

JUDGED AT FIRST SIGHT: THE EFFECTS OF STEREOTYPE
INCONSISTENCY ON INTERRACIAL ROMANTIC EVALUATIONS

by
Vy Cao-Nguyen and Morgan A. Caverhill

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Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the accompanying thesis by Vy Cao-Nguyen and Morgan A. Caverhill has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with Honors in Psychology.

Brooke Vick

Whitman College
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Abstract

Interracial romantic relationships are uncommon, and research on why individuals choose or do not choose to romantically interact with members outside their racial group is recent and limited (Mok, 1999). Because stereotype inconsistency has been shown to have positive effects on evaluations of minority races (Power et al., 1996), the present study investigated how stereotype inconsistency might influence one's willingness to date interracially. We investigated this factor by providing White women with fictional online dating profiles of Black, Asian, and White men. Each participant saw two profiles that featured negative stereotypes of either Black or Asian races. Half the participants were led to believe the men were of the minority race, and the other half, who read the exact same profiles, were led to believe that the men were White. One of the two profiles was consistent with the negative stereotype of that minority group and the other was stereotype inconsistent. Participants evaluated the men as romantic prospects by indicating their attraction and romantic interest in the men. We predicted that inconsistency with a negative stereotype would make evaluations more favorable regardless of the race of that target. We also predicted that evaluations would be based more on profile content than race of the target, so the evaluations of a profile presented as Black or Asian to one group and as White to another would be relatively the same. Results supported both hypotheses. Implications of stereotype inconsistency's influence within the interracial dating context and limitations of the study are discussed.

Keywords: stereotypes, stereotype consistency, stereotype inconsistency, dating, interracial relationships

Judged at First Sight: The Effects of Stereotype Inconsistency on Interracial Romantic Evaluations

Interracial romantic relationships are uncommon, and the majority of research in this area has focused on married couples rather than dating couples (Feliciano, Robnett, & Komaie, 2009). Furthermore, research on why individuals choose or do not choose to romantically interact with members outside their racial group is recent and limited (Mok, 1999; Shoepflin, 2009). Because stereotype inconsistency has been shown to have positive and negative effects on evaluations of minority races (e.g. Power, Murphy & Coover, 1996; Schimel et al., 1999), we investigated it in a context that has not previously been studied with regard to stereotype inconsistency, but one in which race and evaluations of others is central: interracial romantic relationships.

Processing Stereotype Inconsistencies

Social psychologists tend to agree that stereotypes function as cognitive “energy-saving” devices because they simplify information for more efficient processing and response generation (Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994). It logically follows that within the context of interpersonal relationships, the efficiency of stereotyping allows for stereotype-consistent information to be more frequently shared than stereotype-inconsistent information during social exchanges (Clark & Kashima, 2007). However, although stereotype-inconsistent information is not perpetuated as easily as stereotype-consistent information, research does suggest that when present, stereotype inconsistency can have positive effects on racial evaluations of outgroup members in a variety of contexts (e.g. Bodenhausen, Schwarz, Bless, & Wanke, 1995; Power et al., 1996). For example, one study found that counterstereotypical descriptions of outgroup members

can positively influence implicit racial evaluations (Marini, Rubichi, & Sartori, 2011). After participants read a story in which a Black man was portrayed positively and counter to the negative stereotype, they showed less pro-white bias on the race Implicit Association Test (IAT) than when they had taken the race IAT in a previous session prior to reading the story. These results suggest that implicit racial attitudes can change, at least temporarily, after reading something positive about a member of that race. These findings are important because they demonstrate that racial attitudes are not necessarily inflexible, and rather that they can be influenced by positive, counterstereotypical information about a member of that race.

Furthermore, Power et al. (1996) found that when participants were given newsletters with either depictions of a negative stereotypical Black man, a positive counterstereotypical Black man, or a neutral depiction as the control, those who had seen the counterstereotypical depiction gave more favorable evaluations of the man than those who had seen the negative stereotypical depiction or the neutral depiction. Results such as these demonstrate the potential positive influence that stereotype inconsistency can have, suggesting that members of a negatively stereotyped race can be evaluated positively if they are inconsistent with the negative stereotype.

Contrary to the observations of positive reactions to stereotype-inconsistent data, evidence of negative reactions exist when group members deviate from stereotypical expectations (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). One explanation for this phenomenon is that stereotype inconsistency threatens people's worldview because the inconsistency does not fit with how they conceptualize the world (Schimel et al., 1999). Schimel et al. (1999) observed that, although White men and women generally preferred a stereotype-

inconsistent “bookish” Black man, they instead demonstrated a preference for a stereotype-consistent Black man when their mortality was made salient. According to this terror management theory, under conditions of fear and uncertainty, people resort to stereotypes for assurance because using familiar heuristics is a quick and easy way of making sense of what they can immediately control: their conceptualization of the world. This view is consistent with the idea mentioned above that stereotypes serve as cognitive tools. When stereotype inconsistency renders these cognitive tools ineffective, it makes sense that people would feel threatened and seek to penalize the deviant, resulting in backlash effects. Phelan & Rudman (2010) discovered that even Whites can suffer from a backlash effect when they engage in cross-racial domains. In this study, two groups of White students were exposed to an identical rap song. One group was led to believe the song was performed by a White rapper while another group was told that the song was performed by a Black rapper. Compared to the views of the Black rapper, the White rapper was rated by students as less likeable, less talented and less worthy of economic support. The authors argue that although Whites are not always punished for engaging in cross-racial domains, they are punished if the domain is perceived as lower than the typical status of Whites. In this scenario, rapping is considered to be of lower status because it belongs in the Black domain, and thus, White men who rapped were punished for such cross-racial engagement. In a different investigation, Black and Hispanic students who excelled in academics experienced decreased popularity while their White peers enjoyed increased popularity for high academic achievement (Fryer & Torelli, 2010). Because intelligence is inconsistent with the stereotypes of Blacks and Hispanics (Devine & Elliot, 1995), the minorities experienced the backlash effects from

deviating from stereotypical expectations for their race, even though the deviation reflected a positive achievement. These results suggest that minority outgroups could actually be evaluated less favorably when they are inconsistent with their stereotype, even if the inconsistency portrays them positively.

Overall, stereotype-consistent information is exchanged more often, and people tend to embrace those stereotype consistencies more than information that is inconsistent with their existing beliefs (Clark & Kashima, 2007). However, research shows that stereotype inconsistencies can have both positive and negative effects. Since interracial dating is influenced by the kinds of suitor information shared and how that information is perceived, how will stereotype inconsistency manifest itself in the dating context?

Interracial Romantic Relationships

Studying interracial romantic relationships is a useful context in which to examine racial attitudes since racial attitudes play a particularly restrictive role when it comes to intimate partner selection (Feliciano et al., 2009; Park, 1924). For instance, although Whites' racial attitudes have become increasingly more tolerant (Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997), still only 4% of White Americans actually marry outside their race (Qian & Lichter 2007). This low percentage could be because of perceptions about what it means to marry outside of one's race. For example, White men who marry outside of their race, "violating norms about appropriate marriage partners," were seen as less professionally competent (Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001). The same study showed that Black and Asian Americans who married outside their race were sometimes regarded as "sell outs" in addition to being perceived as less professionally competent. Of those interracial marriages, couples with a Black partner were seen as less compatible. The

statistics show that even though racial attitudes are improving, intimate interracial relationships remain uncommon.

Data on factors that breed attraction in pre-dating contexts cover a wide variety of possibilities, including political orientation, similarities, personality, reciprocation, appearance, and cognitive complexity (Burlison, Kunkel, & Swolwinski, 1997; Eastwick, Richeson, Son, & Finkel, 2009; Luo, 2009; Luo & Zhang, 2009; Walster, Aronson, Abraham, & Rottman, 1966). One of the strongest indicators of attraction during the search for a romantic partner is physical attractiveness (Luo & Zhang, 2009). For instance, researchers in one study found that women tended to rate a man as more likeable the more handsome he was, and the more handsome he was, the more she was open to pursuing a relationship with him (Walster, Aronson, Abraham, & Rottman, 1966). Romantic interest based on physical attractiveness demonstrates one way that people use an easily accessible observation to make a quick initial judgment about the attractiveness of a potential dating partner.

On a less superficial but related level, couples decide to date largely due to the similarities they share on demographics, attitudes, and personal interests. Though similar personality traits somewhat predicted attraction, the link between shared personality traits and a desire to date an individual were not as statistically significant as other similarities such as age or personal interests, perhaps because one's personality requires a good deal of time for partners to discover and understand (Luo & Zhang, 2009). New encounters with romantic prospects force individuals to quickly capture their best impression of others based on the most salient qualities available, qualities such as physical beauty, age, and ethnicity that are quickly observable during a short time frame of acquaintance. The

fact that ethnicity or race is an easily noticeable characteristic used to make quick judgments suggests a potential for racial stereotypes to play a role in the assessment of a potential dating partner.

