A critical test of the assumption that men prefer conformist women and women prefer nonconformist men

Matthew J. Hornsey[1]

Richard Wellauer[1]

Jason C. McIntyre[1]

Fiona Kate Barlow[1, 2]

[1]The School of Psychology, The University of Queensland

[2]The School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University

Authors' note: Please address all correspondences to Matthew J. Hornsey, The School of Psychology, The University of Queensland, Queensland, 4072, Australia. Phone: +617 3365 6378. E-Mail: m.hornsey@uq.edu.au. The authors would like to acknowledge and thank Vladas Griskevicius and Douglas T. Kendrick, as well as an anonymous editor and two reviewers, for their useful feedback on an earlier draft of this manuscript.

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Abstract

Five studies tested the common assumption that women prefer nonconformist men as romantic partners, whereas men prefer conformist women. Studies 1 and 2 showed that both men and women preferred nonconformist romantic partners, but women over-estimated the extent to which men prefer conformist partners. In Study 3 participants ostensibly in a small group interaction showed preferences for nonconformist opposite-sex targets, a pattern that was particularly evident when men evaluated women. Dating success was greater the more nonconformist the sample (Study 4), and perceptions of nonconformity in an ex-partner were associated with greater love and attraction toward that partner (Study 5). On the minority of occasions in which effects were moderated by gender it was in the reverse direction to the traditional wisdom: conformity was more associated with dating success among men. The studies contradict the notion that men disproportionately prefer conformist women.

KEY WORDS: conformity; nonconformity; social role theory; gender; interpersonal attraction

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It is frequently presumed that women are attracted to nonconformist men, and that men are attracted to conformist women. But is this true, or is it an anachronistic myth? If one were to draw exclusively on the psychological literature, one might presume the former. For example, studies have found that women conform more when their mating drives are primed (Griskevicius, Goldstein, Mortensen, Cialdini, & Kenrick, 2006), that attractive women report higher levels of conformity (see Segal-Caspi, Roccas, & Sagiv, 2012), and that (unlike men) women do *not* try to separate themselves from the crowd in the presence of an attractive, opposite sex audience (Van Vugt & Iredale, 2013). Furthermore, men become more nonconformist after a mating prime (Griskevicius et al., 2006) and men low in agreeableness report having more casual sex (Urbaniak & Kilmann, 2006). Interestingly, though, the assumption that traits of (non)conformity have different effects on men and women when choosing opposite-sex partners has never been directly tested, and it is the goal of this paper to fill this gap. Doing so has implications for evolutionary and sociocultural explanations of attraction, and also helps to integrate two research traditions that have traditionally remained isolated from each other: interpersonal attraction and group processes.

Sharpening our theoretical understanding of the link between conformity traits and attraction also carries applied importance. Relationship success is a key driver of overall health and happiness, and failing to attract a partner is associated with low subjective wellbeing (Dush & Amato, 2005). If it is true that men prefer conformity and women prefer nonconformity in their romantic partners, then this would have implications for how they should present themselves in courting situations. But if this assumed wisdom turns out not to be true then it suggests that many people might be engaging in impression-management

strategies that are ineffective; or even worse, counter-productive. Across five studies the current paper reviews evidence that suggests that this may be the case: people *think* that men prefer conformist women, but this impression is discrepant from reality.

Human Mate Preferences and Conformity

The most focused examination of mate preferences as a function of conformity was conducted by Griskevicius and colleagues (2006). Mate attraction was primed by asking people to imagine spending a romantic day with an attractive stranger. After the prime, conformity was measured by testing the extent to which participants deferred to others' opinions in an online task. When primed with mate attraction motives, men were significantly less likely to conform compared to control conditions, especially when nonconformity made them appear unique and independent. In contrast, women were significantly *more* likely to conform when primed to attract a mate.

