

The Role of Stereotypes in Consumer Behavior

by

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Dissertations submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of
Business Administration in the Graduate School
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2010

ABSTRACT

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Abstract

Since the cognitive ability to process information is limited, people often rely on stereotypes to help them make sense of their social environment. These knowledge structures allow people to utilize past experiences and social learning to infer the characteristics and behaviors of individual group members. Stereotypes provide their holders with scripts, specifying how to interact with members of specific social groups (e.g., what products to choose or avoid and how certain actions may be interpreted).

Despite the prevalent use of stereotypes in daily life, little research in consumer behavior has examined the role of stereotypes from this perspective. I propose that consumers use stereotype knowledge to navigate interpersonal interactions through adjusting their self-evaluations and product choices to match the needs of the social situation. My research suggests that both the stereotypes applied to the self and those applied to others have implications for how consumers strategically leverage this socially shared knowledge when interacting with others.

In Essay 1, I examine how consumers use stereotypes to guide their self-evaluations when preparing to interact with someone who may stereotype them. Most interestingly, consumers are selective in what aspects of the stereotype they take on, depending on whether they have more interdependent or independent self-construals. In three studies, I demonstrate that individuals with more interdependent self-construals engage in selective self-stereotyping and that these shifts in self-evaluations

are specifically tailored to the preferences and expectations of the interaction partner.

However, I find that individuals with more independent self-construals engage in selective counter self-stereotyping in order to distance themselves from the constraints of the stereotype and also to rebuff the expectations of the interaction partner.

Essay 2 examines the various impression management concerns that arise when consumers choose products to share with others. I find that when the consumer has little information regarding his consumption partner, stereotypes related to the consumption partner's social group are used to guide product choices. Whether the chosen products are stereotype consistent or inconsistent depend on the consumer's social goals and the consumption partner's expectations. Across four studies, I take both the perspectives of the consumer making the choice and the consumption partner to examine the various strategies adopted for making joint consumption choices and also to evaluate the interpersonal consequences of these strategies.

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1. General Introduction

Since the cognitive ability to process information is limited, people often rely on stereotypes to help them make sense of their social environment. These knowledge structures allow people to utilize past experiences and social learning to infer the characteristics and behaviors of individual group members. Stereotypes provide their holders with scripts, specifying how to interact with members of specific social groups (e.g., what products to choose or avoid and how certain actions may be interpreted).

Despite the prevalent use of stereotypes in daily life, little research in consumer behavior has examined the role of stereotypes from this perspective. I propose that consumers use stereotype knowledge to navigate interpersonal interactions through adjusting their self-evaluations and product choices to match the needs of the social situation. My research suggests that both the stereotypes applied to the self and those applied to others have implications for how consumers strategically leverage this socially shared knowledge when interacting with others.

1.1 Essay 1: Selective Self-Stereotyping

In Essay 1, I examine how consumers use stereotypes to guide their self-evaluations when preparing to interact with someone who may stereotype them. I posit that stereotype targets engage in selective self-stereotyping and leverage the multidimensionality of stereotypes in order to remain consistent with their attitudes toward the stereotyper. That is, rather than embracing or rejecting a stereotype in its

entirety, I propose that stereotype targets alter their self-views on a subset of stereotypical traits. Whether targets selectively assimilate toward or contrast away from the stereotype will depend on whether they have more interdependent or independent self-construals. People with interdependent self-construals see themselves as closely connected to the people in their social environment, whereas those with independent self-construals see themselves as distinct and separate from others.

In 3 studies, I demonstrate that individuals with more interdependent self-construals engage in selective self-stereotyping and that these shifts in self-evaluations are specifically tailored to the preferences and expectations of the interaction partner. However, I find that individuals with more independent self-construals engage in selective counter self-stereotyping in order to distance themselves from the constraints of the stereotype and also to rebuff the expectations of the interaction partner. This essay opens up many avenues for future research and also suggests that though being stereotyped may be very unpleasant, stereotype targets can respond in selective ways that enable them to regain control of the situation and possibly protect themselves from undesirable consequences.

1.2 Essay 2: Impression Management, Stereotypes and Joint Consumption

Essay 2 examines how consumers may use stereotype knowledge to address the various impression management concerns that arise when consumers choose products to share with others. Because consumers oftentimes use joint consumption as an

opportunity to build new relationships, it is important for consumers to select products that facilitate positive interpersonal outcomes. Furthermore, consumers understand that simply choosing something liked by the consumption partner may not be enough to ensure a positive consumption experience because chosen products may also reflect personal preferences and communicate additional traits about oneself to others. In order to ensure that selected items will be favorably received, consumers must also make sure their choices are appropriate for the social interaction and also address expectations their consumption partner might have of them.

However, given that individuals are just beginning to learn about each other, they may have little more than superficial information (e.g., gender, race, age) about their consumption partners to help make their product choices. I find that under these circumstances, consumers will rely on stereotypes to help infer the preferences of the consumption partner and inform their choices. Confirming that impression management concerns do drive product choice as proposed, I find that differences in self-monitoring affect how consumers use the knowledge derived from stereotypes to make their product choices. Studies 1 and 2 examine how stereotypes about one's own social group help individuals maintain valued roles by informing the appropriateness of behaviors and indicate whether an individual is meeting the standards for one's social group. Studies 3 and 4 find that stereotypes about other social groups are also useful

and help individuals anticipate the expectations of others, providing information about another individual's approachability and potential outcomes of the social interaction.

1.3 Conclusions

During any given social interaction, consumers are oftentimes both targets and users of stereotypes. Given the prevalence of these knowledge structures, I propose that individuals are highly sophisticated in how they use stereotype knowledge in both how they view themselves and how they prepare to interact with others. This dissertation examines two ways in which stereotypes are used strategically and demonstrates how behavior may be shaped by individual differences, interpersonal goals, and the social environment.

2. Self-Construal and Selective Self-Stereotyping

Our self-perception is often shaped by other people and the social environment (Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Mead, 1934). For instance, I may see ourselves as confident and straightforward when negotiating with a competitor but nurturing and empathic when comforting an upset friend. Having our self-views flexible and sensitive to the social context enables us to shape our environment and pursue our social goals (e.g., beat the competitor or make the friend feel better). In other words, the flexibility of our self-perceptions allows us to gain control of our social outcomes.

I examine how self-views are affected by situations in which individuals feel they have very little control—when they are being stereotyped by others. Stereotypes make it difficult for targets to shape their social environment because people already have preconceived notions of who they are (see Fiske, 1998; Hamilton & Sherman, 1994). However, ample research has demonstrated that stereotyped individuals work towards regaining control of the situation by engaging in behaviors and self-presentational strategies that counter stereotypes (e.g., Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Kray, Thompson, & Galinsky, 2001) and compensate for negative expectations (e.g., Adkins & Ozanne, 2005; Miller, Rothblum, Felicio, & Brand, 1995). In addition to engaging in these *external* behaviors, stereotyped individuals' *internal* self-views may also be shaped by interactions with people who stereotype them (Sinclair, Huntsinger, Skorinko, & Hardin,

2005). Interestingly, shifts in self-views may be more fine-tuned and nuanced than behavioral changes. Individuals tend to see their identity as a set of divisible attributes rather than an inseparable whole (Biernat, Vescio, & Green, 1996; Reid & Deaux, 1996). This “divisibility” allows individuals to address more precisely the stereotype in question, whereas it would be much more difficult to address multiple aspects of one’s stereotype through behavior and self-presentation within a single interaction. Thus, I propose that stereotype targets may leverage the flexibility of one’s self-concept and *selectively* embrace or reject specific aspects of the stereotype in their self-views.

2.1 Selective Self-Stereotyping

Because stereotypes related to social groups often include a diverse set of traits (Biernat, Vescio, & Green, 1996; Reid & Deaux, 1996), it is inevitable that some traits are consistent while others are inconsistent with an individual’s immediate goals. Research has found that individuals are selective in applying stereotypical traits to themselves to resolve *intrapersonal* conflicts. For instance, in order to reconcile the needs to identify with one’s social group and to maintain a positive self-image, sorority members accepted positive but not negative stereotypical traits as descriptive of themselves (Biernat et al., 1996). Similarly, female math majors actively rejected feminine traits thought to compromise their math performance (e.g., flirtatious, emotional) but continued to identify with feminine traits irrelevant to their academic success (e.g.,

empathetic, shy; Pronin, Steele, & Ross, 2004). I posit that selective self-stereotyping may also prove useful in the realm of *interpersonal* interactions.

2.2 Responses to being Stereotyped and Self-Construal

Previous research has largely focused on how stereotype targets may avoid the negative consequences of being stereotyped by viewing or presenting oneself positively. However, not all individuals may wish to be viewed favorably by those who stereotype them. Sometimes, the anger stemming from being unfairly judged based on one's group membership can lead to antisocial and hostile behavior (Butz & Plant, 2006; Piel, 2002). Though ample research has documented these two divergent responses to being stereotyped, it remains unclear when stereotype targets may choose to build a negative relationship versus a positive relationship with someone who stereotypes them. I propose that self-construal may determine whether targets distance themselves from or become closer to those who stereotype them, and that these different relational patterns will in turn shape how individuals selectively view themselves on stereotype-relevant traits.

2.2.1 Independent Self-Construal

Self-construal describes how individuals understand and define themselves in relation to the social environment. Independents see themselves as distinct and separate from others while interdependents see themselves as closely connected to the people in their social environment (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Being stereotyped should be

particularly unpleasant for independents because they are highly motivated to maintain their autonomy and distinctiveness (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). When expected to behave like other members of one's group, the ability to be autonomous and unique is compromised. Thus, independents may likely feel negatively toward and wish to distance themselves from those who stereotype them and threaten their freedom.

Since people often react unfavorably to those who violate their expectations, one way for independent individuals to express opposition is to go against the expectations of others (Gergen & Taylor, 1969; Miller & Turnbull, 1986). Thus, when an individual is stereotyped, an effective way to create distance and negativity is to challenge the stereotyper's expectations of the individual. Thus, stereotyped individuals may view oneself as having traits inconsistent with their stereotyped identity (Sinclair et al., 2005). Furthermore, going against the expectations of the stereotyper makes one's behavior less predictable and harder to control, allowing independent individuals to regain their sense of autonomy and freedom in the situation (Gergen & Taylor, 1969).

However, moving away from one's stereotype in its entirety may be counterproductive because countering negative stereotypical traits may be received positively and bring one closer to the stereotyper. Thus, only distancing oneself from *positive* stereotypical traits may be the most effective way for independent targets to create distance between themselves and those who stereotype them. It is interesting to note that I predict that independent individuals' self-views will actually become more

negative. This is in contrast to previous literature that has primarily examined how individuals distance themselves from stereotypes to maintain a positive self-view or self-presentation (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Zebrowitz, Andreoletti, Collins, Lee, & Blumenthal, 1998). However, Kaiser and Miller (2001) found that when female participants wished to present an image of competence, they actually portrayed less socially desirable self-presentations (e.g., being less family-oriented and kind), suggesting that individuals may be motivated to contradict positive stereotypes if it serves their interpersonal goals.

2.2.2 Interdependent Self-Construal

Though interdependent individuals may feel the same anxiety and discomfort associated with being stereotyped, they tend to have a predisposed motivation to affiliate with others and put much effort into becoming close to those important to them (e.g., friends, family, authority figures; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). It is well documented that when individuals wish to become closer with someone who views them stereotypically, they try to fulfill those expectations by changing their self-views and behaviors to become more stereotypical (Sinclair et al., 2005; von Baeyer, Sherk, & Zanna, 1981; Zanna & Pack, 1975). Thus, it may be beneficial for an interdependent individual's self-concept to confirm the stereotyper's expectations such that a sense of shared understanding and bonding can be fostered. However, embodying all aspects of the stereotype could thwart an interdependent individual's affiliation efforts because

embodying negative traits may be received unfavorably by the stereotyper. Thus, I posit that interdependents' self-views will be most consistent with traits that are both stereotype congruent and also appreciated by the stereotyper (i.e., positive stereotypical traits).

