# *Exploring creole male stereotypes in Seychelles using digital matched-guise methodology*

Mats Deutschmann (Örebro University)

Anders Steinvall (Umeå University)

Justin Zelime (Seychelles University)

# Women in the Seychelles do well… on paper?

- Women have achieved almost full practical empowerment in the public sphere
- The significant difference in life expectancy at birth for women (79.6 years) and men (70.4 years) is an indication of this (National Statistics Bureau, 2018).
- Women highly visible in public life because of the small size of the country.
- 57% of households headed by women (2007)
- Women make up 62% of the Civil Service, [43.8 % of Members of Parliament, and 41% of the ministerial posts]*.
  *Updated figures.

(Geisler & Pardiwalla, 2010: 63)

# Stereotypic views of masculinity in the Seychelles.

Irresponsible!

Lazy!

Unmotivated!

Inadequate!

Druggies!

Drunkards!

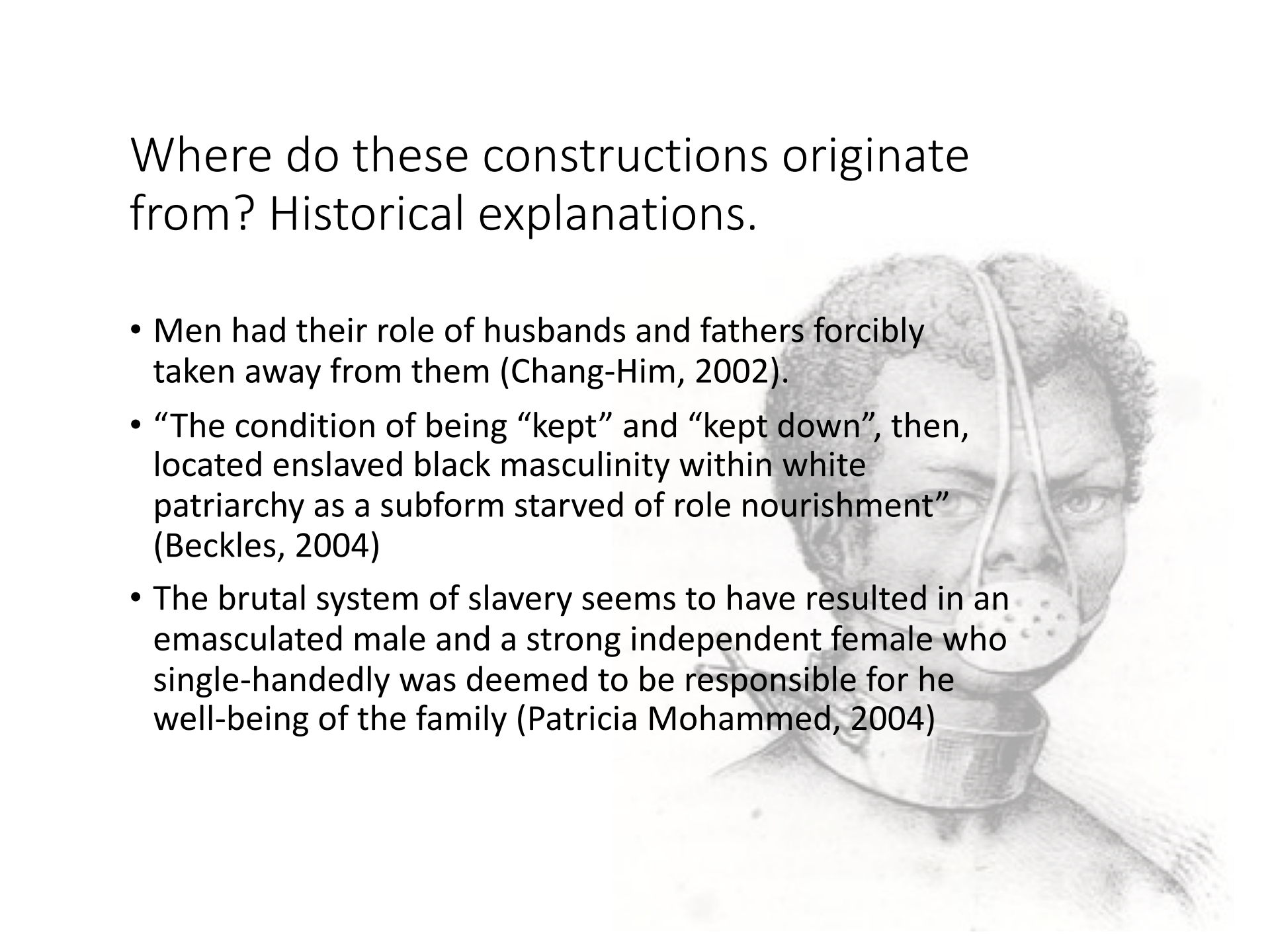
- "In many households, the father remains on the periphery and leaves the mother to carry the full responsibility of bringing up the children. He sees nothing wrong in having other partners and children". (Geisler & Pardiwalla, 2010: 66)
- Girls were the preferred gender at school and teachers held high expectations for them, while boys were labeled as lazy, irresponsible, and lacking in motivation.
- mothers and teachers alike. They bring negative ideas of masculinity to bear on their and other women's sons: boys, like men, are considered difficult, irresponsible, unmotivated, and inadequate.

(Geisler & Pardiwalla, 2010: 81)

