

# Experimenter Context and Perceptual Subsystems Predict Stereotyping and Individuating

Susan J. Park, Alexander J. Rothman, and Chad J. Marsolek

University of Minnesota

## Introduction

- Brief exposure to an unfamiliar face elicits automatic *activation* and automatic *inhibition* of gender stereotypes, depending on visual processing of the face (Marsolek et al., 2004; Marsolek, 1999).

Perceptual Categorization Alone Activates Stereotypes

Perceptual Individuation and Categorization Inhibits Stereotypes

Abstract Category Visual Recognition (Gender)

Specific Exemplar Visual Recognition (Individual)

- Outperforms specific face processing unless face presented to right hemisphere

- Enhanced by right hemisphere presentation



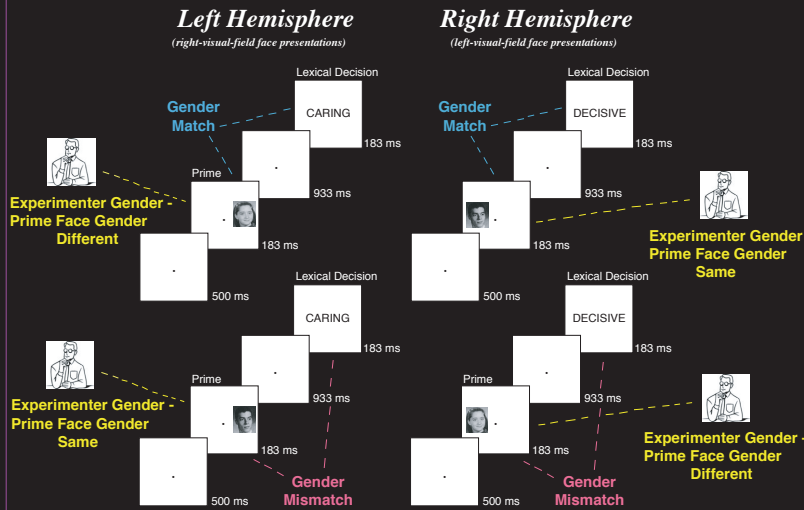
## Social Tuning

- Race stereotyping is affected by the perceived shared reality among mental agents within a social context (Hardin & Higgins, 1996).
- Subject-experimenter relationship motivation high --> subject adjusts self-views toward the perceived views of the experimenter (Lowery, Hardin, & Sinclair, 2001).

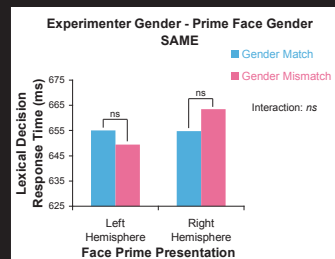
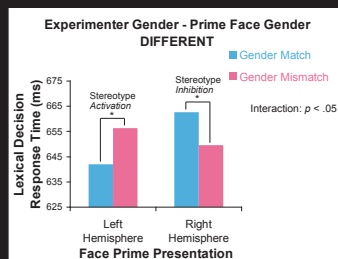
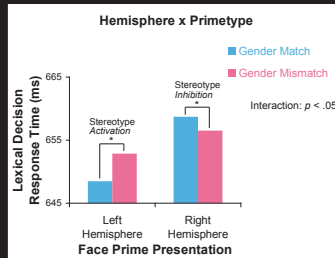
## Main Question

Does such social tuning influence automatic activation and automatic inhibition of gender stereotypes?

## Method



## Results



## Conclusions

- Dissociable visual-form subsystems mediate initial perceptual processing of unfamiliar faces, instigating activation of gender stereotypes or inhibition of gender stereotypes
- This occurs only when experimenter gender and prime face gender are *different*
- Social tuning influences automatic activation and inhibition of gender stereotypes

## References

Hardin, C.D., & Higgins, E.T. (1996). Shared reality: How social verification makes the subjective objective. In R.M. Sorrentino & E.T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of Motivation and Cognition, Vol. 3: The interpersonal context* (pp. 28-84). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Lowery, B.S., Hardin, C.D., & Sinclair, S. (2001). Social influence effects on automatic racial prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*, 842-855.

Marsolek, C.J. (1999). Dissociable neural subsystems underlie abstract and specific object recognition. *Psychological Science, 10*, 111-118.

Marsolek, C.J., Rothman, A.J., Elo, L.C., & Farhat, R.T. (April, 2004). Spontaneous activation and inhibition of gender stereotypes. Presented at the Cognitive Neuroscience Society Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 16*, (Suppl.).

## Acknowledgments

This research was supported in part by the Center for Cognitive Sciences, University of Minnesota, the National Institute of Health and Human Development (HD-07151), and the National Institute of Mental Health (MH60442).

\*\*\* Please Take a Handout \*\*\*