3. Experiment 1: Self-Construal and Selective Self-Stereotyping in Asian Americans

My first study examined the self-evaluative consequences of being stereotyped and provided evidence that interdependent and independent individuals respond in divergent ways. Specifically, I observed how Asian American and White participants' self-views were affected when they were introduced to a hypothetical supervisor who endorsed Asian stereotypes. Given that individuals have multiple social identities (Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999; Sinclair, Hardin, & Lowery, 2006), I primed all participants with ethnicity to ensure that participants would construe the scenario in terms of the targeted identity. I also tested the hypotheses that only individuals at risk of being stereotyped personally (i.e., Asian Americans) would engage in selective self-stereotyping and that only their self-views on positive (but not negative) stereotypical traits would be affected.

3.1 Method

Ninety-four undergraduates (30 = Asian American, 64 = White) completed this study. To prime ethnicity, I asked participants to answer questions regarding the

languages they spoke at home with their family (Shih et al., 1999)¹. Next, participants were instructed to imagine that they were about to start their first job out of college and would be introduced to their new supervisor, who was portrayed as holding stereotypic views of Asians. In the scenario, the supervisor described a recent trip he had taken to Asia and applauded the hard-working values of the people there. After reading the description, participants were instructed to spend a few minutes describing their hypothetical new job.

Lastly, participants completed a packet titled “Personality Questionnaire.” Embedded in this questionnaire were the self-stereotyping and self-construal measures. For the self-stereotyping measure, participants used scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*very*) to indicate the extent to which a number of stereotypical Asian American traits were descriptive of themselves. Positive traits included family-oriented, self-disciplined, intelligent, modest, reserved, and arrogant (reverse-coded). Negative traits included antisocial, shy, socially awkward, timid, weak, and athletic (reverse-coded). These traits were selected from Lin, Kwan, Cheung, and Fiske (2005) and Ho and Jackson’s (2001) conceptualizations of the Asian American stereotype.

Finally, participants completed Hardin, Leong, and Bhagwat’s (2004) revised Self-Construal Scale. Participants rated on 7-point scales the extent to which they agreed

¹ A manipulation check confirmed that Asian American participants (87%) were more likely than White participants (3%) to speak a language other than English at home ($\chi^2 = 35.72, p < .0001$).

with 15 interdependent items (e.g., I feel good when I cooperate with others) and 15 independent items (e.g., I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects)². An overall index of self-construal was constructed using the same method outlined in previous research (Holland, Roeder, van Baaren, Brandt, & Hannover, 2004; Pohlmann, Carranza, Hannover, & Iyengar, 2007). First, participants' average scores on the interdependence and independence subscales were standardized. Next, interdependence was subtracted from independence to create an index of self-construal where lower values corresponded to stronger interdependence and higher values corresponded to stronger independence.

3.2 Results and Discussion

Participants' trait ratings were subjected to regression analysis with ethnicity (Asian American vs. White), self-construal (measured) and trait valence (positive vs. negative) as predictors. Trait valence was a within-subjects factor while the other two variables were between-subjects. The analysis revealed main effects of self-construal ($F(1,90) = 5.33, p = .0233$) and trait valence ($F(1,90) = 267.32, p < .0001$) and a 2-way interaction between trait valence and ethnicity ($F(1,90) = 7.61, p = .0070$). These lower order effects were qualified by the predicted 3-way interaction between ethnicity, self-construal, and trait valence ($F(1,90) = 7.52, p = .0074$). To better understand the interaction, I analyzed Asian American and White participants separately (see Figure 1).

² A factor analysis found similar factor structures for Asian American and White participants.

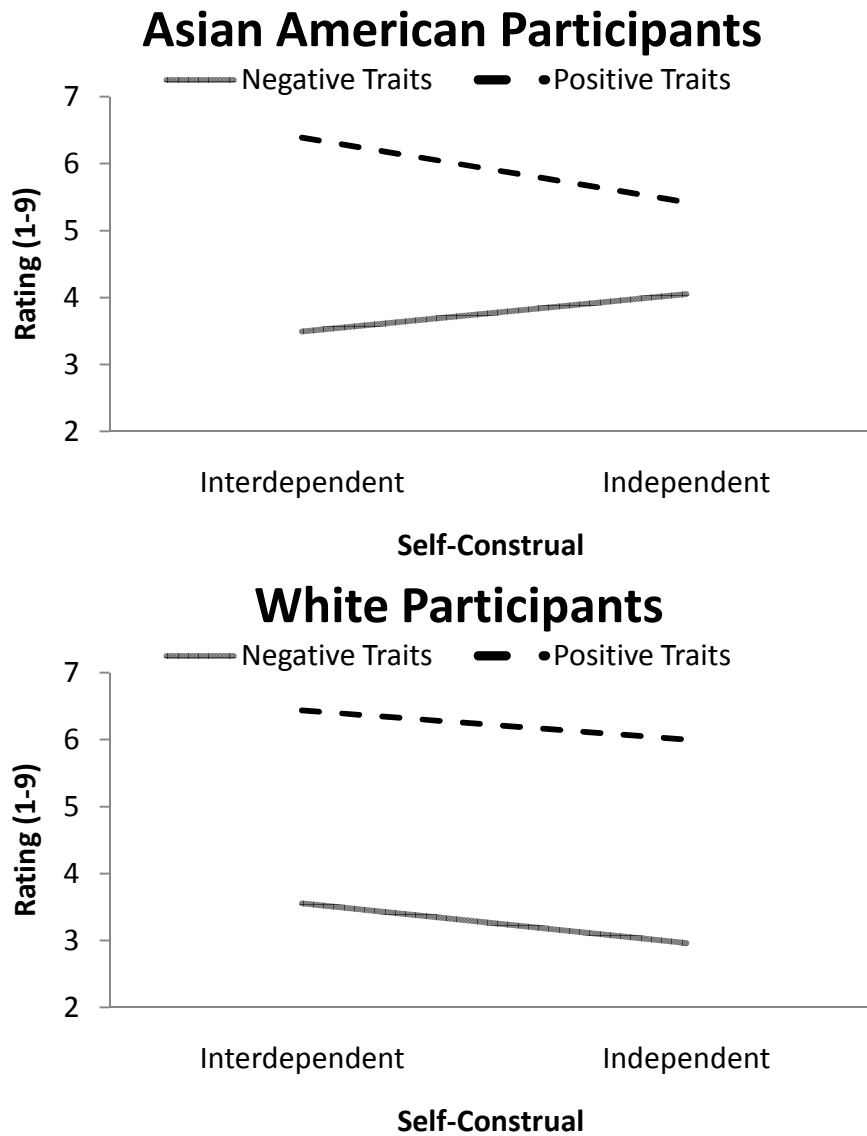


Figure 1: Experiment 1: Participants' ratings on traits related to the Asian American stereotype as a function of ethnicity, self-construal, and trait valence.

An analysis of Asian American participants' self-views revealed a significant 2-way interaction between self-construal and trait valence ($F(1,28) = 8.90, p = .0058$). Simple slopes analysis (Aiken & West, 1991) revealed that independents were less likely and interdependents were more likely to see themselves as having positive stereotypical

traits ($\beta = -.31, t(28) = -3.02, p = .0053$). However, self-construal had no effect on Asian American participants' ratings for negative stereotypical traits ($\beta = .19, t(28) = 1.40, ns$).

An analysis of White participants' self-views revealed significant main effects of self-construal ($F(1,62) = 7.13, p = .0097$) and trait valence ($F(1,62) = 306.48, p < .0001$). Importantly, there was no interaction between self-construal and trait valence ($F(1,62) = .21, ns$), suggesting that self-construal did not influence how White participants viewed themselves on positive versus negative traits.

In sum, I found that when stereotyped by another person, independent Asian Americans were less likely to have stereotypical self-views while interdependent Asian Americans were more likely to do so. Importantly, I only found differences between self-construal for positive, but not negative, traits tied to the Asian American stereotype. For White participants, independents were less likely and interdependents were more likely to see themselves as having *both* positive and negative traits related to the Asian American stereotype. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that independents' self-views tend to contrast away while interdependents tend to assimilate toward activated stereotypes (Bry, Follenfant, & Meyer, 2008; Keller & Molix, 2008; Stapel & Koomen, 2001).

4. Experiment 2: Self-Construal and Selective Self-Stereotyping in Women

In this study, I focused on the selective self-stereotyping behavior of another group—women. Whereas all participants in Experiment 1 were primed with the stereotype-relevant identity, I varied whether participants' stereotyped identity was made salient in Experiment 2 to examine the role of identity salience in selective self-stereotyping. Given that individuals have multiple social identities, only one's most salient social identity and its associations are likely to color self-views (Shih et al., 1999; Sinclair et al., 2006). If perceived stereotyping motivates changes in self-ratings as proposed, then selective self-stereotyping should be more apparent in individuals who have been primed with their stereotyped identity. Thus, I predict that with regard to positive stereotypical traits, self-construal will only affect self-views when gender is primed. Because I believe that being stereotyped affects both interdependents and independents' self-views, I expect that interdependents will rate themselves higher and independents will rate themselves lower on positive stereotypical traits relative to when gender is not salient. Given that I expect *selective* self-stereotyping, I do not expect the gender prime to influence self-stereotyping on negative stereotypical traits.

4.1 Method

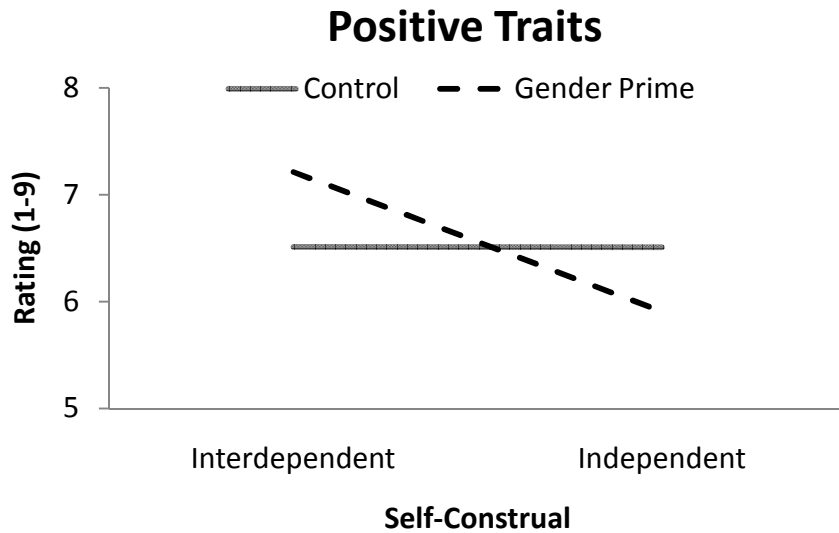
Ninety-five female undergraduates completed this study. The procedure was identical to the one used in Experiment 1 with the following exceptions. Gender was primed instead of ethnicity and an additional control condition was introduced.

Participants in the gender prime condition were asked to indicate their gender and answer questions related to whether they lived in single-sex or coed environments (Shih et al., 1999). In the control condition, participants answered similar questions about their telephone service.

As in Experiment 1, participants were introduced to a hypothetical supervisor, but they were led to believe that their supervisor held stereotypical views of women. He was described to be in his early 50s, conservative, and particularly concerned about the safety of his female employees. Again, participants completed a self-stereotyping measure. Positive stereotypical traits included compassionate, caring, arrogant (reverse-coded), aggressive (reverse-coded), and sweet. Negative stereotypical traits included insecure, intelligent (reverse-coded), sad, shy, and strong (reverse-coded). These traits were selected through pilot testing where a separate set of female participants ($N = 35$) rated the extent to which they believed each trait was stereotypically associated with women. Because of time constraints, each participant completed a shortened 10 item self-construal scale adapted from the revised Self-Construal Scale (Hardin et al., 2004). The 5 interdependent and 5 independent scale items with the highest factor loadings from my previous study were selected for my shortened scale. A factor analysis confirmed that the interdependent and independent items loaded on 2 separate factors. The same method implemented in Experiment 1 was used to calculate an index of self-construal.