# Where do these constructions originate from?

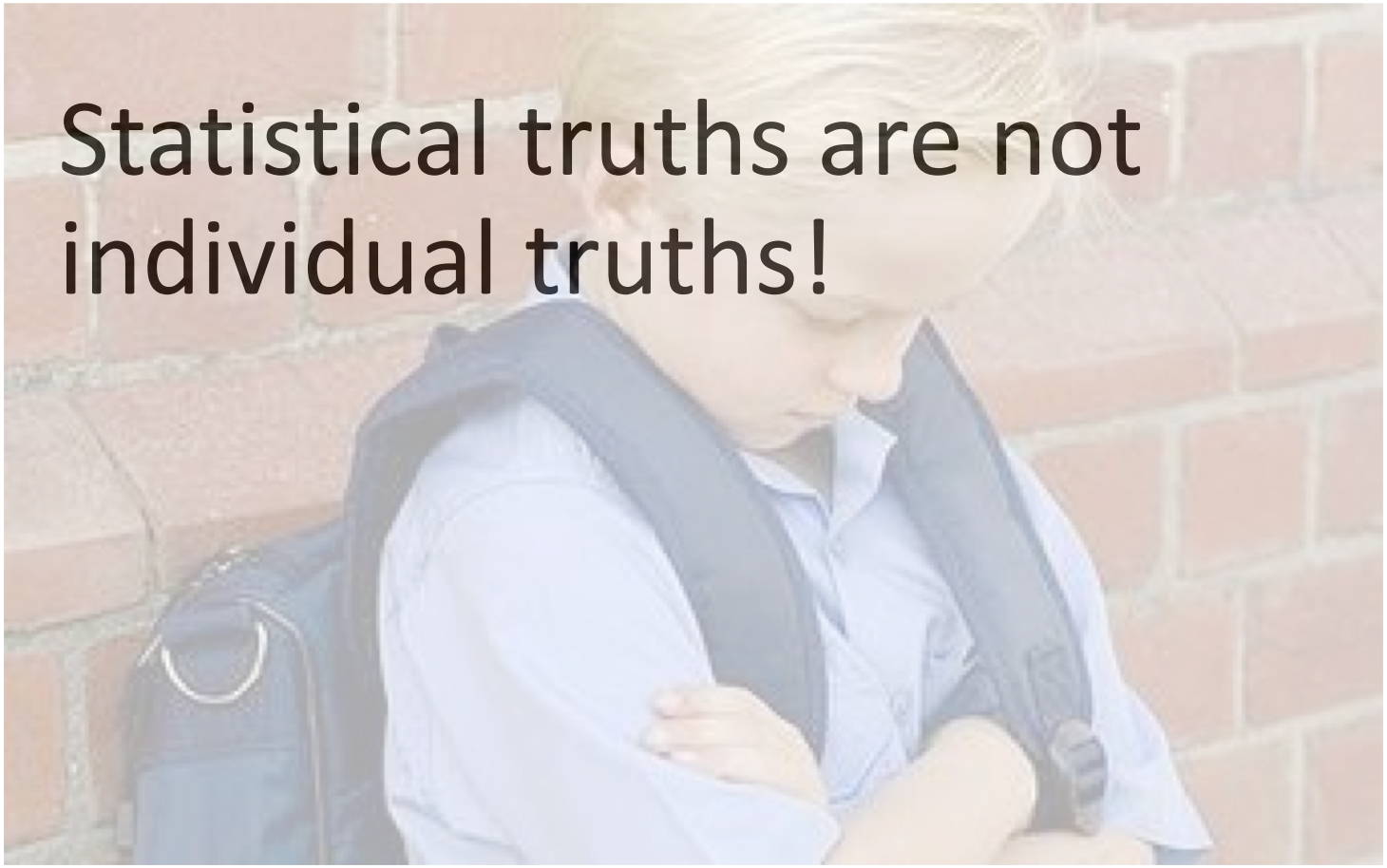
- Negative feed-back loops
  - The study […Ministry of Education and Youth, 2002 ] revealed differential treatment of boys and girls in schools and higher expectations for girls on the part of teachers. (see also Pardiwalla, 2007; 2009)
- Upbringing
  - The only fear parents frequently expressed about their sons were homophobic in nature, reconfirming overly stereotyped gender role ascriptions to boys as belonging outside the home, and thereby outside the place where emotions and sensitivity are learned and attachments are formed. (Geisler & Pardiwalla, 2010: 77)

# Where do these constructions originate from? Historical explanations.



- Men had their role of husbands and fathers forcibly taken away from them (Chang-Him, 2002).
- “The condition of being “kept” and “kept down”, then, located enslaved black masculinity within white patriarchy as a subform starved of role nourishment” (Beckles, 2004)
- The brutal system of slavery seems to have resulted in an emasculated male and a strong independent female who single-handedly was deemed to be responsible for he well-being of the family (Patricia Mohammed, 2004)

But…



# This study

- Ambition here is to explore aspects of gender stereotyping in the Seychelles and to see whether these stereotypes affect perceptions of an act of apology.

# RAVE

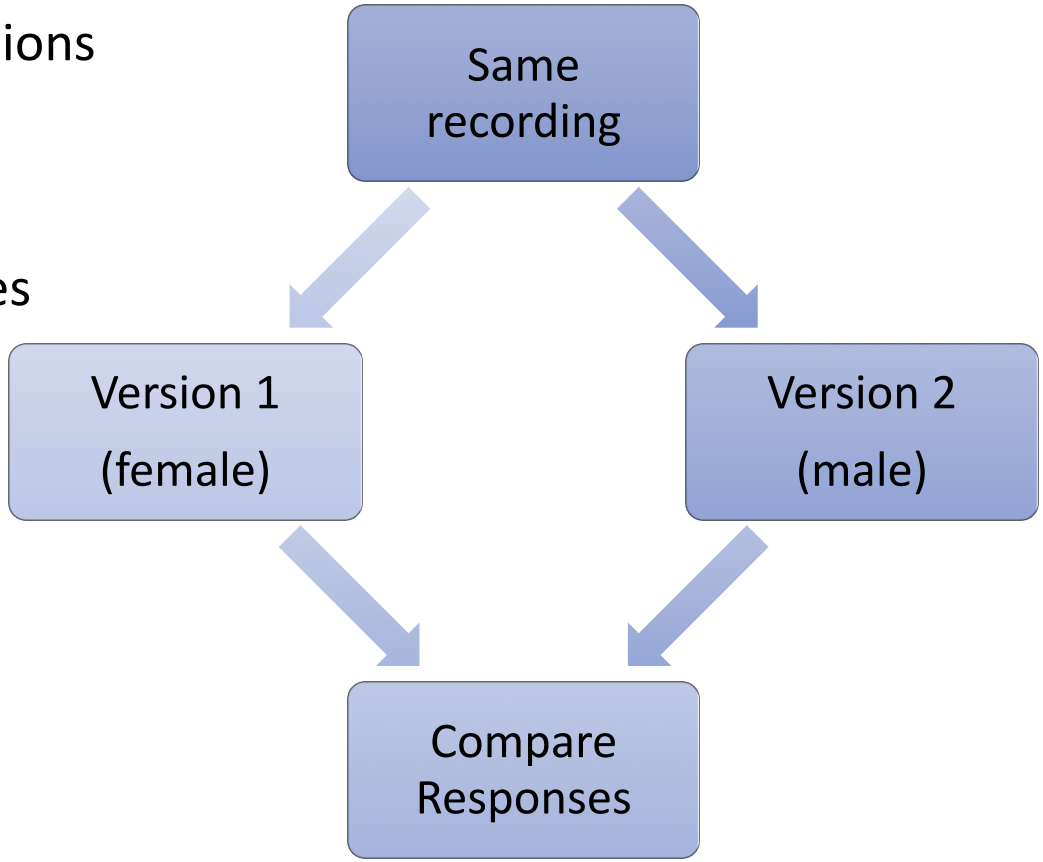
- RAVE (Raising Awareness through Virtual Experiencing), financed by *Swedish Research Council*, aims to explore and develop innovative methods for raising subjects' awareness of their own linguistic stereotyping, biases and prejudices, and to systematically explore ways of testing the efficiency of these methods. The RAVE methodology is based on traditional matched-guise methodology from sociolinguistics but uses digital manipulation techniques for the guise-flipping.