Despite the plethora of relationship research available, data on factors influencing interracial dating in particular are significantly less common (AnhAllen & Suyemoto, 2011; Mok, 1999). We hoped to address this gap in the research and focus on how negative racial stereotypes might affect one's initial willingness to engage in a relationship. Based on what is known about other factors that people use to make quick judgments about potential dating partners such as physical attractiveness and perceived similarity discussed above, interracial attraction likely involves another factor that allows people to make quick judgments based on the race of the romantic prospect. For this reason, racial stereotypes could be a useful lens with which to examine willingness to date interracially because another person's race is something that can be noticed quite quickly upon meeting a person, knowing their name, or hearing them speak. Furthermore, because stereotypes are known to be used as cognitive tools to make judgments about others more quickly (Macrae et al., 1994), it makes sense that people would be aware of racial stereotypes when evaluating a romantic prospect of another race.

In the present study, we investigated whether stereotype inconsistency would influence participants' evaluations of racial outgroup members in a dating context. We used Whites as the majority-race evaluators and Blacks and Asians as the two outgroup romantic prospects. We chose Blacks as one of the target outgroups because the White-Black divide has historically been and currently remains the strongest racial divide in the

United States (Lee & Bean, 2004). We chose Asians as our second outgroup target because White Americans hold a set of views about Asians that is markedly different than their views about Blacks. Research has shown that Whites “favor Asians at the expense of African Americans” because Asians are seen as a “model minority” who exemplify positive images of hard work and endurance (Chao, Chiu, Chan, Mendoza-Denton, & Kwok, 2012). Intermarriage rates reflect this favoritism since about 50% of third generation Asians marry Whites compared to only 10% of Blacks who marry Whites (Feliciano et al., 2009). Thus, researchers argue that the racial divide between Asians and Whites is less pronounced than the racial divide between Blacks and Whites (Chao et al., 2012). Therefore, the use of these two outgroups better captures Whites’ opinions across different degrees of racial divide in the dating context.

Will the romantic evaluations of a Black or Asian man who is consistent with the negative stereotypes of his race differ from the evaluations of a Black or Asian man who is inconsistent with the negative stereotypes of his race? Furthermore, how will these evaluations compare to those of White men who are either consistent or inconsistent with the negative stereotypes of the Black and Asian race?

To answer these questions, we used fictional online dating profiles featuring Black and Asian stereotypes and Black, Asian, and White men as the romantic prospects. Literature that indicated the most pervasive racial stereotypes reported that Blacks were stereotyped most commonly as being lazy, unintelligent, and aggressive (Devine & Elliot, 1995). Being inconsistent with the Black stereotype would mean being hard working, intelligent, and peaceful. Asians were stereotyped as being physically small or weak, effeminate, and socially awkward (Wong, Owen, Tran, Collins, &

Higgins, 2012), and thus being inconsistent with the Asian stereotype would mean being physically strong or athletic, masculine, and charismatic. We predicted that the romantic prospects would be evaluated more favorably when they were inconsistent with the negative stereotype of their race, similar to the results found in the Power et al. (1996) study. For example, we predicted that a “hard working” Black man whose profile contradicts the negative Black stereotype of laziness would be evaluated more favorably than the “lazy” Black man whose profile aligns with the stereotype of laziness. Similarly, we predicted that a “masculine” Asian male whose profile suggests he is inconsistent with the negative Asian stereotype of effeminacy would be evaluated more favorably than the “effeminate” Asian man whose profile is consistent with the stereotype of effeminacy. A significant difference between the two evaluations would suggest that inconsistency with a negative stereotype can have positive effects on romantic evaluations of targets. Although White men were also used as romantic prospects, we were not necessarily interested in the effects of Black or Asian stereotype-inconsistency as it relates to Whites. Rather the White group served as a comparison group for our second research question.

In regard to the evaluations of the minority targets compared to the White targets, research suggests that in accordance with the expectancy-violation theory (when information about a target violates stereotype-based expectancies, the target is evaluated more extremely in the direction of the violated expectancy), minority targets (Blacks and Asians) who are *inconsistent* with the negative stereotypes of their race will be evaluated more favorably than Whites who are inconsistent with the negative stereotypes of the other two races (Jackson, Sullivan, & Hodge, 1993). As supported by Jackson et al.

(1993), defying negative, Black stereotypes as a Black man who belongs to a negatively stereotyped group is a bigger challenge than defying these same negative stereotypes as a White man who belongs to a positively stereotyped group, of which positive characteristics are assumed to be typical of his group's attributes. For example, in our study, a Black man who is an account manager at an investment firm would be evaluated more favorably than a White man who has the same occupation because the violation of the Black stereotype (e.g. lazy and unintelligent) makes the accomplishment of the Black man seem more impressive.

Similarly, according to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and the "black sheep hypothesis," Whites who evaluate a negative *ingroup* member (another White person) will evaluate him more negatively than an negative *outgroup* member in order to distance themselves from the negative ingroup member. Dissociating themselves from the negative ingroup member protects their self-esteem as group members as it allows them to maintain their feelings of a positive social identity. An example of this phenomenon in our study could be that a White man who is aggressive will be evaluated more negatively than a Black man who is aggressive because an aggressive Black man seems normal, but an aggressive White man is stereotypically inconsistent and shameful to the White race. Further support for this hypothesis comes from Phelan and Rudman's (2010) rap study discussed above involving the backlash effects. When evaluators see the White targets who fit the Black stereotype, a race of lower status, the White targets are evaluated more negatively than the identical Black targets because the White targets are lowering the status of the White ingroup by engaging in the activities of a lower status race. This effect might not apply to the White versus Asian targets because the Asian

race is not necessarily considered to be of lower status (Phelan & Rudman, 2010). In sum, according to expectancy-violation theory, members of minority groups with traits that are *inconsistent* with the negative stereotypes of their race will be evaluated more positively than White men with the same traits. As it relates to the traits *consistent* with the negative stereotypes, the black sheep hypothesis suggests that minority members would again be evaluated more positively than ingroup White members.

In contrast to the black sheep hypothesis, additional research suggests that the evaluations of the minority targets who are *consistent* with the negative stereotypes of their race would actually be *less* favorable than the evaluations of the White targets who are consistent with the negative stereotypes of the minority targets (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This prediction also follows social identity theory, and more specifically “ingroup favoritism,” in that members of a group (in our case, Whites) will generally evaluate other ingroup members more favorably than outgroup members (i.e. members of other races) in order to maintain and increase their own positive social identity. For example, a White man who is seen as effeminate and physically small (traits consistent with the Asian male stereotype) would be evaluated more favorably by a White woman than an Asian man who is seen as effeminate and physically small. Although the White ingroup member has the same negative traits as the Asian outgroup member, White evaluators would be motivated to evaluate the ingroup member more favorably since his status contributes to the status of the White group as a whole. According to the two variations within social identity theory, the evaluations of negative ingroup members (White men consistent with negative stereotypical traits of minority races) will depend on how much the evaluator identifies with the negative ingroup member. If she identifies with him

strongly as a group member, she will invoke ingroup favoritism in her evaluation and judge him more positively than the negative outgroup member. If she does not identify very strongly with him as a group member, consistent with the black-sheep hypothesis, she will find it easier to distance herself from him, leading to more negative evaluations of him compared to the negative outgroup member.

Alternatively, if participants are truly making their evaluations based on the characteristics of romantic prospects, regardless of the race of the target, then the evaluations of the White men should not differ significantly from the evaluations of the Black or Asian men. In other words, a White man who displays the negative stereotype of a Black man should not be evaluated more or less favorably than the Black man who exhibits the negative stereotypes of a Black man. To test for this effect, each stereotype consistent and inconsistent profile of the Black stereotype was presented to one group of participants as White males and to a second group of participants as Black males. By the same method, each stereotype consistent and inconsistent profile of the Asian stereotype was presented to one group of participants as White males and to a second group of participants as Asian males. If the results do not differ significantly between the evaluation as a minority target and the evaluation as a White target, then the data would suggest that it is the content of the profile rather than race that is influencing participant evaluations.

Research relating to impression formation supports the prediction of the priority of character over race in evaluations. There are two main methods of impression formation: stereotype-based and attribute-based (Kunda & Thagard, 1996). As the name implies, *stereotype-based* impression formation is dominated by the stereotype of the

group to which a person belongs, to the point where personal attributes might be ignored altogether. For example, perceivers see a White man elbowing another man as a jovial shove, but interpret the same action by a Black man as a violent push (Duncan, 1976). On the other hand, a person's specific attributes dominate *attribute-based* impression formation. For personal attributes to take evaluative precedence over race, attribute-based impression formation would have to override stereotype-based impression formation. In this sense, unique information provided about the individual might call to mind a subtype within the larger, multifaceted, stereotyped group. Regarding Blacks, the subtypes "ghetto Black" and "Black businessman" call to mind different traits that lead to different impression formation (Devine & Baker, 1991; Kunda & Thagard, 1996). Therefore, a romantic prospect with individuating information consistent with a positive racial subtype of an otherwise negatively stereotyped race—such as the Black businessman subtype—can receive positive evaluations based on his positive personal attributes.

