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Forming Impressions About Homosexuals: Does Timing of Disclosure Matter?

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COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

FORMING IMPRESSIONS ABOUT HOMOSEXUALS: DOES TIMING OF DISCLOSURE
MATTER?

By
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The members of the committee approve the thesis of David M. Buck defended on October 9, 2007.

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The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	iv
Abstract	v
INTRODUCTION	1
Primacy and Recency in Impression Formation	1
Current Work	2
METHOD	3
Participants and Design.....	3
Procedure	3
Materials	3
RESULTS	6
DISCUSSION	9
Application and Limitations	10
APPENDIX A.....	12
APPENDIX B	13
APPENDIX C	14
APPENDIX D.....	15
APPENDIX E	16
REFERENCES	17
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	19

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Self-report Measure	6
Table 2: Estimated Marginal Means (with Standard Errors) for the Feeling Thermometer, Stereotypicality, and Misrecall	7

ABSTRACT

Unlike gender, race, or ethnicity, sexual orientation is not necessarily readily identifiable. Because of this, the biases that are associated with prejudice towards members of other groups might not be initially applied to gay men and lesbians. The current work tests whether timing of disclosure of sexual orientation might influence how observers form first impressions of a target individual. Participants ($n = 177$) watched a video of two male confederates having a brief interaction. Either at the beginning or the end of this interaction, one of the confederates self-identified as gay or straight. Participants in all four conditions then completed several measures assessing attitudes toward the target individual, memory for information disclosed in the interaction, and general attitudes toward homosexuality. Target sexual orientation and timing of disclosure interacted to influence impression formation. Identifying as gay early rather than late in the interaction lead to a more negative impression of the target and an increased perception of the target as possessing more stereotypically gay traits. Further, when the target identified as gay early in the interaction, participants mistakenly recalled him reporting engaging in more stereotype congruent behaviors. These results suggest a primacy effect for group categorization such that greater levels of bias will occur when group categorization is possible prior to the receipt of individuating information. Implications of these findings for decisions to disclose sexual orientation are discussed. Future research will examine the optimal timing of disclosure.

INTRODUCTION

One would be hard pressed to find groups in contemporary American society that are more openly and widely discriminated against than gay men and lesbians. In 2004, hate crimes against lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) individuals made up nearly 16% of all hate crimes, placing them second only to hate crimes against Black individuals (FBI Uniform Crime Reports). This statistic is made all the more poignant when the low reporting rates of incidents and the relatively small proportion of openly disclosing gay men and lesbians in the population are considered. People who are unlikely to show prejudice toward other minority groups appear willing to express prejudice against gay men and lesbians, and this negative sentiment can lead to antigay legislation that denies equal protection and civil liberties as well as acts of aggression for which the victim's only offense is not concealing his or her sexuality.

Unlike gender, race, or ethnicity, sexual orientation is not necessarily identifiable, and is primarily inferred by others based on stereotype typicality and judgment of dynamic features, such as gestures (Ambady, Hallahan, & Conner, 1999). Stereotypes about gay men appear to be widely known (Madon, 1997); however, an individual's sexual orientation is not necessarily determined by the presence or absence of stereotypic traits or gestures, and at best, such cues merely provide a guessing strategy for others. As such, LGB individuals often have the option of concealing their group identity until they feel comfortable disclosing. The current work was designed to examine the implications of sexual orientation and the timing of disclosure of sexual orientation for impression formation, attitudes, memory, and the perception of quality of social interactions.

Primacy and Recency in Impression Formation

Research conducted by Golebiowska (2003) examined how timing of disclosure of sexual orientation might influence a political candidate's chances of winning an election. Specifically, she looked at how variables such as the voter's gender, candidate's stereotypicality, and general attitudes toward homosexuality might interact with timing of disclosure to influence willingness to vote for a gay or straight candidate. She found that timing of disclosure interacted with attitudes toward homosexuality such that individuals who disapproved of homosexuality were less likely to vote for a gay candidate if the sexual orientation was disclosed early rather than later. There was no difference in the voting behavior based on timing of disclosure for individuals who approved of homosexuality. Her research also showed that timing of disclosure interacted with the stereotypicality of the candidate. Participants were more likely to vote for gay candidates whose reported behavior was not stereotypic when the disclosure of sexual orientation occurred later rather than earlier. Timing did not influence voting behavior when the candidate was stereotypic. It is possible, however, that this latter result could have been due to participants inferring the candidate's sexual orientation from the stereotypic behavior, and the disclosure merely confirming that belief. Golebiowska's work, while limited by its strict application to voting patterns, lays a groundwork for thinking about how impressions about LGB individuals might form. Clearly, timing of disclosure plays a role in how impressions of gay men are formed, but it remains to be seen why.

