



Racial stereotyping of gay men: Can a minority sexual orientation erase race? ☆, ☆ ☆



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ABSTRACT

Decades of research indicate that the traits we ascribe to people often depend on their race. Yet, the bulk of this research has not considered how racial stereotypes might also depend on other aspects of targets' identities. To address this, researchers have begun to ask intersectional questions about racial stereotypes, such as whether they are applied in similar ways to men and women, or to children and adults. In the present studies, we examine whether men who are described as gay (vs. not) become *de-racialized* in the minds of perceivers. That is, we test whether gay (vs. non-gay) men are perceived as less stereotypic of their own racial or ethnic groups. Results consistently support the de-racialization hypothesis, regardless of whether targets are Black, White, Asian, or Hispanic. Moreover, when Black and Hispanic men are described as gay (vs. not), they become stereotypically “Whitened” in addition to seeming less stereotypic of their own racial groups. This “Whitening” effect is explained by Black and Hispanic men's seeming more affluent when described as gay (vs. when not), an effect that holds even when controlling for changes in these men's stereotypic femininity. Collectively, these findings underscore the point that race and sexual orientation are not orthogonal in the minds of perceivers. A minority sexual orientation can alter the racial characteristics ascribed to men, reducing the perceived presence of race-typical traits and, for low-SES men, increasing their perceived “Whiteness.”

1. Introduction

Within 100 milliseconds of seeing someone's face for the first time, we make up our minds about what their gender is, what their race is, whether they are old or young, and even about whether they are homosexual or heterosexual (Todorov, Olivola, Dotsch, & Mende-Siedlecki, 2015). Put simply, we have a strong, effortless tendency to engage in social categorization—to sort ourselves and other people into meaningful social groups (Brewer, 1988; Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000). This process of social categorization, and the ability to think categorically about the world more broadly, is an adaptive psychological tendency (Hamilton & Trolier, 1986; Taylor, 1981). And yet, this tendency is often deleterious for the targets of our perceptions. Merely categorizing someone as an outgroup member, even on the basis of something arbitrary, like a coin toss, is sufficient to elicit biases disadvantaging that person (Brewer, 2010; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). Likewise, categorizing someone as a member of a racial group can spontaneously activate stereotypes in our minds

(Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996), and these stereotypes can color our perceptions of that person's behavior.

Complicating matters is the fact that perceivers do not always respond to others in terms of isolated dimensions of social identity. Instead, social impressions arise holistically, with different identity dimensions being interpreted interactively (Cole, 2009; Freeman & Ambady, 2011; Kang & Bodenhausen, 2015). For example, when a person is upper-class, as opposed to working-class, perceivers are more inclined to categorize them as White (Freeman, Penner, Saperstein, Scheutz, & Ambady, 2011; Lei & Bodenhausen, 2017). In addition, Black targets are categorized as men faster than White targets are (Goff, Thomas, & Jackson, 2008; K. L. Johnson, Freeman, & Pauker, 2012), and more masculine stereotypes are applied to them (Galinsky, Hall, & Cuddy, 2013; Hall, Galinsky, & Phillips, 2015). Thus, perceptions of social categories, as well as the stereotypes these categories imply, can be augmented and attenuated by perception of seemingly orthogonal social categories to which a person belongs.

In the present paper, we investigate whether the racial stereotypes

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perceivers apply to a person depend on that person's sexual orientation. Our first hypothesis is that labeling men as gay (vs. not) will cause them to become *de-racialized* in the minds of perceivers. By “de-racialized,” we mean that gay men, compared with men whose orientation is not mentioned, will seem less typical of their constituent racial or ethnic groups. For example, perceivers will characterize gay (vs. non-gay) White men as “less White,” gay (vs. non-gay) Black men as “less Black,” and so on for targets of other racial and ethnic groups. In addition to testing the de-racialization hypothesis, we examine evidence in favor of a second hypothesis: that when *low-SES* groups of men are described as gay (vs. not) they will seem stereotypically Whiter to perceivers. Both of these hypotheses are rooted in research on cultural prototypes, described below. We focus on perceptions of traits that are stereotypically associated with Black, White, Asian, and Hispanic racial/ethnic groups because these perceptions—perceptions of racial prototypicality—are often correlated with targets' likelihood of facing racial discrimination.

Generally speaking, people who seem more stereotypic of their racial groups are at greater risk of being discriminated against on the basis of their race (Kleider-Offutt, Bond, & Hegerty, 2017; Maddox & Perry, 2018; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Numerous studies support this idea in the criminal sentencing domain (e.g., Blair, Judd, & Chappleau, 2004; Eberhardt, Davies, Purdie-Vaughns, & Johnson, 2006), but this principle applies to other domains as well. People who seem more stereotypic of their racial groups experience greater racial discrimination in personnel selection (Harrison, Reynolds-Dobbs, & Thomas, 2008; Wade, Romano, & Blue, 2004), in earnings (Devaraj, Quigley, & Patel, 2018), in educational settings (M. Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Murguia & Telles, 1996), and in contexts of intergroup interaction more generally (Hebl, Williams, Sundermann, Kell, & Davies, 2012; Uzogara, Lee, Abdou, & Jackson, 2014). As such, understanding the factors that accentuate or attenuate how stereotypic someone seems of their racial group is of broad interest to psychologists and laypeople alike.

Our principal hypothesis—that gay (vs. non-gay) men will be de-racialized in the minds of perceivers—is informed by research on cultural prototypes. In general, people construct prototypes of social groups in ways that presume default standing (i.e., majority-group status) on other social identities (Bodenhausen & Peery, 2009; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). In the United States, where the present studies were conducted, this means that the most prototypic members of social groups are typically presumed to be White (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Hegarty, 2017), male (Bailey, LaFrance, & Dovidio, 2018; Eagly & Kite, 1987), and heterosexual (Herek, 2007; Herek & McLemore, 2013; Lick & Johnson, 2016) by default. These default assumptions are usually termed cultural ethnocentrism, androcentrism, and heterocentrism, respectively. When Americans call to mind their prototypes of non-White individuals, default presumptions of Whiteness are of course replaced by the relevant focal ethnicities, but even in these circumstances, the group prototype continues to be defined in terms of male and heterosexual group members. Thus, racial prototypes *presume* heterosexuality, and any deviation from heterosexuality could imply reduced racial prototypicality. Specifically, when contemplating gay (vs. non-gay) members of a racial group, the addition of stereotypically gay characteristics can displace, conflict with, and potentially erase racial characteristics that would otherwise be present in the group prototype. We hypothesize that this “de-racialization” process applies to gay (vs. non-gay) members of *all* racial and ethnic groups.

So far, we have argued that when prototypes of gay men are combined with prototypes of particular racial groups, the presumptions of heterosexuality inherent in the racial prototypes are challenged in ways that reduce racial prototypicality. In addition to this direct clash of stereotypes, there can also be more indirect conflicts relating to other kinds of default assumptions about the two original ‘parent’ categories. In the present research, we focus on assumptions about socioeconomic status (SES). We focus on SES because of the widespread recognition of its fundamental role in social relations (e.g., Fiske & Markus, 2012;

Manstead, 2018). In the U.S., gay men are stereotypically viewed as economically successful. Although LGBT people in America are actually more likely to experience economic challenges such as housing and food insecurity than their heterosexual counterparts, they are commonly stereotyped as affluent and as living self-indulgent, cosmopolitan lifestyles in trendy neighborhoods (McDermott, 2014). Sociological analyses confirm that gay men are often depicted in the media as economically comfortable White men (Barrett & Pollack, 2005; Bérubé, 2001; Shugart, 2003; Valocchi, 1999), despite the much greater diversity that actually characterizes gay communities (e.g., Greene, 1997). Given these common cultural representations, the prototype of gay men in America is likely to entail assumptions of socioeconomic success.

Stereotypic assumptions about socioeconomic success also vary widely across different racial and ethnic groups, with White and Asian groups being perceived as higher in SES than Black and Hispanic groups (e.g., Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Zou & Cheryan, 2017). This means that for gay men belonging to stereotypically lower-SES racial and ethnic groups, there is not only a clash of stereotypes concerning sexuality-related traits but also concerning SES-related traits. Gay prototypes presume relative affluence, and prototypes of affluence in turn implicate Whiteness (Freeman et al., 2011; Lei & Bodenhausen, 2017; Penner & Saperstein, 2008). Given this set of tensions, we hypothesize that gay (vs. non-gay) men from stereotypically low-SES racial groups will be seen as possessing stereotypically Whiter characteristics, presumably because they will be thought of as possessing higher SES. For gay men from racial groups that are stereotyped as economically successful, there should be no corresponding tension, and hence, no ensuing “Whitening.”¹

2. The present studies

We conducted several experiments to compare Americans' stereotypes of men at various intersections of racial and sexual orientation categories. Because it provides a common approach for assessing stereotypes toward multiple groups, we relied primarily on the checklist method first developed by Katz and Braly (1933) and adapted in many subsequent studies (e.g., Devine & Elliot, 1995; Galinsky et al., 2013; Karllins, Coffman, & Walters, 1969). In this task, one group of participants chooses from a checklist the traits that come to mind when thinking of a specified group of people. New participants then rate these traits on dimensions of interest (for example, on how stereotypically Asian they seem). This procedure allows us to compute, for each target group, the degree to which participants nominate traits that are seen as stereotypically Black, White, Asian, and Hispanic. If Americans' default assumption is that prototypic members of a racial group are heterosexual (e.g., Herek & McLemore, 2013; Lick & Johnson, 2016), then explicitly labeling groups of men as gay could reduce their racial prototypicality and, consequently, decrease how stereotypic they seem of their racial groups (i.e., ‘de-racialization’). If it is also true that Americans' prototype of the gay community is economically successful by default (e.g., Bengry, 2009; Valocchi, 1999), and economic success is in turn associated with Whiteness, then men from stereotypically low-SES groups (e.g., Black men) may not only be de-racialized when described as gay (vs. not), but regarded as psychologically Whiter as well.

Our data and experimental materials can be found on the Open Science Framework (OSF; <https://osf.io/bktjs/>). We report all data exclusions and measures. Key results are accompanied by unstandardized effect sizes (M_{diffs}), 95% confidence intervals around these effect sizes (95% CIs), and standardized effect sizes (β s). Unless noted

¹ Of note, stereotypes of Black and Hispanic men differ from those Asian and White men in ways that extend well beyond SES positioning (e.g., stereotypic positivity vs. negativity, stereotypic masculinity vs. femininity). We will return to this issue in the Mediation Interlude of this paper.

otherwise, we used a rule-of-thumb strategy of recruiting 75 participants per condition. This gave us 80% power to detect between-condition differences as small as 0.32 standard deviations (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009).

3. Checklist traits and trait ratings

3.1. Method

3.1.1. Trait selection

We used a checklist measure of stereotyping that contained 99 trait terms. Eighty-four of these traits came from Katz and Braly's (1933) original checklist, 9 were traits that Devine and Elliot added in 1995, and 6 were traits that Galinsky, Hall, and Cuddy added in 2013 (for the full list of traits, see materials on OSF).

3.1.2. Trait ratings

Participants rated how stereotypic each of these traits seemed of four racial groups: Black Americans, White Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans. These ratings were collected as each group became focal in the research program. To avoid redundancy, we summarize the general method for collecting each type of rating here. The instructions accompanying these ratings were the same across all four focal groups, and we ensured that participants who provided one type of rating were excluded from providing other types of ratings.

3.1.2.1. Participants and procedure. A total of 320 Mechanical Turk (MTurk) participants completed a brief survey in exchange for \$0.85. We excluded all participants ($n = 5$; 1.6%) who did not respond “yes” to the question, “Did you take this survey seriously?” The 315 remaining participants were primarily White (244 White, 26 Asian, 23 Black, 16 Latinx, 3 multiracial, 1 Pacific Islander, 2 non-specified), and the majority were men (208 men, 119 women, 2 transgender, 2 non-specified). Participants' ages spanned from 18 to 74 ($M = 33.85$, $SD = 10.60$), they were generally well educated (44.76% held at least a bachelor's degree), and they tended to be somewhat liberal ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 2.45$, on a 10-point scale from 1 = *extremely liberal* to 10 = *extremely conservative*).

Participants rated the 99 checklist traits on one of four dimensions, depending on the study for which they were recruited. Regardless of study, all participants saw the instructions, “we are interested in understanding the cultural stereotypes that are attributed to ____ [Black, White, Asian, or Hispanic] individuals in the U.S.” They then learned that they would view 99 personality traits in a random order, and that they would be asked to rate all 99 traits on how stereotypic they seem of a group of people, from 1 = *Not at all* ____ [Black, White, Asian, or Hispanic] to 7 = *Very* ____ [Black, White, Asian, or Hispanic]. As a strategy to reduce concerns about appearing socially undesirable (e.g., see Devine & Elliot, 1995; Ghavami & Peplau, 2013) participants were told “Please note that we are *not* interested in your personal beliefs. Rather, we want you to tell us how stereotypically ____ [Black, White, Asian or Hispanic] the *average American* would regard these traits to be.” Participants then made their ratings, completed a demographic questionnaire, and they received compensation for their time.