Based on this research, we predicted that evaluations of minorities and evaluations of Whites would not differ significantly because evaluations would be made based on the man's personal characteristics and not his race. Research has demonstrated that even when a target's racial identity is known, certain types of motivation can negate the use of the stereotype in behavior (Devine, Plant, Amodio, Harmon-Jones, & Vance, 2002). For example, when a participant in our study is presented with a Black male target, the negative stereotypical Black traits, such as unintelligence or aggressiveness, might come to the participant's mind. However, awareness of these traits does not guarantee that she will then evaluate him as an unintelligent or aggressive man. Given

that choosing a romantic partner is a personally relevant and important choice, it makes sense that a woman would be particularly motivated to make an informed decision based on all the information provided and not primarily on the man's race or the traits she expects a man of that race to possess. In regard to social identity theory, the choice that the woman hypothetically makes is more so in relation to her personal identity, and less in relation to her social group. For these reasons, we contend that racial and social identities would not be especially influential, meaning that the personal evaluation of the man's individual attributes would drive the romantic evaluation more than the man's race. Therefore, following from the research on attribute-based impression formation, minority targets who are *inconsistent* with the negative stereotypes of their race would have individuating information reflecting them as members of a positive subtype of their race. Thus, evaluations of the minorities should be based on whether the content of the profile reflects positive or negative traits, not based on the race of the target. Subsequently, White targets *consistent* with the negative stereotype of one of the outgroups might be perceived as part of a negative subtype of the White race, such as "ghetto White" (as it relates to the Black stereotype) or "effeminate White man" (as it relates to the Asian stereotype). Again, evaluations of the White targets should be based on whether the content of the profile reflects positive or negative traits, not based on the fact that the target is White. Because our profiles contained identical individuating information for each racial pairing (e.g. the same stereotypic profile was used for a minority name and a White name), we expected to see similar evaluations between the minority targets and the White targets.

Method

Participants

We recruited 164 women from several different colleges and universities. Participants from Whitman College received emails via the college's listservs with the researchers' contact details and information on how to join the study. With permission from professors teaching introductory psychology, we enlisted additional participants during brief, one-time classroom visits with sign-up sheets. Out-of-state participants were recruited via snowball sampling, starting with emails to friends and acquaintances of the researchers. Participants either received extra credit for a course or had their name put into two drawings for \$25 each.

Because participants evaluated men as romantic prospects, only data from heterosexual women or women who indicated a stronger sexual preference for men over women were analyzed. Therefore, 13 participants who indicated being bisexual, having a stronger sexual preference for women over men, or being unidentified/questioning were eliminated. We also eliminated any participants who identified with any race other than White, including participants who identified with White and another race. Because the U.S.' majority race is White, the study used a sample of White women as evaluators of minority targets and evaluators of White men who reflected minority stereotypes. A crucial aspect of the study revolves around White perception of Black and Asian men, based on the historical relationships of their unique racial groups. Thus, to help make a compelling argument about our findings, we excluded 44 non-Caucasian or biracial Caucasian women from the participant pool. We discarded the results from eleven participants who submitted incomplete profile evaluations and eliminated 34 results belonging to those who, according to answers within the suspicion probes, suspected that

the study was about race in any interpersonal context before or during their evaluations of the profiles. After data cleaning, we analyzed the results from 62 participants.

Participants were exclusively limited to college women who evaluated male targets. Research has shown that men are more often the targets of the stereotypes for a given ethnicity than women because of men's higher status in societies (Eagly and Kite, 1987). Therefore, the stereotypes in the literature for each race we used are more likely to be stereotypes for men of that race rather than women, and thus, we designated men as the targets of evaluation.

Overview and Design

The present study is a mixed-model within and between subjects design. One independent variable was manipulated within subjects, which was stereotype consistency (consistent or inconsistent). Two independent variables were manipulated between subjects, which were the race of the target (White or minority) and the race of the stereotype (Black or Asian). The dependent variable was the evaluation of the target as a romantic prospect.

All of the stereotypes used were negative. There were four types of profiles: Black stereotype inconsistent, Black stereotype consistent, Asian stereotype inconsistent, and Asian stereotype consistent. There were four groups of participants. Group 1 read profiles about White targets, one consistent with the Black stereotype and one inconsistent with the Black stereotype. Group 2 read the same profiles as Group 1, but the profiles had Black target names rather than White target names. Results of evaluations based on consistency versus inconsistency with the stereotype were compared within each group and results of evaluations based on race of the target were compared

across groups 1 and 2. Group 3 read profiles about White targets, one consistent with the Asian stereotype and one inconsistent with the Asian stereotype. Group 4 read the same profiles as Group 3, but the profiles had Asian target names rather than White target names. Again, results of evaluations based on consistency versus inconsistency were compared within each group and results of evaluations based on race of the target were compared across groups 3 and 4. Each of the four groups of participants read three filler profiles after the first two to distract them from realizing the pattern of the first two profiles and becoming suspicious of the true nature of our study.

Materials

Our three independent variables, stereotype consistency, race of target, and race of stereotype were manipulated by the content of the profiles of the online dating prospects (See Appendix A). We manipulated the consistency variable by writing the profile as either consistent or inconsistent with the three negative stereotypic traits mentioned previously of either the Black or Asian race. We manipulated the race of the stereotype variable by giving half of the participants profiles with information involving the Black stereotype and half of the participants profiles with information involving the Asian stereotype. We manipulated the race of the target variable by presenting the same profiles to half the participants as White targets and to the other half as minority targets by manipulating the name of the target.

A pilot study was conducted before the main experiment to determine the racial perceptions of different names people most closely associated with the three different races, White, Black, and Asian. The study consisted of nine common White male names, eight Asian names, eight Black names, and eight Latino/Hispanic names. The top four

White male names were used, the top two Black names were used and the top two Asian names were used. For example, since 100% of respondents marked that they associated the name “DeShawn” with a Black man, a profile manipulated to portray a Black man was given the name “DeShawn.” Participants for the pilot study were recruited in a different way than participants for the main study and could be of any age, gender, or race. For the pilot study, researchers sent the information for the study to friends and acquaintances who were ineligible for the main study. These participants were not compensated for their participation.

We used the Five-Item Likeability Questionnaire (Sritharan, Heilpern, Wilbur, and Gawronski, 2010) to measure our dependent variable, which was participants’ evaluations of the romantic prospects (See Appendix B). This questionnaire asks five questions assessing the participants’ positive opinions of the targets as it relates to dating on a Likert scale of 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). The questions are “How much do you like the person in the profile you have just seen?”, “Do you think this person is nice?”, “Would you like to get to know this person better?”, “Would you like to be friends with this person?”, and “Would you like to go on a date with this person?” We added two questions to this questionnaire to measure the perceived similarity between the participant and each romantic prospect: “Do you think that you and this person have a lot in common” and “Do you think that you and this person have similar personalities?” We expected that, consistent with previous research about attraction in romantic relationships, increased perceived similarity would be positively correlated with higher attraction ratings (Luo & Zhang, 2009).

The manipulation check consisted of seven statements to which participants responded on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) (See Appendix C). These statements listed facts relating or not relating to the content of the profiles. Participants' answers let the researchers know how well the participants read the profiles and, more importantly, if they recognized the races of the five targets. A sample statement used to assess their awareness of the races of the targets stated, "One of the men in the profiles was Asian." If one of the profiles that this participant read was about an Asian man and the participant selected a form of agree somewhere on the scale, the researchers concluded that the participant was indeed aware of the race of the target.

We used three scales (See Appendix D for all measures), the Social Distance Scale (Sartain & Bell, 1949), the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992), and the Modern Racism Scale (McConahay, 1986), to measure possible individual factors that may have influenced the evaluations of outgroup romantic prospects. The Social Distance Scale measures prejudice against certain outgroups by assessing how comfortable participants are with different types of interactions with outgroup minorities. Participants submitted "Yes" or "No" answers to the 7-item test, ranging from "I would accept a member of this group as close kin by marriage" to "I would exclude all members of this group from my country." Although the interaction scenario in our study, dating an outgroup member, is not one of the seven scenarios on the Social Distance Scale, we thought that people with lower degrees of social distance (e.g. willing to accept an outgroup member as close kin by marriage) would be more willing to date people of other races. The Collective Self-Esteem Scale has four subscales that measure membership self-esteem ("I am a worthy member of my race/ethnic group"), private

collective self-esteem (“In general, I’m glad to be a member of my racial/ethnic group”), public collective self-esteem (“Overall, my racial/ethnic group is considered good by others”), and importance to identity (The racial/ethnic group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am”). Participants responded to 16 questions of this nature on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Each subscale was scored and evaluated separately as results across subscales are not necessarily correlated. We were primarily interested in the results to the importance to identity subscale, and expected that the more central a participant’s own race is to her identity, the less likely she would be willing to date a male target of another race. The Modern Racism Scale measures participants’ opinions about the social, political, and economic status of Blacks in America to assess racism. An example of an item on this measure is “Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve.” Participants responded to six questions of this nature on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). We expected that there would be a negative correlation between the participants’ scores on this scale and their evaluations of the Black targets. In other words, the more strongly participants agreed with these statements, the lower their evaluations of Black romantic partners may be.

