

# Rachel D. Arnett

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## EDUCATION

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### Harvard Business School

Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior, May 2017 (expected)

- Dissertation: Cultivating inclusion: Navigating differences through expressing and concealing social identities in interpersonal interactions.
- Dissertation Committee: Robin Ely (Chair), Kathleen McGinn, Jim Sidanius, Lakshmi Ramarajan, Francesca Gino

### Harvard University

M.A. in Psychology, May 2015

### University of Pennsylvania

B.A., May 2007

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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My research investigates the important role that identities and interpersonal interactions play in cultivating workplace inclusion and enabling professional advancement. My dissertation focuses on how individuals cultivate a sense of inclusion through the ways in which they navigate social identity differences in interpersonal interactions. Using experimental methods, I examine when, why, and how individuals express cultural identities or conceal relatively high status identities when interacting with others, and the influence that these decisions have on employees' inclusive behaviors in the workplace. In a second branch of my research, I utilize multiple methods and data sources – experiments, company datasets, and qualitative interviews – to investigate how ascribed social identities (such as gender and social class) influence the professional identities that individuals construct, and the consequences for career choices, employee performance, and leadership attainment.

## AWARDS

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Harvard Business School Departmental Nominee, AOM Organizational Behavior Doctoral Consortium (2016).

Most Innovative Student Paper Award, Academy of Management Organizational Behavior Division (2015).  
Submission: Me versus us: Concealing high status identities from lower status peers (Awarded to one student in the Academy of Management Organizational Behavior Division).

Graduate Student Travel Award, Society for Personality and Social Psychology (2015).

Diversity Fund Graduate Travel Award, Society for Personality and Social Psychology (2015).

## UNDER REVIEW

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*Arnett, R.D., Sidanius, Jim. Sacrificing status for social harmony: Concealing relatively high status identities from one's peers (Previously titled: Me versus us: Concealing high status identities from lower status peers). In preparation for invited resubmission at *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.*

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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*Arnett, R.D., Sidanius, Jim.* 2015. Me versus us: Concealing high status identities from lower status peers. In John Humphreys (Ed.), *Proceedings of the Seventy-fifth Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management*. (Top 10% of paper submissions to the Academy of Management Annual Meeting)

## WORKING PAPERS

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*Arnett, R.D.* Making diversity win: Cultivating inclusion through expressing cultural identity differences at work. In preparation for submission to *Journal of Applied Psychology*.

*Arnett, R.D., Kteily, N., Navarrete, C.D., Sidanius, J.* If Michael Brown had been Michelle Brown: Difference in the acquisition and extinction of conditioned fear towards outgroup males vs. females in a minimal group context. In preparation for submission to *Journal of Experimental and Social Psychology*.

*Arnett, R.D.* Who will you become? Committing to professional & family identities and the influence of gender and role models. In preparation for submission to *Academy of Management Journal*.

*Arnett, R.D., Gino, F., Staats, B.* When less is more: Fewer job options boosts performance. Data collection in progress.

Clair, J., Humberd, B.H., *Arnett, R.D., McGinn, K.*, Class matters: Narratives of women firsts in social economic context. In preparation for submission to *Organization Science*.

## INVITED TALKS, CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS, AND ORGANIZED SYMPOSIA

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Clair, J.A., McGinn, K.M., Humberd, B.K., *Arnett, R.D.*, (2016, August). Class Matters: Narratives of Women Firsts in Social Economic Context. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Anaheim, CA.

- Selected for Academy of Management Organizational Behavior Division Showcase Symposium

*Arnett, R. D.* (2016, April) Harnessing cultural identity expression to achieve workplace inclusion. Paper presented at the Harvard Business School Gender & Work Conference, Boston, MA.

*Arnett, R. D., Sidanius, Jim.* (2015, August) Me versus us: Concealing high status identities from lower status peers. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Vancouver.

- Winner of Academy of Management Organizational Behavior Division's Most Innovative Student Award
- Included in *Proceedings of the Seventy-fifth Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management*

*Arnett, R.D.* (2015, June) Empowered by parents: How parental role models influence professional and family identity construction. Paper presented at the Conference of Positive Organizational Scholarship, Orlando, FL.

*Arnett, R. D., Sidanius, Jim.* (2015, May) Me versus us: Concealing high status identities from lower status peers. Paper presented at the London Business School Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference, London, UK.

*Arnett, R. D., Sidanius, Jim.* (2015, February) Me versus us: Concealing high status identities from lower status peers. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Long Beach, CA.

*Arnett, R.D.* (2014, December) Who will you become? Committing to professional & family identities: The influence of parental role models. Invited talk at the Center for Gender in Organizations (CGO), Distinguished Scholar Speaker Series, Simmons College School of Management, Boston, MA.