# C-RAVE

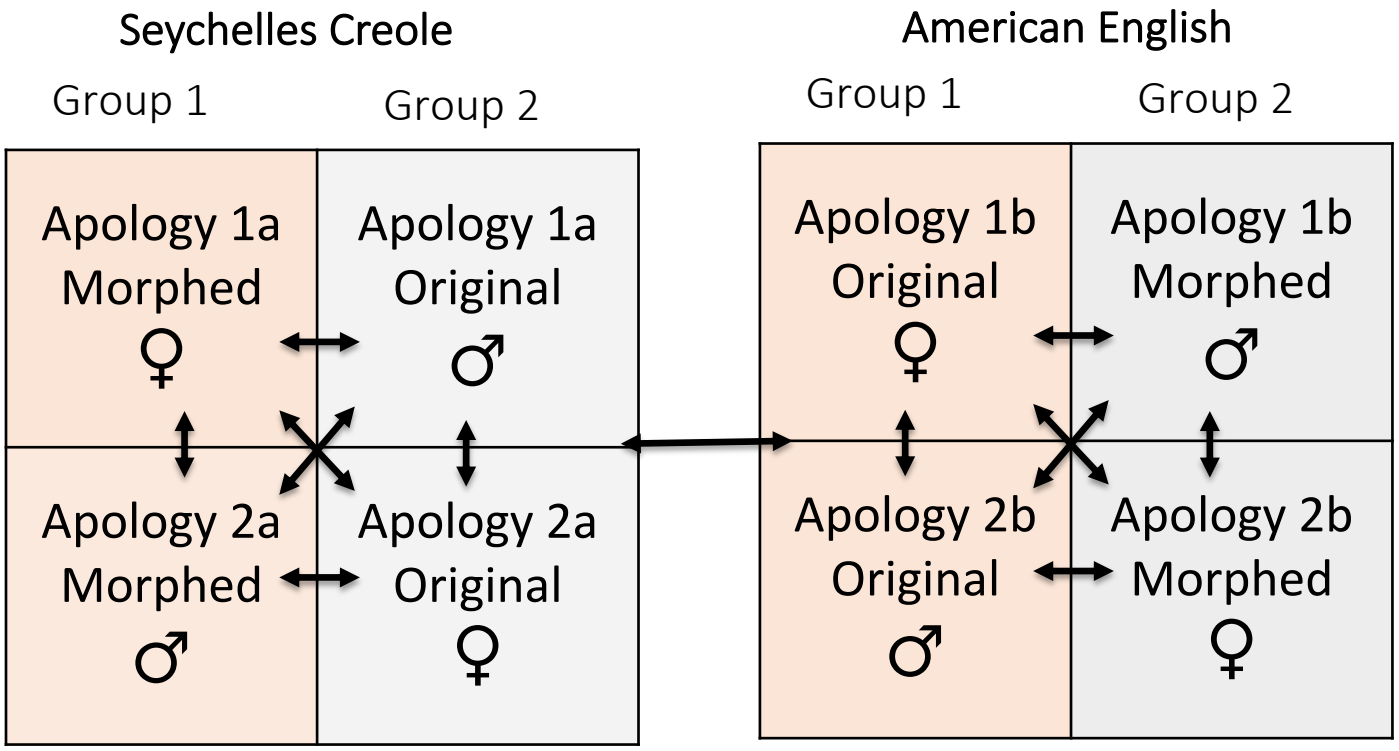
- Building on methods developed under RAVE, C-RAVE aims to explore how socio-linguistic stereotypes are constructed in a different cultural context, namely in the multi-ethnic, and by many described as ‘matriarchal’, African state Seychelles. The project is funded by the Marcus and Amalia Wallenberg Foundation.
- Stereotypes and prejudices are culturally bound. What is considered a "good or bad" characteristic in one culture is not necessarily deemed the same in another. In order to understand our own patterns of behaviour and view others with more open eyes, cross-cultural and intercultural perspectives are needed.

# RAVE – central method (matched-guise)

- 1. Same recording, two versions
- 2. Random split + response
- 3. Compare responses
- 4. Correlate with stereotypes



# Design: Apology 1 = teacher apology; Apology 2 = subordinate worker apology



# Examples of apologies: Creole

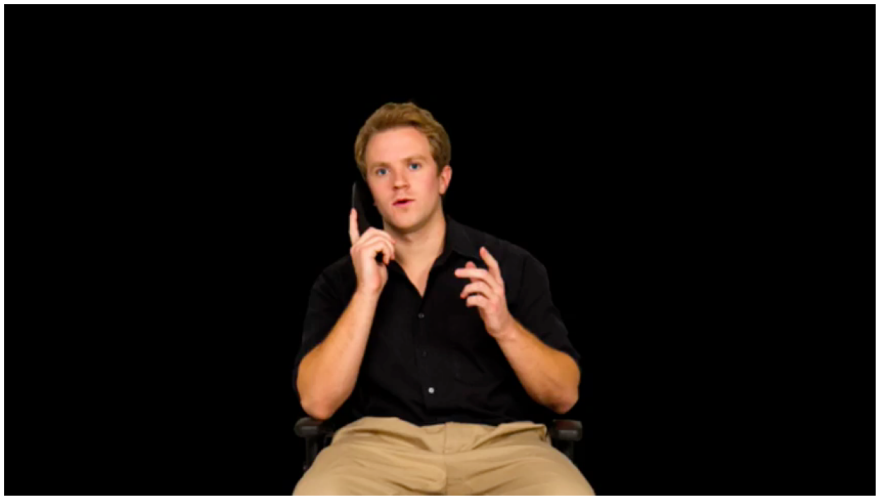
Apology 2a -original (Female subordinate worker)

Apology 2a -morphed (Male subordinate worker)

# Examples of apologies: American

Apology 1b -original
(Female teacher)

Apology 1b -morphed
(Male teacher)



# Response Questionnares

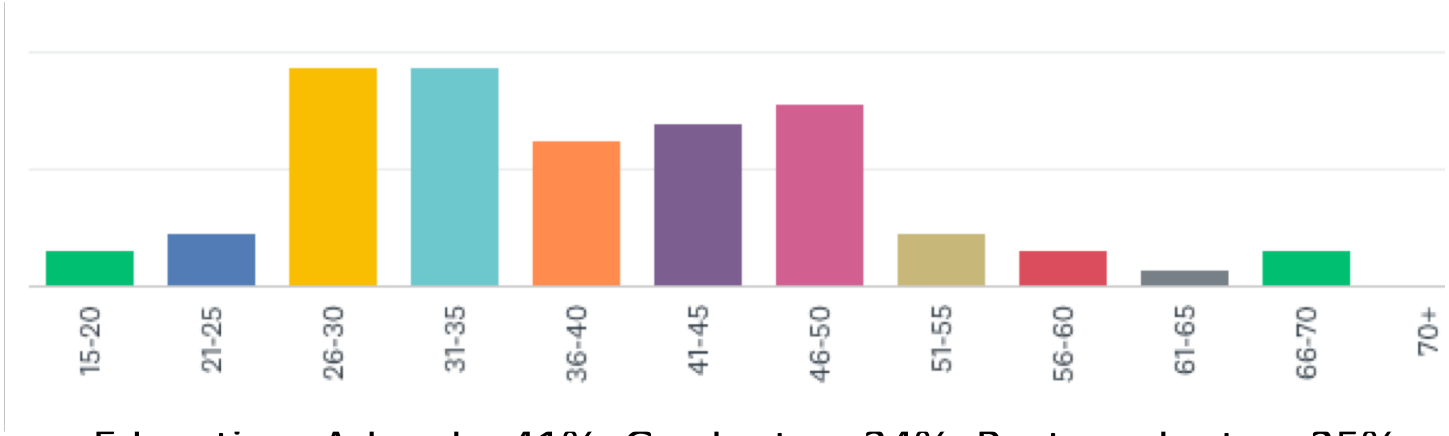
- **5 Dimensions (6 point Likert scale)**
- Sincerity; (the person apologising is sincere/insincere)
- Honesty; (The person is being honest – this was really a mistake/vice versa)
- Genuineness; (The person genuinely regrets the incident/ vice versa)
- Admitting fault; (The person takes full responsibility/is making excuses)
- Politeness; The person is polite

# We also asked of traits related to these dimensions

- 5 point scale where 0 = neutral; -2 very typically male; +2 = very typically female
- For example
- Being honest… Is this a typically female or male trait etc.