To help us initially hide the true purpose of our experiment, we used some extra scales as distractors, which were the Differential Loneliness Scale – short student version (Schmidt & Sermat, 1983), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1973). The Differential Loneliness Scale measures loneliness in romantic/sexual relationships, friendships, relationships with family, and relationships with larger groups. A sample item is, “I

seldom get the emotional security I need from a good romantic or sexual relationship.” We added two extra questions to this scale to covertly measure whether or not the participants had ever been in an interracial relationship. These two questions were: “I seek out many types of personalities for company” and “I have dated someone of another race.” Participants responded with either true or false to the 22 statements. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) measures the self-esteem of the person by instructing the participant to indicate the level of their agreement with ten statements relating to their positive and negative feelings about themselves such as, “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.” The Personal Attributes Questionnaire measures the femininity and masculinity of its users. There are 24 pairs of characteristics, and participants judged which characteristic they thought most closely related to them and to what degree by marking a letter on a scale. We solely used these measures as distractors within the study.

Procedure

We provided participants with the measures for the study online at [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com). We informed them that they would be evaluating five online dating profiles from Match.com to help us study factors that influence romantic partner preferences in online dating, which is the same cover story previously used in a study about impression formation in an online dating context (Sritharan et al., 2010). This information page also informed them of their rights as a participant in our experiment and provided them with our contact numbers should they have any questions or concerns. Afterwards, they were asked to fill out a demographics sheet. After completing the demographics sheet, they then began reading the profiles (Appendix

A). After each profile, they answered five questions assessing their attraction to each person in the profile (Appendix B). Following their evaluations, they were asked to complete the manipulation check (Appendix C).

Next, participants proceeded to the next page to begin the second part of our study. This half was a series of survey measures we administered to determine several individual differences among participants that might have affected their evaluations (Appendix D). The first measure was the Collective Self-Esteem Scale. The second measure was one of the distractors, the Differential Loneliness Scale. The third measure was the Social Distance Scale. The fourth and fifth measures were the other two distractors, The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Personal Attributes Questionnaire. The last measure was the Modern Racism Scale.

After participants completed all the measures, the next survey page contained a suspicion probe. Participants were then debriefed about the true nature of the study and asked to approve a data-release consent form allowing us to use their responses in our data.

Results

First, we ran a mixed-model analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine the effects of stereotype inconsistency as a within-subjects variable, and race of the target and race of the stereotype as between-subjects variables on participants' evaluations of the men as romantic prospects. We ran a similar mixed-model ANOVA to examine if participants' previous experience in an interracial romantic relationship affected their evaluations of the targets. We used two independent samples t-tests to examine the effectiveness of our manipulation checks. We ran several bivariate correlations to

examine the relationships between our dependent variable and potential moderators including the Modern Racism Scale, the Collective Self-Esteem Scale, and perceived similarity.

Scores on the five-item likeability questionnaire were determined by calculating the mean score for all five items, with 1 being the minimum and 5 being the maximum. The mean score for all of the profiles was 2.72 ($SD = .59$), which means that on the whole, the evaluations were slightly negative. Profiles featuring a White man received a mean evaluation score of 2.87 ($SD = .56$), which is below the midpoint of the scale. Profiles featuring a Black man received a mean score of 2.65 ($SD = .58$), also below the midpoint on the scale. The profiles featuring an Asian male had the lowest average score of 2.56 ($SD = .64$). The average score for profiles that were consistent with either the negative Black or Asian stereotype were generally unfavorable with a score of 2.29 ($SD = .77$), which is below the midpoint on the scale. Conversely, profiles that were inconsistent with the negative stereotypes were generally favorable with a mean score of 3.19 ($SD = .94$), above the midpoint on the scale.

The mean score for our first moderator variable, the Modern Racism Scale, was 1.45 ($SD = .38$). Considering this scale goes from 1 to 5, this mean score is well below the midpoint, meaning our sample scored very low for racism. The range of the scores was very narrow with the minimum being 1 and the maximum being only 3. This range means that no participant scored in the high range of the scale so no participant could be considered to have a high level of racism. Running a bivariate correlation revealed no significant correlations between scores on the Modern Racism Scale and evaluation scores of the romantic prospects of any race. Contrary to our expectations, there was no

significant correlation between scores on the Modern Racism Scale and evaluations of Black targets, $r(60) = -.19, p = .43$. There were also no significant correlations between Modern Racism scores and evaluations of White targets, $r(60) = -.12, p = .61$, or evaluations of Asian targets, $r(60) = -.36, p = .21$.

Our second moderator, the subscale of Importance to Identity as part of the Collective Self-Esteem Scale ranges from 1 to 7 and measures how important the participant's own race or ethnicity is to her identity. The average score of 3.14 ($SD = 1.14$) is below the midpoint meaning that being "White" was relatively unimportant to their identities. A bivariate correlation analysis revealed no significant correlations between the scores on the Collective Self-Esteem scale and the evaluation scores of Black targets, $r(60) = -.20, p = .38$, White targets, $r(60) = .12, p = .59$, or Asian targets, $r(60) = -.27, p = .35$. The results from the third moderator, the Social Distance Scale, were not analyzed because many participants expressed confusion in filling out that scale.

A mixed-model ANOVA with stereotype inconsistency as a within-subjects variable and race of the target, race of the stereotype, and previous experience in a interracial romantic relationship as between-subjects variables revealed no significant effect of participants' previous experience in a romantic relationship on their evaluations of the romantic prospects, $F(1, 58) = .45, p = .51$.

Measures of perceived similarity between the participant and each man in the profiles were strongly positively correlated with evaluations for both stereotypically consistent profiles, $r(60) = .67, p < .000$, and stereotypically inconsistent profiles, $r(60) = .83, p < .000$. These positive correlations mean that the more participants perceived the

romantic prospects to be similar to themselves, the more favorably they evaluated them on the likeability questionnaire. Participants indicated more perceived similarity for Black, Asian, and White men in profiles that were stereotypically inconsistent with either the Black or Asian stereotype ($M = 2.57, SD = 1.01$) than for men in profiles that were stereotypically consistent with the Black or Asian stereotype ($M = 1.54, SD = .71$). Means of perceived similarity for both inconsistent and consistent profiles were below the midpoint, indicating that participants did not generally feel very similar to the romantic prospects.

Manipulation Checks

Independent samples t-tests revealed that our manipulation checks were effective. For the profiles with Black romantic prospects, the statement “At least one of the profiles was about a Black man” was used to check participants’ awareness that they did read profiles about Black men, thus checking if our manipulation of the target race was successful. We ran two independent samples t-tests, comparing agreement with the above statement of participants who read profiles with the name of a Black man to both participants who read profiles with Asian names and White names. There was a significant effect of target race between Black and Asian targets, $t(33) = 2.94, p = .006$, with Black profiles receiving more agreement with the above statement ($M = 4.95, SD = 1.69$) than Asian profiles ($M = 3.42, SD = 1.16$). There was a marginally significant effect of target race between Black and White targets $t(44) = 1.84, p = .072$, with the Black profiles receiving more agreement with the statement ($M = 4.95, SD = 1.69$) than White profiles ($M = 4.08, SD = 1.52$). For profiles with Asian romantic prospects, the statement “At least one of the men was Asian” was used to check if the name

manipulation worked for the Asian targets. Two independent samples t-tests revealed two significant effects of target race between Asian and White targets, $t(37) = 6.56, p < .001$, and between Asian and Black targets, $t(33) = 6.47, p < .001$, indicating that Asian profiles received more agreement with the statement ($M = 6.07, SD = 1.14$) than did the White profiles ($M = 3.36, SD = 1.29$) and the Black profiles ($M = 3.09, SD = 1.45$). These results indicate that using an Asian name to signify an Asian man in the profiles was successful in differentiating Asian romantic prospects from White or Black romantic prospects in the profiles.

Hypothesis Testing

Effects of the three independent variables were examined in a mixed-model ANOVA with race of the target as a between subjects variable, race of the stereotype as a between subjects variable, and stereotype inconsistency as a within subjects variable. A significant main effect of the within-subjects variable, stereotype inconsistency occurred, $F(1, 58) = 34.48, p < .001$, with profiles that were inconsistent with the negative stereotypes of both races being rated significantly higher ($M = 3.19, SD = .94$) than profiles consistent with the negative stereotypes ($M = 2.29, SD = .77$). There were no significant main effect of race of the stereotype, $F(1, 58) = 1.37, p = .25$, meaning that evaluations of profiles reflecting the Black or Asian stereotype did not differ significantly. There was also no significant main effect of race of the target, $F(2, 58) = 1.20, p = .31$, meaning that there was no significant difference among evaluations of Black, Asian, and White targets. There was a significant interaction between stereotype inconsistency and the race of the stereotype, $F(1, 58) = 9.51, p = .003$, indicating that the effect of inconsistency depended on the race of the stereotype. These results mean that

while women were significantly more attracted to men who were inconsistent with either the stereotypical Black or Asian traits than they were to men who were consistent with these stereotypical traits, the difference between these evaluations of attraction was significantly more pronounced for the profiles regarding the Black stereotype than those regarding the Asian stereotype (see Figure 1). There was no significant interaction between stereotype inconsistency and the race of the target, $F(2, 58) = .012, p = .90$, meaning that the effects of inconsistency did not depend on the race of the target. In other words, the positive effects that inconsistency had on evaluations did not depend on whether the target was White or one of the minority races. This finding is consistent with our hypothesis that evaluations of White romantic prospects would not differ significantly from minority romantic prospects for both consistent and inconsistent profiles.