Griskevicius and colleagues (2006) interpreted their data as a reflection of a sensible mating strategy. They posited that it is important for men to distinguish themselves from potential rivals when trying to attract a female mate, and that nonconformity is one way to do so. Evolutionary literature demonstrates that nonconformity can communicate social dominance, willingness to take risks, and assertiveness; all traits that are preferred by females when selecting mating partners (Bassett & Moss, 2004; Buss, 2001; Sadalla, Kenrick, & Vershure, 1987). These traits are often associated with good earning potential and higher social status; people who are successful may have achieved their success due to their risk-taking and assertive behaviors (Brauer & Bourhis, 2006), and people with high social status often have greater social liberty to freely express their opinions (Bassett & Moss, 2004; Buss, 2001; Sadalla et al., 1987). Thus, nonconformity should help men attract women.

In contrast, Griskevecius and colleagues argued that men are primed to seek different qualities in women. The authors stated: "… traits that men prefer in a mate focus less on

social dominance and more on … the mate's ability to facilitate group cohesion (Campbell, 2002). Not only may the successful display of these traits be undermined by going against the group, but conforming more to the group may actually lead a woman to appear more agreeable while facilitating group cohesiveness" (Griskevicius et al., 2006, p.283). According to this rationale, women can make themselves more attractive to men by conforming.

The fact that men behaved in a less conformist way and women behaved in a more conformist way after a mating prime can also be explained using social role theory. Social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 1999) proposes that men and women exhibit sex-specific behaviors as a product of historical divisions of labor, and the different roles they imply. For example, women have traditionally held caregiving roles within families and are consequently seen as more communal than men. Over time such social roles become gender roles, denoting how men and women are expected to behave. This has resulted in masculine gender roles associated with agentic qualities for men, and communal qualities for women (Wood & Eagly, 2002). Further, it is argued that people prefer partners with characteristics that are consistent with the typical gender roles of men and women in society. When trying to attract a mate, both men and women would be expected to strategically exhibit behaviors that are consistent with their social roles. For men this might involve acting in an independent and nonconformist fashion, whereas for women it might involve acting in an interdependent and conformist fashion.

Prior research has not directly examined mate preferences for conformity, but for the sake of thoroughness we review studies that have examined constructs that can be considered to be broadly associated with conformity, such as "niceness" and agreeableness. Urbaniak and Kilmann (2003) examined the 'nice guy' stereotype, which proposes that some women report a desire to date nice guys, but in fact prefer dating men who are highly masculine and insensitive. Niceness (operationalized as being emotionally expressive, attentive, and kind)

was a positive factor in women's reported mate preferences, and niceness was particularly valued in the context of long-term relationships. However, in the context of casual sexual relationships, niceness was less influential, lending partial support to the 'nice guy' stereotype.

A follow-up study examined agreeableness, measured using a scale that incorporates a range of dimensions such as being sensitive, kind, obliging, cooperative (in the high ends of the scale), and tough, assertive, aggressive, cold, and opinionated (at the lower ends). Males low in agreeableness reported greater dating success in the context of short-term and superficial relationships than agreeable males (Urbaniak & Kilmann, 2006). There was no relationship between agreeableness and success in committed romantic relationships, however. Note that these studies only focused on female preferences for male targets, and so it is impossible to tell whether men had similar preferences for women. Furthermore, we emphasize that agreeableness is a distinct construct from conformity, meaning that the answer to our key question cannot be distilled from past literature.

Summary of Present Research

In the five studies that follow we take a broad definition of (non)conformity, incorporating measures and manipulations that include standing out from the crowd, emphasizing uniqueness, and sticking to opinions in the face of pressure from others. Study 1 examined participants' stated mate preferences using a self-report questionnaire measuring attitudes towards conformist and nonconformist characteristics in romantic partners. In Studies 2 and 3 we focused on revealed mate preferences. In Study 2, participants were exposed to dating profiles that varied systematically in the extent to which the target self-described as conformist or nonconformist. Study 3 examined how conformity and nonconformity affected the perceived attractiveness of an opposite-sex target in an (ostensibly) live, small-group interaction. Finally, Studies 4 and 5 tested whether the results

of the first three studies were likely to reflect mate value and preferences outside the laboratory.

Study 1

In Study 1, participants reported how attractive they found conformity characteristics in potential romantic partners. The questionnaire also examined participants' ideas about the characteristics that *other* men and women would find attractive in mating partners. Participants therefore responded to the mate preferences for conformity scale from three perspectives: their personal preferences, their ideas about the preferences of most men, and their ideas about the preferences of most women.