Research on impression formation suggests that the order in which traits are presented to the social perceiver can have an effect on the overall evaluation of an individual (Asch, 1946). In particular, traits presented earlier in a list appear to carry more weight than traits presented

toward the end of a list (Asch, 1946; Kelley, 1950). One possible explanation for this is that information presented earlier in the list shapes the processing of the following traits (Kunda, Sinclair, Griffin, 1997; Eibach, Libby, & Gilovich, 2003). If this is the case, then it stands to reason that the early activation of stereotypes could lead to behavior being interpreted in stereotype-consistent ways. To the extent that disclosure of sexual orientation by a LGB individual leads to the activation of stereotypes about gay men and lesbians, this would likely bias the processing of subsequent information about the person and may lead to an overly stereotypic impression.

It also seems likely that attitudes toward homosexuality would moderate this effect because people with negative attitudes toward LGB individuals are more likely to engage in biased processing when forming impressions (Sherman, Stroessner, Conrey, & Azam, 2005) and are less likely to actively inhibit stereotypic thinking and responding (e.g., Monteith, 1993) than those with positive attitudes. The resulting biased impression could be problematic in that prejudiced individuals are more likely to discriminate against outgroup members who are considered to be stereotype consistent (Ramsey, Lord, Wallace, & Pugh, 1994). Thus, depending on the initial attitudes of the person forming the impression, more stereotypic impressions may lead to more negative attitudes toward a person and more negative behavior directed at that person than if the impression was less stereotypic. According to this approach, early compared to late disclosure, would result in more biased processing of information about the person and, therefore, a more negative impression and response to the individual, particularly among those with negative attitudes toward LGB individuals.

Contrary to this line of reasoning, there is some evidence that information that is seen as being particularly negative can create a recency effect, causing all the preceding information to be disregarded (Fiske, 1980; Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). If this were the case, then people who are prejudiced toward gay men and lesbians may respond to late disclosure by ignoring all of the preceding, potentially individuating information and forming a stereotypic and, likely negative, impression. However, under this model of impression formation, prejudiced individuals' negative responses at early disclosure could become diluted by subsequent individuating information. Thus, among high-prejudice individuals, late disclosure of sexual orientation by a gay man or lesbian may result in particularly negative responses.

Current Work

The current work sought to distinguish between these two contradicting possibilities. Specifically, this study examined whether the early disclosure of sexual orientation by a gay man would lead to the activation of stereotypes about gay men and influence the processing of subsequent information, resulting in biased impression formation. The design of this study also allowed for the testing of the alternative hypothesis, that late disclosure could lead those high in prejudice to disregard preceding information about the person and form a more stereotypic and negative impression than they otherwise would.

In this study, participants observed an interaction in which the sexual orientation of a target person (gay versus straight) and the timing of disclosure of the sexual orientation (early versus late) were both manipulated. The goal of this study was to examine whether the attitudes and impressions that people form about the person would be influenced by the sexual orientation of the target and the timing of the disclosure.

METHOD

Participants and Design

Participants were one hundred seventy-seven undergraduate students (69% female) who completed the experiment in partial fulfillment of a requirement for their introductory psychology course. Because the focus of the work was on heterosexuals' attitudes toward gay men, participants who did not identify as heterosexual were omitted from analyses, $n = 7$. Ten participants were also omitted for incorrectly identifying the target individual's sexual orientation on the manipulation check. This resulted in a final sample of one hundred and sixty participants. The study had a 2 (Timing of disclosure: early versus late) X 2 (Sexual orientation of target: gay versus straight) between-subjects factorial design. Participants in this study were at least 18 years old, $M = 18.6$ ($SD = 1.13$).

