area of philosophy are you most interested in?
 - a. Why?
11. How many female philosophy professors have you had?
 - a. How has this influenced your study of philosophy?
 - b. Have you noticed any differences in your experience with male and female faculty?
 - c. Would you like to talk about this?
12. What qualities make a good philosophy professor?
 - a. Why?
13. How important do you think it is to have teachers of the same sex as role models?
14. How important do you think it is for women to be involved in philosophy?

15. Do you have any female friends or acquaintances that were initially interested in pursuing philosophy as a major or minor but decided not to?
 - a. If so, why?
16. Do you have any friends or acquaintances in classes who have dropped out of philosophy classes?
 - a. If so, why?
17. What did you expect to gain by majoring or minoring in philosophy?
 - a. How has philosophy met or not met those expectations?
18. Do you feel you had a strong sense of efficacy prior to majoring in philosophy?
19. Do you feel comfortable expressing your ideas and opinions in class?
 - a. Was there ever a time when you felt uncomfortable expressing your ideas/opinions in philosophy classes?
 - b. If so, why
 - c. What factors do you think made you more or less comfortable?
 - d. Did other women in your classes participate regularly in discussion?
20. Do you think that anyone has the capacity to succeed in philosophy?
 - a. If so, Why?
 - b. If not, Why not?
21. What is the proportion of female versus male students in your philosophy classes?
 - a. How, if at all, has this affected your classroom experience?
22. How do you feel that your male peers responded to and/or treated your thoughts and ideas?
23. Do you feel that gender is an issue in philosophy?
 - a. If so, why?
 - b. If not, why not?
24. Do you intend to pursue a graduate degree?
 - a. If so, in what field?
 - b. If philosophy, what area?
 - c. If not philosophy, why?
 - d. Do you have any concerns about pursuing a graduate degree in philosophy?
25. If you could offer advice to any females interested in pursuing philosophy as a major or minor, what would you say?
26. Are you happy that you majored in Philosophy?
 - a. What do you intend to do with your degree?
27. What is the highest level of education your parents, guardians or caregivers completed?
 - a. What degrees?

- b. How many degrees?
 - c. In what area of expertise?
28. Are either of your parents, guardians or caregivers a professional philosopher?
- a. How has this influenced your interest in philosophy?
29. Is anyone in your family a professional philosopher?
- a. How has this person influenced your interest in philosophy?
30. What race or ethnicity do you identify with?
31. Age Bracket: (18 to 24) (25 to 31) (32 to 38) (39 to 45) (45 to 51) (52 and older)
32. Is there anything else that you think I should know or that you want to add?

Informed Consent

Dear Participant:

My name is Crystal Aymelek and I am an undergraduate psychology student at Portland State University. I am working with Dr. Veronica Dujon on a study focused on the experiences of undergraduate women in philosophy. I will be conducting my research at Portland State and would like to invite you to participate.

You are being asked to take part because you are a student who has recently earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy or is currently majoring in philosophy. As part of the study, I am interested in the female perceptions and experiences with philosophy. The information I collect will help to better understand why women choose philosophy as a major. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to share your perspectives and experiences with me in an interview. During the interview you will be asked questions about your experiences with philosophy as well as some questions about your family background. You may choose not to answer any question, and you may choose to end the interview at any time should you wish to do so, without any repercussions to you. The interview will take place at a location of your choice that is comfortable and convenient for you. It will be audio recorded and should take between 30 to 50 minutes to complete.

It is not anticipated that there are any risks involved with your participation. You may or may not receive any direct benefit from taking part in this study, but this research may help to increase knowledge that may be useful for understanding how women relate to philosophy.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be linked to you or your identity will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used to refer to participants who take part in the interview. Participation is entirely voluntary. Your decision to participate or not to participate in this study will in no way affect your relationship with the researcher or your affiliated educational institution.

If you have concerns or problems about your participation in this study or your rights as a research subject, please contact the Human Subjects Research Review Committee, Office of Research and Strategic Partnerships, Portland State University, P.O. Box 751, Portland, Oregon 97207, 503.725.2227. If you have any questions, or would like to speak to the researchers, please contact Dr. Veronica Dujon at 503.725.8503 or by email dujonv@pdx.edu and/or Crystal Aymelek at 503.820.9870 or by email ccrystal@pdx.edu.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the above information and agree to take part in the study. Please understand that you may withdraw your consent at any time without penalty, and that, by signing, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this form for your own records.

Signature

Date