4.2 Results and Discussion

Participants' trait ratings were subjected to regression analysis with self-construal (measured), prime (control vs. gender) and trait valence (positive vs. negative) as predictors. Trait valence was a within-subjects factor while the other two variables were between-subjects. Analysis revealed main effects of self-construal ($F(1,91) = 25.66, p < .0001$) and trait valence ($F(1,91) = 354.96, p < .0001$) and a 2-way interaction between self-construal and prime ($F(1,91) = 4.41, p = .0384$). These effects were qualified by a significant 3-way interaction between self-construal, prime, and trait valence ($F(1,91) = 5.00, p = .0277$). To better understand this 3-way interaction I examined ratings on positive and negative female stereotype traits separately (see Figure 2).



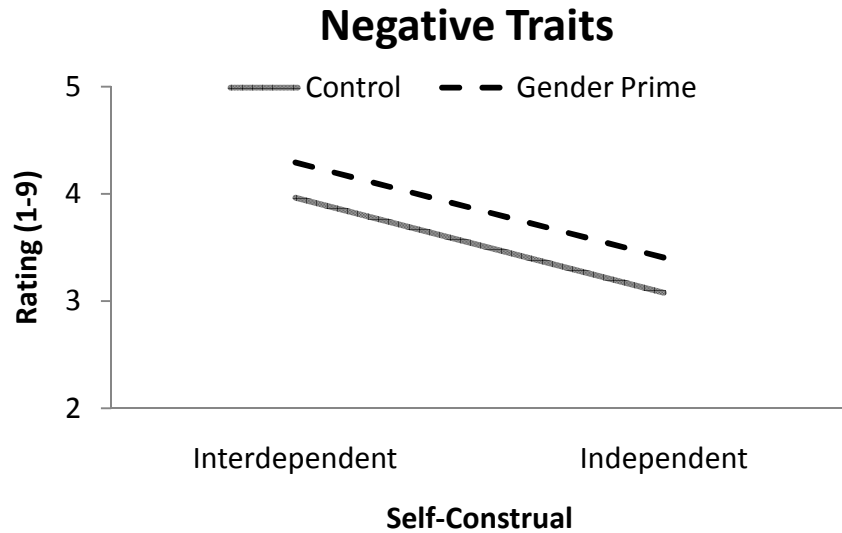


Figure 2: Experiment 2: Female participants' ratings on traits related to the female stereotype as a function of trait valence, self-construal, and prime.

For positive stereotypical traits, there was a significant 2-way interaction between self-construal and prime ($F(1,91) = 9.57, p = .0026$). A simple slopes analysis (Aiken & West, 1991) found that ratings differed by self-construal when gender was primed ($\beta = -.40, t(91) = -4.43, p < .0001$). In line with the results from Experiment 1, I found that interdependent females were more likely and independent females were less likely to self-stereotype when gender was primed. However, self-construal had no effect when gender was not primed ($\beta = -.0009, t(91) = -.01, ns$). A spotlight analysis (Irwin & McClelland, 2001) conducted at one standard deviation above and below the mean self-construal level revealed that independent individuals were *less* likely to view themselves as stereotypically feminine when gender was salient as compared to when it was not ($t(91) = -2.47, p = .0153$) while interdependent individuals were *more* likely to view

themselves as stereotypically feminine when gender was salient as compared to when it was not ($t(91) = 2.63, p = .0101$).

For negative stereotypical traits, there was a main effect of self-construal on negative self-stereotyping where independent individuals rated themselves lower on these traits compared to their interdependent counterparts ($F(1,91) = 17.21, p < .0001$). Importantly, the interaction between self-construal and prime was not significant ($F(1,91) = .001, ns$). This finding is consistent with Cross and Madsen's (1997) work proposing that the female stereotype and interdependent self-construal overlap on many traits. However, most importantly, female participants' self-views did not differ by self-construal on negative stereotypical traits when gender was primed as compared to when it was not.

In addition to replicating the findings from Experiment 1 with a different social group, these results also support my contention that it is perceived stereotyping that drives the divergent self-views of interdependents and independents since I found these effects only when gender was primed. Importantly, gender salience only influenced self-stereotyping for positive but not negative stereotypical trait ratings. Furthermore, I found that relative to the control condition, interdependents increased while independents decreased their positive self-stereotyping, suggesting that the effect of self-construal on self-stereotyping is driven by both interdependents and independents.

5. Experiment 3: Self-Construal, Interpersonal Intentions, and Selective Self-Stereotyping

My first two experiments showed that when individuals were stereotyped, interdependents and independents engaged in selective self-stereotyping in divergent ways. Experiment 3 examined the proposed psychological mechanism underlying these effects by including measures of intentions toward the stereotyper. I also measured people's evaluations of the stereotyper to examine an additional interpersonal consequence of being stereotyped. Specifically, I predicted that self-construal orientations would determine the extent to which individuals wished to distance themselves from (independents) versus become closer to (interdependents) the stereotyper and that these motivations would drive people's self-views to become more or less stereotype-consistent on positive (but not negative) traits. Finally, I also included participants' ratings on positively valenced non-stereotypical traits to rule out the alternative hypothesis that the effects I found were self-presentational in nature rather than stereotype specific. In other words, I predicted that the responses of independent and interdependent individuals would be stereotype specific and would not carry over to traits unrelated to their stereotyped identity.

5.1 Method

Ninety-two female undergraduates completed this study for monetary compensation. The procedure used in this study was nearly identical to the one used in Experiment 2 with the following exceptions. First, all participants were primed with

gender. In addition to the female stereotype traits used in Experiment 2, participants also rated themselves on 5 positive non-stereotypical traits (confident, honest, logical, organized, tactful). These traits were pre-tested with a separate set of female participants ($N = 35$) to confirm they were not differentially associated with males and females. Next, I added measures of interpersonal intentions toward the supervisor. Participants used scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*) to indicate the extent to which they wished to distance oneself from (e.g., I would try to avoid interacting with the supervisor as much as possible, $\alpha = .71$) and bring oneself closer (e.g., I would try my best to build a good working relationship with my supervisor, $\alpha = .61$) to the supervisor. The distance items were reverse-coded and averaged with the closeness items such that higher values reflected intentions to become closer to the supervisor. I also had participants use the same scales to indicate the extent they believed nine personality traits (e.g., friendly, inconsiderate, $\alpha = .88$) were descriptive of the supervisor. Negative trait ratings were reverse-coded such that higher values corresponded to more favorable evaluations of the supervisor. Finally, participants completed the full Self-Construal Scale (Hardin et al., 2004).

5.2 Results and Discussion

First, regression analyses were conducted to examine whether self-construal influenced intentions toward the supervisor, evaluations of him, and self-views.

Analyses revealed that independents were inclined to distance themselves from while

interdependents wished to bring themselves closer to the stereotyper ($\beta = -.17, t(90) = -3.74, p = .0003$). Consistent with their intentions, independents were more likely to evaluate the supervisor negatively while interdependents were more likely to evaluate him positively ($\beta = -.19, t(90) = -3.56, p = .0006$). In line with the results of Experiment 2, independents were less likely than interdependents to self-stereotype on positive stereotypical traits ($\beta = -.18, t(90) = -2.82, p = .0059$) and negative stereotypical traits ($\beta = -.16, t(90) = -2.28, p = .0248$). However, self-construal did not influence ratings on positive *non-stereotypical* traits ($\beta = .05, t(90) = .87, ns$), confirming that the influence of self-construal on positively valenced traits was specific to those related to the stereotyped identity.

Next, I conducted regression analyses to examine whether intentions toward the stereotyper predicted self-views. Analysis revealed that intentions toward the supervisor influenced positive self-stereotyping ($\beta = .61, t(90) = 4.49, p < .0001$). However, intentions were not related to ratings of negative stereotypical ($\beta = -.04, t(90) = -.31, ns$) or positive non-stereotypical traits ($\beta = .11, t(90) = .90, ns$).

Given that both self-construal and intentions toward the stereotyper influenced positive self-stereotyping, I conducted a mediation analysis (Baron and Kenny 1986) to examine whether the effect of construal on positive self-stereotyping was driven by intentions toward the stereotyper. To do so, I examined the effect of self-construal on positive self-stereotyping, controlling for intentions. When intentions were controlled

for, the effect of self-construal was significantly reduced ($\beta = -.10, t(89) = -1.45, ns$) while the effect of intentions remained significant ($\beta = .53, t(89) = 3.67, p = .0004$; Sobel test: $z = -2.90, p = .0037$, see Figure 3).

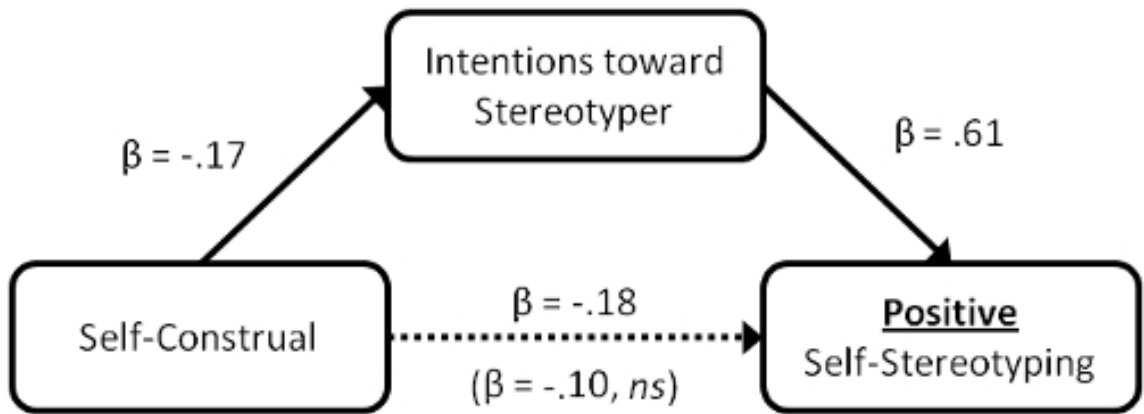


Figure 3: Experiment 3: Depiction of mediation analysis. All β values are significant at $p < .01$ unless otherwise noted.

My results suggest that participants' intentions toward the stereotyper (whether they were to increase distance or closeness) drove the effect of self-construal on self-stereotyping on positive stereotypical traits. Notably, intentions toward the stereotyper failed to predict ratings on negative stereotypical and positive non-stereotypical traits. These results lend further support to my hypothesis that selective self-stereotyping is driven by how individuals wish to respond to the stereotyper because intentions toward the stereotyper only affected self-views related to traits that served individuals' interpersonal goals but did not do so for traits that did not serve those purposes.

6. General Discussion

In 3 experiments, I examine the phenomenon of selective self-stereotyping and identify self-construal as a key moderator. I found that self-construal influences whether individuals' self-views become more or less stereotypical only when they are targets of the stereotype endorsed by the stereotyper (Experiment 1) and when their stereotyped identity is salient (Experiment 2). When these 2 conditions are met, independents are more likely to reject while interdependents are more likely to embrace only positive stereotypical traits (not negative stereotypical or positive non-stereotypical traits) as descriptive of themselves. Mediation analysis in Experiment 3 lends further support for my theory by showing that intentions toward the stereotyper mediate the effect of self-construal on self-views for traits that facilitate responding to the stereotyper (positive stereotypical traits) but not for traits that may hinder (negative stereotypical traits) or be irrelevant (positive non-stereotypical traits) to these efforts.

6.1 Contributions

This set of results is to my knowledge the first demonstration of selective self-stereotyping in an interpersonal context. Previous research has established that individuals are selective in applying specific stereotypical traits to themselves in order to reconcile the conflicting goals of self-enhancement and group identification (Biernat et al., 1996; Pronin et al., 2004). However, this line of research focused on the process of self-stereotyping on an *intrapersonal* level and did not provide predictions for how

individuals may engage in similar methods of self-stereotyping in *interpersonal* situations. It is also notable that previous research has focused on selective self-stereotyping where targets wish to view themselves in a positive light. I found that when targets wished to distance themselves from someone who stereotyped them, they actually viewed themselves more negatively and their self-views moved away from positively valenced stereotypical traits.

In the interpersonal realm, self-stereotyping research has primarily focused on whether individuals will embrace or reject one's stereotype in its entirety (e.g., Sinclair et al., 2005, 2006). My research builds on these findings and takes a more nuanced view of self-stereotyping and provides a framework for understanding why and how individuals targeted by stereotypes may distinguish between specific dimensions of one's stereotype. I demonstrate that individuals recognize that embodying or rejecting certain traits may be more or less conducive to fostering desired relationships with the stereotyper. Only shifting one's self-views on positive (but not negative) stereotypes serves the dual purposes of viewing oneself in a manner consistent with desired relationships and also responding to the stereotyper's expectations. Thus, when individuals are stereotyped, responses toward the stereotyper (determined by self-construal) are only reflected in self-views related to positive stereotypical traits and not negative stereotypical or positive non-stereotypical traits.