Discussion

In the present study, we examined how a man's inconsistency with the negative stereotypes of his race would affect the evaluations of him as a romantic prospect in the interracial dating context. Overall, the results supported our two hypotheses. Consistent with our first hypothesis, the study revealed that inconsistency with negative racial stereotypes generally increases likeability regardless of the race of a romantic prospect. Black and White men who were inconsistent with the negative Black stereotype and Asian and White men who were inconsistent with the negative Asian stereotype were evaluated more positively than men who were consistent with either negative racial stereotype, consistent with the findings of Power et al. (1996). It appears

that when it comes to interracial dating, the presentation of inconsistency made a positive impression if the kinds of stereotypes associated with racial groups were negative.

This result is inconsistent with other research that demonstrates how stereotype inconsistency, even when it results in positive traits, can lead to more negative evaluations on the basis of backlash effects (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Fryer & Torelli, 2010; Schimel et al., 1999). Although our study's stereotypically inconsistent men deviated from the expected traits of their races, they still received more positive evaluations than the stereotypically consistent romantic prospects with the expected traits. In spite of the men differing from the women's expectations, the women may have evaluated these men in relation to themselves as they thought about whether or not they would want to date each person. For this reason, the positivity of the traits might have been more apparent than the deviation from the stereotype because it was easier to imagine how a man's positive traits instead of his nonconformity to a stereotype would affect their romantic relationship. Hence, the evaluations were favorable. Consider a successful, Black male college-graduate who deviates from the expectation of Black men being lazy and uneducated. A woman considering dating this man might be less concerned about her expectations of race and more interested in the fact that he would make an intelligent and financially sound romantic partner.

Consistent with our second hypothesis, evaluations of romantic prospects did not differ between the White romantic prospects and the minority romantic prospects. The results suggest that the individuating information in the profiles led to attribute-based impression formation (Kunda & Thagard, 1996). When other factors besides race are taken into account, judgments are based less on the stereotypes of that race and more on

the personal attributes of the person. The specific traits described in each profile encouraged participants to make judgments based not only on the men's race, but also their personal characteristics. For example, even though Jamal was a Black man, he presented specific traits about himself that were inconsistent with the Black stereotype and called to mind impressions other than those of the stereotypical “ghetto” black man (Devine & Baker, 1991; Kunda & Thagard, 1996), and thus, his positive personal attributes overrode stereotype-based impression formation. Because he was evaluated based more on his personal attributes and less on his race, his evaluations were essentially equal to those of a White man with the same attributes. Similarly, even though Ethan was a White man in the study, he presented unattractive personal traits that happened to coincide with the negative Black stereotype. His unattractive individuating information outweighed his positive status as a White man, and thus he received negative evaluations equal to the Black man who was also consistent with the negative Black stereotype.

The results seem to indicate that the Black stereotype was perceived as more extreme than the Asian stereotype, since the greatest disparity between likeability ratings occurred between Black consistent profiles and Black inconsistent profiles. When Black or White men deviated from stereotypical Black traits, women expressed more attraction to them than they did to White or Asian men who deviated from stereotypical Asian traits. Conversely, romantic prospects consistent with the negative Black stereotype were evaluated less favorably than romantic prospects consistent with the negative Asian stereotype.

Based on the origins of each of the racial stereotypes, we might argue that this difference is driven by the more strongly negative nature of the Black stereotype compared to the Asian stereotype. Origins of the unsavory Black stereotypes likely derived from the U.S.' history of slavery (Lee & Bean, 2004). In order to justify their subjugation of Black slaves, the White majority constructed strongly negative generalizations about Black laziness, simple-mindedness, and aggression as a few of many reasons to believe Blacks deserved their low status. Consistent with the premises of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), Whites protected their own image as good-natured White people by asserting that their Black countrymen needed to be monitored or could not function properly in society. The history of Asians in America was different. On the whole, Asians came voluntarily as immigrants and refugees eager to advance in the new world or to reunite with relatives (Juan, Gilbert, Michael, Sheldon, & David, 2009; Le Espiritu, 1996; Weis, 1994; Zhou, 2009). The White American majority did not have to exaggerate such negative traits of the Asian race as a means of justifying their position in the U.S. Reflected in the stereotypes used in this study, one can see that the Asian stereotype of awkwardness (Wong et al., 2012), for example, is not as threatening as the Black stereotype of aggressiveness (Devine & Elliot, 1995).

It is likely that the process of stereotype origin and development for each of the races continues to have influence on the more pronounced disparity between Black stereotype-consistent and inconsistent profiles compared to Asian stereotype-consistent and inconsistent profiles. The Black stereotype of being lazy and unintelligent stands directly opposite of some of the core values in American society, values that commend being hardworking and intelligent. While the traits that are inconsistent with the Black

stereotype are the epitome of being an ideal American and consequently are perceived as very positive, it follows that the stereotypically consistent traits are exactly the opposite, and therefore, very negative. On the other hand, the negative traits regarding the Asian stereotype are not as harshly negative; physically small and socially awkward might not be attractive traits in a man, but they do not violate the core values of American society. This logic could explain why the disparity between consistent and inconsistent Black stereotypical profiles was much larger than that of the consistent and inconsistent Asian stereotypical profiles.

The idea that the Black stereotype is more negative than the Asian stereotype supports another possible explanation for the difference between the Black and Asian stereotypic profiles. Jackson et al. (1993) proposed that a negatively viewed outgroup member who goes against the negative beliefs about his group will be seen as overcoming a larger challenge, and thus will be evaluated more positively than a member of an already positively viewed group. Under that condition, the extremely negative Black stereotype makes a Black man who is seen as overcoming the stereotype seem more impressive than an Asian man who is seen as having overcome a much less negative stereotype. On one hand, it seems especially impressive when a Black man has graduated from college and has an impressive job when his racial group is expected to be lazy and unintelligent. On the other hand, it might not seem as impressive when an Asian man, who is expected to be awkward and effeminate, turns out to be charismatic and in a fraternity. Thus, the evaluations of the Black stereotypically inconsistent romantic prospects were viewed more favorably than the Asian stereotypically inconsistent romantic prospects.

As discussed previously, we expected that perceived similarity with a romantic prospect would yield more favorable evaluations since perceived similarity is a strong predictor of attraction in romantic relationships in general (Luo & Zhang, 2009). This expectation was supported by our results as perceived similarity was strongly, positively correlated with likability for both the stereotypically consistent and inconsistent romantic prospects. This relationship suggests that similar to intraracial romantic attraction, interracial romantic attraction is also strongly influenced by perceived similarity between two individuals. Even though race would not be a common factor in an interracial relationship, our result suggests that White women are willing to look past the racial difference to see other aspects that the two have in common, and that these other similarities, in spite of different races, can still lead to favorable evaluations. By the same measure, our results show that women indicated more perceived similarity for stereotypically inconsistent profiles than for stereotypically consistent profiles. Again, because perceived similarity is a strong predictor of attraction, this result could partially explain why inconsistent profiles received more likeability than consistent profiles. This finding is consistent with other research showing that stereotypically inconsistent outgroup members were generally liked more than stereotypically consistent outgroup members when the inconsistency made them more similar to their evaluator (Schimmel et al., 1999; Sears & McConahay, 1973).

Contrary to what we expected, levels of racism as measured by the Modern Racism Scale had no significant effect on evaluations of the romantic prospects. Although not an explicit hypothesis, we suspected that high levels of racism might have led to less favorable evaluations of the minority targets compared to the

White targets. One explanation for this lack of effect could be that there was not a large enough range of scores on the Modern Racism Scale to have any kind of effect. We did not have any participants who scored in the high range on the scale (indicating high levels of racism), so there was no comparison to make between high and low levels of racism (since all participants were in the low range). To combat this limitation, future research might want to use a more diverse sample of participants to achieve a broader range of scores, representing multiple levels of racism in order to make comparisons. Also, future research might consider using another method of measuring racism (e.g. the Implicit Association Test) to better examine the effects of racism in the study. The Modern Racism Scale is a commonly used way to measure racism and asks participants to explicitly mark their opinions about Blacks' sociopolitical and economic treatment in society. While this scale is somewhat accurate in predicting voting behavior, it does not necessarily accurately capture people's true opinions about race (Henry & Sears, 2008). As discussed earlier, racial attitudes is a topic highly susceptible to social desirability, meaning that people might give false answers when asked to explicitly express their racial attitudes in an effort to not appear racist. A measure such as the Implicit Association Test measures people's unconscious or automatic biases against Black people, and thus might provide a more accurate indication of people's racial attitudes.