Procedure

Participants were told that they were going to watch a filmed interaction between two research participants. The film was actually a staged interaction between two male confederates. In all conditions, they were asked to focus primarily on one of the two people in the film. Participants were then randomly assigned to view one of four videos and were always asked to focus on the same target individual. Although the body of the interaction was identical across all of the videos, a segment was edited into the footage either at the beginning or the ending of the interaction. In this segment the target individual mentioned going to see a movie with either a boyfriend or a girlfriend. Through this manipulation, he indirectly disclosed his sexual orientation as gay or straight¹.

After viewing the interaction, participants were asked to rate the degree to which they believed the target confederate possessed various traits. Included among the list of traits were attributes that are stereotypic of gay men (e.g., feminine, artsy). Participants also provided an overall impression of the target and the quality of the interaction on several self-report measures. At the end of the session, participants completed a brief demographic questionnaire, manipulation check, and a measure of homophobia. They were then debriefed and allowed to leave.

Materials

Videos

In all conditions, participants were told that they were going to be watching an interaction between two research participants from a previous study. They were told that the participants had never met and that they had been instructed to ask one another questions to try and develop an impression of the other person. The interaction that they viewed consisted of two male confederates sitting at a table, asking and answering questions. The content of the video could be divided into two parts – the body of the interaction and the manipulation. Participants were informed that the interaction that they were going to watch had been edited to shorten it for this study. This was said to explain the jump in the video where the manipulation scene was edited in at the beginning or end.

The body of the interaction was filmed once and was used for all four conditions. No information regarding sexual orientation was revealed at this time. The confederates asked each

other a series of innocuous questions (e.g., “Do you have any siblings?”, “What do you like to do on the weekend?”), and provided scripted answers. The answers provided by the target individual were designed so that some were stereotypic of gay men (e.g., working at a clothing store, enjoying cooking) and some were counterstereotypic of gay men (e.g., enjoying going to football games, playing videogames). This was done so that the target individual’s sexual orientation would be ambiguous to observers and so that recall for stereotypic versus counterstereotypic information could be examined later.

The manipulation scene was edited in at the beginning or the end of the interaction. This was one of two scenes in which the target individual talked about going to see a movie with his significant other. The only difference in these two scenes was that the target referred to his significant other as his “boyfriend” or his “girlfriend”. The total time of the manipulation scene was less than 30 seconds.

Attitudes

Attitudes toward the target individual were assessed by asking the participants to rate how warmly or coldly they felt toward the person they just watched using a 100 point feeling thermometer (0 = extremely cold, 50 = neither warm nor cold, 100 = extremely warm), $M = 50.38$ ($SD = 18.48$).

Quality of Interaction

The quality of the interaction was evaluated by indicating agreement or disagreement to a series of statements using a 7-point Likert-type scale. Two scales were created from participant responses by averaging individual item scores (see Appendix B for specific items). The first scale measured whether the target individual was perceived as engaging in behaviors that contribute to a good interaction and included 8 items (e.g., “The participant frequently smiled during the interaction.”, $\alpha = .84$). The second scale included 6 items measuring how well the participant thought the interaction in general went (e.g., “The participant and the partner seemed to get along well.”, $\alpha = .87$).

Stereotypes

Stereotypicality was assessed by having participants evaluate the target person on a series of personality traits using a 7-point Likert-type scale. Embedded in this list were traits that are stereotypic of gay men². A scale was constructed from these 5 stereotypic traits by averaging participants’ ratings ($\alpha = .65$). Higher scores on the scale meant more stereotypic evaluations.

Memory

Memory for stereotypic information was measured using a recognition task. Participants were given a series of statements about the target from the interaction and were asked to put a check mark next to the statements they recalled being said by the person in the video. Half of the statements could accurately be attributed to the target person based on the information provided in the video. The other half could not. A general recall measure was created by adding the number of true statements correctly recalled by the participant and subtracting from that the number of false statements that were mistakenly recalled. Additionally, some of the false

statements were stereotypic of gay men. Of particular interest was how being aware of the target's sexual orientation might influence participants' false recognition of these stereotypic statements, so a second score was created by totaling the number of false stereotypic statements that the participant incorrectly recognized (see Appendix C for a list of recall items).