3.2. Results

For each of the 99 traits, we computed a score of how stereotypically Black, White, Asian, and Hispanic participants' ratings were, on average. Table 2 contains the correlations between these rating dimensions. To illustrate some of the diversity in these stereotypes, we report the five most- and least- stereotypic traits for each racial group in Table 1.

4. Experiments 1a, 1b, and 1c

In Experiments 1a, 1b, and 1c, we examined participants' stereotypes of Black and White men as a function of whether or not these men were described as gay. We hypothesized that both groups of men would be de-racialized when described as gay (vs. not). Thus, we anticipated that gay (vs. non-gay) Black men would be characterized by checklist traits that were rated as “less Black,” and that gay (vs. non-gay) White men would be characterized by checklist traits that were rated as “less White.” In addition to being viewed as less prototypically Black, we hypothesized that gay (vs. non-gay) Black men would be stereotypically “Whitened.” That is, the traits selected as typical of gay Black men were expected to be rated as higher in stereotypic Whiteness, on average, than those selected as typical of Black men. In Experiment 1a, we used the checklist method to examine preliminary support for these hypotheses. In Experiment 1b, we examined whether these results depended on how we semantically described the target men (i.e., as “gay Black men” vs. “Black gay men”). In Experiment 1c, we tested whether non-gay men—men whose orientation is not mentioned (e.g., “Black men”)—are indeed stereotyped similarly to men whose orientation is explicitly denoted as heterosexual (e.g., “straight Black men”). In addition, Experiment 1c examined whether the results of Experiments 1a and 1b would replicate when using a free-response method of assessing group stereotypes.

4.1. Experiment 1a

Participants listed their stereotypes about one of four groups of men: gay Black men, Black men, gay White men, or White men. The overall design was a 2 (target orientation: gay, control) \times 2 (target race: Black, White) between-person experiment.

4.1.1. Method

4.1.1.1. Participants. A total of 300 online participants completed a survey in exchange for \$0.85. We excluded all participants ($n = 7$; 2.3%) who did not respond “yes” to the question, “Did you complete this study carefully?” The final sample consisted of 293 respondents (161 men, 130 women, 2 non-specified). They were mostly White (220 White, 23 Asian, 19 Black, 17 Latinx, 3 American Indian, 1 Pacific Islander, 9 multi-racial, and 1 non-identified) and their ages ranged from 18 to 71 ($M = 33.57$, $SD = 11.92$). They were also generally well educated (42.66% held a bachelor's degree or higher), moderately liberal ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 2.27$, on the same scale as above), and predominantly (88.40%) heterosexual.

4.1.1.2. Procedure. Participants completed a survey on “perceptions of various social groups.” They learned that the research team wanted to know about current societal stereotypes—defined for participants as Americans' culturally shared beliefs—about one of four groups of men, by random assignment: gay Black men, Black men, gay White men, or White men.

Participants saw all 99 traits, arranged in a randomized order, and they were instructed to “select ALL traits that are part of the current cultural stereotype of” their randomly assigned target group. After viewing all of the traits and selecting the ones that were relevant to the cultural stereotype about their target group, participants were shown the traits they chose one more time, and they were asked to narrow their trait selections down to the 10 most stereotypic traits about the focal group. Using the Whiteness and Blackness scores for each trait described in the section above (see Checklist Traits and Trait Ratings), we computed how stereotypically White and how stereotypically Black each participant's top 10 traits were, on average.² At the end of the

² Our conclusions remain the same regardless of whether we analyze all of participants' trait nominations, or simply the top 10. For analyses on *all* trait

Table 1
Five most- and least- stereotypic traits of Black, White, Asian, and Hispanic Americans.

		Stereotypically Black (<i>N</i> = 78)		Stereotypically White (<i>N</i> = 79)		
		<i>M_B</i>	95% CI		<i>M_W</i>	95% CI
Most	Athletic	6.04	[5.77, 6.31]	Materialistic	5.49	[5.24, 5.74]
	Loud	5.97	[5.70, 6.24]	Ambitious	5.23	[4.94, 5.52]
	Rhythmic	5.64	[5.33, 5.95]	Conservative	5.20	[4.87, 5.54]
	Ostentatious	5.55	[5.23, 5.87]	Industrious	5.20	[4.93, 5.48]
	Poor	5.55	[5.28, 5.82]	Pleasure-Loving	5.15	[4.89, 5.42]
Least	Reserved	2.10	[1.83, 2.38]	Criminal	2.87	[2.57, 3.18]
	Delicate	2.09	[1.81, 2.37]	Low in Intelligence	2.73	[2.45, 3.01]
	Scientifically Minded	2.08	[1.82, 2.34]	Poor	2.59	[2.35, 2.84]
	Shy	2.01	[1.75, 2.28]	Uneducated	2.49	[2.18, 2.81]
	Quiet	1.99	[1.73, 2.25]	Physically Dirty	2.34	[2.05, 2.63]

		Stereotypically Asian (<i>N</i> = 81)		Stereotypically Hispanic (<i>N</i> = 78)		
		<i>M_A</i>	95% CI		<i>M_H</i>	95% CI
Most	Tradition-Loving	6.09	[5.85, 6.33]	Loyal to Family	6.21	[5.96, 6.46]
	Loyal to Family	6.06	[5.83, 6.29]	Tradition-Loving	5.68	[5.37, 5.99]
	Intelligent	5.93	[5.64, 6.21]	Very Religious	5.58	[5.24, 5.91]
	Scientifically Minded	5.76	[5.50, 6.02]	Poor	5.36	[5.03, 5.69]
	Ambitious	5.73	[5.45, 6.01]	Passionate	5.06	[4.73, 5.40]
Least	Violent	1.99	[1.76, 2.22]	Meditative	2.55	[2.27, 2.84]
	Uneducated	1.89	[1.61, 2.17]	Delicate	2.50	[2.22, 2.78]
	Stupid	1.80	[1.53, 2.07]	Humorless	2.47	[2.22, 2.73]
	Low in Intelligence	1.77	[1.49, 2.04]	Sophisticated	2.40	[2.13, 2.66]
	Lazy	1.75	[1.50, 2.01]	Scientifically Minded	2.12	[1.89, 2.34]

Note. Four unique samples of participants rated all 99 traits (sample *N*s are included in parentheses). *M_B* = how “Black” a trait was rated, on average; *M_W* = how “White” a trait was rated, on average; *M_A* = how “Asian” a trait was rated, on average; and *M_H* = how “Hispanic” a trait was rated, on average. All means are enclosed by 95% confidence intervals.

experiment, participants responded to a demographic questionnaire, and they received compensation for their time.

4.1.2. Results

Our first hypothesis was that men who were labeled as gay, compared with men who were not, would be characterized by traits that are less stereotypic of their constituent racial groups. We conducted two 2 (target orientation) × 2 (target race) ANOVAs to test this: one on how stereotypically Black the trait selections were, and one on how stereotypically White the trait selections were. For illustrative purposes, we list the ten most-selected traits among participants in each condition of this experiment (see Table 3).

4.1.2.1. Blackness ratings. An ANOVA on the stereotypical Blackness of participants' trait nominations revealed an unsurprising main effect of target race: participants chose stereotypically Blacker traits, on average, for Black targets ($M = 4.77$, $SD = 0.61$) than for White targets ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.52$), $M_{diff} = 0.75$, 95% CI [0.62, 0.87], $\beta = 1.09$, $F(1, 289) = 141.11$, $p < .001$. This analysis also yielded a main effect of target orientation: participants chose traits that were less stereotypically Black for gay targets ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.57$) than for non-gay (“control”) targets ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 0.76$), $M_{diff} = -0.22$, 95% CI [-0.34, -0.09], $\beta = -0.32$, $F(1, 289) = 11.97$, $p < .001$. Importantly, this analysis yielded an interaction between these two main effects [$F(1, 289) = 27.79$, $p < .001$, $\omega_p^2 = 0.083$], as shown in Fig. 1 (left panel). As hypothesized, participants characterized gay Black men as less stereotypically Black than non-gay (“control”) Black men, $M_{diff} = -0.55$, 95% CI [-0.72, -0.37], $\beta = -0.80$, $F(1, 289) = 38.01$, $p < .001$, but they characterized gay White men as no more or less stereotypically Black than non-gay (“control”) White men,

(footnote continued)

nominations, including traits that did not make it into participants' top 10, see supplemental analyses.

$M_{diff} = 0.11$, 95% CI [-0.06, 0.29], $\beta = 0.16$, $F(1, 289) = 1.64$, $p = .201$. Thus, we found support for the de-racialization hypothesis: gay Black men seemed “less Black” to participants than non-gay Black men.

4.1.2.2. Whiteness ratings. We next conducted a 2 × 2 ANOVA on how “White” participants' trait nominations were. This ANOVA yielded a main effect of target race, such that participants characterized Black targets as less stereotypically White ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.50$) than White targets ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.26$), $F(1, 289) = 223.47$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -0.55$, 95% CI [-0.62, -0.48], $\beta = -1.14$. In addition, this analysis yielded a main effect of target orientation, such that participants nominated stereotypically Whiter traits for gay targets ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.25$) than for non-gay (“control”) targets ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.61$), $F(1, 289) = 56.24$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.28$, 95% CI [0.20, 0.35], $\beta = 0.57$. Finally, we found a two-way interaction between these two effects that corresponded to our predictions, $F(1, 289) = 121.00$, $p < .001$, $\omega_p^2 = 0.29$, as depicted in Fig. 1 (right panel). Participants thought of White targets as less stereotypically White when described as gay (vs. not), $F(1, 289) = 6.15$, $p = .014$, $M_{diff} = -0.13$, 95% CI [-0.23, -0.03], $\beta = -0.27$, but they did the reverse for Black targets. That is, participants thought of gay Black men as substantially Whiter, stereotypically speaking, than non-gay (“control”) Black men, $F(1, 289) = 170.56$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.68$, 95% CI [0.58, 0.78], $\beta = 1.41$. These results support both hypotheses: gay White men were de-racialized relative to non-gay White men, and gay Black men were accorded stereotypically Whiter qualities than were non-gay Black men.

4.1.3. Discussion

Experiment 1a supports the notion that racial group prototypes are presumed heterosexual by default (Herek & McLemore, 2013; Lick & Johnson, 2016). Men who were labeled as gay (vs. not) deviated from this presumption and were, consequently, de-racialized in the minds of

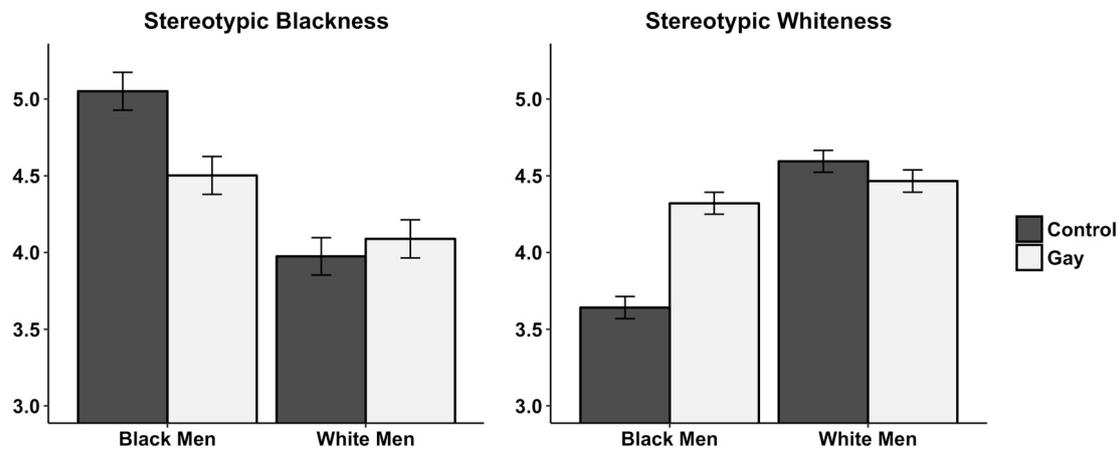


Fig. 1. How stereotypically Black (left-hand panel) and White (right-hand panel) the traits were, on average, that participants used to characterize groups of men in Experiment 1a. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

perceivers. This is to say that gay (vs. non-gay) White men were characterized as “less White,” and that gay (vs. non-gay) Black men were characterized as “less Black.” In addition, these findings support our second hypothesis: that when stereotypically low-SES men are described as gay (vs. not), they may be stereotypically Whitenized *in addition* to being de-racialized.