On the basis of the literature discussed earlier, it can be predicted that men will prefer conformist women and women will prefer nonconformist men. A secondary research question concerns the differences between people's own mate preferences and people's beliefs about the preferences of others. By examining both the reality of attraction (what men and women prefer) and the stereotypes of attraction (what people *think* men and women prefer) we are able to gauge the extent to which beliefs are synchronous with, or dissociated from, reality.

Method

Participants

Seventy-four Caucasian undergraduate students (62% female) were recruited. All participants were heterosexual, and ranged from 17-28 years old (M_{age}=20.36).

Materials and Procedure

Participants were instructed to imagine they were single and wanted to start dating, and were presented with 39 items designed to assess mate preferences for conformity behaviors. In the first 13 items, participants rated how romantically attractive they found someone of the opposite gender who had certain characteristics. Items covered two

dimensions of behaviors associated with conformity (fitting in with others) and nonconformity (standing out from others). Example items include: “How romantically attractive do you find a man (woman) who likes to stand out from his (her) friends?” and “How romantically attractive do you find a man (woman) who is flexible in his (her) attitudes in order to accommodate others?” Males and females received identical questionnaires, with only the gender of the target varying.

After recording their own preferences, participants reported how attractive other *people of their own gender* would find the 13 characteristics, and how attractive *people of the opposite gender* would find the 13 characteristics. For example, male participants were asked: “Generally, how attractive do you think other men find a woman who likes to stand out from her friends?” and “Generally, how attractive do you think a woman would find a man who likes to stand out from his friends?”

All items used a 7-point scale (1=*very unattractive*, 7=*very attractive*). Factor analyses conducted within each response set showed that items were best represented by one factor. Thus, means were calculated such that each participant received a score for their own preferences, a score for what they believed other men would prefer, and a score for what they believed other women would prefer (all αs>.70). The scales were calculated such that higher scores indicated preference for romantic partners who conform, whereas lower scores indicated preference for nonconformist partners.

Results and Discussion

A 2 (participant gender) x 3 (rating perspective) mixed-measures ANOVA was performed. The within-subjects factor was the perspective from which ratings were made (i.e., own preferences, beliefs about the preferences of men, and beliefs about the preferences of women). Means are summarized in Table 1.

Significant differences emerged across the three perspectives from which ratings were made, $F(2,68)=14.12$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.29$. Participants' own preferences for conformity characteristics ($M=3.39$) were significantly lower than participants' ratings of how attractive they thought women would find conformity characteristics ($M=3.76$, $p=.006$, CI[.085-.499]), which in turn were significantly lower than participants' ratings of how attractive they thought men would find conformity characteristics ($M=4.01$, $p=.001$, CI[.136-.541]). However, there was no significant difference between the ratings of male and female participants overall, $F(1,69)=0.40$, $p=.53$, $\eta_p^2=.01$, and the interaction between the rating perspective and participant gender was not significant, $F(2,68)=1.10$, $p=.34$, $\eta_p^2=.02$.

In sum, both men and women showed a preference for nonconformity relative to what they thought other men or women would prefer. Further, both endorsed the stereotype that, relative to women, men would prefer conformist partners. In sum, there is a discrepancy between perception and reality: People *think* that men prefer conformist women and that women prefer nonconformist men, when in fact both men *and* women report being most attracted to nonconformist targets.

Study 2

Study 1 focused on participants' *stated* ideal partner preference, that is, what participants think and report that they want in a partner. However, *revealed* partner preferences (what people actually choose in a partner) are often at odds with stated preferences. For example, women report earning prospects as being more important in a potential mate than do men, and conversely men report focusing more on physical appearance than do women. However, a recent meta-analysis demonstrates that in contrast to stated preferences, both men and women reveal a similar sized preference for physically attractive people with good earning potential (Eastwick, Luchies, Finkel, & Hunt, 2014). Revealed preferences, then, can provide a more authentic portrait of people's real-world choices (Wood

& Brumbaugh, 2009; but see Li et al., 2013 for a qualification). As such, we switched to an experimental, revealed preferences paradigm in Study 2. Participants were presented with descriptions of targets of either the same- or opposite-gender, who self-presented in a conformist or nonconformist way. Participants then rated each target according to how romantically attractive *they* found the target, and how romantically attractive they thought *others* would find the target. Study 2 further improves on Study 1 by (a) using a broader range of dimensions of (non)conformity, and (b) couching the target information in a more realistic and information-rich setting.