Our second potential moderator, the Importance to Identity subscale of the Collective Self-Esteem Scale also yielded no significant relationships with our dependent variable, contrary to our expectations. We expected that participants who attached more importance to their race (White) as part of their identity would indicate a preference for

ingroup members over outgroup members as consistent with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). However, our results indicated that that our participants did not attach very much importance of their race to their identity, which could explain why the analysis of this variable yielded no significant relationships. The weak connection between race and identity in our White participants is consistent with past research that showed Whites demonstrating lower ingroup loyalty norms compared to other racial groups, groups such as Latinos, who displayed a higher identification with their ethnic group (O'Brien, Major, & Simon, 2012; Major et al., 2002). Additionally, Whites' low emphasis of race to their identity may be related to the dominant status of their race in the U.S., for it was shown that a high status group tends to have a weaker ingroup ethnic identity and use less ingroup favoritism than a low status group (Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992; O'Brien et al., 2012). This trend can be explained by the social identity theory in that low status groups may use ingroup favoritism to increase their self-esteem and compensate for their position in society. Consequently, not only did our White participants display a weak connection to their racial identity, but they also had minimal motivation to invoke ingroup favoritism in their evaluations of the outgroup targets. Future research could examine these effects more closely if they use evaluator races that attach more importance to their racial identities.

Although the profiles of the men were written to reflect the chosen stereotypes as closely as possible, the profiles may have contained unexpected limitations. For example, in order to noticeably portray the stereotypical traits, the profiles might have been exaggerated to the point that they seemed unrealistic. The answers provided in the suspicion probes indicated that our cover story was somewhat unconvincing due to the

overt racial stereotypes in the profiles, which led us to remove approximately 21% of our total participants from the data group. Alternatively, it is also possible that some of the stereotypical traits were not obvious enough (e.g. the “awkwardness” of the Asian stereotypical romantic prospects).

Another potential limitation about the way the profiles were written could be that some profiles simply contained more or less information in general, which would have affected the amount of individuating information that influenced participants’ evaluations. Related to Rubin’s (1970) hypothesis about disclosure reciprocity, a phenomenon in which the sharing of disclosures between people invites more instances of reciprocation while simultaneously strengthening their social bond, simply knowing more about one target may have given participants a head start on developing interest in a relationship with that target over others with less individuating information. Additionally, the “disclosure-liking effect” suggests that when people disclose more information about themselves, they give the impression to the recipient of being more warm, trusting, friendly and interested in developing an intimate relationship (Collins & Miller, 1994). Therefore, profiles in our study that contained more information in general would make the romantic prospect appear to be disclosing more personal information about himself, which would lead the women to believe that the man was trusting and interested in forming an intimate relationship with them. Although we tried to construct the profiles with even amounts of individuating information, future research may equalize the profiles more precisely by making sure each profile has the same number of interests and hobbies as well as the same amount of descriptive adjectives.

Another limitation is that the use of names as a way to manipulate the race of the target was potentially not a strong enough way to make the race of the target salient in the participants' minds. Although the use of names to indicate race has been used successfully in other studies (e.g. Bertrand & Mullainathan, 1994; Milkman, Akinola, Chugh, 2012; Widner & Chicoine, 2011), it is crucial to the validity of future studies that the manipulation of race be noticeable and effective. Even though the manipulation check showed that the majority of evaluators were aware of the targets' races, suspicion probes revealed that a few participants experienced slight confusion about the races presented in the profiles and some indicated that they did not notice the name of the romantic prospect in the profile at all. If the manipulation of race did not work fully, it could be one reason why evaluations of White and minority romantic prospects did not differ significantly. For example, if the groups who saw the stereotype inconsistent profiles featuring men of minority races did not realize that these men were of minority races, they might have been evaluating them as if they were White men since Whites are the majority race or because the stereotype-inconsistent traits of the minorities might reflect White stereotype-consistent traits. To combat this potential limitation, other research might explore different ways of indicating the race of the romantic prospects, such as pictures or an explicit indication of race following the name.

To encourage data that is free of participant bias, improvements in technique could better elude subjects from the true nature of the study's hypothesis, which involves racial evaluations and is highly sensitive to social desirability. Because race was a central part of the study, care should be taken in future studies to make race obvious without being transparent enough to betray the study's purpose. Suspicion probes in the

present study suggested that one aspect of the study that caused suspicion about race were the profiles being overly caricatured in their portrayal of stereotypical traits (e.g. making the stereotypical Black man so stereotypical that participants suspected the profile was fictional). Future studies might want to construct the profiles in a more realistic way while still portraying the stereotypical traits.

In order to draw meaningful conclusions about the effects of stereotype inconsistency in the interracial dating context, it is important to make a distinction between inconsistency and positivity, and consistency and negativity. The mere presence of positive and negative profile content may provide an alternative explanation for the evaluation differences between the stereotypically consistent and inconsistent dating profiles. In this case, an evaluator could have been unaffected by stereotype consistency or inconsistency when she rated men with stereotypically inconsistent profiles positively and when she rated men with stereotypically consistent profiles negatively. For this reason, one might argue that it is uncertain that the stereotype-inconsistent profiles were rated positively because they were inconsistent with a stereotype, since it is possible that they were rated more favorably than negative profiles simply because they contained traits generally considered to be positive. Although it is true that stereotype-inconsistent profiles generally received more positive ratings than stereotype-consistent profiles, if the sheer positivity of inconsistent profiles was causing the effect, we would expect to see that this pattern of ratings was true for all conditions. In our case, however, the results seem to indicate that stereotypic content affected the evaluators' judgments. Although women rated the stereotype-inconsistent Black profiles much more favorably than the stereotype-consistent Black profiles, their ratings for the stereotype-inconsistent Asian

profiles barely differed from stereotype-consistent Asian profiles, even though the inconsistent Asian profiles were theoretically more positive than the consistent Asian profiles.

Interestingly enough, the rating pattern was actually slightly reversed for the White men who depicted Asian stereotypes. Jack, who was Asian stereotype-*consistent*, had a slightly higher average likeability rating than Peter, who was Asian stereotype-*inconsistent*. Here was an instance when stereotype-inconsistent did not necessarily equal “more positive,” and thus, we might conclude that it was likely that stereotype content affected the evaluations. If people liked the inconsistent profiles only because the profiles had appealing characteristics, we would expect the positive evaluations to display similar rating patterns for all racial targets.

In regards to this discourse, our results suggest that differences between all profile evaluations *within* each racial stereotype were affected by consistency versus inconsistency with the stereotype. Differences in these patterns *between* racial stereotypes, however, might be due to the degree of positivity or negativity of the stereotype content, consistent with what we discussed earlier about Black stereotypes having a bigger positive-negative contrast than Asian stereotypes. However, to control for the effects of positivity and negativity’s presence in future related studies, one might consider including “stereotype-neutral” profiles that contain either positive or negative traits unrelated to racial stereotypes. Comparing the ratings of these stereotype-neutral profiles with the ratings of stereotype-inconsistent and stereotype-consistent profiles might show whether there is a positive effect of stereotype inconsistency separate from

an effect of simply having positive traits, or a negative effect of stereotype consistency separate from an effect of simply having negative traits.

Another possible way to check for the effectiveness of the stereotype consistent/inconsistent manipulation would be to include a manipulation check similar to the one used in the Power et al. (1996) study in which participants in the stereotypic and counterstereotypic conditions were shown a list of traits and asked to indicate which they thought were the most representative of Blacks or Asians as a whole. This list would contain the three stereotypic traits used in the profiles (e.g. aggressive, lazy, and unintelligent, or small, effeminate, and socially awkward) as well as some stereotypically irrelevant traits (e.g. emotional, self-centered). A successful manipulation would result in noticeable differences between the stereotypic and counterstereotypic conditions in the number of stereotypical traits marked.

The study's generalizability is one aspect that can benefit from improvement in future studies. The present study attracted a homogenous pool of college-educated participants with mostly liberal political leanings. The sample fails to account for other populations who might have different romantic goals, who might have had more exposure to minority races, or whose views might be less accepting of minority races. Future research ideally should explore other demographics for both the sample population and for the dating targets. Using men to evaluate women, a minority race to evaluate a majority race, gay individuals to evaluate gay profiles, and a mix of people of different educational levels to be evaluators, for instance, could help us understand the extent to which and how stereotypes affect interracial romantic evaluations.

Studying the effects of different racial stereotypes in the dating context is another useful direction for future research. We chose stereotypes that psychological research indicated were the most pervasive for each race in order to prevent researcher bias regarding the choice of stereotypical traits (Devine & Elliot, 1995; Wong et al., 2012). However, these stereotypes may not have been as relevant as other stereotypical traits that are more closely related to dating such as fidelity, sexuality, and physical characteristics. Negative stereotypes associated with fidelity, for instance, may have a stronger detrimental effect than intelligence on the evaluations made by women who are in the mindset of establishing a commitment to a partner. Even though our study demonstrated that stereotypes can affect interracial romantic evaluations, a different set of stereotypical traits for each race might bring forth different effects on the results, such as a polarizing effect on attraction levels. Because women are evaluating the men in a dating context, traits more relevant to the dating context might carry more weight in the participants' minds than other traits when they are making the evaluations.