4.2. Experiment 1b

Experiment 1b provided a replication of our initial results regarding perceptions of Black targets who are (or are not) described as gay, and also examined whether the previously obtained results depend on whether targets are described as “gay Black men” versus “Black gay men.” In the first case, gayness modifies a referent identity of “Black men.” But in the second case, Blackness modifies a referent identity of “gay men.” Given that linguistic distinctions between modifiers and referents can influence the content of perceivers’ conceptual combinations (Gagné & Shoben, 1997; Wisniewski & Gentner, 1991), we wanted to ensure that the above findings were not simply a product of the particular way target groups were labeled in Experiment 1a.

4.2.1. Method

4.2.1.1. Participants. Two hundred and twenty-eight participants completed an online survey in exchange for \$0.85. Again, we excluded all individuals ($n = 7$; 3.1%) who did not respond “yes” to the question, “Did you complete this study carefully?” Our final sample consisted of 221 respondents (127 were men, 93 were women, 1 was non-specified). This sample was mostly White (153 White, 21 Black, 20 Latinx, 17 Asian, 2 American Indian, 9 multi-racial), and had ages ranging from 18 to 69 ($M = 33.56$, $SD = 9.57$). They were also well educated (47.96% held at least a bachelor’s degree), somewhat liberal, on average ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 2.38$, on the same scale as above), and primarily (91.40%) heterosexual.

4.2.1.2. Procedure. Instructions and survey structure were identical to those of Experiment 1a. This time, however, participants either reported on the stereotypes about Black men, Black gay men, or gay Black men, by random assignment.

4.2.2. Results

As in Experiment 1a, analyses are broken down by dependent variable. For both dependent variables, we regressed our outcomes onto contrast codes that corresponded to our research questions [statistically equivalent to running one-way ANOVAs (Judd, McClelland, & Ryan, 2009)].

4.2.2.1. Blackness ratings. Subjecting Blackness ratings to a one-way ANOVA yielded a sizable main effect of target sexual orientation, suggesting that participants characterized men who are both Black and gay ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.52$) as less stereotypically Black than men who are Black and non-gay (i.e., ‘control’ Black men: $M = 5.15$, $SD = 0.33$), $F(1, 218) = 157.51$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -0.83$, 95% CI $[-0.96, -0.70]$, $\beta = -1.37$. Moreover, the magnitude of this effect was similar regardless of the ordering of the Black and gay descriptors. Participants characterized “gay Black men” as no more or less stereotypically Black than “Black gay men,” $F(1, 218) = 2.18$, $p = .141$, $M_{diff} = -0.11$, 95% CI $[-0.26, 0.04]$, $\beta = -0.19$ (see Fig. 2, left panel).

4.2.2.2. Whiteness ratings. Turning to the Whiteness of these stereotypes, a one-way ANOVA yielded a sizable main effect of target sexual orientation, suggesting that participants characterized Black men who are gay ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.28$) as stereotypically Whiter than Black men who are not ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 0.33$), $F(1, 218) = 348.86$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.79$, 95% CI $[0.71, 0.88]$, $\beta = 1.66$. As before, we found no evidence that how we described these men influenced participants’ stereotypes. Participants characterized targets as equally (stereotypically) White regardless of whether these targets were described as “gay Black men” or as “Black gay men,” $F(1, 218) = 0.49$, $p = .484$, $M_{diff} = 0.03$, 95% CI $[-0.06, 0.13]$, $\beta = 0.07$ (see Fig. 2, right panel).

4.2.3. Discussion

These findings indicate that stereotypes of gay-and-Black men are not meaningfully contingent on which word—“gay” or “Black”—serves as a modifier and which one serves as a referent. Thus, conceptual knowledge of race-by-orientation category combinations does not appear to be affected by word ordering, as knowledge of other category combinations can be (e.g., Gagné & Shoben, 1997). Instead, perceivers show a robust tendency to de-racialize Black men who are labeled as gay (vs. not), and they show a separate, robust tendency to regard these men as stereotypically Whiter as well.

4.3. Experiment 1c

Experiment 1c replicated the design of Experiment 1a, but it added conditions in which Black and White men were *explicitly* described as heterosexual. If the observed de-racialization effects really stem from perceivers’ assumption that racial group prototypes are heterosexual by default (e.g., Herek, 2007; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008), then men who are labeled as gay—but *not* men who are labeled as heterosexual—should be de-racialized in the minds of perceivers. By

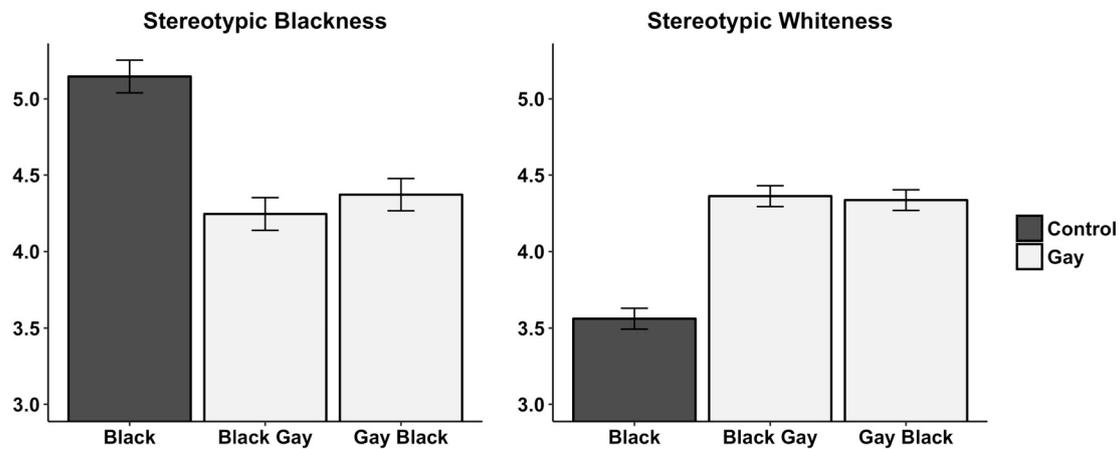


Fig. 2. How stereotypically Black (left-hand panel) and White (right-hand panel) the traits were, on average, that participants used to characterize groups of men in Experiment 1b. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

contrast, if de-racialization effects stem from the fact that gay men are simply a more specialized subset of their racial category than are non-gay men (Hinzman & Maddox, 2017; Kunda & Oleson, 1995), and if being more specialized is what de-racializes targets, then perhaps adding *any* adjective to the racial category that restricts its inclusiveness (including the adjective “straight”) will lead to de-racialization effects. Experiment 1c tested whether men who are explicitly labeled as heterosexual (vs. not) are de-racialized. If racial group prototypes are presumed heterosexual by default, there should be no differences between men who are explicitly described as heterosexual vs. those who are not (i.e., ‘control’ targets).

Experiment 1c also further examined the robustness of our initial results by using a different approach to measuring stereotypes. As previously noted, the checklist approach offers valuable advantages, but it does limit the respondents’ stereotypes to a fixed set of trait descriptors. Although the list of trait descriptors we used is extensive and diverse, it is nevertheless of interest to examine whether our hypotheses receive continued support when using a more open-ended procedure for stereotype assessment, as others have done (e.g., Cox & Devine, 2015; Ghavami & Peplau, 2013; Niemann, Jennings, Rozelle, Baxter, & Sullivan, 1994).

4.3.1. Method

Experiment 1c had a two-phase design. In Phase 1, participants were randomly assigned to list up to five stereotypes about one of six groups of men defined by a 3 (target orientation: gay, heterosexual, control) \times 2 (target race: Black, White)³ between-person experiment. Participants were free to use any descriptors they wanted. In Phase 2, new participants were randomly assigned to rate these descriptors either on the degree to which they seemed stereotypically Black or on the degree to which they seemed stereotypically White.

4.3.1.1. Phase 1

4.3.1.1.1. *Participants and procedure.* We aimed to recruit approximately 50 people per condition.⁴ Our final sample consisted

³ Phase 1 actually had a 3 (target orientation: gay, heterosexual, control) \times 3 (target group: Asian men, Black men, White men) between-participant design, but we decided to limit Phase 2 data collection only on the conditions that replicate and extend the findings of Experiment 1a. Ratings of the stereotypes from the other three conditions were never collected, but a complete summary of the Phase 1 results is available online. Stereotypes regarding Asian men are fully examined in Experiment 2.

⁴ Phase 1 of Experiment 1c had only $n = 50$ people per cell because it was initially intended to be part of a separate research project. Phase 1’s sample size was determined a priori.

of 314 people (187 men, 127 women) was primarily White (215 White, 38 Asian, 31 Latinx, 22 Black, 2 Pacific Islander, 2 American Indian, 4 multiracial) and had ages spanning from 18 to 68 ($M = 31.57$, $SD = 10.20$). Much of the sample (49.68%) held at least a bachelor’s degree, they were somewhat politically liberal on average ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 2.23$, on same scale as above), and most (87.90%) were heterosexual.

The opening instructions to Phase 1 were identical to the instructions in Experiment 1a. However, this time participants were asked to report on current cultural stereotypes about one of six groups of men, by random assignment. These men were either Black or White, and their orientations were either not specified (e.g., “Black men), stipulated to be heterosexual (e.g., “straight Black men”), or stipulated to be homosexual (e.g., “gay Black men”). Participants were presented with five free-response boxes, along with these instructions: “Please list the five stereotypes of [the randomly assigned group] that come to mind most quickly, regardless of whether you believe them to be true.” Participants could write as much or as little as they wanted in these boxes. After providing their stereotypes, participants completed the demographic questions and were compensated for their time.

4.3.1.2. *Phase 2.* In Phase 2, new participants rated the entries we acquired in Phase 1 on one of two dimensions, by random assignment: either on how stereotypically Black the entries seemed, or on how stereotypically White the entries seemed. Participants from Phase 2 saw an even number of stereotype sets ($n = 8$) from each of Phase 1’s conditions, drawn randomly for each participant from the total pool of stereotype sets that we had previously collected. Thus, the overall design of Phase 2 was a 2 (rating dimension: Blackness, Whiteness) \times 3 (target orientation: gay, heterosexual, control) \times 2 (target race: Black, White) experiment, with repeated measures on the second two factors.

4.3.1.2.1. *Participants and procedure.* We aimed to recruit approximately 100 participants per between-person condition.⁵ A total of 204 participants completed our survey in exchange for \$0.85. Of these, we excluded $n = 11$ (5.39%) for failing to reply “yes” to the question, “Did you take this study seriously?” Our remaining 193 participants (113 men, 77 women, 3 non-specified) were primarily White (144 White, 16 Asian, 15 Black, 10 Latinx, 1 American Indian, 1 Pacific Islander, 6 multiracial) and their ages spanned from 19 to 71 ($M = 36.21$, $SD = 10.18$). Our sample was also generally well educated (59.07% held at least a bachelor’s degree), somewhat politically liberal ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 2.81$, on an 11-point scale from 1 = extremely liberal

⁵ Phase 2’s per-condition n of 100 was chosen a priori, and exceeds the per-condition n of 75 used in earlier studies because we anticipated that Phase 1’s free-response data could be noisier than the checklist method.

to 11 = *extremely conservative*), and predominantly (89.12%) heterosexual.

Upon entering the online survey, we informed participants that “in a previous study, we collected open-ended descriptions of different social groups,” and we told them that their task would be to “read some of the descriptions provided by previous respondents and rate them on a particular dimension.” After this, participants rated the responses of 48 randomly selected people who had participated in Phase 1. Specifically, they rated 8 responses from each of the 6 combinations of race (Black or White) and sexual orientation (straight, gay, or unspecified). Each of these 48 responses contained the five freely generated stereotypes, in their original order, that participants in Phase 1 had listed for their designated target groups.⁶ Phase 2 participants were asked to look at the five stereotypes listed in each of these 48 responses, and to indicate how stereotypically Black [White] the average American would perceive them to be (from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *extremely*) on the whole. The presentation order and selection of the 48 responses was randomized for each participant. After participants provided their ratings of either “Blackness” or “Whiteness,” they completed several demographic questions and were compensated for their time.