My research also contributes to the intergroup interactions literature by studying the role of self-construal in how stereotype targets respond to the stereotyper. Sinclair and her colleagues (2005) first examined interpersonal goals and self-stereotyping by highlighting the role of affiliation and demonstrated that those primed to affiliate will assimilate while those primed to disaffiliate will contrast away from the stereotype. I extend their findings by identifying an individual difference—self-construal—as an antecedent to the interpersonal motivations adopted by stereotype targets which allows us to better understand how individuals without pre-existing interpersonal goals may respond to being stereotyped. Given that specific self-construal orientations have been found to be more prominent in certain groups (Cross & Madson, 1997; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), my findings have interesting implications for how certain groups may respond to being stereotyped. Furthermore, self-construal can also fluctuate within an individual and may vary depending on the situation (see Oyserman & Lee, 2008 for review). Thus, certain types of situations may also foster specific responses to being stereotyped, which may then contribute to the degradation or perpetuation of stereotypes within these situations.

6.2 Limitations and Future Research

In my research, Asian and female participants were not stereotyped in the same way. Asian participants in Experiment 1 were positively stereotyped (i.e., the supervisor commended Asians for being hard-working) while female participants in Experiments 2

and 3 were negatively stereotyped (i.e., the supervisor's concern regarding the safety of female employees implied that he believed women are weak). Though I find that the self-evaluative responses of independents and interdependents are not affected by the valence of stereotyping, being positively versus negatively stereotyped may elicit different reactions depending on the behavior examined. For instance, future research could examine how self-construal may influence performance in different ways depending on stereotyping valence. If independents wish to reject the stereotype, their responses to positive and negative stereotyping may differ such that positive stereotyping leads to reduced performance while negative stereotyping leads to enhanced performance in stereotype-relevant domains, whereas interdependents may show the opposite pattern.

Future research could also examine how self-construal may shape selective self-stereotyping for in-group versus out-group members. It is likely that participants perceived the stereotyper (i.e., the supervisor) as an in-group member, and thus, interdependents were motivated to affiliate with him. However, research finds that interdependents' are only motivated to bond with in-group members and not out-group members (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), suggesting that they may not engage in positive self-stereotyping when stereotyped by an out-group member. On the one hand, interdependents may simply disregard stereotyping by out-group members and their self-views may not be affected. On the other hand, regardless of one's level of self-

construal, being stereotyped can be a very unpleasant experience. Thus, in the absence of the motivation to affiliate, interdependents may respond in a manner similar to independents and reject positive stereotypical traits as descriptive of themselves.

6.3 Conclusions

Given that self-stereotyping can have many implications for the maintenance of prejudice towards one's group (Crocker & Major, 1989; Frome & Eccles, 1998; Kay, Jost, & Young, 2005), it is important to understand when and on which traits self-evaluative shifts may occur. By demonstrating how individuals may selectively self-stereotype in interpersonal situations and identifying self-construal as a key moderator, this research opens up many avenues for future study and also suggests that though being stereotyped may be very unpleasant, stereotype targets can respond in discerning ways that enable them to regain control of the situation.

7. Impression Management, Stereotypes, and Joint Consumption

Consumers often engage in shared consumption in order to become acquainted with and learn more about each other. For example, new friends may go see a movie together to socialize or a salesperson may take a new client to dinner to learn about the client's needs. Whether the purpose is to make new friends or bring in new business, consumers often engage in joint consumption to forge new relationships with others. In these types of situations, the impressions people convey early in the relationship are important. Though new information is gained as interactions continue, additional information that contradicts the initial impression tends to be overlooked (Olson, Roese, and Zanna 1996; Olson and Zanna 1993). Given the importance of creating a pleasant consumption experience in the early stages of a relationship, the products consumers choose for joint consumption are quite important and have the potential to make or break a budding relationship.

The importance of creating a positive relationship with one's consumption partner has been highlighted in prior research on the joint consumption experience. For instance, consumers' emotional experiences converge over the duration of watching video clips through the processes of mimicry and emotional contagion (Ramanathan and McGill 2007), which tend to occur when affiliative motivation is high (Chartrand and Bargh 1999; Gump and Kulik 1997; Lakin and Chartrand 2003). Consumers also experience more enjoyment when their opinions of the shared experience are congruent

with their consumption partner's evaluations because congruence engenders a sense of shared understanding and belonging (Raghunathan and Corfman 2006).

When consumers are just beginning to get to know each other, they have very little information regarding their consumption partner's preferences and expectations for the interaction. How might they go about making their product choices? I propose that consumers use stereotypes as a resource to help inform their choices. Because stereotypes are socially shared and provide information about social groups based on easily identified qualities (e.g., race, gender), they may prove useful in inferring the preferences and anticipating the behavior of one's consumption partner.

In this paper, I find that when consumers wish to create a relationship with their consumption partners but have little information about them, they will rely on stereotypes to anticipate their consumption partner's responses. This in turn informs self-presentation efforts and ultimately product choice. Furthermore, the types of impressions consumers wish to create and the products they choose will be shaped by interpersonal goals, characteristics of the consumption partner, and the ability to effectively convey desired impressions.

7.1 Stereotypes as Social Tools

Stereotypes can be defined as knowledge structures that associate a social group with a set of traits and behaviors (Hamilton and Sherman 1994). In the context of joint consumption, they may be useful in helping consumers create favorable impressions in

numerous ways. A first step in creating a positive consumption experience is to incorporate the consumption partner's preferences, so that one can communicate a considerate and friendly image. Stereotypes allow people to infer the preferences of others in a wide variety of consumption domains. Consumer research in the social identity domain has shown that it is often the case that specific products are closely tied to certain social groups. For example, *Star Wars* is considered masculine while *Bridget Jones* is considered feminine (White and Argo 2009). Because stereotypes are such rich knowledge structures, simply knowing someone's group membership provides a guide for inferring his or her consumption preferences across a wide range of domains. For example, by knowing that one's consumption partner is male, an individual may assume that he enjoys *Star Wars*, beer, car magazines, and sporting events. Armed with this knowledge, a consumer can convey a considerate and friendly image by tailoring his or her product choices to serve the preferences of the consumption partner.

However, the ability to incorporate one's consumption partner's preferences may be limited by one's role demands. Most roles require people who occupy them to appear a certain way or possess specific qualities (Sarbin and Allen 1968). Failing to convey impressions consistent with one's role may bring into question one's ability to successfully enact the role and may lead to negative social consequences (Goffman 1959; Leary and Kowalski 1990; Schlenker 1980). Given the risks involved with role-violating behaviors, individuals often try to present themselves positively within the limits of

their valued roles. For example, high status ROTC candidates are modest about their accomplishments, but specifically in areas that are irrelevant to being an ROTC cadet (Jones, Gergen, and Jones 1963). Doing so allows them to appear likeable and approachable but also maintain an image of dominance and competence congruent with their roles as ROTC cadets.

How might stereotypes help inform the appropriateness of certain behaviors in relation to one's valued roles? The specific attributes and behaviors associated with specific social roles can be easily identified by the stereotypes tied to individuals who occupy these roles (Schlenker 1980). For example, stereotypes suggest that a priest should be moral and strict and a heterosexual man should be rugged and tough. If individuals know which specific characteristics are associated with their valued roles, then they can work towards creating impressions that do not compromise their positions and effectiveness in those roles. Consumption situations provide various opportunities for individuals to create impressions that complement their roles. For example, males publicly chose a 12 oz. Chef's Cut steak even if they would personally prefer the smaller 10 oz. Lady's Cut steak to uphold their roles as a masculine man (White and Dahl 2006). Similarly, women become restrained eaters to fit the role of a feminine woman when interacting with a man they find attractive (Zanna and Pack 1975). This suggests that in joint consumption, where one's product choices reflect not only the preferences of the consumption partner but also one's own personal preferences, stereotypes may help

individuals protect their valued roles. Stereotypes provide information regarding what typical individuals occupying the role do and enable individuals to avoid any behaviors that may threaten the legitimacy of their valued roles.

Stereotypes also provide information regarding the relationships between various social groups, which aids consumers in anticipating how their actions may be perceived by members of other social groups. For instance, people may infer different expectancies or values of an audience based on gender stereotypes. People display more aggression in the presence of a man than a woman, presumably because women are stereotypically less tolerant of aggression than men (Borden 1975). Similarly, women are less likely to assume a leadership position when paired with a man as compared to a woman because, stereotypically, men are more dominant than women (Megargee 1969). Subsequent studies find that the sex of the interaction partner and not the dominance scores of the women predicts leadership, suggesting that it is the specific gender of the interaction partner that shapes women's leadership behaviors (Carbonell 1984; Nyquist and Spence 1986).

Research in consumer behavior also suggests that individuals use stereotypes related to others to anticipate audience expectations during joint consumption (Fisher and Dubé 2005). Stereotypically, men are uncomfortable and dislike when other men show emotions like tenderness and vulnerability (Dindia and Allen 1992; Smith, Noll, and Bryant 1999). However, women are stereotypically less likely to react negatively

when a man expresses these types of emotions and may even appreciate these emotional displays. Thus, male audiences may expect (and prefer) an individual to suppress low-agency emotions whereas female audiences may not necessarily do so. As a result, Fisher and Dubé (2005) found that male participants were more likely to suppress low-agency emotions (e.g., tenderness, vulnerability) while viewing advertisements with another male as compared to when viewing with a female consumption partner. These findings suggest that stereotypes related to a consumption partner's social group may help anticipate their consumption partner's expectations and evaluations, and this in turn can influence behavior and experiences in joint consumption situations.

7.2 Self-Monitoring and Joint Consumption

Though most consumers may be motivated to present themselves favorably to their consumption partners, they may differ in their motivation and ability to do so. Self-monitoring describes the extent to which individuals can monitor and control their expressive behaviors (Snyder and Monson 1975). High self-monitors, compared to low self-monitors, have richer, more easily accessible knowledge structures regarding other people and the appropriateness of certain behaviors in specific social situations (Snyder and Cantor 1980). In turn, they use this information as a guide for monitoring their own self-presentations. Thus, high self-monitors should be more willing and able to select products that convey impressions that facilitate the achievement of their interaction goals.

Since high self-monitors are more sensitive to the needs of the social situation, they are more willing to select less preferred items if this allows them to present positive images to others. For example, high self-monitors are likely to forego favorite items and seek more variety in product choices to appear more unique (Ratner and Kahn 2002), and they are also more likely to avoid eating unhealthy (but delicious) foods when doing so distances oneself from an undesirable outgroup (Berger and Rand 2008). Consistent with the notion that a consumers' joint consumption choices will be driven by evaluative concerns, self-monitoring should moderate the extent to which consumers will be able to accurately anticipate their consumption partner's evaluations and select products that facilitate pleasant consumption experiences.

7.3 Overview of Studies

In the current research, I focus on how gender stereotypes may inform joint consumption decisions. Gender stereotypes have been well studied and established in the social psychology and consumer behavior literatures. I have elected to focus on gender stereotypes because clear product associations (White and Argo 2009), social norms (Deaux and Major 1987; Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford, and Weaver 2008), and intergroup dynamics (Klonis, Plant, and Devine 2005) have been identified and studied. Given that these factors have been well established and examined, I focus on how consumers may address these different dynamics by relying on gender stereotypes

to anticipate the responses of their consumption partner and leverage the associations between gender and specific products to create positive impressions.

Across 4 studies, I take the perspectives of both the actor choosing the product for joint consumption and the audience evaluating the actor based on his choices. This approach enables us to not only examine how impression management needs drive joint consumption choices, but also whether these self-presentation efforts are in fact effective in facilitating positive social interactions and consumption experiences. In studies 1 and 2, I examine how male consumers may be constrained by the need to uphold the role of a masculine man when trying to pursue a romantic relationship with a female consumption partner and how these constraints shape the impressions male consumers wish to present. Before examining product choice in joint consumption, I first explore in study 1 how expressing role-consistent or inconsistent product preferences may influence the impressions they convey and subsequent downstream social consequences. After establishing that there are social consequences for male consumers expressing role-violating preferences, I explore in study 2 the implications for joint consumption choices and examine how self-monitoring influences whether male consumers can effectively create impressions that are within the role constraints of the social situation.