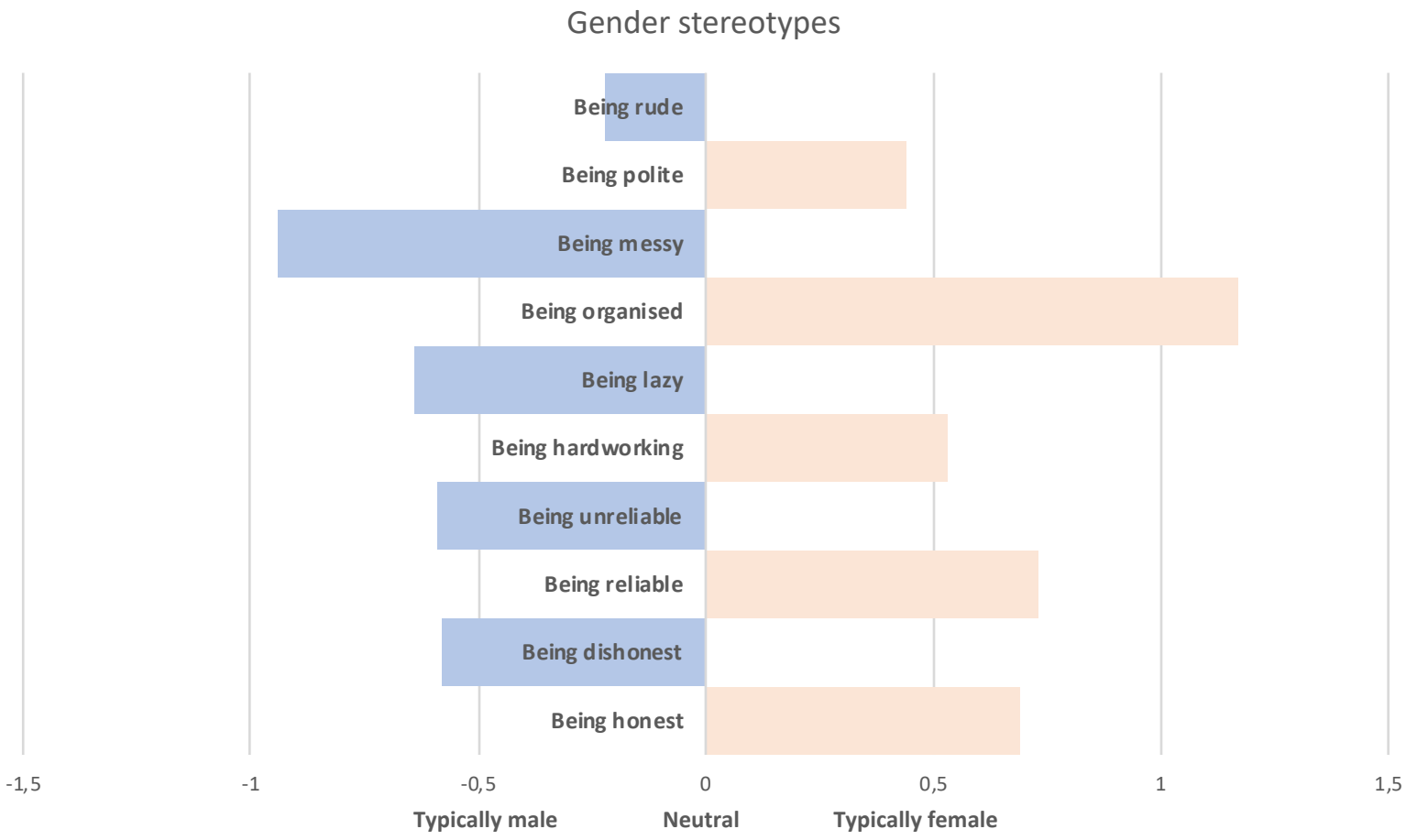
# Respondents

- N= 64 (22 males and 42 females)
- Age

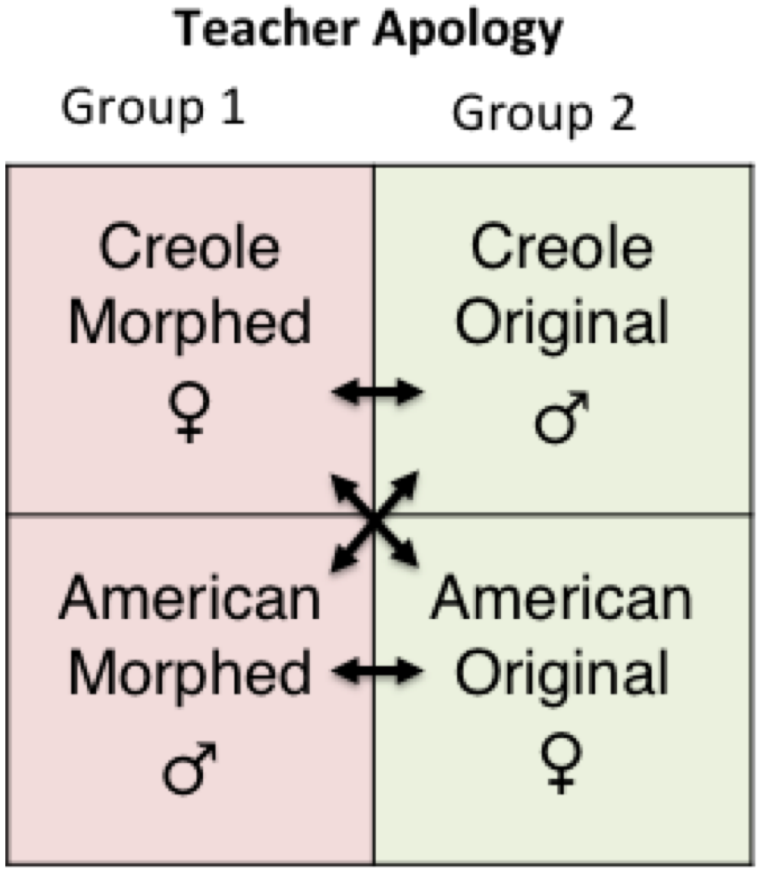



- Education: A-level = 41%; Graduate = 34%; Post-graduate = 25%