Method

Participants and Design

Three participants were excluded because they identified as exclusively same-sex attracted, leaving a final sample of 115 undergraduate students (59.1% female: M_{age}=19.86). They were allocated to the cells of a 2 (participant gender) x 2 (target gender) x 2 (conformity) mixed-measures design, with conformity manipulated within-subjects.

Procedure

Participants were presented with profiles of 20 people; each profile comprising a brief description of the person's personality accompanied by a photograph. The 20 profiles were arranged in pairs, and each pair of profiles described a conformist target and a nonconformist target (see Figure 1 for an example; see supplementary materials for the full list). Half the participants viewed profiles of opposite-gender targets, and half viewed profiles of same-gender targets.

Each profile began with a neutral statement such as: "Jess has moved to study at university and lives in a sharehouse with three friends." After this, a few sentences described the target as being either relatively conformist or relatively nonconformist. Each pair of target descriptions covered one of ten domains in which people can conform (or not). Examples of

the domains covered by the profiles include: conforming with friends, conforming in public situations, conforming to others' beliefs, conforming to social norms, conforming to parents, conforming in clothing choices, and conforming to the tastes and opinions of others.

Each description was accompanied by demographic information (name, birthday, nationality) and a portrait photograph. Portraits were obtained from casting database websites or from other researchers. Photographs were black-and-white and cropped to ensure they looked as similar to each other as possible. Photographs and demographics were counterbalanced such that each was equally represented in the conformist and nonconformist conditions, and equally so within each of the 10 domains. Within each domain, participants received the conformist target first half the time, and the nonconformist target first half the time.

Measures

Participants presented with opposite-sex targets completed six items (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*). In the first three items they rated how attractive *they* found the targets. So a male participant evaluated the items: "I think [name of target] is romantically attractive", "I would like to go on a date with [target]", and "I think [target] would make a desirable girlfriend" (α=.92). The next three items asked how attractive *other people of their gender* would find the target. So a male participant would evaluate the items: "I think most men would find [target] romantically attractive", "I think most men would like to go on a date with [target]", and "I think most men would desire [target] as their girlfriend" (α=.97).

Participants in the same-sex condition received only three items, asking how attractive *people of the opposite gender* would find the target. So a male participant would be faced with male targets, and would evaluate the items: "I think most women would find [target] romantically attractive", "I think most women would like to go on a date with [target]", and "I think most women would desire [target] as their boyfriend" (α=.95).

Results and Discussion

As described earlier, 10 sets of dating profiles were used, each operationalizing different dimensions of (non)conformity. Preliminary analyses examined whether there were micro-differences among the dimensions of (non)conformity in terms of what people find attractive. A series of 10 (profile domain) x 2 (level of conformity) x 2 (gender) mixed-design ANOVAs revealed no interactions between profile domain and either gender or conformity (all *ps*>.30). Consequently, responses to the 10 profile domains were collapsed together.

Personal attraction to targets. Personal attraction was analyzed using 2 (participant gender) x 2 (conformity of target) mixed-design ANOVAs. In these analyses, only the participants who rated opposite-sex targets were included. Means are summarized in the first and fourth rows of Table 2.

Nonconformist targets were more desirable as romantic partners than conformist targets, $F(1,60)=5.00$, $p=.029$, $\eta_p^2=.08$, CI[.043-.758]. The interaction between conformity and participant gender was non-significant, $F(1,60)=0.03$, $p=.87$, $\eta_p^2=.00$; in other words, the preference for nonconformist targets was equally strong for male and female participants.