Attitudes toward homosexuality

Participants' attitudes toward homosexuality were then assessed using a homophobia scale created and validated by Wright, Adams, and Bernat (1999) (e.g., "Gay people make me nervous.", $\alpha = .93$). Agreement with scale items was measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree). Higher scores indicated more homophobic responses.

RESULTS

Means and standard deviations for the variables of interest are included in Table 1. Also included are the correlations between the different measures.

To test the hypothesis that timing of disclosure would interact with target orientation to influence attitudes toward the target individual, a series of 2 (sexual orientation: gay vs. straight) by 2 (timing of disclosure: early vs. late) by 2 (participant gender: male vs. female) analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted on the ratings of the target with homophobia scores as the covariate. Participant gender was included in the analyses because past research has repeatedly shown that men's and women's attitudes toward gay men differ. Specifically, heterosexual men tend to possess more negative attitudes toward gay men than do heterosexual women (LaMar & Kite, 1998). Initially, it was thought that homophobia would interact with the experimental condition, producing a pattern of results similar to those found by Golebiowska. However, initial analyses showed that while homophobia was a consistent predictor for many of the dependent variables, it never significantly interacted with either timing of disclosure or sexual orientation of the target. Because evaluation of the target individual was consistently related to general levels of sexual prejudice, as evidenced by the relation between homophobia and most of the dependent variables (see Table 1), it was decided to control for the variance explained by it. Therefore, analyses were run with homophobia scores included as a covariate in all analyses.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Self-report Measures

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Homophobia	2.01	.67				
2. Thermometer	50.38	18.48	-.21**			
3. Stereotypicality	3.45	1.07	.18*	-.13		
4. Memory (accuracy)	.76	.16	-.22**	.04	-.17*	
5. Memory (misrecall)	.67	.65	.14	-.06	.23**	-.52**

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

For the analysis of the feeling thermometer, there were no main effects for target orientation, timing of disclosure, or participant gender on participants' scores, p 's $> .2$. In addition, gender did not significantly interact with any of the other terms, p 's $> .2$. However, the predicted interaction between timing of disclosure and target sexual orientation was significant, $F(1,150) = 4.27, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$. Tests of the simple main effects showed that when disclosing sexual orientation early in the interaction, the gay target was evaluated less favorably, $M = 47.74$ ($SE = 2.8$), than the straight target, $M = 58.44$ ($SE = 3.38$) $F(1, 150) = 4.24, p < .05, \eta^2 = .07$. However, when disclosing late in the interaction, gay and straight targets were evaluated equally, $F(1,150) = .08, p > .05$. There was no difference between the gay early disclosure and gay late disclosure conditions.

The participants' evaluations of the quality of the interaction were analyzed using the same method. Two separate analyses were conducted for evaluations of the quality of the interaction and the target's behavior. There were no significant main effects or interactions for any of the variables in either analysis, all p 's > .05. So, participants' evaluations of how well the interaction went and how well the target individual behaved do not appear to have been influenced by the experimental manipulation.

The analysis for perceptions of the target's stereotypicality revealed a main effect for target orientation, $F(1,147) = 20.49, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12$, and for gender of the participant, $F(1,147) = 6.8, p = .01, \eta^2 = .04$. When the target individual identified as gay, he was perceived as possessing more stereotypically gay traits, $M = 3.86 (SE = .11)$, than when he identified as heterosexual, $M = 3.11 (SE = .12)$. Further, male participants tended to rate the target individual as possessing more stereotypically gay traits, $M = 3.72 (SE = .15)$, than female participants, $M = 3.25 (SE = .09)$. There was no main effect for timing of disclosure, $F(1,147) = .07, p > .05$. The only significant interaction was the predicted target orientation by timing of disclosure interaction, $F(1,147) = 6.97, p < .001, \eta^2 = .05$. When the target identified as gay early in the interaction, he was perceived as possessing more stereotypic traits than when he identified as straight $F(1,147) = 36.9, p < .001, \eta^2 = .32$. Additionally, identifying as gay early in the interaction also led to greater perceptions of stereotypicality than identifying as gay late in the interaction, $F(1,147) = 6.05, p < .05, \eta^2 = .06$ (see Table 2 for means).