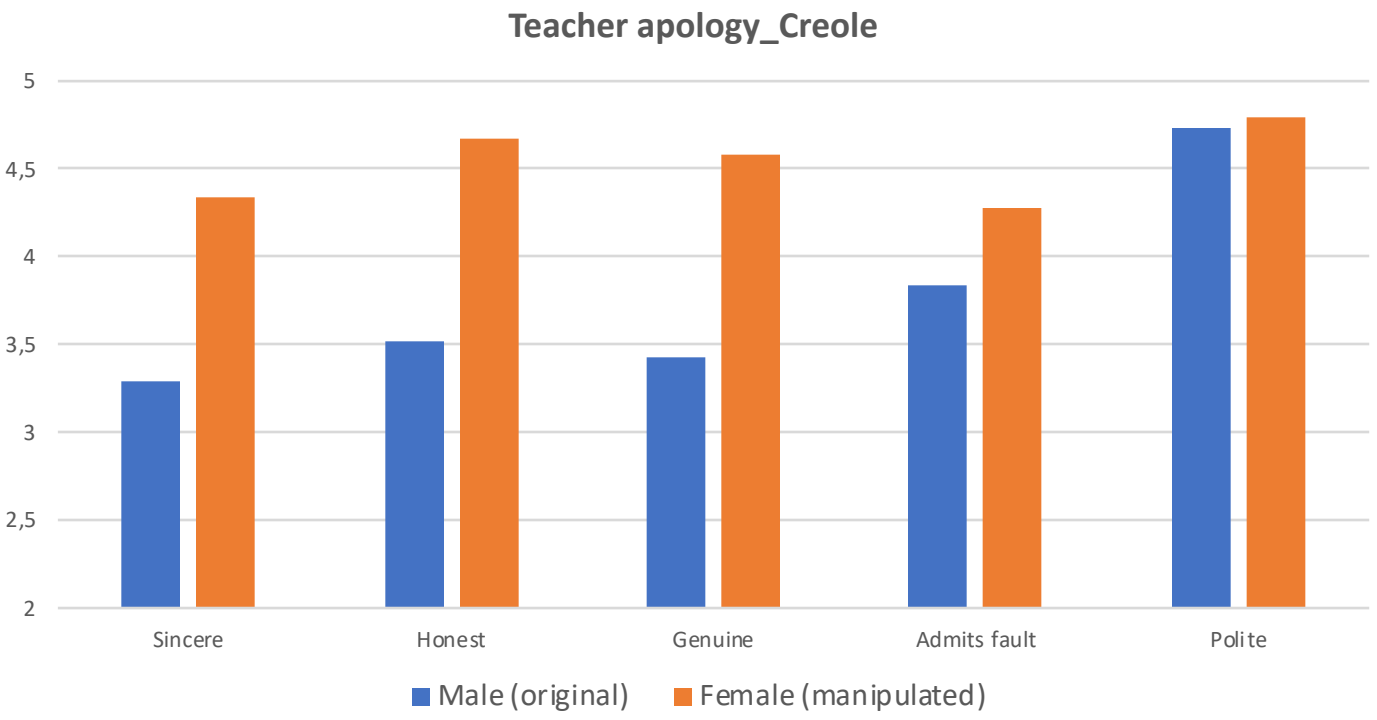
# Stereotypes



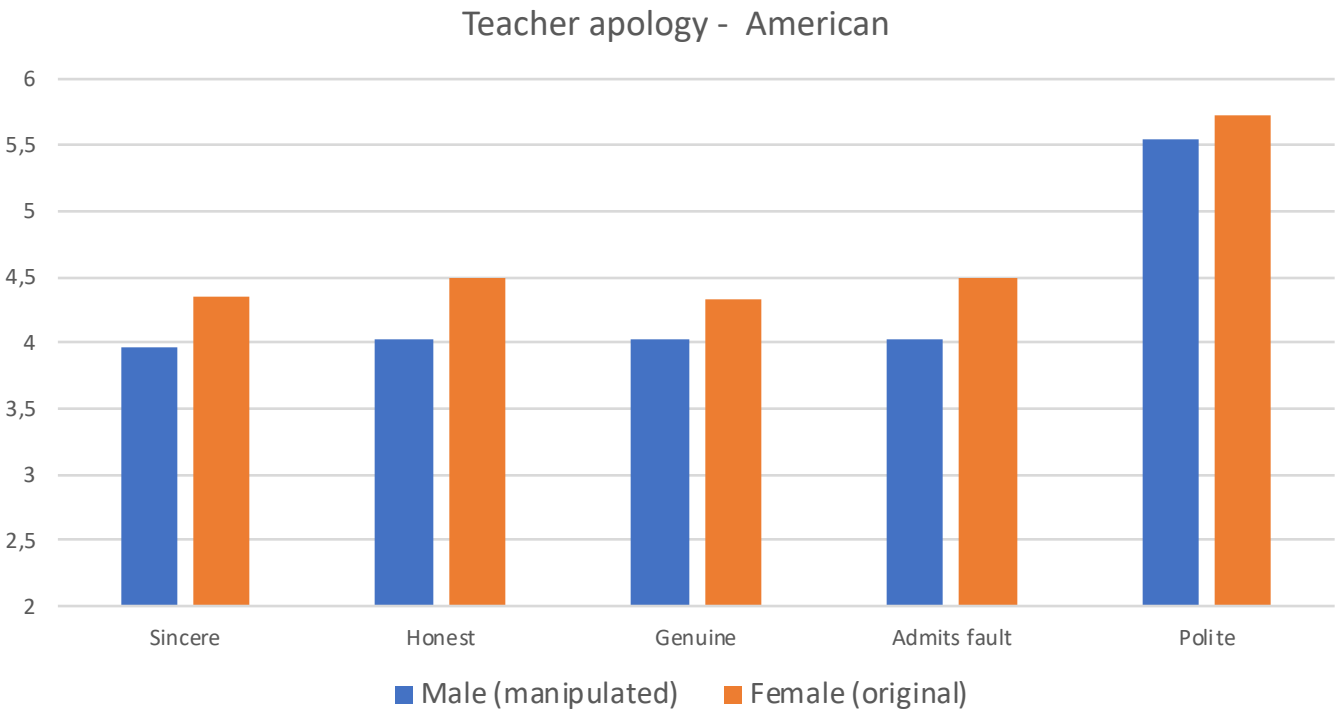
# Teacher apology



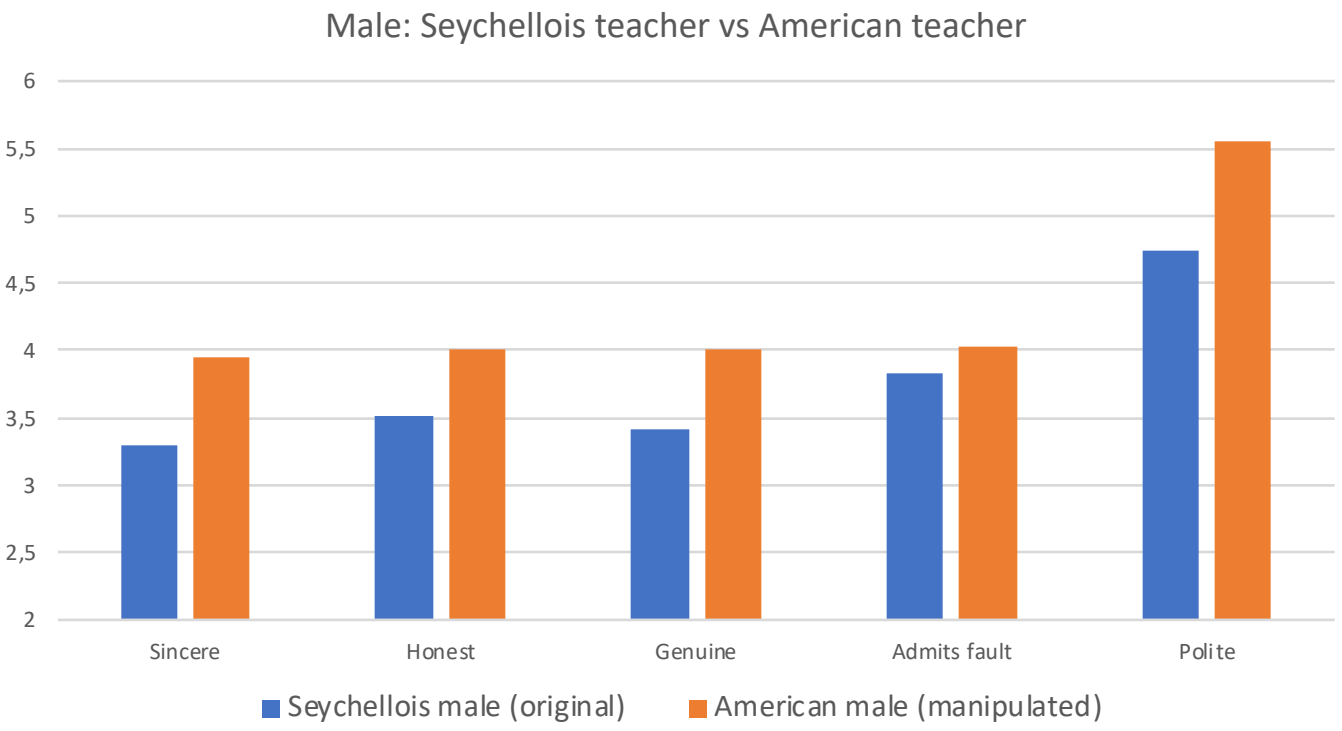
# Teacher apology – Creole, male vs female



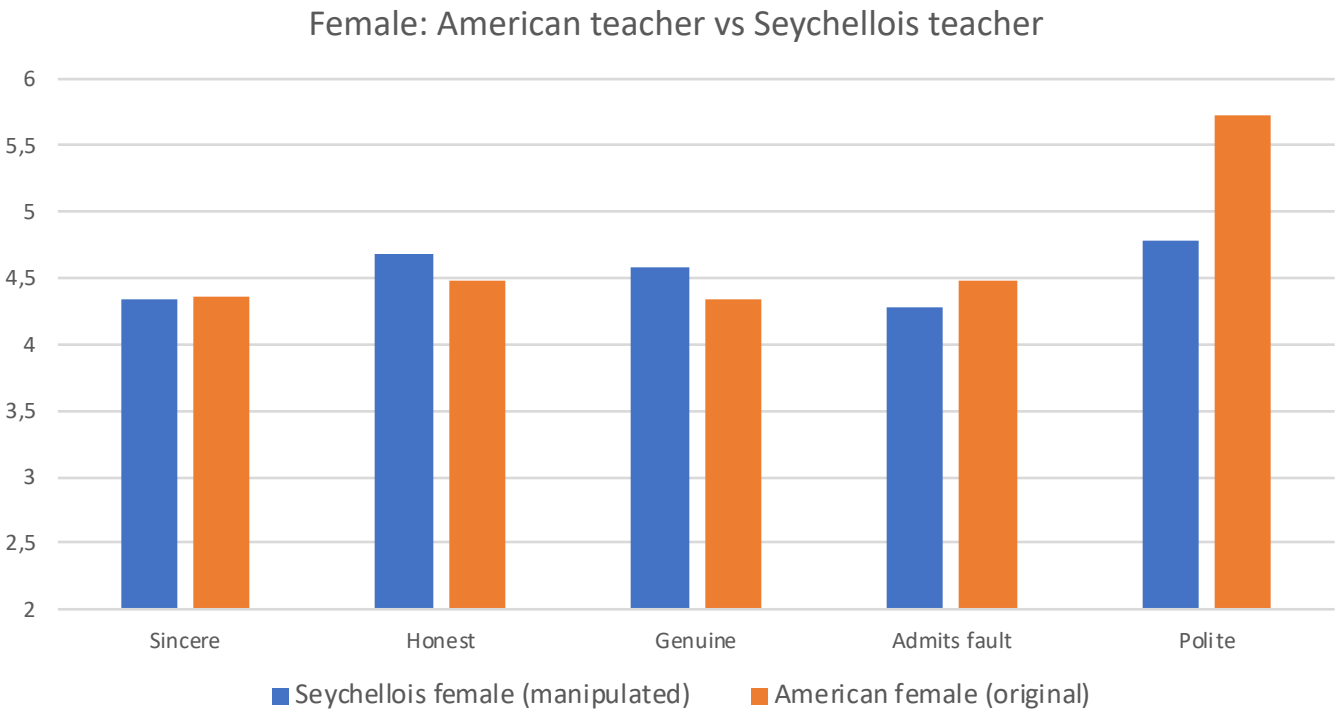