4.3.2. Results

We conducted two sets of analyses: one among participants who provided ratings of how stereotypically Black the previously generated descriptors seemed, and one among participants who provided ratings of how stereotypically White these descriptors seemed. To conduct these analyses, we created two multilevel models in R [using the “lme4” package, (Bates, Mächler, Bolker, & Walker, 2014)], one for each analysis. Both models allowed for random intercepts of participant, and both allowed for random intercepts of stimuli. The former adjusts for the fact that observations were nested within person, and the latter adjusts for the fact that each participant saw a random subset of all the possible stereotype sets (i.e., stimuli) generated in Phase 1. Because target race and orientation were manipulated within participants, Experiment 1c had > 96% power to detect effects (of target race, target orientation, or their interaction) as small as $\beta = 0.20$, according to Monte Carlo simulations.⁷

4.3.2.1. Blackness ratings. Subjecting Blackness ratings to the model described above is akin to running a 2 (target race: Black, White) \times 3 (target orientation: gay, heterosexual, control) within-person ANOVA. This analysis yielded a sensible main effect of target race, indicating that participants rated the descriptors of Black targets as more stereotypically Black ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.04$), on average, than the descriptors of White targets ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.04$), $F(1, 312) = 506.43$, $p < .001$,⁸ $M_{diff} = 1.96$, 95% CI [1.79, 2.13], $\beta = 0.92$. In addition, this analyses yielded an interaction between target race and target orientation, $F(1, 311) = 137.45$, $p < .001$, $\omega_p^2 = 0.31$. The nature of this interaction was that when Black men were labeled as gay ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 1.37$), they indeed seemed less stereotypically Black to perceivers than when labeled as heterosexual or not labeled at all ($M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.32$), $F(1, 309) = 270.14$,

⁶ The stereotypes from Phase 1 were unedited except for a very small percentage (2.7%) of entries. These entries were modified either to remove explicit mentions of race or to make non-human nouns into person descriptors (for example, “fried chicken” was changed to “likes fried chicken.”). See OSF 1c data for all entries, edited and unedited.

⁷ We calculated statistical power by following the procedures outlined by Bolger, Stadler, and Laurenceau (2012). Simulations were conducted using the “simr” package in R (Green & MacLeod, 2015).

⁸ Significance levels for F -tests come from the “lmerTest” package in R (Kuznetsova, Brockhoff, & Christensen, 2017), which estimates degrees of freedom for all tests by using the Satterthwaite approximation. Fluctuations in degrees of freedom across F -tests are due to approximation variability rather than to missing data.

$p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -2.17$, 95% CI [-2.43, -1.91], $\beta = -1.02$. However, when White men were labeled as gay ($M = 2.30$, $SD = 1.33$), perceivers characterized them as no more or less stereotypically Black than when labeled as heterosexual or not labeled at all ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.33$), $F(1, 313) < 0.01$, $p = .984$, $M_{diff} < -0.01$, 95% CI [-0.25, 0.25], $\beta < 0.01$. Thus, we replicated the pattern of results that we found in Experiment 1a using a completely different method for assessing the content of group stereotypes.

Importantly the 2 \times 3 model also contained a contrast to examine how heterosexual targets ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.14$) were stereotyped relative to targets whose orientation was not mentioned (‘control’ targets: $M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.11$). This contrast was not significant, $F(1, 313) = 0.33$, $p = .57$, $M_{diff} = 0.06$, 95% CI [-0.15, 0.27], $\beta = 0.03$, and it did not interact with target race, $F(1, 313) = 0.45$, $p = .50$, $\omega_p^2 < 0.01$. Consistent with the idea that heterosexuality is a default component of racial group stereotypes, this pattern indicates that nominated racial stereotypes were quite similar regardless of whether men were explicitly described as heterosexual or whether their sexual orientation was unmentioned (see Fig. 3, left panel).

4.3.2.2. Whiteness ratings. Subjecting Whiteness ratings to the same 2 (target race: Black, White) \times 3 (target orientation: gay, heterosexual, control) model yielded a main effect of target race, indicating that participants rated the descriptors of Black targets as less stereotypically White ($M = 2.86$, $SD = 1.10$), on average, than those of White targets ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 1.11$), $F(1, 307) = 562.50$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -1.58$, 95% CI [-1.71, -1.45], $\beta = -0.82$. In addition, this analyses yielded an interaction between target race and target orientation, $F(1, 306) = 178.86$, $p < .001$, $\omega_p^2 = 0.36$. When White men were labeled as gay ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.28$), they seemed less stereotypically White to perceivers than when labeled as heterosexual or not labeled at all ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.28$), $F(1, 309) = 217.36$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -1.47$, 95% CI [-1.66, -1.27], $\beta = -0.76$. However, when Black men were labeled as gay ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 1.29$), perceivers characterized them as *more* stereotypically White than when labeled as heterosexual or not labeled at all ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 1.27$), $F(1, 303) = 17.96$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.43$, 95% CI [0.23, 0.63], $\beta = 0.22$. Thus, we again replicated the pattern of results that we found in Experiment 1a.

As before, this model contained a contrast to examine how stereotypically White heterosexual targets ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.16$) were regarded in comparison to targets whose orientation was not mentioned (‘control’ targets: $M = 3.85$, $SD = 1.15$). This contrast was not significant, $F(1, 309) = 0.41$, $p = .52$, $M_{diff} = -0.05$, 95% CI [-0.21, 0.11], $\beta = -0.03$, and it did not interact with target race, $F(1, 309) = 1.73$, $p = .19$, $\omega_p^2 < 0.01$. This implies, again, that stereotypes are similar regardless of whether they are directed toward men who are explicitly described as heterosexual, or whether they are directed toward men whose sexual orientation is unmentioned (see Fig. 3, right panel).

4.3.3. Discussion

Experiment 1c is informative in two noteworthy ways. First, it demonstrates that perceivers’ racial stereotypes are applied in similar ways to men who are labeled as heterosexual vs. men whose orientation is not mentioned (i.e., ‘control’ targets). This accords with the argument that gayness de-racializes targets because group prototypes—in these studies, racial prototypes—are constructed around presumptions of heterosexuality (e.g., Herek, 2007; Herek & McLemore, 2013). In addition, Experiment 1c shows that the results of earlier experiments can be replicated when using a very different approach to assessing stereotype content. In particular, Experiment 1c shows that de-racialization and Whiteness effects can be replicated when participants are allowed to *freely* nominate (as opposed to select from a checklist) the attributes that constitute their stereotypes of men at various intersections of race and sexual orientation.

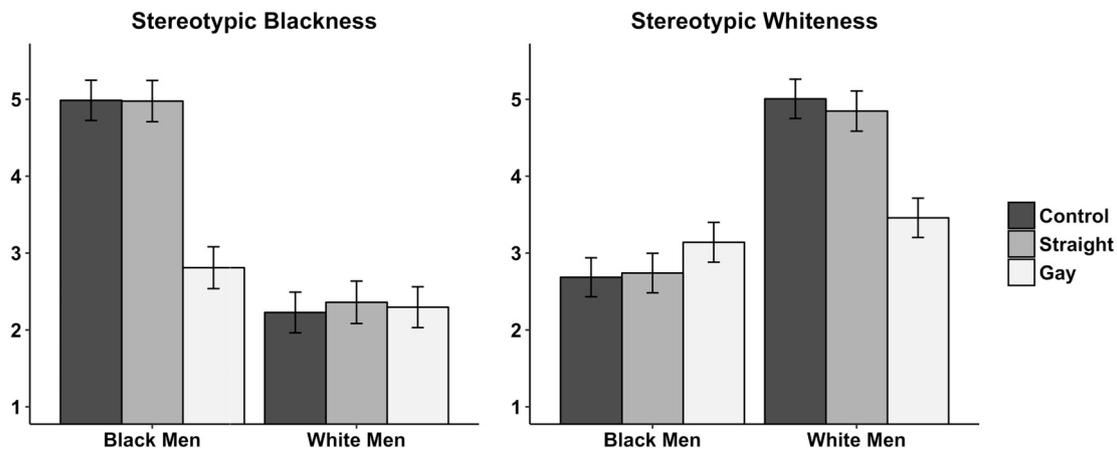


Fig. 3. How stereotypically Black (left-hand panel) and White (right-hand panel) the traits were, on average, that participants used to characterize groups of men in Experiment 1c. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

5. Experiment 2

Findings from Experiments 1a–1c consistently support our hypotheses. Because group prototypes are constructed around notions of heterosexuality (Herek, 2007; Lick & Johnson, 2016), labeling men as gay (vs. not) causes them to become de-racialized in the minds of perceivers, rendering them less typical of their own racial groups. In addition, these experiments support the idea that men from low-SES groups are not only characterized as less race-typical under these conditions, but as correspondingly “Whiter” as well. Finally, Experiments 1a–1c rule out the possibilities that a) the findings are contingent on how target men are described, and that b) the findings are limited to a particular method of stereotype assessment.

Experiment 2 examined whether our hypotheses would also apply to the case of stereotypes about gay Asian men. Asian men serve as an interesting comparison group to Black men for two main reasons. First, some past research suggests the possibility that Asian men may actually seem more typical of their racial group when described as gay, rather than less. The logic of this competing prediction hinges on the idea that people tend to stereotype gay men as gender-inverted, or as more feminine than their heterosexual counterparts (Blashill & Powlisha, 2009; Kite & Deaux, 1987). This tendency is important in light of the previously noted finding that racial categories are imbued with gender connotations (Galinsky et al., 2013; Hall et al., 2015; K. L. Johnson et al., 2012). According to this literature, people in the U.S. tend to stereotype Asian Americans as more feminine than White or Black Americans. Given that Americans associate Asian individuals with stereotypic femininity, and given that they also stereotype gay (vs. heterosexual) men as more feminine, gay Asian men may seem more feminine, and consequently, more stereotypically Asian to perceivers than their non-gay counterparts. In contrast to this line of thinking, research based on the stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002) has shown that Asians are broadly stereotyped as high in competence but low in warmth. This pattern stands in sharp contrast to common cultural stereotypes of femininity. From this perspective, as well as from the argument that heterosexuality is a default assumption of racial/ethnic prototypes, we anticipate that gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men will be de-racialized in the minds of perceivers—that they will seem “less Asian” in the minds of perceivers, rather than more.

Experiment 2 also provides leverage on the expectation that that the Whitening effects observed in the previous experiments are due to clashing assumptions about SES. Unlike Black Americans, who are stereotyped as lower in SES, Asian Americans are often stereotyped as economically successful (e.g., Zou & Cheryan, 2017). Thus, assumptions about the SES of Asian Americans are redundant (rather than clashing) with common assumptions about the affluence of gay men (e.g.,

Shugart, 2003). Because we hypothesize that men who are labeled as gay (vs. not) should seem “Whiter” only when their being labeled as gay causes them to seem higher-SES, gay Asian men should not necessarily be “Whitened” in the same way that gay Black men are.

5.1. Method

Experiment 2 had two phases. Phase 1 involved collecting additional ratings of how stereotypically masculine and feminine the checklist attributes are. Phase 2 involved gathering participants' stereotypes about gay and non-gay groups of Asian men.

5.1.1. Phase 1

5.1.1.1. Participants. A total of 161 participants completed a survey in exchange for \$0.85. Two of these participants (1.2%) did not respond “yes” to the question, “Did you complete this study carefully?” and were therefore dropped from analyses. The final sample was mostly male (90 male, 66 female, 3 non-specified), mostly White (106 White, 18 Black, 15 Asian, 14 Latinx, 1 American Indian, 3 multiracial, 2 non-specified), diverse in age ($M = 32.98$, $SD = 9.27$; range: 18 to 69), well-educated (52.2% held at least a bachelor's degree), and slightly liberal ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 2.22$, on the 10-point ideology measure we have been using).

5.1.1.2. Procedure. Participants completed an identical procedure to the one described in the Checklist Traits and Trait Ratings section (above). However, in this case, participants either provided ratings of how stereotypically masculine the traits seemed, or how stereotypically feminine the traits seemed (on a scale from 1 = not at all to 7 = very masculine[feminine]). As was the case with earlier trait ratings, participants reported how the average American would perceive these traits. At the end of the survey, participants completed demographic measures and were compensated for their time. The 5 highest and lowest traits on the dimensions of masculinity and femininity are shown in Table 4.

5.1.2. Phase 2

5.1.2.1. Participants. A total of 150 participants⁹ completed a survey in

⁹Phase 2 of Experiment 2 actually had a 2 (target orientation: gay, control) × 2 (target race: Asian, Black) between-person design, and included a total of 300 participants. However, we have already extensively reported on stereotypes about Black men in the preceding 3 experiments, and the data in this experiment fully replicated the very same pattern of stereotyping shown in Experiments 1a–1c. Full details of this direct replication are available in the supplemental analyses. For brevity's sake, we focus here on the novel conditions

exchange for \$0.85. Five of these participants (3.3%) did not respond “yes” to the question, “Did you complete this study.

carefully?” and were thus dropped from analyses. Our final sample consisted of 145 participants (75 men, 69 women, 1 non-specified) who mostly identified as White (112 White, 12 Asian, 9 Black, 8 Latinx, 1 American Indian, 1 Pacific Islander, 2 multi-racial). Their ages ranged from 21 to 73 ($M = 35.04$, $SD = 10.38$), they were well educated on the whole (51.03% had at least a bachelor’s degree), and they were politically somewhat left-leaning on average ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 2.47$, on the 10-point scale we have been using). Again, most respondents (91.72%) were heterosexual.