Do people know which targets the opposite gender find attractive? A 2 (participant gender) x 2 (target gender) x 2 (level of conformity) ANOVA was conducted on the full sample to determine whether men accurately predict what type of partner women prefer, and whether women accurately predict what type of partner men prefer. A significant three-way interaction emerged, $F(1,111)=4.90$, $p=.029$, $\eta_p^2=.04$. Examination of simple effects involved 1) comparing women's ratings of the attractiveness of male targets with men's ratings of how attractive they *thought* women would find male targets, and 2) comparing men's ratings of female targets with women's ratings of how attractive they *thought* men would find female targets.

In three of the four comparisons, the expectations matched closely to the reality. Men accurately estimated how attractive women would find both the conformist and the nonconformist men, and women accurately estimated how attractive men would find the nonconformist woman, all *F*s <2.52, all *p*s>.11. There was one mismatch between perception and reality, however: Women overestimated how attracted men would be to the conformist women, $F(1,111)=4.67$, $p=.033$, $\eta_p^2=.04$, CI[.033-.761].

We conducted a supplementary analysis to buttress the case that women believe men desire conformity in their partners more than men actually do. For this analysis we calculated difference scores between the ratings of the conformist target and the ratings of the nonconformist target, both in terms of people's own preferences for the opposite sex, and in terms of people's beliefs about what the opposite sex desire. We then conducted a 2 (participant gender) x 2 (target gender) ANOVA on the difference scores. Consistent with expectations, the interaction was significant, $F(1,111)=4.90$, $p=.029$, $\eta_p^2=.05$. The interaction was driven by the fact that the difference between what men prefer (differences across means in row 1 of Table 2) and what women *think* men prefer (row 3 of Table 2) was marginally significant, $F(1,111)=3.20$, $p=.077$, $\eta_p^2=.03$, CI [-.033-.648]. The equivalent comparison for male targets was non-significant, $F(1,111)=1.83$, $p=.180$, $\eta_p^2=.02$, CI[-.596-.113]. This reinforces the case we are making: women believe that men desire conformist partners more than nonconformist partners, when in fact men's actual preferences indicate the opposite.

Study 3

Study 3 extended Study 2 by examining (non)conformity preferences among men and women during an ostensibly live group interaction. This revealed preferences paradigm allowed us to observe mating preferences during real-time interpersonal interactions, rather than while viewing static dating profiles. The paradigm was adapted from the same aesthetic preference task Griskevicius and colleagues (2006) used, the exception being that we

manipulated conformity as an independent variable, whereas Griskevicius and colleagues used the paradigm to measure conformity as a dependent variable. In Study 3 we focused exclusively on participants' own target evaluations.

Method

Participants and Design

Study 3 included 111 university students (53.2% female) who self-identified as heterosexual or bisexual (M_{age}=20.71). The majority was Caucasian (62.2%); the majority of non-Caucasians were Asian (31.5%). The majority was single (64.9%); the remainder reported being in a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend (31.5%), married (2.7%), or divorced (0.9%).

Participants were randomly allocated to the conditions of a 2 (participant gender) x 2 (conformity) between-groups design. In all cases participants evaluated an opposite-sex target. Unlike Studies 1 and 2, Study 3 had a substantial proportion of non-Caucasian participants. Because preferences for (non)conformity traits in men and women could plausibly be influenced by culture, the self-reported ethnicity of participants was dichotomized into "Caucasian" and "Other" and included as an exploratory third independent variable. Thus, the experiment was a 2 (participant ethnicity) x 2 (participant gender) x 2 (conformity) between-groups design. Finally, the conformity condition comprised a much higher proportion of single participants (78.6%) than did the nonconformity condition (50.9%). For this reason, we dichotomized participants as either "single" (coded 0) or "other" (coded 1) and included this variable as a covariate.

Materials and Procedure

Participants were informed that they would be completing a study on art preferences and that they - along with other participants in different laboratories - would evaluate a series of images. They were led to believe that the experiment would be conducted via an

interactive ‘chat’ program, where each participant could view other participants’ ratings and comments. As displayed in Figure 2, the program was in fact a series of Microsoft PowerPoint slides, played in succession and designed to look like an interactive program. Prior to the task, participants’ photographs were taken using a digital camera and ostensibly uploaded onto the chat program (although in reality photos were simply deleted).