Table 2: Estimated Marginal Means (with Standard Errors) for the Feeling Thermometer, Stereotypicality, and Misrecall

Timing of Disclosure	Target Orientation	
	Gay	Straight
Feeling Thermometer		
Early	47.74 _a (2.80)	58.44 _b (3.38)
Late	50.79 _a (3.24)	48.04 _{ab} (3.43)
Stereotypicality		
Early	4.10 _b (.15)	2.91 _a (.17)
Late	3.61 _c (.17)	3.31 _a (.18)
Misrecall		
Early	.94 _b (.10)	.41 _a (.12)
Late	.59 _a (.11)	.60 _a (.12)

Note. Within dependent variables, values in the same column or row with different subscripts are different from one another at $p < .05$.

Two analyses were also conducted for participants' memory of the interaction. First participants' general recall was analyzed. There were no main effects or interactions for any of the variables, all p 's > .05. Participants' general recall for the interaction was not influenced by

condition. A second analysis was run to examine whether the experimental manipulation lead to biased recall for statements that fit stereotypes of gay males. There was a significant main effect for the target's sexual orientation, such that the stereotypic statements were more often misattributed to the gay target, $M = .75$ ($SE = .66$), than the straight target, $M = .56$ ($SE = .63$), $F(1,150) = 5.25, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$. This main effect was qualified by an interaction with timing of disclosure (see Table 2 for means). Misrecall of the stereotypic statements occurred more in the gay early disclosure condition than in the gay late disclosure condition $F(1,150) = 5.92, p < .05, \eta^2 = .06$ or in the straight early condition $F(1, 150) = 7.37, p < .01, \eta^2 = .09$.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the effect of timing of disclosure of sexual orientation on several measures related to impression formation. It was hypothesized that the timing of disclosure would interact with sexual orientation such that impressions of gay, but not straight men would be influenced by timing. Previous applied work by Golebiowska (2003) suggested that impressions would be influenced by a primacy effect of sexual orientation disclosure. Consistent with this hypothesis, several of the measures revealed what appears to be a primacy effect for gay, but not straight targets. The gay target was consistently seen as possessing more stereotypically gay traits than the straight target. However, this effect was especially pronounced for the gay target whose orientation was revealed early in the interaction. In fact, he was seen as being more stereotypically gay than the gay male who disclosed late in the interaction. These differences in perceptions of the targets are particularly compelling because in reality all participants observed the same behavior. Except for the short clip placed at the beginning or end of the video to establish the target's sexual orientation, the same taped interaction was used in all conditions. This uniformity between the videos in the different conditions strongly suggests that it was not a change in the target's behavior that produced this difference in evaluation, but rather a change in the way the participants perceived that behavior.

A similar effect was found for the misrecall of stereotypic information. Individuals were more likely to inaccurately attribute stereotypically gay statements and behaviors to the gay target who disclosed early in the interaction compared to any of the other conditions. No differences were found between conditions for participants' general ability to recall information from the interaction accurately. This suggests that recall is not influenced by potentially biasing information unless the material being recalled is relevant to the biasing information. This type of misrecall could be particularly problematic for group-level attitudes and beliefs. If a target individual is recalled as behaving stereotypically, this could serve as evidence to further reinforce stereotypes about the group of which that individual is a member. It is also possible then that these stronger stereotypes could lead to greater bias in perceptions of future targets, potentially creating a vicious cycle in which existing stereotypes are continually reinforced.

There was also an interaction between timing and sexual orientation for participants' responses to the feeling thermometer. However, the interaction did not seem to follow the same pattern as the other dependent variables. Inspection of the means did not reveal a difference between the gay target who disclosed early and the gay target who disclosed late. Rather, the interaction seemed to be driven by the difference in the feelings toward the gay and straight targets in the early-disclosure condition. While it is worth noting that the difference between the gay and straight targets was not found in the late-disclosure condition, this appears to be due to a nonsignificant decrease in the ratings of the straight target in the late disclosure condition rather than a change in attitudes toward the gay target.