5.1.2.2. Procedure. As in the previous experiments, participants learned that the researchers were interested in examining the cultural stereotypes Americans harbor toward various groups of men. Participants saw the previously described checklist of traits, the order of which was randomized for each person, and they were asked to characterize (using the same instructions as in Experiments 1a and 1b) the cultural stereotypes of either (‘control’) Asian men, or gay Asian men, by random assignment.

5.2. Results

As in Experiments 1a–1c, results are broken down by dependent variable. We list the ten most-nominated traits for gay vs. non-gay (‘control’) Asian men in Table 5.

5.2.1. Gender ratings

As noted above, men who are labeled as gay are often stereotyped as possessing more feminine and less masculine attributes than men who are not. Phase 2 participants’ trait nominations for groups of Asian men replicate this trend. Stereotypes of gay Asian men were rated, on average, as less masculine ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.50$) than stereotypes of non-gay (‘control’) Asian men ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.39$), $F(1, 286) = 10.98$, $p = .001$, $M_{diff} = -0.22$, 95% CI $[-0.36, -0.09]$, $\beta = -0.52$. In addition, gay Asian men were characterized as more stereotypically feminine ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.58$), according to trait ratings, than were non-gay Asian men ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.33$), $F(1, 286) = 31.24$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.42$, 95% CI $[0.27, 0.56]$, $\beta = 0.58$. Moreover, these two effects do not seem to be statistically redundant with one another. The stereotypic femininity of attributes was only moderately correlated with the stereotypic masculinity of these attributes, $r(97) = -0.40$, $p < .001$.

5.2.2. Asianness ratings

The analysis above reveals that gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men were indeed stereotyped as possessing gender-inverted qualities—but does this also imply that participants stereotyped them “more Asian?” An analysis of how stereotypically Asian participants’ trait nominations were revealed very strong evidence to the contrary. Consistent with the de-racialization hypothesis, gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men seemed less stereotypically Asian by more than a full standard deviation, $F(1, 286) = 189.06$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -1.10$, 95% CI $[-1.25, -0.94]$, $\beta = -1.11$ (see Fig. 4, left side). Thus, participants’ de-racialization of gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men occurred *in spite* of the fact that these men were stereotypically feminized in perceivers’ minds, and in spite of the

(footnote continued)

of the experiment.

¹⁰ Degrees of freedom are equal to 286 because we are reporting a planned contrast from the full 2×2 model that we ran (see footnote 9). Analyzing the data in this way allows us to report the mean differences between ratings of gay Asian men and non-gay Asian men without abusing degrees of freedom. Conducting simple *t*-tests between gay Asian men and Asian men does not change the interpretation of our results in any way.

Asian Men

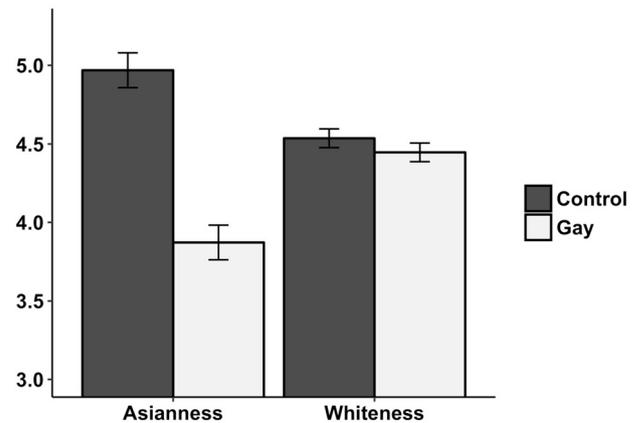


Fig. 4. How stereotypically Asian (left-hand side) and White (right-hand side) the traits were, on average, that participants used to characterize Asian men in Experiment 2. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

fact that stereotypic femininity—in our data as in others’—was correlated with stereotypic Asianness, $r(97) = 0.47$, $p < .001$.

5.2.3. Whiteness ratings

We next examined whether Asian men who are labeled as gay (vs. not) are stereotypically “Whitened,” as are Black men. Here, too, we found evidence to the contrary. Consistent with our hypothesis that the Whitening effect will be limited to stereotypically low-SES groups, gay Asian men were *not* characterized as any stereotypically Whiter than non-gay (‘control’) Asian men. In fact, gay Asian men were characterized as less stereotypically White than their non-gay counterparts, $F(1, 286) = 4.34$, $p = .038$, $M_{diff} = -0.09$, 95% CI $[-0.17, -0.01]$, $\beta = -0.20$ (see Fig. 4, right side). Thus, whereas gay Black men seem stereotypically Whiter than their non-gay counterparts, gay Asian men do not.

5.3. Discussion

Experiment 2 expands the evidence for the de-racialization hypothesis in a particularly noteworthy way. Even though gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men were indeed stereotyped as more feminine, and even though feminine attributes were rated as “more Asian” overall, we still found support for the de-racialization hypothesis: gay Asian men were stereotyped as “less Asian” than (‘control’) Asian men. This accords with the argument that all racial/ethnic prototypes inherently presume heterosexuality, whatever else they may assume about degrees of relative femininity. Gayness clashes with this presumption, and a reduction in racial prototypicality ensues.

The results of this experiment also confirm that the “Whitening” hypothesis does not apply to the case of gay men from a stereotypically affluent minority group. Rather than being characterized as “Whiter” when described as gay (vs. not), Asian men were characterized as “less White” under these conditions. Although we did not anticipate that gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men would seem “less White” to participants, it is conceivable that Americans’ stereotypes of Asian-American men were high enough in stereotypic SES that gay (vs. non-gay) men from this group could only be stereotyped as lower in SES. If gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men seemed “lower-SES” to participants, even to a small degree, this could help explain why participants characterized them as relatively lower in stereotypic Whiteness (see supplemental analyses for more on this point). We examine the contours of who is and is not “Whitened” in the remaining experiments.

6. Experiment 3

Across experiments, our hypotheses have received robust support. Black, White, and Asian men have been consistently de-racialized in the minds of perceivers when described as gay (vs. not), and Black men—but not Asian men—have been correspondingly “Whitened” under these same conditions. We have argued that a likely reason for these discrepant findings is that African Americans and Asian Americans are stereotyped as occupying different socioeconomic status (SES) positions in American society; whereas Black men are stereotyped as low-SES, Asian men are stereotyped as high-SES (Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005; Siy & Cheryan, 2013). This is relevant because, as we have noted, gay men are stereotyped as economically advantaged in the United States (Bengry, 2009; H. Hughes, 1997; Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005; Peters, 2010). Consequently, labeling men as gay (vs. not) can raise the perceived SES of men whom perceivers would ordinarily stereotype as low-SES (like Black men), but not the perceived SES of men whom participants ordinarily stereotype as high-SES (like Asian men). Because higher SES and Whiteness are strongly confounded in Americans' minds (e.g., Freeman et al., 2011), elevations in perceived SES can explain why gay Black men—but not gay Asian men—are stereotypically “Whitened” by perceivers.

A different reason why gayness “Whitens” Black (but not Asian) men, however, could lie in the tendency for Americans to think of racial Whiteness and Blackness as having an oppositional relationship to each other (Norton & Sommers, 2011), just as the color terms black and white do. Data previously reported in Table 2 provide some credence for this possibility in that ratings of the stereotypical Blackness and Whiteness of the checklist traits were significantly negatively correlated (albeit only modestly, $r = -0.319$). Other racial minority groups, such as Asians, may not be considered as having the same inherently oppositional relation to the White majority group.

The present experiment examines stereotypes about Hispanic men. Consistent with the de-racialization hypothesis, we anticipated that gay Hispanic men, relative to non-gay (“control”) Hispanic men, would be stereotyped as seeming “less Hispanic.” However, the competing explanations outlined above make divergent predictions about whether gay Hispanic men will seem stereotypically Whiter than their non-gay counterparts. Because Hispanic men are stereotyped as similar to Black men in terms of SES positioning (Koch, Imhoff, Dotsch, Unkelbach, & Alves, 2016; Zou & Cheryan, 2017), our prediction is that Hispanic men will, like Black men, seem stereotypically Whiter when they are described as gay (because of a boost to their presumed SES). On the other hand, Hispanicness is not oppositional to Whiteness in the same way that Blackness is (e.g., Norton & Sommers, 2011; see also Table 2). If the operation of a race-specific oppositional heuristic explains why gay Black men are characterized by stereotypically Whiter traits, then stereotypes about gay Hispanic men may, like those of gay Asian men, fail to show any evidence of “Whitening.”

6.1. Method

6.1.1. Participants

A total of 149 people took an online survey in exchange for \$0.85.

Table 2
Correlations (Pearson's r) between dimensions of racial stereotypicality.

	Black	White	Asian
Black	–		
White	–0.319*	–	
Asian	–0.722*	–0.639*	–
Hispanic	–0.512*	–0.020	–0.094

Note. Because we correlated ratings of 99 traits, we had adequate power (80%) to detect correlations as small as $r = 0.27$.

* $p \leq .001$.

Table 3
Ten Most Selected Traits for Groups of Black and White men in Experiment 1a.

Gay Black men ($n = 73$)		Black men ($n = 73$)	
Trait	Freq.	Trait	Freq.
Talkative	58%	Poor	60%
Ostentatious (showy)	53%	Criminal	60%
Loud	44%	Athletic	58%
Pleasure-loving	41%	Violent	53%
Passionate	30%	Aggressive	51%
Sexually perverse	29%	Uneducated	49%
Musical	27%	Loud	47%
Sensitive	27%	Lazy	42%
Artistic	23%	Quick-tempered	36%
Witty	23%	Low in intelligence	33%

Gay White men ($n = 72$)		White men ($n = 75$)	
Trait	Freq.	Trait	Freq.
Sensitive	56%	Arrogant	49%
Ostentatious (showy)	56%	Conservative	36%
Pleasure-loving	54%	Ambitious	31%
Talkative	51%	Materialistic	31%
Neat	42%	Tradition-loving	31%
Sexually perverse	39%	Conventional	29%
Musical	39%	Intelligent	28%
Happy-go-lucky	35%	Loyal to family	25%
Loud	33%	Conceited	24%
Delicate	29%	Extremely nationalistic	23%

Note. Sample sizes for each condition are listed in parentheses. When two or more traits tied for the 10th most-selected trait, we chose to present the trait(s) that came first alphabetically. Freq. = the percentage of participants in a condition who selected a given trait.

Only 1 participant (0.7%) was excluded from this sample for not responding “yes” to the question, “Did you take this survey seriously?” The final sample consisted of 148 participants (91 men, 57 women), the majority of whom were White (118 White, 13 Asian, 7 Black, 6 Latinx, 2 American Indian, 1 Pacific Islander, 2 multi-racial). Participants' ages ranged from 22 to 69 ($M = 33.98$, $SD = 10.56$), they were generally well educated (54.05% held at least a bachelor's degree), leaned toward liberal politics ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 2.47$, on the same 10-point scale as before), and the majority (92.57%) were heterosexual.

6.1.2. Procedure

As in previous experiments, we instructed participants to think about the current cultural stereotypes in the United States toward either gay Hispanic men, or non-gay (“control”) Hispanic men, by random assignment. Participants viewed the same checklist as before, and they nominated up to 10 traits for their assigned group.

6.2. Results

As in earlier experiments, we list the ten most-selected stereotypes among participants in each condition (see Table 6).

6.2.1. Hispanicness ratings

We expected to find continued support for the de-racialization hypothesis. To test this, we conducted an independent t -test on the Hispanicness of participants' trait selections in each condition. This analysis supported our predictions. Participants' trait selections for gay Hispanic men were indeed less stereotypically Hispanic, on average, than their trait selections for non-gay (“control”) Hispanic men, $t(146) = 8.34$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -0.48$, 95% CI[–0.60, –0.37], $\beta = -1.13$ (see Fig. 5, left side).

Table 4
Most- and least- stereotypically feminine and masculine traits.