In studies 3 and 4, I examine another important determinant of impression management efforts: the audience's expectations. More specifically, I study the types of impressions male consumers wish to present when selecting products to consume with a

feminist consumption partner, who stereotypically expects men to be sexist. I first examine in study 3 how low and high self-monitors may differ in the types of products they choose when consuming with a feminist. Given that male consumers may rely mostly on general, stereotype-based information, it is not entirely clear that they will always be successful in fostering a positive consumption experience. To explore the efficacy of using stereotypes to inform audience expectations and make joint consumption choices, in study 4, I examine joint consumption from the perspective of the female consumption partner and observe how her expectations of being negatively stereotyped may influence her evaluations of the male individual selecting the product for joint consumption. Table 1 summarizes the different perspectives and behaviors examined in each experiment, each of which deals with a slightly different demonstration of the strategic use of stereotypes in joint consumption settings.

Table 1: Overview of Experimental Design

	<i>Perspective of...</i>	<i>Type of Product Choice</i>	<i>Desired Relationship</i>	<i>Dependent Measure</i>
Study 1	Audience	Personal	Platonic or Romantic	Impression of actor
Study 2	Actor	Joint	Platonic or Romantic	Product chosen to consume w/audience
Study 3	Actor	Joint	Platonic	Product chosen to consume w/audience
Study 4	Audience	Joint	Platonic	Impression of actor

7.4 Experiment 1: Product Preferences and Interpersonal Outcomes

In study 1, I examine the social implications of expressing gender role consistent or inconsistent product preferences for both males and females. Products are closely tied to the types of individuals who frequently use them and thus become associated with certain social groups. As a result, when an individual uses a certain product, he or she will likely be perceived as having traits stereotypical of those who often consume that product. More specifically in the context of gender stereotypes, individuals expressing preferences for stereotypically feminine products may be perceived as having more feminine traits as compared to those expressing preferences for stereotypically masculine products.

I anticipate that the social implications for expressing gender role inconsistent preferences will be different for males and females. Research has shown that males are motivated to avoid gender role inconsistent activities (Elling and Knoppers 2005) and tend to be socially penalized for exhibiting feminine traits (Costrich, Feinstein, Kidder, Maracek, and Pascale 1975; Rudman and Fairchild 2004). Perceivers are also quick to assume that male individuals who display feminine behaviors are homosexual (Bosson, Prewitt-Freilino, and Taylor 2005; Deaux and Lewis 1984). Furthermore, men are viewed as less romantically attractive (but not less likeable) when they behave submissively as compared to when they behave dominantly (Sadalla, Kenrick, and Vershure 1987).

This suggests that males expressing feminine product preferences compared to those expressing masculine product preferences may be perceived as less romantically desirable by females. However, this preference for masculine heterosexual men should be specific to potentially romantic relationships and should not affect how females evaluate males in terms of platonic relationships. Because female gender roles are dynamic and constantly changing, traditional gender stereotypes may not be as applicable to females (Diekmann and Eagly 2000). As a result, females are less likely than males to be penalized for engaging in gender role inconsistent behavior in both platonic and romantic relationship contexts (Sadalla et al. 1987). Thus, product preferences for role-violating (i.e., masculine) products should affect neither the romantic nor the platonic attractiveness of females.

7.4.1 Methods

Sixty-two undergraduate students (female = 31, male = 31) completed this study in individual rooms located in a laboratory setting. After ensuring that none of the participants knew each other, the experimenter placed participants into male-female dyads. They were told that they would become acquainted with each other by completing questionnaires about themselves and exchanging them. In addition to answering a number of filler questions, participants were instructed to rank their preferences for books, magazines, and videogames, with each choice set containing a stereotypically feminine, masculine, and neutral product. A pretest with a separate set of

29 participants confirmed the intended femininity, masculinity, or neutrality of each item.

After completing the questionnaire, participants' packets were collected, and they were handed a questionnaire purportedly filled out by their partner. The answers to all questions other than the product preferences were their partners' actual answers. However, their partners' answers to the product preference items were replaced with predetermined responses that were either stereotypically feminine or masculine. In other words, participants were led to believe that their opposite sex partner either had stereotypically feminine or masculine product preferences.

After reading their partners' answers, participants completed a separate packet regarding their experiences of the interaction. In addition to a number of filler items, participants rated on seven-point scales the extent to which they believed their partner was weak, insecure, timid, and sensitive ($\alpha = .69$). These traits were pre-tested with a separate set of 29 participants from the same sample to ensure that these traits were perceived to be stereotypically feminine.

Also embedded in this questionnaire were the romantic and platonic interest measures that were also answered via seven-point scales. Romantic interest was measured by two items ($\alpha = .79$) asking participants to rate their romantic interest in and the attractiveness of their partner. The two platonic interest items ($\alpha = .83$) asked

participants to rate how likely they would become friends and have fun hanging out with their partner.

7.4.2 Results

To see whether perceived product preferences influenced how targets were evaluated by their partners, I conducted a 2 (evaluation target gender: male vs. female) by 2 (target product preferences: masculine vs. feminine) between-subjects ANOVA with feminine trait ratings as the dependent variable. Analysis revealed the predicted main effect of product preferences ($F(1, 58) = 14.67, p < .01$), and no other reliable effects were found. Male participants were evaluated as more feminine when they were perceived to have stereotypically feminine preferences ($M_{Fem} = 3.86$) compared to when they were perceived to have stereotypically masculine preferences ($M_{Masc} = 3.00; F(1, 58) = 2.96, p < .01$). Female participants were also stereotyped based on their perceived product preferences ($M_{Fem} = 3.87$ vs. $M_{Masc} = 3.16; F(1, 58) = 2.45, p < .05$).

To test whether males and females would face different interpersonal consequences depending on the consistency of their preferences to their gender roles, I conducted a 2 (evaluation target gender: male vs. female) by 2 (target product preferences: masculine vs. feminine) by 2 (evaluation criteria: romantic vs. platonic) mixed ANOVA with evaluation ratings (i.e., responses to the platonic and romantic interest items) as the dependent variable. Both evaluation target and product preferences were between-subjects while evaluation criteria was a within-subjects factor.

Analyses revealed a significant 3-way interaction ($F(1, 58) = 9.39, p < .01$). To gain a better understanding of this interaction, I examined the results separately for male and female evaluation targets.

For male targets being evaluated by females, analyses revealed a main effect of evaluation criteria ($F(1, 29) = 76.01, p < .0001$) that was qualified by the predicted two-way interaction between target preferences and evaluation criteria ($F(1, 29) = 12.06, p < .01$). Planned contrasts confirmed that males were evaluated as less romantically attractive when expressing gender role inconsistent preferences ($M_{Fem} = 2.53$) than when expressing gender role consistent preferences ($M_{Masc} = 3.69; F(1, 29) = -2.78, p < .01$). However, males were not evaluated differently when expressing role inconsistent ($M_{Fem} = 4.57$) versus role consistent preferences ($M_{Masc} = 4.56; F(1, 29) = .01, NS$) when being considered for a platonic relationship by their female partners.

For female targets evaluated by males, only a main effect of evaluation criteria was found, where female targets were evaluated as less romantically than platonically attractive by their male partners ($F(1, 29) = 47.71, p < .0001$). The lack of a significant two-way interaction ($F(1, 29) = .90, NS$) between target preferences and evaluation criteria confirmed that female targets were not evaluated differently for expressing gender role inconsistent versus gender role consistent preferences under either romantic or platonic contexts.

7.4.3 Discussion

The results from study 1 suggest that role-violating product preferences shape the impressions individuals project and affect specific interpersonal consequences. Though both males and females were believed to have traits stereotypical of the gender associated with their preferred products, these preferences only had differential interpersonal implications for male individuals in romantic contexts, because only under these conditions were gender role consistent preferences valued over gender role inconsistent preferences by female evaluators. Because expressing gender role inconsistent preferences did not compromise either the platonic or romantic attractiveness of females, female targets were not evaluated any differently by males depending on product preferences.

These findings suggest that the impressions product preferences create do not necessarily lead to the same interpersonal results. The roles individuals must embody play a key part in determining whether certain impressions are successful in fostering positive social outcomes. In this study, I establish that males may be penalized romantically if they express gender role violating product preferences. Next, I explore the implications of these findings for making joint consumption choices in which personal preferences of the chooser are also reflected. In study 2, I examine how males choose products when consuming with a female depending on whether these males are

high or low self-monitors and also whether they are motivated to pursue a romantic relationship.

7.5 Experiment 2: Joint Consumption and Role Constraints

One key trait for the masculine gender identity is heterosexuality, so men who engage in role-violating behavior not only risk tarnishing their manhood but also risk being misclassified as a homosexual (Bosson et al. 2005). Maintaining one's manhood is particularly important for male individuals trying to pursue romantic relationships with females because being misclassified as homosexual would likely exclude oneself for being considered as a romantic partner. For example, males are more reluctant to ask an attractive female for help as compared to an unattractive female because help-seeking behavior runs counter to the masculine traits of competence and self-reliance (Nadler, Shapira, and Benitzhak 1982). Similarly, male consumers who wish to pursue a romantic relationship with a female consumption partner may steer clear of stereotypically feminine items to avoid conveying that one is submissive, timid, or not romantically interested in women.

However, as mentioned previously, not all consumers will necessarily behave the same way. The extent to which consumers are motivated and able to adjust their impressions to fulfill role demands should influence the types of products they choose for joint consumption. Since high self-monitors should be more likely than low self-monitors to realize that selecting feminine items could compromise their romantic

attractiveness, high self-monitors should be less likely than low self-monitors to select feminine items when consuming with an attractive female. If males should avoid selecting feminine items for joint consumption, then what should they choose to foster a romantic relationship? Drawing from the female stereotype, males can infer that females may enjoy consuming neutral items more than masculine items. Thus, selecting neutral items would be optimal for male individuals trying to foster a romantic relationship with a female consumption partner. High self-monitors should again be more likely than low self-monitors to understand the benefits of selecting a neutral item.

However, study 1 suggests that the risks involved with engaging in role-violating behaviors are minimized when male individuals are not pursuing a romantic relationship, so the need to uphold one's masculine role is less salient. Furthermore, selecting feminine items may be beneficial to fostering a platonic relationship by conveying a friendly and considerate image. Since females do not evaluate males with purportedly feminine preferences more negatively in terms of platonic interest, the benefits of honoring one's consumption partner's feminine preferences may outweigh the costs of violating one's male gender role. High self-monitors are concerned with creating favorable images, so they should be more likely to recognize the benefits of selecting feminine items.

Thus, I predict that when consuming with a platonic partner, high self-monitors should be more likely than low self-monitors to utilize stereotypes in an attempt to try to

please their partner and defer to her preferences, and ultimately select feminine items. Though low self-monitors may be less likely to sacrifice their personal preferences to present a favorable impression to an unattractive female, they should still be somewhat motivated to accommodate their consumption partners because joint consumption is an interpersonal situation where individuals are generally concerned with how they appear to others (Raghunathan and Corfman 2006; Ramanathan and McGill 2007). Thus, I propose that low self-monitors will be more likely to make a compromise and gravitate toward neutral items.

It is important to note that I posit shifts in product choice for shared consumption will change based on the different evaluative concerns related to the social situation, not the different inferences made regarding the preferences of the consumption partner. Thus, whether male consumers are concerned with maintaining their masculinity should not affect how they use gender stereotypes to infer the preferences of their female consumption partners. That is, male consumers should assume that both a woman they wish and a woman they *do not* wish to romantically affiliate with will have stereotypically feminine product preferences.

7.5.1 Methods

Forty male undergraduates completed a packet of paper and pencil questionnaires where they were first introduced to a hypothetical classmate named Jen. They were told to imagine that they shared some mutual friends with Jen but did not

know her very well. In addition, participants were provided with a picture of her that portrayed her as either attractive or unattractive in appearance. The attractive picture of Jen was meant to motivate participants to pursue a romantic relationship while the unattractive picture was meant to deter participants from doing so.