# Teacher apology – American: Male vs female



# Male Creole Teacher vs Male American Teacher



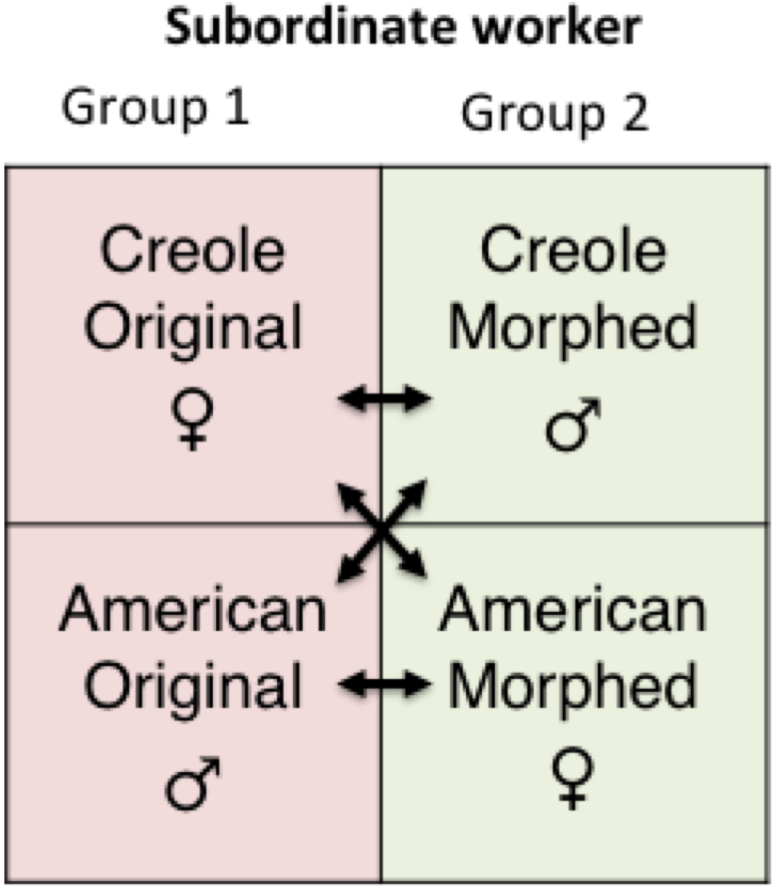
# Female Creole Teacher vs Female American Teacher