		Stereotypically feminine (N = 79)		Stereotypically masculine (N = 75)		
		<i>M_F</i>	95% CI		<i>M_M</i>	95% CI
Most	Sensitive	6.23	[6.09, 6.36]	Athletic	6.01	[5.89, 6.14]
	Delicate	6.08	[5.94, 6.21]	Aggressive	5.67	[5.55, 5.79]
	Gentle	5.99	[5.84, 6.13]	Sportsmanlike	5.52	[5.36, 5.68]
	Sensual	5.74	[5.60, 5.88]	Ambitious	5.51	[5.35, 5.66]
	Talkative	5.74	[5.58, 5.89]	Industrious	5.38	[5.23, 5.53]
Least	Hostile	2.28	[2.13, 2.42]	Poor	2.49	[2.36, 2.63]
	Aggressive	2.16	[2.01, 2.31]	Cowardly	2.20	[2.04, 2.36]
	Criminal	1.91	[1.78, 2.04]	Shy	2.19	[2.04, 2.34]
	Violent	1.88	[1.73, 2.02]	Sensitive	2.10	[1.96, 2.24]
	Physically Dirty	1.70	[1.58, 1.82]	Delicate	1.85	[1.70, 2.00]

Note. Per-study sample *N*s are included in parentheses. *M_F* = how stereotypically feminine a trait was rated to be, on average; *M_M* = how stereotypically masculine a trait was rated to be, on average. All means are enclosed by 95% confidence intervals.

Table 5
Ten most-selected traits for groups of asian men in Experiment 2.

Gay Asian men (n = 73)		Asian men (n = 72)	
Trait	Freq.	Trait	Freq.
Sensitive	42%	Intelligent	61%
Neat	41%	Loyal to family	51%
Sexually perverse	34%	Tradition-loving	52%
Intelligent	32%	Quiet	45%
Delicate	30%	Scientifically Minded	39%
Pleasure-loving	30%	Efficient	38%
Talkative	29%	Reserved	34%
Witty	26%	Industrious	28%
Artistic	25%	Shy	28%
Ostentatious (Showy)	25%	Ambitious	27%

Note. Sample sizes of people in each condition are listed in parentheses. When two or more traits tied for the 10th most-selected trait, we chose to present the trait(s) that came first alphabetically. Freq. = the percentage of participants in a condition who selected a given trait.

Table 6
Ten Most selected traits for groups of Hispanic men in Experiment 3.

Gay Hispanic men (n = 74)		Hispanic men (n = 74)	
Trait	Freq.	Trait	Freq.
Pleasure-loving	41%	Loyal to family	58%
Ostentatious (showy)	39%	Poor	38%
Passionate	39%	Uneducated	35%
Sexually perverse	39%	Very religious	35%
Talkative	38%	Tradition-loving	32%
Suave	31%	Physically dirty	31%
Sensitive	30%	Quick-tempered	27%
Loud	27%	Lazy	23%
Delicate	26%	Passionate	22%
Happy-go-lucky	20%	Criminal	20%

Note. Sample sizes of people in each condition are listed in parentheses. When two or more traits tied for the 10th most-selected trait, we chose to present the trait(s) that came first alphabetically. Freq. = the percentage of participants in a condition who selected a given trait.

6.2.2. Whiteness ratings

In support of the SES-based explanation of stereotypic Whiteness, gay Hispanic men were also characterized by traits that were stereotypically Whiter than non-gay (“control”) Hispanic men, $t(146) = 3.42$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.29$, 95% CI[0.12, 0.45], $\beta = 0.54$ (see Fig. 5, right side).

6.3. Discussion

As was the case with Black, White, and Asian men, gay Hispanic men were characterized as less prototypic of their racial/ethnic group than their non-gay counterparts—that is, they were de-racialized (or rather, ‘de-ethnitized’). The present results also indicate that stereotypic Whiteness does not depend on the operation of a race-specific oppositional heuristic. Instead, these data corroborate the proposition that being gay “Whitens” men who would otherwise be stereotyped as low-SES. Given that the gay identity is inflected with notions of social class (e.g., Bengry, 2009; Valocchi, 1999), knowledge that a man is gay can cause him to seem higher-SES than he would otherwise—and this in turn may cause him to seem stereotypically Whiter in the minds of American perceivers (e.g., Freeman et al., 2011).

7. Mediation interlude

Our experiments are quite consistent with the de-racialization hypothesis. All groups of men seem less typical of their own racial/ethnic groups when described as gay (vs. not). In addition, our expectation that members of low- but not high-SES racial/ethnic groups would be stereotypically “Whitened” in perceivers’ minds was also supported. We now turn to a more direct investigation of this mediating mechanism. Specifically, we test whether Black and Hispanic men seem “Whiter” when labeled as gay because gayness elevates their presumed SES (e.g., Bérubé, 2001; Valocchi, 1999), and because elevated SES is in turn associated with increases in stereotypic Whiteness (e.g., Penner & Saperstein, 2008). In addition, we examine whether SES-based assumptions explain variation in “Whiteness” above and beyond alternative explanations—specifically, above and beyond explanations relating to gender stereotypes and to stereotypic positivity.

As experimental psychologists have repeatedly demonstrated, perceivers tend to stereotype gay (vs. non-gay) men as gender-inverted (e.g., Blashill & Powlishta, 2009; Cox & Devine, 2015; Kite & Deaux, 1987). In addition to this, gay men from stigmatized racial groups are occasionally evaluated more positively than their non-gay counterparts (at least in the U.S.: Remedios, Chasteen, Rule, & Plaks, 2011; Wilson, Remedios, & Rule, 2017). This implies that when Black and Hispanic men are described as gay (vs. not), they may seem more stereotypically feminine and positive to perceivers in addition to seeming “higher-SES.” If these qualities overlap with assumptions about Whiteness, then the “Whiteness” of Black and Hispanic men may result from stereotypic changes to their femininity and valence rather than their SES. Given the multidimensional nature of cultural representations of gay men, we examined a multiple mediation model in which each of these considerations is included as a possible basis for the “Whiteness” of gay (vs. non-gay) Black and Hispanic men. Our central contention is that SES-related assumptions play a unique role in this process, over and above

Table 7
Most- and least- stereotypically high-SES and positive (vs. negative) traits.

		Stereotypically high-SES (<i>N</i> = 79)		Stereotypically positive (<i>N</i> = 75)		
		<i>M</i> _{SES}	95% CI	<i>M</i> _{POS}	95% CI	
Most	Ambitious	5.83	[5.51, 6.16]	Faithful	6.01	[5.75, 6.28]
	Sophisticated	5.66	[5.35, 5.97]	Kind	5.96	[5.67, 6.25]
	Intelligent	5.63	[5.33, 5.94]	Efficient	5.93	[5.67, 6.20]
	Brilliant	5.35	[5.05, 5.66]	Honest	5.93	[5.62, 6.25]
	Materialistic	5.32	[4.94, 5.69]	Ambitious	5.91	[5.59, 6.22]
Least	Low in Intelligence	1.96	[1.68, 2.24]	Stupid	1.79	[1.54, 2.03]
	Stupid	1.95	[1.64, 2.24]	Violent	1.79	[1.53, 2.04]
	Physically Dirty	1.81	[1.52, 2.10]	Cowardly	1.73	[1.54, 1.93]
	Poor	1.70	[1.40, 1.99]	Unreliable	1.72	[1.52, 1.91]
	Uneducated	1.62	[1.37, 1.87]	Criminal	1.61	[1.40, 1.83]

Note. Per-study sample *N*s are included in parentheses. *M*_{SES} = how “high-SES” a trait was rated, on average; *M*_{POS} = how positive vs. negative a trait was rated, on average. All means are enclosed by 95% confidence intervals.

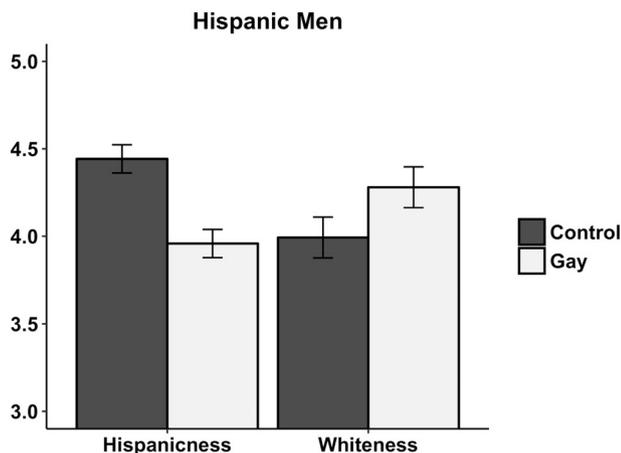


Fig. 5. How stereotypically Hispanic (left-hand side) and White (right-hand side) the traits were, on average, that participants used to characterize Hispanic men in Experiment 3. Error bars represent 95% confidence.

any effects of how gayness influences the gender and valence-related content of perceivers' stereotypes.

7.1. Method

Two new, independent samples of Americans rated either the extent to which the 99 checklist attributes seemed “high-SES,” or the extent to which they seemed stereotypically positive vs. negative. For ease of presentation we describe the demographics of these two samples simultaneously.

We then use these ratings—along with previously collected ratings of masculinity and femininity—to examine what about gay (vs. non-gay) Black and Hispanic men causes them to seem stereotypically Whiter to perceivers.

7.1.1. Participants

A total of *N* = 156 MTurkers participated in exchange for \$0.85. Of these participants, we dropped *n* = 2 (1.3%) for not answering “yes” to the question, “Did you complete this study carefully?” Our remaining 154 participants had very similar characteristics to the samples studied in the preceding experiments: 61% were male (94 men, 59 women, 1 non-specified), they were mostly White (113 White, 16 Asian, 15 Latinx, 6 Black, 1 American Indian, 1 Pacific Islander, and 1 biracial), their ages spanned from 19 to 70 (*M* = 33.98, *SD* = 11.13), they were generally well-educated (42.2% held at least a bachelor's degree), and they leaned somewhat toward political liberalism on average (*M* = 4.33, *SD* = 2.33, on the same 10-point scale as before).

7.1.2. Procedure

Participants completed an identical procedure to the one described in the Checklist Traits and Trait Ratings section (above). However, in this case, participants either provided ratings of how stereotypically high-SES the traits seemed, or how stereotypically positive (vs. negative) the traits seemed. Because participants might not be familiar with the term “SES,” we had them place all 99 traits on a scale from 1 = *not at all high-status* to 7 = *very high-status*. For these ratings, we defined “high-status” as characteristic of people with high levels of occupational prestige, high levels of education, and high incomes. For ratings of stereotypic positivity, participants placed all 99 traits on a scale from −3 = *very negative* to 3 = *very positive* [for consistency with other measures, we recoded this to 1 = *very negative* and 7 = *very positive*]. In doing so, participants again reported how the *average American* would perceive these groups. At the end of the survey, participants completed demographic measures and were compensated for their time. The 5 highest and lowest traits on each of these dimensions are shown in Table 7.

7.2. Results

An omnibus analysis was conducted using our previously collected checklist stereotypes of Black men (Experiment 1a, Experiment 1b) and Hispanic men (Experiment 3)—that is, the groups of men for whom gayness induces a “Whitening” effect.¹¹ We relied in the “psych” package in R to estimate all indirect effects (Revelle, 2018).

When we imputed newly-collected ratings into the stereotype nominations from these earlier experiments, we found that gay Black and Hispanic men were indeed stereotyped as “higher-SES” (*M* = 4.05, *SD* = 0.42) than their non-gay (“control”) counterparts (*M* = 3.35, *SD* = 0.58), *t*(513) = 15.82, *p* < .001, *M*_{diff} = 0.70, 95% CI[0.61, 0.79], β = 1.16. Replicating past work, these new ratings revealed that gay Black and Hispanic men were also stereotyped more positively (*M* = 4.05, *SD* = 0.74), on average, than non-gay (“control”) Black and Hispanic men (*M* = 3.16, *SD* = 0.89), *t*(513) = 12.46, *p* < .001, *M*_{diff} = 0.90, 95% CI[0.76, 1.04], β = 0.97. Unsurprisingly, gay men from these groups were also stereotyped as more feminine (*M* = 4.41, *SD* = 0.48) than non-gay (“control”) men from these groups (*M* = 3.42,

¹¹ Our conclusions remain the same regardless of whether we conduct omnibus tests of what mediates the “Whitening” phenomenon, or whether we analyze the data separately by study (Experiment 1a, Experiment 1b, Experiment 3). See supplemental analyses for these by-study analyses of the Whitening phenomenon, as well as for mediational tests of why each group becomes de-racialized in perceivers' minds. We present mediation of de-racialization effects in our supplemental analyses rather than in the main text because these patterns of mediation vary widely from target group to target group.

$SD = 0.58$), $t(513) = 21.05$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.98$, 95% CI [0.89, 1.08], $\beta = 1.38$, and they were also stereotyped as less masculine ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.37$) than their non-gay ('control') counterparts ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.34$), $t(513) = -3.83$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = -0.12$, 95% CI [-0.19, -0.06], $\beta = -0.34$. In summary, labeling Black and Hispanic men as gay influenced perceivers' stereotypes about these men in several notable ways, some of which relate to gender stereotypes, to valence, and importantly, to stereotypes about socioeconomic status.