Next, participants read two scenarios in which they were discussing with Jen which items they (the participant and Jen) should bring along for either a group gathering or a road trip they were taking with some other friends. Group activities were chosen for the scenarios because it seemed unlikely that undergraduate males would wish to spend time with an unattractive female alone. For each product category (television shows, movies, magazines, and music albums), participants chose between 6 items: 2 stereotypically feminine, 2 stereotypically masculine and 2 neutral. A pretest conducted with a separate set of 29 male participants confirmed that each item was perceived to correspond with its appropriate stereotype. For each choice, participants were also asked to indicate which items they thought Jen would prefer. Following this task, participants completed the Self-Monitoring Scale (Lennox and Wolfe 1984).

Two items were included after the self-monitoring measure to ensure that the attractive and unattractive pictures of Jen correctly manipulated male participants' interaction goals. Participants rated on seven-point scales the extent to which they found Jen to be attractive and the extent to which they were romantically interested in her. Participants were also asked to provide their age and ethnic background. There were not

significant effects of age and ethnicity, so these variables will not be discussed any further.

7.5.2 Results

Analysis confirmed that participants perceived the attractive version of Jen to be more attractive ($M_{Att} = 5.5$) than the unattractive version ($M_{Unatt} = 3.05$; $t(39) = 26.55$, $p < .0001$). Participants were also more romantically interested in the attractive version ($M_{Att} = 4.65$) compared to the unattractive version ($M_{Unatt} = 1.90$; $t(39) = 21.82$, $p < .0001$).

To test my hypotheses, I conducted a logistic regression analysis with the following factors: Jen's appearance (attractive, unattractive), self-monitoring (measured), product type (feminine, neutral, masculine), and product category (television show, movie, music album, magazine). Whether participants chose an item (coded as 1 = yes, 0 = no) served as the dependent variable. Partner appearance and self-monitoring were between-subject factors while product type and product category were within-subject factors. There was a main effect of product type ($\chi^2 = 20.41$, $p < .0001$) that was qualified by the predicted three-way interaction between Jen's appearance, self-monitoring, and product type ($\chi^2 = 8.93$, $p < .01$). Confirming that participants did not choose differently for each of the four product categories, no effects of product category or any of its interaction terms were found. To gain a better understanding of the three-way interaction, I conducted simple slopes tests (Aiken and West 1991).

For participants choosing with an attractive female consumption partner (i.e., those pursuing a romantic relationship), a simple slopes analysis found that as self-monitoring increased, choice for feminine items decreased ($\beta = -3.32$; $\chi^2 = 4.64$, $p < .05$) while choice for neutral items increased ($\beta = 2.25$; $\chi^2 = 5.85$, $p < .05$). The slopes of self-monitoring on choice of feminine and neutral items were significantly different ($\chi^2 = 9.58$, $p < .01$). There was no significant effect of self-monitoring on choice of masculine items ($\beta = -.64$; $\chi^2 = .52$, *NS*).

For participants choosing with the unattractive female consumption partner (i.e., those not motivated to pursue a romantic relationship), analysis found that as self-monitoring increased, share of feminine items also increased ($\beta = 1.97$; $\chi^2 = 6.86$, $p < .01$) while share of neutral items decreased ($\beta = -.78$; $\chi^2 = 3.42$, $p = .0643$). The effects of self-monitoring on choice of feminine and neutral items were significantly different from each other ($\chi^2 = 10.16$, $p < .01$). The effect of self-monitoring on product share for masculine items was, again, not significant ($\beta = -.32$, $\chi^2 = .48$, *NS*). Figure 4 depicts the pattern of effects examined.

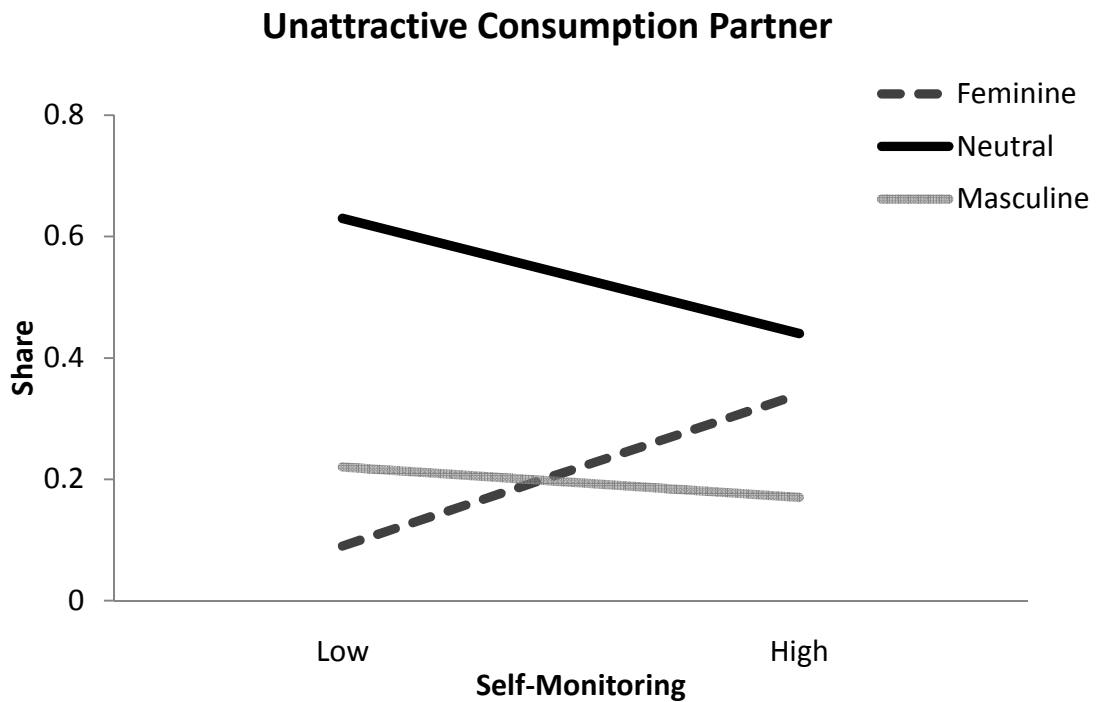
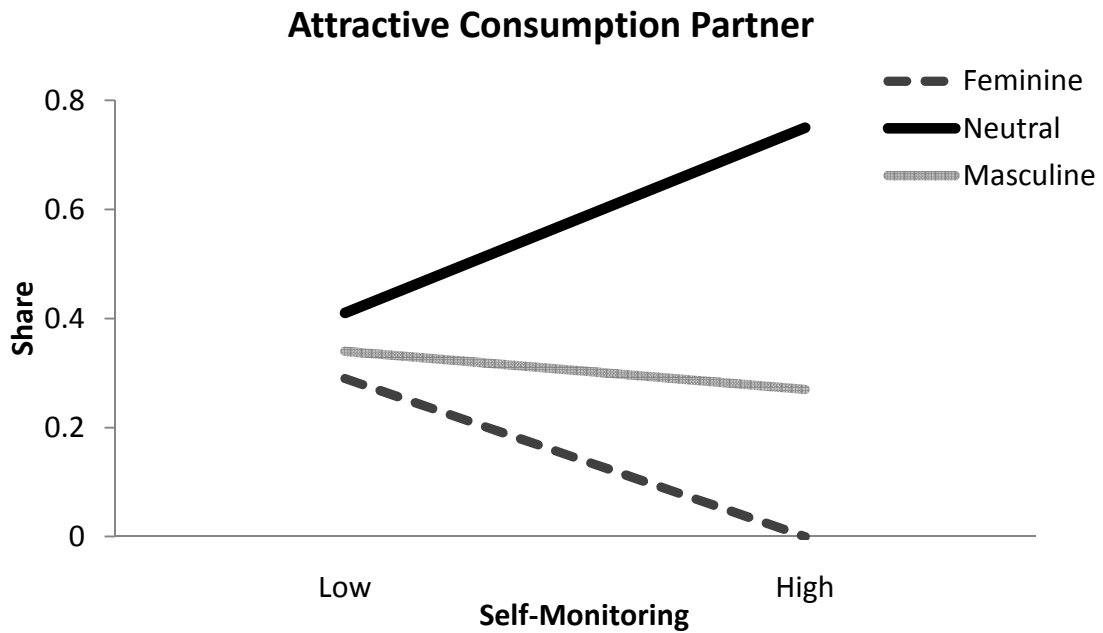


Figure 4: Experiment 2: Share of products chosen as a function of consumption partner appearance, self-monitoring, and product type

The perceived preferences of Jen, the female consumption partner, were also subjected to the same logistic regression analysis, which revealed a significant main effect of product type ($\beta = -.39$; $\chi^2 = 4.97$, $p < .05$). Further contrasts found that the majority of male participants inferring the preferences of an attractive female believed that she would prefer feminine items the most (75%; vs. neutral items $\chi^2 = 37.91$, $p < .0001$, vs. masculine items $\chi^2 = 45.40$, $p < .0001$), neutral items second (20%; vs. masculine items $\chi^2 = 6.63$, $p < .01$), and masculine items the least (5%).

Male participants inferring the preferences of an unattractive female showed the same pattern of results (feminine items = 71%; vs. neutral items $\chi^2 = 34.78$, $p < .0001$, vs. masculine items $\chi^2 = 33.96$, $p < .0001$; neutral items = 23%; vs. masculine items $\chi^2 = 8.10$, $p < .01$; and masculine = 6%). As expected, there were no reliable interaction effects found. These results rule out the alternative hypothesis that participants made their product choices based on what they thought the attractive and unattractive female consumption partners would prefer rather than based on to the impression management strategies I have proposed.

7.5.3 Discussion

As predicted, high self-monitors were more sensitive than low self-monitors to the different needs of the interpersonal relationships they were trying to pursue. When motivated to foster a romantic relationship, high self-monitors were conscious of the negative consequences of gender role inconsistent behaviors and less likely than their

low self-monitoring counterparts to select feminine items. They were also more likely to select neutral items because doing so enabled them to accommodate their partner's preferences but also did not compromise the masculine image they were trying to portray. When not motivated to foster a romantic relationship, high self-monitors were more likely to fully accommodate their female consumption partner and selected feminine items because they wished to project a friendly, considerate impression and were less concerned with violating their masculine gender role. On the other hand, low self-monitors only met their consumption partners halfway when not motivated to foster a romantic relationship and preferred to choose neutral items for joint consumption. In sum, studies 1 and 2 demonstrate that the role consistency of an individual's expressed product preferences can have interpersonal consequences and that consumers are aware of and able to account for this in their joint consumption decisions.

7.6 Experiment 3: Joint Consumption and Audience Expectations

In this study, I focus on the impression management concerns a man may experience when selecting a product to consume with a feminist female consumption partner. Oftentimes, only superficial information (e.g., gender, race) about one's consumption partner is available, so consumers may rely on these characteristics and the associated stereotypes to understand what their consumption partner may expect of them. A man interacting with a feminist may rely on the feminist stereotype to draw the

conclusion that she generally believes men are sexist (MacDonald and Zanna 1998). Previous research on general expectancies suggests that when individuals think their interaction partners hold negative beliefs about them, they work towards overcoming these beliefs (Bond 1972; Hilton and Darley 1985; Swann 1987; Swann and Ely 1984; Swann and Read 1981). Thus, male individuals interacting with a feminist will likely work toward correcting the negative attitudes a feminist may have of them.

However, if a man believes he has no chance of changing the feminist woman's attitudes, he may give up and make no attempts to counter negative expectations or he may even respond with hostility (Ickes, Patterson, Rakecki, and Tanford 1982; Miller and Turnbull 1986). To examine how male individuals in the sample population might respond to a feminist, 35 male undergraduate students were asked to imagine that they were to interact with a female classmate who was an active member of the student group Feminist Students United. Participants rated on seven-point scales the extent to which they would monitor their behavior carefully to avoid appearing sexist (5 items; $\alpha = .84$). For instance, participants rated whether they would stick to gender neutral topics to make sure not to offend her. On average, male participants did plan to monitor their behaviors carefully ($M = 4.67$ vs. neutral point of 4, $t(34) = 2.70, p < .05$). Furthermore, self-monitoring was positively correlated with this measure such that high self-monitors were more concerned and careful than low self-monitors ($r = .36, p < .05$). Thus, this pilot study suggests that male individuals, particularly high self-monitors, will likely be

motivated to compensate for the negative expectations of a feminist through presenting a positive, non-prejudiced impression.