Taken together, these results present strong evidence for a primacy effect with regard to the effect of sexual orientation disclosure on impression formation. Participants were more likely to form biased, stereotypic impressions of a target individual if that individual identified as gay early in an interaction rather than late. This effect was present even after controlling for the possible effects of attitudes toward homosexuals.

Conversely, it seems that when information about sexual orientation was revealed late in the interaction, it carried less weight in participants' overall evaluations of the target individual. It is possible that the participants, having already developed an impression about the individual

they were observing, were less inclined to rely on stereotypes to influence their impressions. Stereotypes offer a low-effort strategy for forming impressions. However, in the absence of group information (as in the late disclosure conditions), the participants would have presumably already put forth the effort to gather information about the target from evidence in the video. Having already formed an impression, they would then have less need or compulsion to rely on heuristics.

Application and Limitations

It would be very easy to take these results to mean that gay men should at least temporarily conceal their sexual orientation when meeting new people, lest they be the victims of biased impressions. And, indeed, the data do seem to tell such a cautionary tale. However, it is important to note that in this study the total amount of exposure that the participants had to the target was less than ten minutes. The terms early and late disclosure, then, are relative to that ten-minute time frame. In reality, ten minutes is a rather brief period of time, and what was considered to be late disclosure in this interaction could very easily be considered early disclosure in real-life interactions with coworkers, friends, and acquaintances.

Future research should examine whether increasing the duration of the interaction would attenuate or perpetuate the current phenomenon. From a purely cognitive standpoint, a longer interaction would necessarily provide more information on which to base an impression. Thus, it would seem likely that group membership information disclosed later would be an even less useful source of information about the individual. However, a longer interaction could also reduce the effect of the early disclosed information. As more information is presented, the initial impression could change to accommodate it.

It is further unclear how factors beyond mere information processing might influence impressions. Interactions, and the possible relationships that result from them, are rarely limited to emotionless exchanges of biographical information. Feelings of intimacy and affection can develop as people get to know one another, and if one person is perceived as being deceitful, those feelings can be sabotaged. For instance, if an individual were in a relationship where he or she felt a high degree of intimacy, an important disclosure that occurred too late might lead to feelings of mistrust and resentment. In a close relationship, failure to disclose by a certain point might be interpreted as deceitful in that it could be considered a lie of omission. Thus, the bride on her honeymoon might be unsettled to discover that her husband had been married twice before.

Further, it is important to note that in this study participants were asked to form an impression of an individual whom they had never met and would likely never meet. There were no consequences if the participant chose to rely on stereotypes to form an impression. This scenario gives only a basic view of the impression-formation process. When interacting with another person it is helpful to form an impression that will foster a successful pleasant interaction. In many cases this might increase an individual's motivation to seek an accurate impression of the person that he or she is interacting with. This motivation for accuracy or for a successful interaction could reduce the primacy bias found in the current research.

This research examined how impressions of an individual might differ based on the relative timing of disclosure of a concealable stigma (in this case homosexuality). Sexual orientation was chosen as the category to be manipulated because explicit prejudice toward homosexuals is quite prevalent in American society and because there currently exists a dearth of

experimental research on sexual prejudice. However, these findings are not necessarily limited to impressions of gay men. There are many categorizable domains which can be concealed. A history of mental illness, for instance, can be stigmatizing, but might not be readily apparent in an individual, and thus can be concealed. Similarly seemingly innocuous information related to an individual's profession, political affiliation, or marital status could serve to activate potentially biasing stereotypes related to categories like lawyer, republican, or divorcé. Though this research does not specifically deal with these categories, it does stand to reason that it could be applied to them.

APPENDIX A

Footnotes

This indirect form of disclosure was chosen over explicit self disclosure (ie. Saying, I'm gay or I'm straight) because it was subtler and more natural than an explicit declaration. It is not without problems, though. By saying that he had a boyfriend the target individual was not ruling out that he could be bisexual. However, because prejudice toward bisexuals is strongly correlated with prejudice toward gay men and lesbians and is predicted by many of the same variables (Herek, 2002), we did not see this as a limiting factor.

² The traits included in the scale were melodramatic, feminine, sensitive, artsy, and masculine. Masculine was reverse scored.