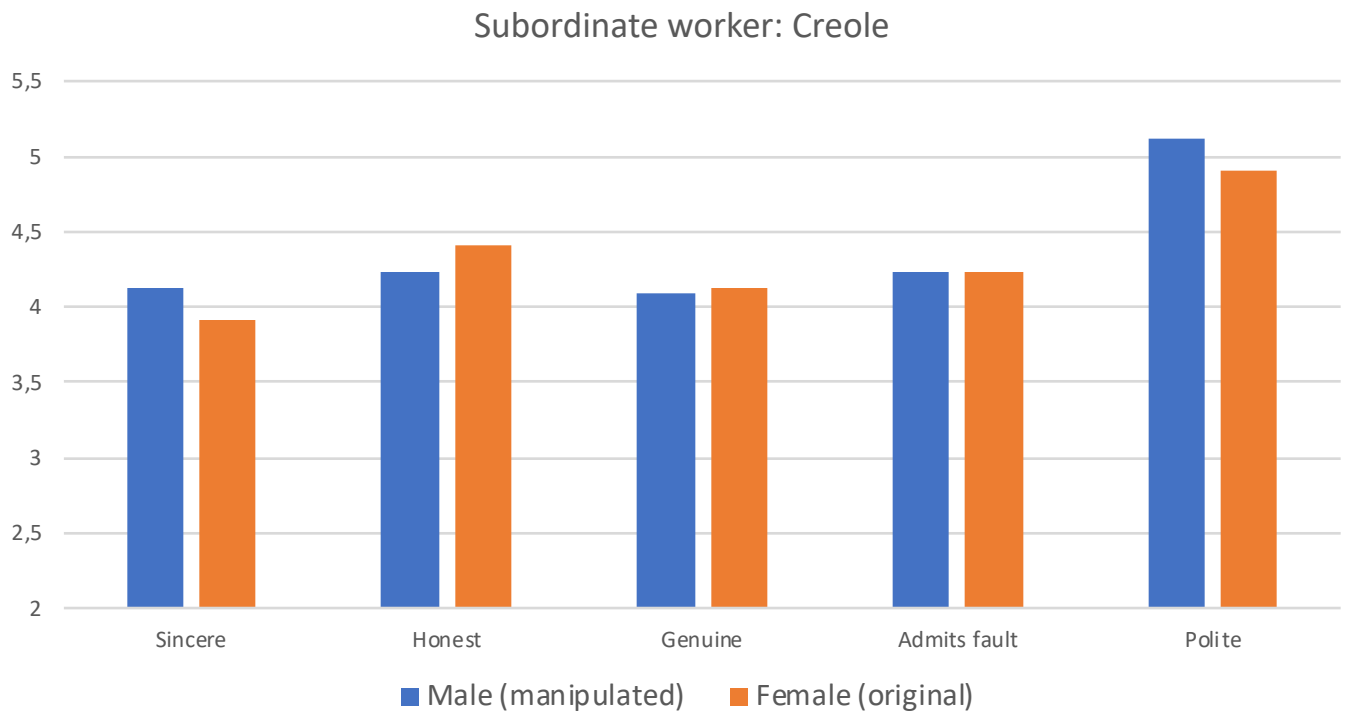
# Summary

- Large differences between Creole male and female versions (male disfavoured)
- Small differences between American male and female versions (male disfavoured)
- Medium differences between American and Creole male (Creole disfavoured)
- No differences between American and Creole female