Given that male individuals wish to counter the negative expectations of a feminist woman, how might they do this when selecting products for shared consumption? Clearly, male consumers should not select feminine items because this choice will likely be construed as a sign of prejudice. However, selecting a gender neutral item may also hold the same risks because the feminist may interpret the selection of a neutral item as a compromise between the male individual's masculine preferences and her presumably feminine preferences. Thus, she may still believe the male individual is stereotyping her, confirming her expectations that he is sexist. Only by choosing masculine items can male consumers make clear to their feminist consumption partner that they are in no way stereotyping her based on gender and completely avoid any risk of the feminist interpreting his choice as a sign of sexism.

However, again, not all consumers may be aware of the best way to counter expectations of prejudice from a feminist consumption partner. Though both low and high self-monitors may be able to anticipate that selecting feminine items would be poorly received by a feminist, only high self-monitors may foresee the risks involved with selecting gender neutral items. That is, high self-monitors should be more likely than low self-monitors to select masculine items to consume with a feminist consumption partner. On the other hand, low self-monitors should be more likely than

high self-monitors to select gender neutral items because they only see the costs of selecting feminine items. As in study 2, I expect that both high and low self-monitors will rely on gender stereotypes to infer their consumption partner's personal preferences and believe a female feminist will prefer stereotypically feminine items.

7.6.1 Methods

Twenty-five male undergraduates completed the study in small groups in a laboratory setting. The procedure was identical to the one used in study 2 with one exception. Male participants read a description about a classmate named Jen, but instead of viewing her picture, all participants were told that she was an active member of the student group Feminist Students United.

7.6.2 Results

To test my hypotheses, I conducted logistic regression analysis with the following factors: self-monitoring (measured), product type (feminine, neutral, masculine), and product category (television show, movie, music album, magazine). Whether participants chose an item (coded as 1 = yes, 0 = no) served as the dependent variable. Self-monitoring was a between-subjects factor while product type and product category were within-subjects factors. There was a main effect of product type ($\chi^2 = 6.68$, $p < .05$) that was qualified by the predicted two-way interaction ($\chi^2 = 11.97$, $p < .01$). No other reliable effects were found, confirming that participants did not choose differently depending on the product categories each item belonged to.

A simple slopes analysis (Aiken and West 1991) revealed that high self-monitors, compared to low self-monitors, were more likely to select masculine items for joint consumption ($\beta = .96$; $\chi^2 = 5.40$, $p < .05$). However, low self-monitors, compared to high self-monitors, were more likely to select gender neutral items ($\beta = -.86$; $\chi^2 = 4.96$, $p < .05$). The effects of self-monitoring on choice of masculine and neutral items were significantly different from each other ($\chi^2 = 6.78$, $p < .01$). There was no effect of self-monitoring on choice of feminine items ($\beta = .04$; $\chi^2 = .01$, *NS*). Figure 5 shows the pattern of results examined.

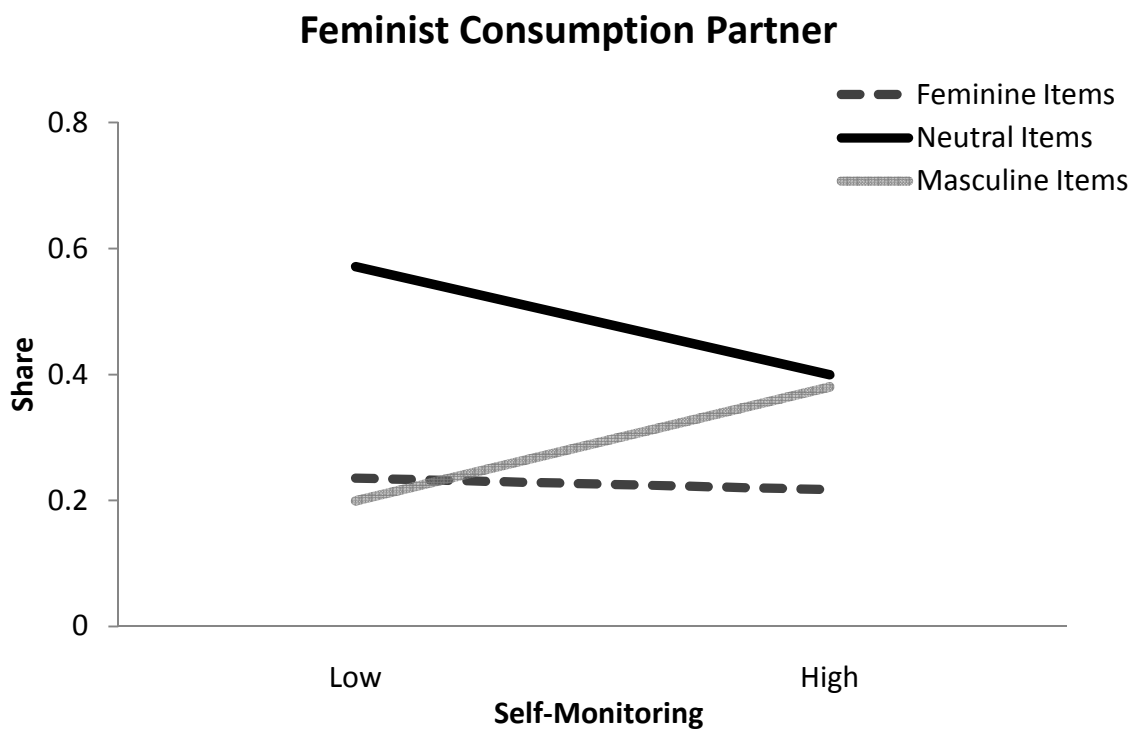


Figure 5: Experiment 3: Share of products chosen as a function of self-monitoring and product type.

The perceived preferences of participants' consumption partner were also subjected to the same logistic regression analysis, revealing a significant main effect of product choice ($\chi^2 = 52.54, p < .0001$) and a significant 2-way interaction between self-monitoring and product type ($\chi^2 = 9.97, p < .01$). Simple slopes analysis revealed that as self-monitoring increased, male participants were more likely to infer that the feminist consumption partner would prefer feminine items ($\beta = 1.05; \chi^2 = 5.40, p < .05$). Importantly, there were no significant effects of self-monitoring on either choice of masculine ($\beta = -1.55; \chi^2 = 3.14, NS$) or neutral items ($\beta = -.71; \chi^2 = 2.30, NS$).

Further contrasts found that male participants believed that their feminist consumption partner would personally prefer feminine items the most (74%; vs. neutral items $\chi^2 = 37.23, p < .0001$, vs. masculine items $\chi^2 = 34.14, p < .0001$), neutral items second (20%; vs. masculine items $\chi^2 = 7.98, p < .01$), and masculine items last (6%). This suggests that participants did rely on gender stereotypes to infer the preferences of their female consumption partner. These results rule out the alternative hypothesis that low and high self-monitors selected different items because they had different beliefs about what a feminist would prefer.

There was no effect of self-monitoring on male participants' romantic interest ratings ($t(24) = -1.33, NS$). Also, participants did not express a high level of romantic interest in the female consumption partner. This rating was not significantly different from the neutral point (4) ($M = 3.87, SD = .22; t(24) = -.58, NS$).

7.6.3 Discussion

The findings in this study suggest that consumers may rely on stereotypes to infer the expectations of the audience. Here, male participants used the stereotype associated with feminists to infer that she may expect him to be sexist and adjusted their joint consumption choices in attempt to compensate for these negative expectations. High self-monitors were more likely than low self-monitors to select masculine items in order to avoid indicating that they were applying gender stereotypes to the feminist consumption partner. On the other hand, low self-monitors were more likely than high self-monitors to select gender neutral items because they were less likely to realize that selecting gender neutral items could be construed as a sign of sexism by a feminist consumption partner.

Rather unexpectedly, I found that when inferring the personal preferences of a feminist consumption partner, high self-monitors were more likely than low self-monitors to believe she would prefer feminine items. Though there were no significant interactions, a simple slopes analysis found the same pattern of results in study 2 for both participants choosing with an attractive and unattractive female consumption partner. In order to convey the impressions called for by each specific situation, high self-monitors pay close attention to others and have extensive, readily available stores of knowledge about other people and their typical behavior (Snyder and Cantor 1980). This suggests that high self-monitors may be more likely than low self-monitors to rely on

stereotypes to infer the behaviors of others. Furthermore, stereotypes, particularly gender stereotypes, may be based on actual frequencies in the population (Eagly and Steffen 1984), which high self-monitors may be more familiar with and attuned to. Taken together, these findings may explain why high self-monitors are more likely than low self-monitors to infer that a female consumption partner would personally prefer feminine items.

The romantic interest ratings suggest that male participants in this study were not particularly motivated to pursue a romantic relationship with the feminist. In both studies 2 and 3 when participants were not motivated to pursue a romantic relationship, high self-monitors were more likely than low self-monitors to select feminine items to please his consumption partner. However, high self-monitors were sensitive to the characteristics of the female consumption partner and changed their choice strategies accordingly. When there was no indication that the female consumption partner was a feminist, high self-monitors selected feminine items to appear accommodating; but when the female consumption partner was feminist, high self-monitors selected masculine items to avoid appearing sexist. This is consistent with the general finding that high self-monitors are chameleons and tailor their behaviors to convey desired impressions depending on the social context while low self-monitors behave the same way regardless of the social situation (Gangestad and Snyder 2000; Snyder and Monson 1975).

In study 3, I examined how male consumers' joint consumption choices may be shaped by what they believe to be their consumption partner's expectations, but it is not entirely clear that their efforts are effective. In study 4, I take the perspective of the female consumption partner and examine the efficacy of the male consumer's impression management efforts.

7.7 Experiment 4: Impression Management Effectiveness

Study 4 explores how expectations regarding stereotyping and prejudice shape females' evaluations of the male consumer selecting products for joint consumption. Though simply expecting a man to be sexist does not make a female feminist, having these expectations makes females similar to feminists in the sense that they may be highly sensitive to being discriminated against and vigilant for any signs of being a target of negative stereotyping (Henderson-King and Stewart 1997).

However, even when individuals expect to be stereotyped, they may be reluctant to attribute negative feedback to discrimination unless they are completely sure, because doing so has many cognitive costs (Ruggiero and Taylor 1997; Schmader and Johns 2003). Other research suggests that individuals will only address the threat of being stereotyped when they believe that it is both possible and probable that others will apply the stereotype to them (Wout, Shih, Jackson, and Sellers 2009). This suggests that in the context of joint consumption, both expectations of sexism and a confirmation of such beliefs, which may be indicated through product choice, need to be present for

female individuals to feel personally stereotyped. Thus, the type of product a male consumer selects for joint consumption plays a large role in how female consumption partners may respond and evaluate him.

Consider a male consumer that selects a gender neutral item for he and his female consumption partner to enjoy together. The female consumption partner may be likely to interpret his choice as a combination of the male individual's masculine preferences and her purportedly feminine preferences. However, how she infers the intentions behind his choice will depend on whether or not she expects the male individual to endorse traditional gender roles (i.e., expect him to be sexist). If she suspects the male individual to do so, she will likely feel personally stereotyped and discriminated against which may lead to negative evaluations of the male individual. On the other hand, if the female does not suspect the male individual supports traditional gender roles, she may appreciate that he is trying to incorporate her preferences (even if he may be relying on stereotypes) and interpret the choice as a sign of consideration, thus, evaluating him more positively.

Now consider the situation in which the same male consumer selects a masculine item for himself and his female consumption partner. Here, a female consumption partner will likely infer that the male individual simply chose what he personally wanted. Though the female individual may think that the male individual is selfish because he does not appear to be considering her preferences, his selection of a

masculine item provides no information as to whether or not he is stereotyping her. Since female individuals are not provided with any confirmation of their sexist expectations, they may be reluctant to believe they are being personally discriminated against. Thus, her evaluations of the male individual should be less likely to differ depending on whether or not she expects him to have sexist beliefs.