As observed above, the effects of extending the body of research regarding stereotype inconsistency to the dating context could have a number of implications for our understanding of social relations. Expanding research on the perceptions of stereotype inconsistencies may help people become more aware of their own criteria for judging others and might provide insight on how people wish to present themselves. Regarding racial divides in the U.S., the use of two minority races in the present study might suggest a revealing update about different degrees of racial acceptance within U.S. culture. The present study indicated that racial attitudes regarding romantic relationships between Whites with Blacks and Asians might not be as varied as

previous research has suggested. Continuing to research this area using other races as the romantic targets could offer further insight into different degrees of racial acceptance. In regards to stereotype inconsistency, other research in the field has shown how the processing of stereotype inconsistencies produces positive effects in some contexts and negative effects in other contexts, and the present study extends the knowledge of these effects to the new context of interracial dating. For example, the present study suggests that this sample of White women seems to value a college degree and a full-time job regardless of the race of the man. The use of other stereotypical traits in future studies may show which kinds of traits women deem as attractive regardless of race. Finally, this research might prompt more investigation into possible explanations for the low rate of interracial marriage, which, as mentioned previously, is at a low four percent (Qian & Lichter 2007). Our results have suggested that a White woman is just as likely to be attracted to a man of a minority race who is inconsistent with his race's negative stereotypes as she is to a White man with the same characteristics, which is somewhat inconsistent with the statistic that has been recorded, indicating that factors other than personal traits might be more influential to the low rates of interracial marriages. It could be useful for future research on interracial relationships to investigate what these factors might be. Overall, we believe further research examining stereotype inconsistencies in the dating context will provide valuable insight into how stereotype inconsistencies determine the evaluations of outgroup members, and how stereotype inconsistencies influence one's willingness to date interracially in an increasingly diverse world.

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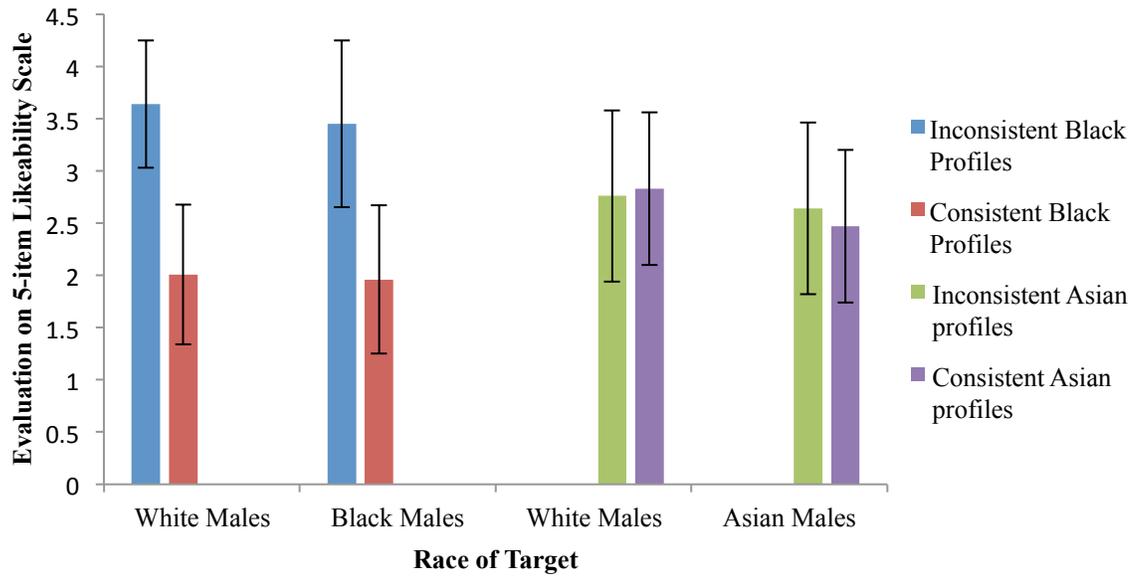


Figure 1. Mean scores on the 5-item Likeability Questionnaire as a function of the race of the target, the race of the stereotype, and stereotype inconsistency. Shows the significant interaction between stereotype inconsistency and race of the stereotype. Standard deviations are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.

Appendix A: Online Dating Profiles

Please read each profile carefully. Answer each of the five evaluation questions after reading each profile.

*Lazy, Unintelligent, Aggressive

Black Stereotype-Consistent Black Male

Name: DeShawn

i'm fun and always down to party and sometimes i can get a little hyphy. I'm all about kickin it with the homies and i definitely know how to thro down but hey we all need a little excitement in our lives right ;) i'd love to kick it wit you girl. i aint got a great job right now cuz u kno i be workin on some sweet rap beats, but I plan to go back to get my GED when I make some time for it lol i grew up in the projects of Oakland so i know how to hold my own on the streets. I ain't got a lotta cash money but I know how to show a girl a good time so if your reading this get at me girl!

Black Stereotype-Consistent Black Male (with White male name)

Name: Ethan

i'm fun and always down to party and sometimes i can get a little hyphy. I'm all about kickin it with the homies and i definitely know how to thro down but hey we all need a little excitement in our lives right ;) i'd love to kick it wit you girl. i aint got a great job right now cuz u kno i be workin on some sweet rap beats, but I plan to go back to get my GED when I make some time for it lol i grew up in the projects of Oakland so i know how to hold my own on the streets. I ain't got a lotta cash money but I know how to show a girl a good time so if your reading this get at me girl!

Black Stereotype-Inconsistent Black Male

Name: Jerome

It's always tricky to fill out these things, but here goes. I graduated from college in Massachusetts and now work at an investment firm where I'm an account manager. It's a lot of work so I don't have much time for myself, but it pays well and I love it. In my free time I like reading sci-fi novels and wine tasting with friends. I also enjoy a friendly debate over coffee about politics or religion or any topic really. I work full-time during the week, but I'm really looking forward to meeting someone who I can cook dinner for and cuddle up with on the weekends.

Black Stereotype-Inconsistent Black Male (with White male name)

Name: Kyle

It's always tricky to fill out these things, but here goes. I graduated from college in Massachusetts and now work at an investment firm where I'm an account manager. It's a lot of work so I don't have much time for myself, but it pays well and I love it. In my free time I like reading sci-fi novels and wine tasting with friends. I also enjoy a friendly debate over coffee about politics or religion or any topic really. I work full-time during the week, but I'm really looking forward to meeting someone who I can cook dinner for and cuddle up with on the weekends.

*Effeminate/asexual/lacking sexual prowess, awkward, physically weak/unathletic
Asian Stereotype-Consistent Asian Male

Name: Jinhai

Good morning, gals. I figure I would give this a try since I am not so good at meeting women in person. I'm pretty shy and a little awkward in social situations, but if you give me a chance, I think you'll see that I am a kind man. I'm on the small side but I make up for it with a Ph.D in math and an excellent job. I have never been great at sports or anything super physical, so my main hobbies include drawing anime and playing video games. I'd love it if you can play with me. I enjoy singing and music and I do it all the time. ^_^ Bubble tea is good too! Can I get to know you over a bubble tea? Okiess bai!

Asian Stereotype-Consistent Asian Male (with a White male name)

Name: Jack

Good morning, gals. I figure I would give this a try since I am not so good at meeting women in person. I'm pretty shy and a little awkward in social situations, but if you give me a chance, I think you'll see that I am a kind man. I'm on the small side but I make up for it with a Ph.D in math and an excellent job. I have never been great at sports or anything super physical, so my main hobbies include drawing anime and playing video games. I'd love it if you can play with me. I enjoy singing and music and I do it all the time. ^_^ Bubble tea is good too! Can I get to know you over a bubble tea? Okiess bai!

Asian Stereotype-Inconsistent Asian Male

Name: Hyun-jun

Hey girls! I just moved to the city so I'm looking to meet as many new people as possible! My friends tell me I'm a ladies' man and always the life of the party. But don't let that "ladies' man" label scare you because I always respect a lady and treat her right... in more ways than one ;) I'm definitely very friendly and love spending all my free time with other people. I was the president of my fraternity in college and the quarterback on the football team. I'm currently working in advertising and I love it. Let's get to know each other.

Asian Stereotype-Inconsistent Asian Male (with White male name)

Name: Peter

Hey girls! I just moved to the city so I'm looking to meet as many new people as possible! My friends tell me I'm a ladies' man and always the life of the party. But don't let that "ladies' man" label scare you because I always respect a lady and treat her right... in more ways than one ;) I'm definitely very friendly and love spending all my free time with other people. I was the president of my fraternity in college and the quarterback on the football team. I'm currently working in advertising and I love it. Let's get to know each other.

Filler Profile #1:

Name: Alexander

Alexander here. I'm your typical guy. I love watching football games on weekends with a cold beer in hand. I graduated from a large university on the west coast, and now I have a decent job at a bank that pays well and gives me plenty of time off. I don't have

many hobbies but I'm interested in trying new things. I have two dogs that are my best friends so if you're a dog lover like me, definitely get in touch!