*Arnett, R.D., Ely, R., McGinn, K.* (2014, August) Approach and avoidance: How parental role models influence professional and family identity work. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

*Arnett, R.D.* (2014, August). Symposium titled “New directions in professional identity work: Exploring forms of social influence” (*Co-Chair and Co-Organizer*). Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

*Arnett, R.D., Sidanius, J.* (2014, February). High status identity and relationship management: Distance and disclosure. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.

*Arnett, R.D., Sidanius, J.* (2013, August). High status identity and relationship management: Distance and disclosure. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL.

Humberd, B.K., *Arnett, R.D., Clair, J.A., McGinn, K.M.* (2013, August). Becoming a leader: High-achieving women’s construction of professional and personal advancement. Paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL.

*Arnett, R.D.* (2013, August). Symposium titled “Beyond gender barriers: Exploring how women overcome obstacles to career advancement” (*Co-Chair and Co-Organizer*). Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL.

*Arnett, R.D., Kteily, N., Sidanius, J. Navarrete, C., McDonald, M.* (2013, January). Outgroup fear: Fundamental, physiological, and male-targeted. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

## **TEACHING AND ADVISING**

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Harvard University, Cambridge MA  
Research Supervisor – PSY 2570r (Psychology of Intergroup Relations Seminar)  
Fall 2012 - Present

Harvard Business School, Boston MA  
Research Supervisor – The Behavioral Insights Group  
Fall 2012 & Spring 2016

Harvard University, Cambridge MA  
Teaching Fellow – PSY S-1, Introduction to Psychology  
Summer 2015

US China Cultural Exchange Foundation, Cambridge, MA  
Instructor – Public Speaking Workshop  
Summer 2015

Harvard University, Cambridge MA  
Teaching Fellow – PSY 1502, Cultural Psychology: Exploring Social Identities in the U.S. and Beyond  
Fall 2014

## SERVICE AND AFFILIATIONS

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Academy of Management, Member, 2011 – Present  
The PhD Project Management Doctoral Students Association (MDSA), 2011 – Present  
- Served as Vice-President, 2013 – 2014  
Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Member, 2011 – Present  
Social Psychology Network, Member, 2011 – Present  
American Psychological Association, Member, 2011 – Present

## PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE

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### **New York University**

Research Assistant for John Jost, 2008 – 2011

### **Young & Rubicam Advertising**

Senior Brand Strategist, 2009 – 2011

Brand Strategist, 2007 – 2009

Primary Consulting Clients: Colgate-Palmolive, Xerox

## REFERENCES

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Robin J. Ely

Diane Doerge Wilson Professor of Business  
Administration

Harvard Business School

617-495-6442

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James Sidanius

John Lindsley Professor of Psychology in  
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## APPENDIX: SELECTED RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

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*Arnett, R.D., Sidanius, Jim. Sacrificing status for social harmony: Concealing relatively high status identities from one's peers (Previously titled: Me versus us: Concealing high status identities from lower status peers). In preparation for invited resubmission at *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.*

Given strong human desires to be both respected and understood, we propose a surprising tendency: individuals conceal their authentic selves in order to avoid being seen as relatively high status compared to peers. Across five studies, participants were more likely to conceal an identity – such as being college-educated – when the identity conveyed higher, rather than similar, status relative to a peer (Studies 1-5). Concealment persisted in professional contexts, where withholding relatively high status identities is particularly costly (Study 3). Concealing a relatively high status identity was an effort to preserve social harmony by avoiding interpersonal threats to the self, others, and belonging (Study 4), and was not simply an attempt to minimize perceived self-promotion (Study 5). We propose that the consistent decision to conceal relatively high status identities demonstrates a critical prioritization of basic human motives: the desire for social harmony trumping the combined desire for status and authenticity.

*Arnett, R.D. Making diversity win: Cultivating inclusion through expressing cultural identity differences at work. In preparation for submission to *Journal of Applied Psychology*.*

The present research investigates the role of employees' interpersonal behaviors in determining whether diversity is beneficial or inhibitive in the workplace. More specifically, I examine the relationship between 1) cultural majority-group employees' ("majorities") engagement in inclusive behaviors, and 2) cultural minority-group employees' ("minorities") engagement in cultural identity expression (i.e., voluntarily bringing attention to one's cultural background during workplace interactions). Although both majorities and minorities often fear that expressing cultural identity differences will have negative consequences for workplace inclusion, the results of two studies demonstrate that minority cultural identity expression can actually increase three types of majority inclusive behaviors: professionally inclusive behaviors, socially inclusive behaviors, and multicultural appreciation behaviors. The richness of the cultural identity expression (i.e., the extent to which cultural identity expression provides greater insight into minorities' culturally-based thoughts and feelings) is particularly important: as minority cultural identity expression increases in richness, such expressions are more likely elicit inclusive behaviors from majorities. The current set of studies also tests the mechanisms underlying these effects. Overall, this research sheds light on the ways in which employees' interpersonal behaviors can make or break the success of diversity in the workplace.