7.7.1 Methods

Both male and female participants were recruited to complete an experiment. After confirming that participants did not know each other, they were placed into male-female dyads and told that they would be selecting and evaluating products together. After this introduction, female participants were taken to individual rooms to complete this experiment while male participants were taken to a separate room to complete an entirely different study. A total of 50 female undergraduate students participated in this study.

Female participants first became acquainted with their purported male partners through answering a number of questions about themselves and exchanging questionnaires. They completed a demographics form and a questionnaire regarding their attitudes toward various social issues (e.g., criminal punishment, world peace). Embedded in this last questionnaire were five items from the Attitudes toward Women Questionnaire (Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp 1973). In the questionnaire purportedly completed by the male partner, responses to all the items were identical except for

responses to the Attitudes toward Women items. For these items, participants read that their male partners' responses were either all consistent or inconsistent with having traditional views of women.

Next, participants selected products to consume with their male partner. They chose from the same movie and music album options used in studies 2 and 3. While making their product choices, female participants were told that their male partners were also making the same choices. After completing their decisions, female participants received the purported product choices of their male partner to evaluate. The male partner's packet indicated that he chose either all gender neutral or all masculine items for them to evaluate together.

After viewing their partners' choices, female participants evaluated their partners by rating on seven-point scales the extent to which they believed their male partners were open-minded, sensitive, charitable, and intelligent ($\alpha = .82$). To measure anticipated stereotyping, participants rated on six items ($\alpha = .63$) the extent to which they agreed with a number of statements describing their concerns with being viewed in terms of their gender when interacting with a male individual. For instance, female participants rated on seven-point scales the extent to which they believed they would be judged based on their gender and the extent to which they believed men had more sexist thoughts than they actually expressed. Finally, participants completed the same measures of self-monitoring and romantic interest used in studies 2 and 3.

7.7.2 Results

There were no effects of expectations, product choice, or self-monitoring on female participants' romantic interest ratings. Also, romantic interest in the male consumption partner was significantly lower than the neutral point (4) ($M = 2.62$; $t(49) = -7.77$, $p < .0001$).

Analyses with the same logistic regression method implemented in studies 2 and 3 were used to examine female participants' product choices. There was a main effect of the type of product chosen ($\chi^2 = 17.72$, $p < .05$) such that most female participants selected gender neutral items to consume with their male partners. Though no significant interactions were found, I examined the simple slopes to see if self-monitoring affected how female participants made their product choices. When female participants were consuming with male individuals who did not endorse traditional gender roles, high self-monitors, compared to low self-monitors, were more likely to select masculine items ($\beta = 1.45$; $\chi^2 = 3.54$, $p < .05$) for joint consumption. No other significant effects were found.

I conducted a between-subjects ANOVA with female participants' expectations (gender traditional vs. gender nontraditional male partner) and male partner's product choice (neutral vs. masculine items) as independent variables and anticipation of being stereotyped as the dependent variable. Analysis revealed that there was a main effect of expectation ($F(1, 46) = 5.54$, $p < .05$), which was qualified by a significant 2-way

interaction between female participants' expectations and products chosen by the male partner ($F(1, 46) = 7.50, p < .01$). Planned contrasts revealed that when male individuals selected neutral items for joint consumption, female participants were more likely to anticipate being stereotyped when he endorsed traditional gender roles ($M_{Trad} = 5.19$) as compared to when he endorsed nontraditional gender roles ($M_{Non} = 4.02; F(1, 46) = 9.48, p < .01$). However, when male partners selected masculine items, female participants did not anticipate different levels of stereotyping depending on whether he endorsed traditional gender roles ($M_{Trad} = 4.54$) or not ($M_{Non} = 4.63; F(1, 46) = .12, NS$).

The same between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with female participants' positive trait ratings as the dependent variable. The results yielded a significant main effect of female participants' expectations ($F(1, 46) = 9.02, p < .01$), which was qualified by the predicted interaction between expectations and product choice ($F(1, 46) = 4.20, p < .05$). More specifically, when male partners were believed to choose neutral items, female participants evaluated their partners more positively when he endorsed nontraditional gender roles ($M_{Non} = 5.19$) as compared to when they believed he endorsed traditional gender roles ($M_{Trad} = 3.72; F(1, 46) = 9.35, p < .01$). On the other hand, when male partners were believed to select masculine items, female participants did not rate their partners differently depending on whether he endorsed traditional gender roles ($M_{Trad} = 4.21$) or not ($M_{Non} = 4.49; F(1, 46) = .72, NS$).

Having established that the expectations of female participants and product choice had the same effect on female participant's anticipation of being stereotyped and evaluations of their male partners, I followed Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt's (2005) guidelines for conducting mediated moderation analyses. When the effect of anticipated stereotyping and its interaction with product choice were controlled for, the effect of the expectations by product choice interaction was diminished ($\beta = .79$; $t(44) = 1.23$, *NS*) while the effect of anticipated stereotyping remained significant ($\beta = -.49$; $t(44) = -2.09$, $p < .05$) (Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt 2005). This analysis suggests that whether a male partner is believed to endorse traditional gender roles will only have an effect on anticipated stereotyping when he selects neutral items; and anticipated stereotyping will, in turn, drive female participants' evaluations of their male partner.

7.7.3 Discussion

By taking the perspective of the female consumption partner, the findings in this study suggest that the high self-monitors in study 3 had the correct intuition in selecting masculine items to consume with a feminist who likely expected to be discriminated against. Female participants evaluated a male individual who selected gender neutral items more negatively when they believed he endorsed traditional gender roles as compared to when they believed he endorsed nontraditional gender roles. However, female participants did not evaluate a male individual differently based on their beliefs

when he selected masculine items. Furthermore, the extent to which female participants anticipated the male individual to stereotype them mediated the effect of gender role beliefs and product choice on female participants' evaluations. These findings suggest that female individuals did interpret the selection of gender neutral items as a sign of being stereotyped when they expected their male partners to endorse traditional gender roles.

In addition, this study also conceptually replicated the findings in study 2. More specifically, high self-monitoring males not pursuing a romantic relationship in study 2 were more likely to select feminine items to consume with their female consumption partner. Similarly, high self-monitoring females choosing for a nontraditional male partner were more likely to select masculine items to consume with their male consumption partner (with whom they had no romantic interest in). Further supporting that when consumers are not motivated to pursue a romantic relationship, high self-monitors are more willing than low self-monitors to accommodate their consumption partners and rely on stereotypes to determine what their partners will like.

7.8 General Discussion

Because consumers oftentimes use joint consumption as an opportunity to forge new relationships with others, it is important for consumers to select products that facilitate positive interpersonal outcomes. However, given that individuals are just beginning to learn about each other, they may have little more than superficial

information about their consumption partners to help make their product choices. Results from 4 studies suggest that under these circumstances, consumers will rely on stereotypes to help infer the preferences and anticipate the responses of the consumption partner. Studies 1 and 2 examine how stereotypes about one's own social group help individuals maintain valued roles by informing the appropriateness of behaviors and indicating whether an individual is meeting the standards for one's social group. Studies 3 and 4 find that stereotypes about other social groups are also useful for anticipating the expectations of others and providing information about potential outcomes of the social interaction. Confirming that impression management concerns do drive product choice as proposed, I find that differences in self-monitoring affect how consumers use the knowledge derived from stereotypes to make their product choices (studies 2 and 3).

Because all the studies in this paper examined the role of gender stereotypes in joint consumption, one might argue that these findings may be limited to gender only. However, research finds that that this is not the only case when individuals may feel self-conscious about committing role-violating behaviors or coming off as prejudiced. Research suggests that consumers from various social groups feel self-conscious about selecting items and performing behaviors that may violate valued roles, such as undergraduate students (Berger and Heath 2007), women (Bosson et al. 2005), and Canadians (White and Dahl 2007). Concerns with appearing prejudiced and being

negatively viewed by an outgroup are also evident in many different intergroup encounters, such as Whites with Blacks (Shelton and Richeson 2005) and White Canadians with Aborigine Canadians (Vorauer and Turpie 2004). Thus, stereotypes may prove useful for members from many social groups in informing joint consumption choices and predicting how others may respond to their actions.

In this paper, I examine a very specific joint consumption situation where the consumer selecting products has very little information about his or her consumption partner. Given that the consumer has very little knowledge about his consumption partner, he often has no choice but to base his decisions on stereotypes. Though these types of situations occur quite frequently, people also consume with people with whom they have more established relationships such as co-workers or friends. If the amount of knowledge a consumer may have of his consumption partner can be viewed on a continuum, at what point on this continuum do stereotypes have less influence on the products people choose? Much research in the impression formation and stereotyping literature posits that it takes very little incongruent or individuating information to discourage people from judging others based on stereotypes (Fiske and Neuberg 1990; Locksley, Borgida, Brekke, and Hepburn 1980). It would be interesting to see if different types of motives (e.g., accuracy-oriented or expectancy-confirming motives) may increase or reduce the reliance on stereotypes when making joint consumption choices.

In addition to increased information about one's consumption partner, the salience of similarities or differences between oneself and one's consumption partner may also influence the extent to which consumers will rely on stereotypes. Research finds that the extent to which an individual feels similar to someone will determine whether that individual will rely on either his personal values or his social stereotypes as a template to infer the mental states of other people (Ames 2004). In the consumption situations examined in this article, the consumer and consumption partner were always of different genders. As a result, the intergroup context may have made salient to male participants that they were very different from their female consumption partners, and as a result, they decided to rely on gender stereotypes to infer her preferences. According to Ames' (2004) theory, if male participants were reminded of their similarities with their female consumption partners (e.g., being reminded that they are both undergraduates at the same school and take marketing experiments for money), they may have projected their own personal preferences on their consumption partners and selected very different products for joint consumption.

Given the prevalence of joint consumption, both marketers and consumers need to understand the interpersonal dynamics involved in shared consumption experiences. By understanding how stereotypes, the consumer's interaction goals, and the consumption partner's expectations influence the evaluations of joint consumption

decisions, marketers and consumers can both understand how to facilitate optimal decision making and enjoyable consumption experiences.

8. Overall Summary and Conclusions

Most research has focused on how individuals may be influenced by the activation of stereotypes through words or pictures, but, most often than not, stereotypes are often activated through interpersonal interactions with individuals from other social groups. My dissertation studies the interpersonal nature of stereotyping and examines how the use of stereotypes is influenced by properties of the social environment.

In essay 1, I examine how consumers' self-views may shift when interacting with someone who stereotypes them. I find that self-construal determines whether stereotype targets wish to distance themselves from or become closer to a stereotyper, and that these different relational patterns will in turn shape how consumers view themselves on stereotype-relevant traits. However, rejecting or embodying one's stereotype in its entirety may be counterproductive. Independents who shift away from negative stereotypical traits may be received favorably by the stereotyper while interdependents who embody negative stereotypical traits may be received unfavorably. Thus, I find that targets are selective in shifting their self-views where independents are more likely to reject while interdependents are more likely to embrace positive (but not negative) stereotypical traits as descriptive of themselves.

In addition to using self-stereotypes to navigate social interactions, consumers may also use stereotypes related to others in order to guide their behavior. In essay 2, I

examine one such situation—joint consumption. Because joint consumption often occurs when individuals wish to learn more about each other, consumers often know very little about their consumption partner’s preferences and expectations for the interaction. In these types of situations, I find that consumers will rely on stereotypes to infer the preferences and anticipate the behaviors of their consumption partners. I find that though all consumers may rely on stereotypes to infer the preferences of their consumption partner, their level of self-monitoring influences whether consumers realize that using these stereotype-based inferences to inform their product choices is appropriate for the social situation.

Throughout my dissertation, I have identified both environmental and individual level factors that may interact to shape various consumer-related outcomes, such as self-views and product choice. Rather than examine how stereotypes may directly contribute to discrimination and prejudice, I examine how consumers may use stereotype knowledge as a tool to adapt to the social environment and enable themselves to regain control of the situation. My research seeks to move beyond viewing individuals as passive responders to seeing individuals as active agents that use stereotype knowledge to shape their social environment. In these ways, my program of research contributes to the growing body of literature that focuses on the individual level factors each person brings to an intergroup interaction (Shelton 2000) and to the

development of community interventions that might help improve cross-group social interactions.

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Biography

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