



# HRM RESEARCH SEMINAR

## “The Consequences of Devaluation for Women’s Creativity”



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### Abstract:

Women are disadvantaged in creative careers. In light of this, a multi-disciplinary literature examines the extent to which the disadvantage can be attributed to gender differences in creativity. Fifty years of research has found no evidence that men are more creative than women and scholars largely credit this disparity to the devaluation of women’s creativity. Yet the literature does not assess whether there are gender differences in the creativity of the actual products generated by creative professionals. We theorize that women’s devaluation leads female artists to make products that are, on average, more creative than those of their male peers. Using an exhaustive dataset comprising over 250,000 songs produced and released between 1955 and 2000, we construct an algorithmically-derived measure of musical creativity to test the extent to which there are gender differences in the relative creativity of products. Initially, we find no mean difference between men and women in terms of the creativity of songs they put out, but after controlling for individual and contextual differences, we find support of our theory: female artists create significantly more creative songs than their male counterparts. Controlling for women’s tendency to cluster in genres and networks with more women significantly increases the effect of being female on creativity, suggesting the creative premium for women would be even higher were it not for their tendency to be sorted into “pink ghettos.”