What explains why gay Black and Hispanic men seem "Whiter" than their non-gay counterparts? According to the parallel mediation analysis, stereotypes related to femininity do tell part of the story. To the extent that gay (vs. non-gay) Black and Hispanic men seem "more feminine" to perceivers, they are likely to seem stereotypically Whiter: indirect $\beta = 0.65$, 95% CI [0.52, 0.78]. Importantly, however, the parallel mediation analysis also documents an indirect effect related to changes in SES-related stereotypes. That is, when Black and Hispanic men are described as gay (vs. not), they are stereotyped as possessing "higher-SES" attributes that in turn predict their seeming "Whiter" to perceivers. This indirect effect explains *unique* variance in stereotypic Whiteness, above and beyond the other pathways that we included in the model: indirect $\beta = 0.58$, 95% CI [0.47, 0.69]. Pathways related to stereotypic SES and femininity are depicted in Fig. 6 on gray backgrounds.

Simultaneous mediation also suggests that changes in stereotypic positivity and masculinity—depicted on white backgrounds in Fig. 6—are not particularly suitable for explaining why Black and Hispanic men seem "Whiter" to perceivers when described as gay (at least not above and beyond what stereotypic SES and femininity can explain). Although it is true that gay (vs. non-gay) Black and Hispanic men seem more stereotypically positive and less stereotypically masculine to perceivers, these changes either weakly predict gay men's likelihood of seeming "Whiter" (as in the case of positivity: indirect $\beta = 0.08$, 95% CI [0.02, 0.14]), or they actually suppress the very pattern of Whiteness we are trying to explain (as in the case of masculinity: indirect $\beta = -0.04$, 95% CI [-0.07, -0.02]).

7.3. Discussion

These data support two conclusions. First, the "Whitening" phenomenon is multiply determined. Gay (vs. non-gay) men can seem stereotypically Whiter for reasons that relate to stereotypic SES as well as to stereotypic femininity. But second, and more critical to our account, stereotypic SES appears to play a role in who gets "Whitened"

above and beyond gayness's influence on femininity. This finding is particularly interesting because, to our knowledge, the majority of experimental research on how gay men are stereotyped has revolved around gay men's sexual- and gender-related attributes (Blashill & Powlishta, 2009; Calabrese et al., 2018; Kite & Deaux, 1987; but see Clausell & Fiske, 2005). Much less common in experimental research has been a focus on whether perceivers stereotype gay men as possessing attributes that are inflected with notions of social class (e.g., Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005; Peters, 2010). These data suggest not only that perceivers *do* stereotype gay (vs. non-gay) men in class-inflected ways, but also that, because SES is correlated with notions of "Whiteness" in the United States, labeling low-SES groups of men as gay (vs. not) can stereotypically Whiten them in the minds of perceivers. Still, it is important to note that the above findings are only correlational. More convincing evidence would come from an experiment in which target race is held constant and target men's SES is manipulated.

8. Experiment 4

In Experiment 4, we manipulated participants' assumptions about the socioeconomic positioning of Asian men and Black men to examine whether changes in perceived SES can indeed cause corresponding changes in the extent to which minority men seem stereotypically Whiter. Following past research (e.g., Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 2011; Koenig & Eagly, 2014), we manipulated the perceived SES of groups by describing changes in the representation of minority groups in various social roles. Because Black men are currently stereotyped as occupying lower-SES roles, describing them as moving into high-SES occupations should produce an upward shift in their perceived SES, whereas describing them as occupying low-SES roles would represent the status quo. In contrast, because Asian men are currently stereotyped as occupying higher-SES roles, describing them as moving into low-SES occupations should produce a downward shift in their perceived SES, whereas describing them as occupying high-SES roles would represent the status quo.

Participants were randomly assigned to project future Americans' stereotypes about one of four groups of men: gay Asian men, Asian men, gay Black men, or Black men. But before participants nominated stereotypes about these men, they were told that in the future, their assigned racial group was projected to be well-represented in social roles that were either congruent with current SES stereotypes about their group (that is, that Asian men would be in relatively high-SES roles, or that Black men would be in relatively low-SES roles), or the

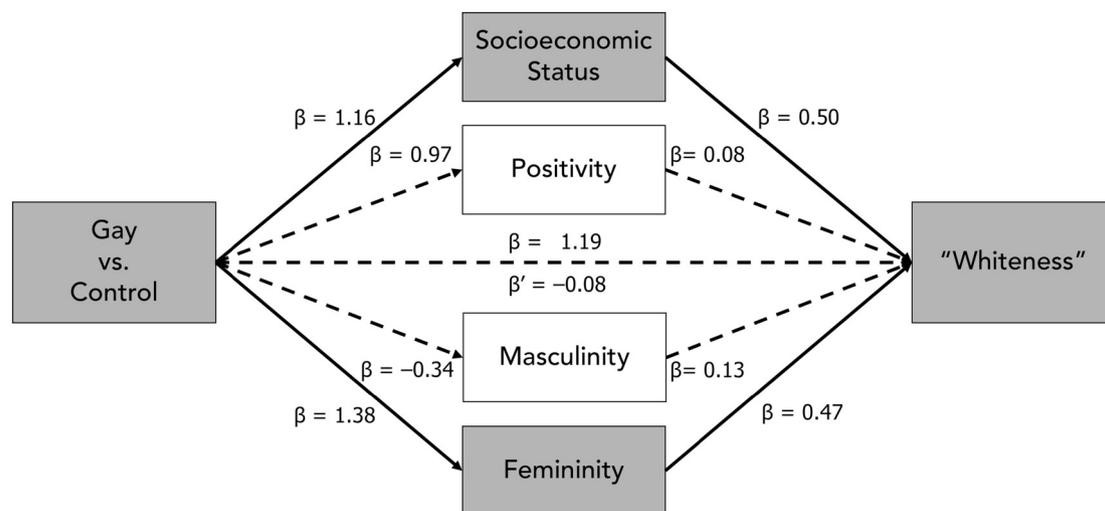


Fig. 6. Simultaneous mediation model in which stereotypic SES, positivity, masculinity, and femininity are entered as mediators of the "Whitening" phenomenon for Black men (Experiments 1a and 1b) and Hispanic men (Experiment 3). Mediators with gray backgrounds offer more explanatory power than mediators with white backgrounds.

reverse—that their group would be well-represented in roles that are incongruent with current SES stereotypes about their group (that Asian men would be in low-SES roles, or that Black men would be in high-SES roles). Thus, the total design of this study was a 2 (target race: Asian, Black) \times 2 (orientation: gay, control) \times 2 (social roles: SES-congruent, SES-incongruent) between-person experiment.

8.1. Method

8.1.1. Participants

A total of 602 participants completed a survey in exchange for \$0.85. We dropped 26 participants (4.3%) for not responding “yes” to the question, “Did you take this survey seriously?” The final sample consisted of 576 participants (289 men, 283 women, 1 other, 1 non-specified) who mostly identified as White (415 White, 59 Asian, 44 Black, 41 Latinx, 5 American Indian, 1 Pacific Islander, 11 multi-racial). Their ages ranged from 19 to 70 ($M = 34.89$, $SD = 10.80$), they were generally well educated (54.69% held at least a bachelor’s degree), they leaned somewhat toward political liberalism ($M = 5.29$, $SD = 2.71$, on an 11-point scale anchored at 1 = *extremely liberal*, 11 = *extremely conservative*), and the majority of them (89.06%) were heterosexual.

8.1.2. Procedure

Participants read about demographic changes that are likely to occur in the United States over the next 25–30 years. They were asked to anticipate how Americans of the future might stereotype a randomly-selected demographic group on the basis of these changes. We used the following instructions, taken directly from Koenig and Eagly (2014, p. 382): “There have been some surprising shifts of social groups into new occupations that they have rarely held in the past. We want you to think about the implications of changing occupations.”

At this point in the survey, participants learned about ostensible social role changes expected to occur over the next 30 years. For example, they learned that Republican women were likely to become prevalent among substance abuse counselors, and that older Americans would, in the coming 30 years, become well-represented among data security analysts. Finally, participants read a critical demographic projection that varied by experimental condition in a 2 (race: Asian, Black) \times 2 (social roles: SES-congruent, SES-incongruent) matrix. In every case, the critical projection had the structure of the following paragraph, whose content was varied as noted:

In 25–30 years, demographers predict that Black men will be more common in the occupations of *lawyers*, *doctors*, and *upper-level managers* than would be expected based on their overall numbers in the U.S. population. In other words, Black men will become especially well-represented in these occupations.

The above instructions were shown to participants assigned to the SES-incongruent Black target condition. Participants in the SES-congruent Black target condition read the same instructions, except the roles “lawyers, doctors, and upper-level managers” were replaced with the roles “fast-food service workers, custodians, and janitors.” These same roles were used in reverse for the two conditions in which Asian men were the targets. We selected these roles because people perceive these as some of the most-characteristic roles of *upper-middle class people*, and of *poor people*, respectively (based on a total sample of $N = 628$, reported in Koenig & Eagly, 2014).

After reading about these “shifts of social groups into new occupations,” participants were given the trait checklist and instructed to guess how Americans in the year 2042 might stereotype either *gay men* from their randomly assigned racial group (e.g., gay Black men), or non-gay (“control”) men from their randomly assigned racial group (e.g., Black men). At the end of the experiment, participants completed a demographic questionnaire, and they were compensated for their time.

8.2. Results

To test whether beliefs about SES play a causal role in the stereotypical Whitening of minority gay men, we subjected the Whiteness ratings of participants’ stereotypes to a 2 (target race: Asian, Black) \times 2 (social roles: SES-congruent, SES-incongruent) \times 2 (orientation: gay, control) ANOVA. As expected, this analysis yielded a significant three-way interaction between target race, social role congruence, and target sexual orientation, $F(1, 568) = 25.62$, $p < .001$, $\omega_p^2 = 0.041$.¹² Because we expected to replicate our previously established “Whitening” effects in the SES-congruent conditions, we first discuss the data patterns in these conditions only.

8.2.1. SES-congruent conditions

When modeling effects among participants in the SES-congruent conditions, we found a two-way interaction between target race and target sexual orientation, $F(1, 568) = 31.33$, $p < .001$, $\omega_p^2 = 0.051$. Planned contrasts reveal the same pattern observed in prior experiments. When participants thought that Black men of the future would remain in low-SES roles, they characterized these men as stereotypically Whiter when they were described as gay than when not, $F(1, 568) = 38.39$, $p < .001$, $M_{diff} = 0.46$, 95% CI [0.32, 0.61], $\beta = 0.93$. In addition, when participants thought that Asian men of the future would remain in high-SES roles, they did not think of gay Asian men as any stereotypically Whiter than generic Asian men. If anything, there was a trend for participants to characterize gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men as less stereotypically White, though this trend was non-significant: $F(1, 568) = 2.98$, $p = .085$, $M_{diff} = -0.13$, 95% CI [-0.28, 0.02], $\beta = -0.26$ (see Fig. 7, left panel).

8.2.2. SES-incongruent conditions

When modeling effects among participants in the SES-incongruent conditions, we did not find a significant two-way interaction between target race and sexual orientation, $F(1, 568) = 2.29$, $p = .131$, $\omega_p^2 = 0.002$. Despite this non-significant interaction, we proceeded with planned contrasts as before. These contrasts revealed that when participants thought Black men of the future would occupy high-SES social roles, they no longer characterized gay Black men as stereotypically Whiter than generic Black men, $F(1, 568) = 0.05$, $p = .821$, $M_{diff} = -0.02$, 95% CI [-0.16, 0.13], $\beta = -0.03$. However, when participants thought Asian men of the future would occupy low-SES positions, there was only marginal evidence that participants characterized gay Asian men as stereotypically Whiter than non-gay (“control”) Asian men, $F(1, 568) = 3.72$, $p = .054$, $M_{diff} = 0.14$, 95% CI [-0.01, 0.28], $\beta = 0.28$.¹³ In short, we found no “Whitening” effect when Black men were thought of as occupying high-SES social roles. The expected tendency for participants to “Whiten” low-SES Asian men was directionally evident but far from robust (see Fig. 7, right panel).

8.3. Discussion

Experiment 4 provides causal (if imperfect) evidence for the idea that assumptions about SES play an important role in the Whitening of gay minority men. Only when the men are assumed to be of lower SES does stereotypic Whitening result. Elevating the salient SES of Black men eliminated participants’ tendency to “Whiten” gay men from this

¹² Our social role manipulation arguably confounds an SES manipulation with a manipulation of positivity. It is worth noting that our conclusions remain the same even when we control for changes in stereotypic positivity (see supplemental analyses for specifics).