APPENDIX B

Quality of Interaction Items

Positive Behaviors

The participant tended to lean towards the other person during the interaction.
The participant frequently smiled during the interaction.
The participant was emotionally expressive while she or he spoke.
The participant frequently gestured during the interaction.
The participant gave detailed answers to the questions.
The participant engaged his partner in conversation.
The participant seemed very interested in the partner's answers.
The participant frequently asked follow-up questions about answers.

Positive interaction

The participant seemed to like his or her interaction partner.
I felt that the participant wanted to end the interaction quickly. *
The participant and the partner seemed to get along well.
The participant seemed to want to withdraw from the interaction. *
Overall, I felt that this was a pleasant interaction.
Overall, I felt that this interaction was uncomfortable. *

Note. Items marked with an asterisk were reverse scored.

APPENDIX C

General Recall Items

Best personality trait is sense of humor.
Hates parking on campus.
Enjoys cooking.
Has an older sister.
Goes to football games.
Plays video games.
Works at the Gap.
Wants to stay in the south after graduation.
Saw *Rent*.
Drinks a lot of beer.
Drives a pickup truck.
Majoring in psychology.
Originally from Florida.
Really in to art. *
Likes to shop. *
Goes dancing at the bars on the strip. *

Note. Participants were asked to mark the items that they recalled as being true of the target individual that they had just observed. Items marked with an asterisk were also used to create the stereotypic misrecall measure.

APPENDIX D

Human Subjects Approval



Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8633 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 11/27/2006

To:
David Buck
MC 1270

Dept.: **PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

From: **Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Jacobson".

Re: **Use of Human Subjects in Research**
Interacting with members of other groups

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Human Subjects Committee at its meeting on **11/8/2006**. Your project was approved by the Committee.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by **11/7/2007** you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. The principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Protection from Research Risks. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

cc: Ashby Plant
HSC No. 2006.0929

APPENDIX E

Informed Consent Form

I freely and voluntarily and without element of force or coercion, consent to be a participant in the research project entitled "Evaluating Interactions." This research is being conducted by David Buck a graduate student at Florida State University. I understand the purpose of this research project is to better understand how different aspects of people's personalities are related. I understand that if I participate in the project I will perform various activities, such as watching a video of an interaction between two people and responding to this interaction on questionnaires.

I understand my participation is totally voluntary and I may stop participation at anytime. The total time commitment would be around 35 minutes. I will be compensated by receiving ½ a credit for my General Psychology class. If I decide to stop my participation, I will still be entitled to the ½ credit.

I know that all my answers to the questions will be kept confidential, and identified by a subject code number. My name will not appear on any of the results. No individual responses will be reported. Only group findings will be reported. Data from the experiments will be stored in a locked office in the psychology building. Participant lists and informed consents will be stored in a separate file from the data. Any identifying information tying participants to their data will be destroyed after data collection is completed. All experimental materials and destroyed on or before Jan, 2015. All information will remain confidential to the fullest extent allowed by law.

I understand that I must be at least 18 years of age in order to participate. I understand there is a possibility of a minimal level of risk involved if I agree to participate in this study. The research assistant will be available to talk with me about any emotional discomfort I any experience while participating. I am also able to stop my participation at any time I wish.

I understand there are benefits for participating in this research project. First, my own knowledge about factors in personality may be increased. Also, I will develop a better understanding of research methodology and will be providing researchers with valuable insight.

I understand that this consent may be withdrawn at any time without prejudice, penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I have been given the right to ask and have answered any inquiry concerning the study. Questions, if any, have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that I may contact David Buck, Florida State University, Department of Psychology 305 Psychology Bldg., 645-7414, or Dr. Ashby Plant, 319 Psychology Bldg., 644-5533, for answers to questions about this research or my rights. Group results will be sent to me upon my request. If I have questions about my rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if I feel I have been placed at risk, I can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Office of the Vice President for Research, at (850) 644-8633

I have read and understand this consent form.

(Participant's signature)

(Date)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

David Buck graduated with a BA from Hanover College in the spring of 2004 before enrolling in the Social Psychology doctoral program at Florida State University the following fall. He currently works with Dr. Ashby Plant as his main advisor. His research interests chiefly involve stereotypes and prejudice.