Filler Profile #2:

Name: Andrew

Well well well, where should I begin. I guess the best way to describe me is that I'm your classic southern gentleman and my mama always taught me to respect women. I go to church every Sunday with my family and then spend the rest of the day spending time with others from my church. I don't drink or go out to clubs and I really prefer a quiet night in with a movie or a book. I'm looking for a nice, wholesome girl who values family and religion. Let me know if that's you.

Filler Profile #3:

Name: Phil

What's up girls!?! I'm new to this big city and I'm looking for someone who can show me a good time! Where are the clubs at? Which are the best bars? Who's down to go get a drink or two! I'm not necessarily looking for a serious relationship right now but I guarantee you'll have a great time with me. I'm really into comedy so I promise I'll make you laugh. I'm up for any adventure! Skydiving, dancing, scuba diving, whatever you want!

Appendix C: Memory Check

The following items ask you to recall some of the details included in the dating profiles that you evaluated earlier. Please indicate your agreement with each statement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
(strongly disagree) (slightly disagree) (slightly agree) (strongly agree)

At least one of the profiles was about a Black man.

There was a man who was awkward in social situations.

One man enjoyed wine tasting.

At least one of the profiles was about a Latino man.

There was a man who grew up in Oakland.

There was a man whose name was Michael.

One man played quarterback on his football team.

At least one of the profiles was about an Asian man.

Appendix D: Post-study Measures**COLLECTIVE SELF ESTEEM SCALE (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992)**

INSTRUCTIONS: We are all members of different social groups or social categories. We would like you to consider **your race or ethnicity** (e.g., African-American, Latino/Latina, Asian, European-American) in responding to the following statements. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these statements; we are interested in your honest reactions and opinions. Please read each statement carefully, and respond by using the following scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*):

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I am a worthy member of my race/ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I often regret that I belong to my racial/ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Overall, my racial/ethnic group is considered good by others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Overall, my race/ethnicity has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I feel I don't have much to offer to my racial/ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	In general, I'm glad to be a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	member of my racial/ethnic group.							
7.	Most people consider my racial/ethnic group, on the average, to be more ineffective than other groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	The racial/ethnic group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I am a cooperative participant in the activities of my racial/ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Overall, I often feel that my racial/ethnic group is not worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	In general, others respect my race/ethnicity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	My race/ethnic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	ity is unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.							
1 3.	I often feel I'm a useless member of my racial/ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 4.	I feel good about the race/ethnicity I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 5.	In general, others think that my racial/ethnic group is unworthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 6.	In general, belonging to my race/ethnicity is an important part of my self image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

MODERN RACISM SCALE (McConahay, 1986)

Please mark the response that most accurately represents your views.

(strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 (strongly agree)

1. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve.

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4

e. 5

2. Over the past few years, the government and news media have shown more respect for Blacks than they deserve.

a. 1

b. 2

c. 3

d. 4

e. 5

3. It is easy to understand the anger of Black people in America.

a. 1

b. 2

c. 3

d. 4

e. 5

4. Discrimination against Blacks is no longer a problem in the United States.

a. 1

b. 2

c. 3

d. 4

e. 5

5. Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights.

a. 1

b. 2

c. 3

d. 4

e. 5

6. Blacks should not push themselves where they are not wanted.

a. 1

b. 2

c. 3

d. 4

e. 5

SOCIAL DISTANCE SCALE (Sartain & Bell, 1949)

Instructions: Please answer "yes" if you agree or "no" if you do not agree with each of the following statements for the following four races: Blacks, Asians, Latinos

Blacks Asians Latinos

1. I would accept a member of this group as close kin by marriage
2. I would accept a member of this group as a friend in my group of friends
3. I would accept a member of this group to my street as neighbors
4. I would accept a member of this group to employment in my occupation
5. I would grant a member of this group citizenship in my country
6. I would permit members of this group as visitors only to my country

7. I would exclude all members of this group from my country

DIFFERENTIAL LONELINESS SCALE – short student version (Schmidt & Sermat, 1983)

Instructions: For each statement, decide whether it describes you or your situation or not. If it

does seem to describe you or your situation, mark it TRUE (T). If not, mark it FALSE (F). If an item is not applicable to you because you are currently not involved in the situation it depicts, e.g., a current romantic or marital relationship, then mark it FALSE (F).

- 1.* I feel close to members of my family. T F
- 2.* I have a lover or spouse (boyfriend girlfriend husband or wife) with whom I can discuss my important problems and worries. T F
3. I seek out many types of personalities for company. T F
4. I have dated someone of another race T F
5. I feel I really do not have much in common with the larger community in which I live. T F
6. I have little contact with members of my family. T F
7. I do not get along very well with my family. T F
- 8.* I am now involved in a romantic or marital relationship where both of us are making a genuine effort at co-operation. T F
- 9.* I have a good relationship with most members of my immediate family. T F
10. I do not feel that I can turn to my friends living around me for help when I need it. T F
11. No one in the community where I live seems to care much about me. T F
- 12.* I allow myself to become close to my friends. T F
13. I seldom get the emotional security I need from a good romantic or sexual relationship. T F
14. I feel that a sense of belonging in the larger community or neighbourhood I live in. T F
15. I do not have many friends in the city where I live. T F
16. I do not have any neighbours who would help me out in a time of need. T F
- 17.* I get plenty of help and support from my friends. T F
18. My family seldom really listens to what I say. T F
19. Few of my friends understand me the way I want to be understood. T F
- 20.* My lover or spouse senses when I am troubled and encourages me. T F
- 21.* I feel valued and respected in my current romantic or marital relationship. T F
- 22.* I know people in my community who understand and share my views and beliefs. T F

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE (Rosenberg, 1965)

Instructions: Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. If you strongly agree, circle SA. If you agree with the statement, circle A. If you disagree, circle D. If you strongly disagree, circle SD.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. SA A D SD
- 2.* At times, I think I am no good at all. SA A D SD
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. SA A D SD
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. SA A D SD
- 5.* I feel I do not have much to be proud of. SA A D SD
- 6.* I certainly feel useless at times. SA A D SD
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. SA A D SD
- 8.* I wish I could have more respect for myself. SA A D SD
- 9.* All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. SA A D SD
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself. SA A D SD

Scoring: SA=3, A=2, D=1, SD=0. Items with an asterisk are reverse scored, that is, SA=0, A=1,

D=2, SD=3. Sum the scores for the 10 items. The higher the score, the higher the self esteem.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES QUESTIONNAIRE (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1973)

Instructions:

The items below inquire about what kind of person you think you are. Each item consists of a PAIR of characteristics, with the letters A-E in between. For example,

Not at all artistic A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very artistic

Each pair describes contradictory characteristics - that is, you cannot be both at the same time, such as very artistic and not at all artistic. The letters form a scale between the two extremes. You are to choose a letter which describes where YOU fall on the scale. For example, if you think that you have no artistic ability, you would choose A. If you think that you are pretty good, you might choose D. If you are only medium, you might choose C, and so forth.

M-F 1. Not at all aggressive A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very aggressive*

M 2. Not at all independent A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very independent*

F 3. Not at all emotional A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very emotional*

M-F 4. Very submissive A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very dominant*

M-F 5. Not at all excitable in a major crisis* A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very excitable in a major crisis

M 6. Very passive A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very active*

F 7. Not at all able to devote self completely to others A.....B.....C.....D.....E Able to devote self completely to others*

F 8. Very rough A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very gentle*

F 9. Not at all helpful to others A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very helpful to others*

M 10. Not at all competitive A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very competitive*

M-F 11. Very home oriented A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very worldly*

- F 12. Not at all kind A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very kind*
- M-F 13. Indifferent to others' approval* A.....B.....C.....D.....E Highly needful of others' approval
- M-F 14. Feelings not easily hurt* A.....B.....C.....D.....E Feelings easily hurt
- F 15. Not at all aware of feelings of others A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very aware of feelings of others*
- M 16. Can make decisions easily* A.....B.....C.....D.....E Has difficulty making decisions
- M 17. Gives up very easily A.....B.....C.....D.....E Never gives up easily*
- M-F 18. Never cries* A.....B.....C.....D.....E Cries very easily
- M 19. Not at all self-confident A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very self-confident*
- M 20. Feels very inferior A.....B.....C.....D.....E Feels very superior*
- F 21. Not at all understanding of others A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very understanding of others*
- F 22. Very cold in relations with others A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very warm in relations with others*
- M-F 23. Very little need for security* A.....B.....C.....D.....E Very strong need for security
- M 24. Goes to pieces under pressure A.....B.....C.....D.....E Stands up well under pressure*

The scale to which each item is assigned is indicated by M (Masculinity), F (Femininity) and MF (Masculinity-Femininity)

Items with an asterisk indicate the extreme masculine response for the M and M-F scales and the extreme feminine response for the F scale. Each extreme masculine response on the M and M-F scales and the extreme feminine response on the F scale are scored 4, the next most extreme scored 3, etc.