¹³ When we add positivity as a covariate (see footnote 11), this contrast becomes significant in the hypothesized direction. In addition, adding this covariate unveils the hypothesized race \times orientation interaction in the SES-incongruency conditions (see supplemental analyses).

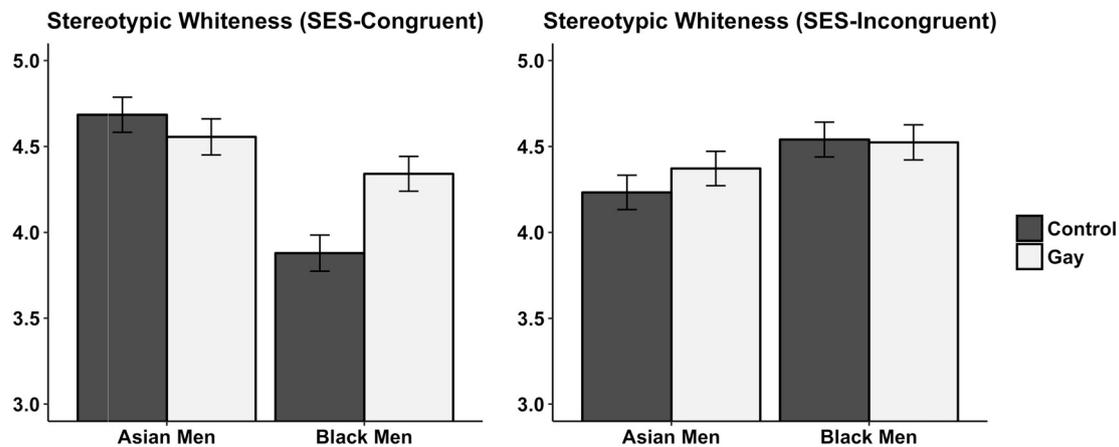


Fig. 7. How stereotypically White the traits were, on average, that participants used to characterize target men in Experiment 4. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

group. However, manipulating the ostensible SES positioning of Asian men induced only a marginal tendency to “Whiten” gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men. It may simply be that participants were less persuaded by the idea that Asian men would show overall downward mobility in the coming decades, given Americans' general preference to presume an upward socioeconomic trajectory (Kluegel & Smith, 1986). Information describing a downward economic trajectory for a group that is stereotypically viewed as high in competence would presumably threaten our participants' sense of social justice and thus they may have resisted it (e.g., see Oldmeadow & Fiske, 2007).

9. General discussion

In everyday discourse, people routinely disaggregate others along racial, gender, and sexual orientation boundaries, even though in interpersonal encounters these distinctions are always intertwined (e.g., Ridgeway & Kricheli-Katz, 2013). For example, social perceivers readily offer generalizations about “Black people,” acting as if other dimensions of identity need not be considered relevant to the validity of the proffered generalization. As Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz put it, these disaggregated groupings can be considered as “culturally distinct systems of difference and inequality not because they really are separate, but because people routinely understand them to be so” (p. 296). People's readiness to consider these dimensions of difference as if they were orthogonal suggests the possibility that they may hold and apply stereotypes in a modular, one-size-fits-all way. For example, stereotypes of “Black people” may seem to apply broadly to all category members, irrespective of a person's gender, sexual orientation, religious identity, or other cross-cutting demographic categories. The present results speak against this view of orthogonal social identities. Instead, across six experiments, we report robust evidence that people stereotype gay men, compared with men whose orientation is unmentioned, in ways that are de-racialized. This is true whether these men are Asian, Black, Hispanic, or White. This pattern is consistent with the argument that race and sexuality are mutually constituted social representations (Vidal-Ortiz, Robinson, & Khan, 2018), and that by default, Americans presume that group prototypes are heterosexual (e.g., Herek, 2007). If assumptions of heterosexuality did not help constitute racial prototypes—if heterosexuality were instead orthogonal to racial prototypes—then learning that a man is gay (vs. not) would not cause him to seem de-racialized in the minds of perceivers.

Although the de-racialization effect was predicted and found for all of the racial/ethnic groups that we examined, the de-racialization effect size using the checklist methodology was smaller for White targets than for non-White targets. This may reflect the fact that, given its status as the culturally unmarked, default identity, prototypes of Whiteness may

be less well defined (e.g., see Brekhus, 1998) and therefore more tolerant of variability. In a related vein, given that the majority of respondents across these studies were White, this result could also be shaped in part by the tendency to view one's ingroup as more heterogeneous than outgroups (e.g., Mullen & Hu, 1989). Beyond variation in effect sizes across target groups, another feature of de-racialization effects (discussed at length in the supplemental analysis document; see footnote 10) is that each racial group seems to become de-racialized in perceivers' minds for reasons that are uniquely their own. The particular elements of gayness that displace, conflict with, or erase what it means for Hispanic men to be “Hispanic” are not necessarily the same as those that displace, conflict with, or erase what it means for Asian men to be “Asian.” It may be the case, for example, gay (vs. non-gay) Asian men seem “less Asian” because gayness conflicts with stereotypes that they are traditional and reserved (see Table 5). For a different ethnic group, like Hispanics, it may be the case that gayness instead induces de-racialization because it conflicts with stereotypes that Hispanics value religion and family ties (see Table 6). Future work should directly investigate this point. While the phenomenon of de-racialization may generalize across most racial and ethnic groups, it may involve distinct mechanisms and effect sizes depending upon the group(s) in question. This diversity of mechanisms underscores the multifaceted nature of cultural representations of gay men; the social perception of gay men entails many assumptions that go beyond presumed femininity. Thus, default notions that are salient in racial and ethnic group prototypes can clash in different ways and to differing degrees with these diverse components of the gay-male prototype.

The tendency for perceivers to stereotype gay (vs. non-gay) men as “Whiter” was consistently observed for men from stereotypically low-SES groups (i.e., Black and Hispanic men). Mediation tests accorded with a model in which increases in the selection of traits associated with high SES could account for corresponding increases in the stereotypical Whiteness of these men. However, for Asian men, who are already stereotyped as relatively affluent, designation as gay produced no increment in perceived affluence and resulted in no change in perceived “Whiteness.” A final experimental test of the role of SES showed that Black gay men were subject to stereotypic Whiteness when they were imagined as holding a lower-SES position in society, but not when they were imagined as holding a higher-SES position. These results collectively provide novel, consistent evidence that clashing default assumptions about SES play a role in how people redefine racial prototypes in the case of a minority sexual orientation.

As Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz (2013) note, social unprototypicality can create both binds and freedoms. Seeming unprototypical of a disadvantage identity such as a racial minority group can result in greater freedom from those disadvantages. For example, as previously

noted, racial discrimination is disproportionately directed toward individuals who seem more race-typical (Dixon & Maddox, 2005; Maddox, 2004). If gay men seem, to the average American perceiver, de-racialized relative to their non-gay counterparts, then they may be less often subjected to race-based discrimination (although they may of course face other kinds of disadvantages based on their sexuality). Indeed, research indicates that minority gay job applicants may face less racial discrimination in hiring contexts than their heterosexual counterparts (Pedulla, 2014). Asian Americans are known to face a different set of discriminatory challenges, based on their ostensibly positive designation as a “model minority” (see Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2011), which can result in unrealistically high expectations and envious forms of prejudice. It would be interesting to determine whether gay Asian men are less vulnerable to these distinct forms of intergroup bias than their counterparts who are not openly gay. Above and beyond seeming less race-typical (de-racialized), seeming stereotypically Whiter, too, may carry advantages in certain contexts. For example, seeming “Whiter” may increase perceived national belonging in the U.S., where perceivers tend to associate what it means to be American with Whiteness (Devos & Banaji, 2005; but see Sibley & Liu, 2007). Thus, gay (vs. non-gay) Black and Hispanic men might be treated more like in-group members by White American perceivers when these targets' sexual orientations are salient. Future research should investigate this possibility.

On the other side of the coin, seeming de-racialized—as well as, for certain groups, seeming stereotypically Whiter—likely carries disadvantages in many contexts. For example, when African Americans (Sesko & Biernat, 2010) and Asian Americans (Schug, Alt, & Klauer, 2015) seem less race-typical, American college students are less likely to remember what they say and what they look like. Moreover, reduced racial prototypicality can influence how fellow in-group members treat targets. African-American individuals who seem counter-stereotypic—for example, because they are affluent (J. D. Johnson & Kaiser, 2013), or because they have mostly White friends (J. D. Johnson & Ashburn-Nardo, 2014)—receive less sympathy and inclusion from racial ingroup members. Americans' tendency to stereotype gay men in de-racialized ways, and to characterize some of these men as stereotypically Whiter in particular, is likely to be a double-edged sword. More research is needed to understand the conditions under which that sword cuts one way or the other.

Beyond focusing on these important issues, future research should address what influences the salience (to perceivers) of a man's sexual orientation. While there are numerous demonstrations that sexual orientation can be detectable even from very minimal information (like what a person's face looks like; Rule, Macrae, & Ambady, 2009), it is also likely that there are contextual variables that differentially accentuate the extent to which perceivers pay attention to targets' race, targets' sexual orientation, or both of these target features simultaneously (e.g., Oakes, Turner, & Haslam, 1991). The effects that we document here are likely to be consequential for how targets are treated by perceivers, but presumably only to the degree that perceivers are motivated and able to attend to targets' sexual orientation.

Future research should also consider the inverse of the research question we have focused on here—that is, it should consider the question of whether targets' racial categories moderate how stereotypic they seem of their sexual orientation groups. If sexual orientation and race are truly correlated dimensions in the minds of perceivers, then certain racial groups may seem more stereotypically gay or heterosexual than others. If prototypes of heterosexuality presume Whiteness by default (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008), for example, then perhaps White men seem “more heterosexual” than men from other racial and ethnic groups. In contrast, if notions of heterosexuality hinge on how stereotypically masculine (and non-feminine) target men seem (Blashill & Powlishta, 2009), then perhaps Black men—who are stereotyped as more masculine than White or Asian men (Hall et al., 2015)—will be stereotyped as most psychologically heterosexual. Of course, these

possibilities presuppose that sexual orientation stereotypes are in fact modified by target race. An alternative possibility is that even though racial stereotyping is dependent on target sexual orientation, the reverse may not be true. Perhaps all heterosexual men seem stereotypically heterosexual to the same degree, or perhaps all gay men seem stereotypically gay to the same degree. This latter possibility is substantiated by the fact that, in the present data, participants' most-nominated traits of gay men tended to be quite similar regardless of target men's racial or ethnic group membership (see Tables 3, 5, and 6).

Beyond investigating the extent to which sexual orientation stereotypes are dependent on target race, future research should seek to answer some of the open questions that we cannot address here. For example, the present findings cannot be generalized to how perceivers stereotype women at various intersections of sexual orientation and racial categories. This of course does not help to address the already pervasive problem in psychological science that most research on homosexuality is focused on men rather than women (Lee & Crawford, 2007). In addition, the present research cannot address to what extent these findings are moderated by perceiver demographics.¹⁴ In particular, the present research cannot address to what extent the phenomena we observe are restricted to or generalize beyond the United States. Given that heterocentrism and sexual prejudice appear to be global phenomena (Bartoş, Berger, & Hegarty, 2014), it is conceivable that the de-racialization of men who are labeled as gay (vs. not) occurs cross-nationally. However, given that the socioeconomic and gendered arrangements of racial groups that we examined are, for the most part, specific to the United States, the “Whitening” phenomenon may not generalize beyond our sample. These are no doubt important avenues for further empirical inquiry.

Race and sexual orientation are not orthogonal dimensions in the minds of social perceivers, even if we routinely make generalizations as if they were. Learning that a man is gay—compared with learning nothing of his sexual orientation—can cause him to become de-racialized in the minds of perceivers. Beyond making a contribution to intersectional person perception, these findings make a contribution to intergroup psychology more generally. If learning that a man is gay causes him to seem less race-typical, and if seeming race-typical is correlated with experiencing racial bias (e.g., Maddox & Perry, 2018), then gayness should also have the power to alter when and with what frequency racial minority men face racial bias. We look forward to the development of research on this point, and indeed, to the progress of research on intersectional stereotyping more broadly.

Appendix A. Supplementary analyses, data, and materials

Supplementary analyses for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2019.03.002>. Data files, code books, and materials can be found on the OSF website at the following link: <https://osf.io/bkts/>.

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¹⁴ Notably, we did have enough data to effectively examine whether gay (vs. presumptively heterosexual) Black men are stereotyped differently by perceivers who are White vs. non-White, heterosexual vs. non-heterosexual, etc. In general, we found little to no moderation of the reported effects by perceiver demographics (see online supplement).

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