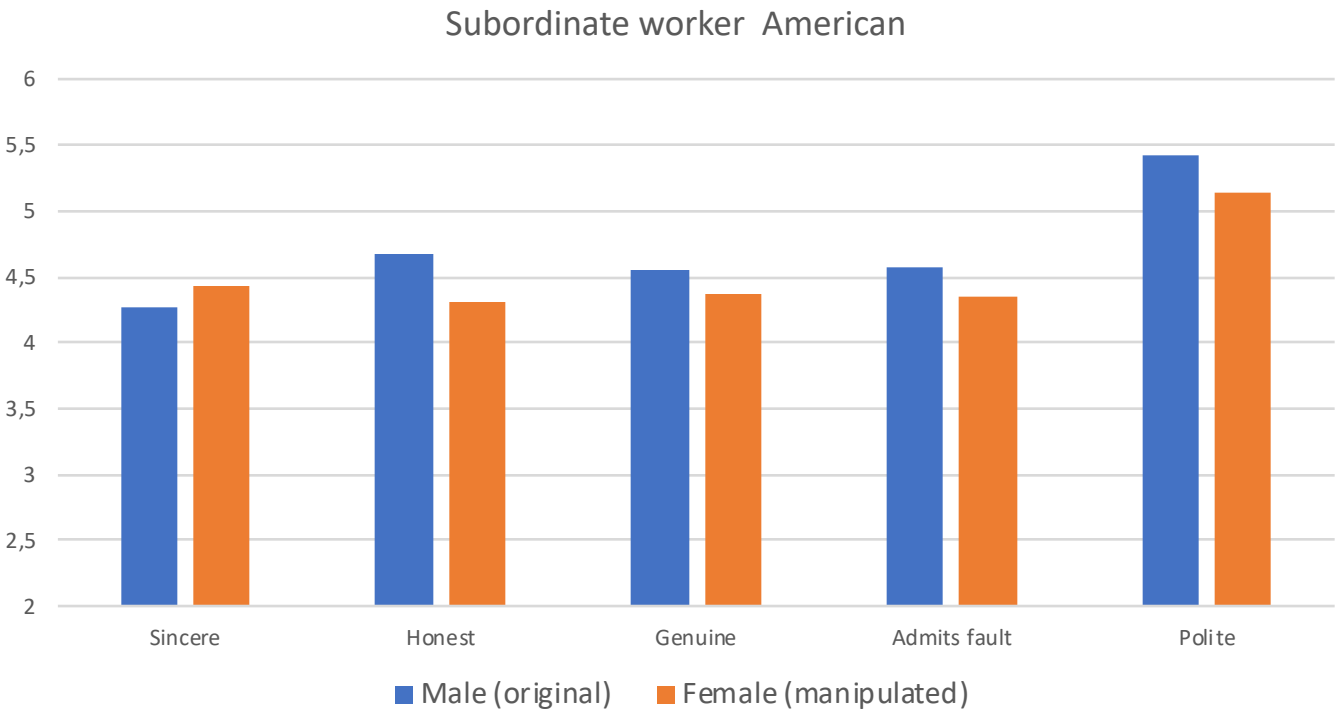
# Subordinate worker apology



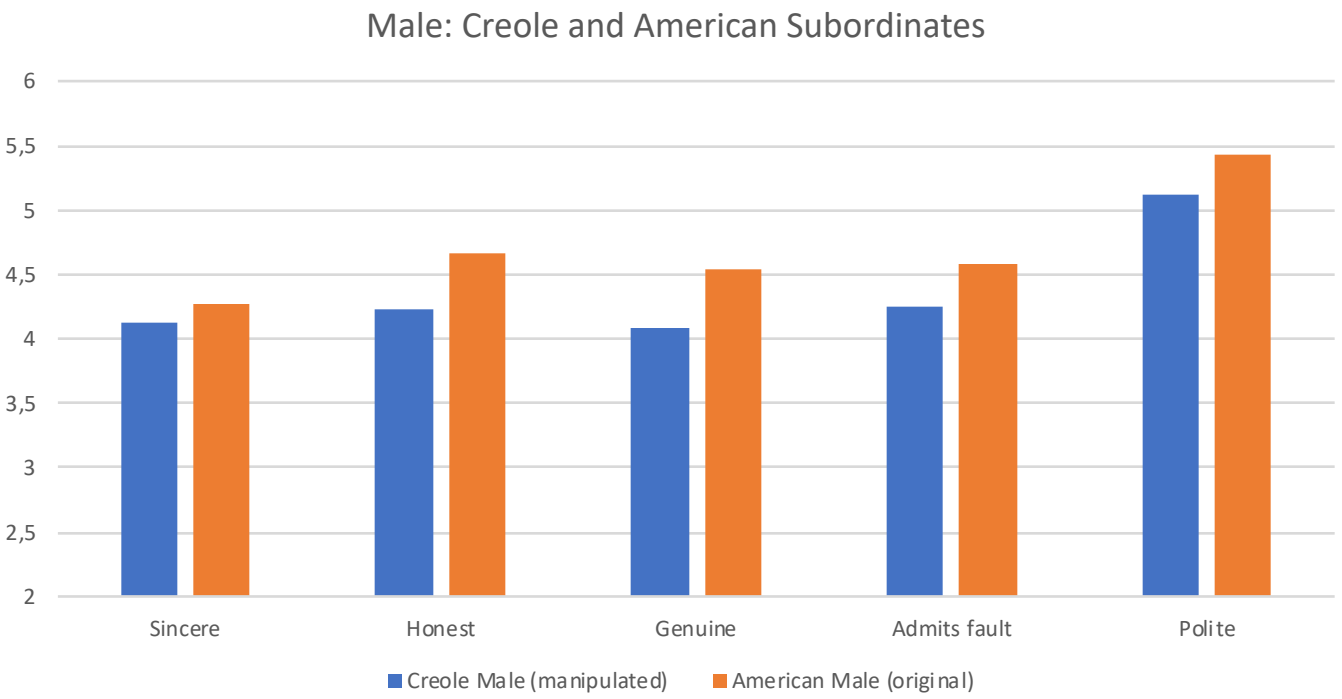
# Subordinate worker apology - Creole



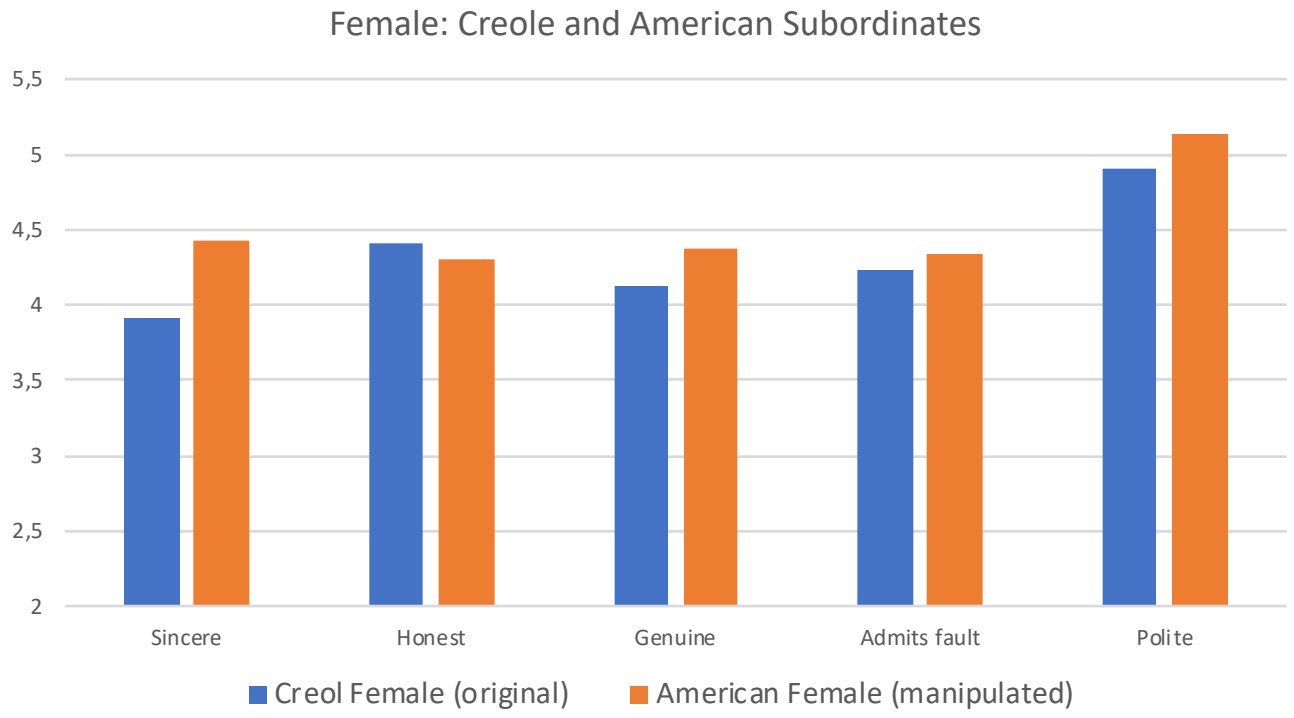
# Subordinate worker apology - American



# Male Creole Worker vs Male American Worker



# Female Creole Worker vs Male American Worker



# Summary

- No differences between Creole male and female versions
- Small differences between American male and female versions (female disfavoured)
- Small differences between American and Creole male (Creole disfavoured)
- No differences between American and Creole female

# Overall findings

- Male stereotypes are generally quite negative
- This is reflected in the interpretations of the Creole Male apology.
- But… seems to be context bound. The ‘teacher’ apology in particular rendered big differences.
- Creole male-recordings are judged less favourably than the American equivalent.
- What does all this say of gender stereotyping in the Seychelles?
- How do we combat such tendencies?

- Thank you!!!