Four images from the lifespan database of adult facial stimuli (Minear & Park, 2004) were presented in the style of an internet chat-room, and participants were led to believe that they were images of co-participants in the interaction. The images comprised people aged 18-29 who were pre-rated as moderately attractive (5.40 to 6.60 on a 10-point scale of attractiveness). Male participants were presented with 4 female group members; female participants were presented with 4 male group members. Of these, one group member varied in terms of the extent to which they converged with (conformity condition) or differentiated from (nonconformity condition) the other members’ ratings. This group member was the target evaluated at the end of the experiment.

Participants were presented with four black-and-white patterns. After the presentation of each pattern, participants rated it (from 0-10) based on its visual appeal. Participants were always (apparently randomly) assigned to make their evaluations last (i.e., after the other four group members had rated). A *comment* box and a *score* box were included under each group member’s photograph so that participants could view the responses of others before making their own rating. For participants in the nonconformist condition, the target rated two of the patterns as clearly more visually appealing compared to the other group members (on average three points higher), and two of the patterns as clearly less visually appealing compared to the other group members (on average three points lower). Conversely, for participants in the conformist condition, the target gave a score for every pattern that was within 0.3 of the scores of other group members. No comments were provided by the target group member

until the final pattern, at which point the target stated: “Looks like I’m going to have to go against the crowd again!” (nonconformist condition), or “Look, I’m happy to go with the crowd again!” (conformist condition).

Following the pattern evaluation task, participants evaluated the target (seemingly selected at random) on a range of attributes. The target participant’s photo was displayed on the screen, and randomized so that each photo was equally likely to be associated with a conformist or nonconformist target. A summary table of all participant ratings was displayed before the questionnaire was administered, and the target’s ratings were highlighted in red.

Participants rated how interesting (1=*boring*, 7=*interesting*), warm (1=*cold*, 7=*warm*), intelligent (1=*not intelligent*, 7=*intelligent*), likeable (1=*strongly disagree*; 7=*strongly agree*), and friendly (1=*unfriendly*, 7=*friendly*) they found the target. These items were combined into a single scale of *positive regard* (α=.79). To measure *romantic attraction* toward the target, participants rated the extent to which they found the target attractive (1=*unattractive*, 7=*attractive*), and the extent to which they agreed with the statements: “I would like to go on a date with this participant” and “I think this participant would make a desirable long-term romantic partner” (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*; α=.79).

Results and Discussion

A 2 (participant gender) x 2 (conformity) x 2 (ethnicity) ANCOVA on *positive regard* revealed only a main effect of conformity, $F(1,102)=4.33$, $p=.040$, $\eta_p^2=.04$, CI[.018-.736]. Nonconformists ($M=5.02$) were regarded more positively than were conformists ($M=4.65$). Participant gender and ethnicity had no significant effects, either alone or as an interaction with conformity (all Fs<1.29, all ps>.25). This effect was consistent with those found in Studies 1 and 2: Nonconformists were rated more positively than conformists, and this was the case for both male and female participants.

On *romantic attraction*, only an interaction between participant sex and conformity emerged, $F(1,102)=3.96$, $p=.049$, $\eta_p^2=.04$. For men, nonconformist women ($M=4.17$) were seen to be marginally more romantically attractive than conformist women ($M=3.50$), $F(1,102)=3.01$, $p=.086$, CI[-.096-1.431]. In contrast, there was no significant difference between how romantically attractive women found nonconformist ($M=3.27$) and conformist men ($M=3.63$), $F(1,102)=0.99$, $p=.323$, CI[-.354-1.465]. Another way of expressing this interaction is that men rated the nonconformist woman as more romantically attractive than women rated the nonconformist man, $F(1,102)=6.29$, $p=.014$, CI[.187-1.597], but when the target was conformist, men and women were rated equally, $F(1,102)=0.13$, $p=.724$, CI[-.866-.604]. Ethnicity had no effect, either alone or as part of an interaction (all Fs<1.21, ps>.27).

In sum, nonconformists were accorded more positive regard than conformists, an effect that was equally strong for men and women. As such, this effect replicated the main effects on conformity found in Studies 1 and 2. On a measure that was more specifically related to romantic intentions, the previously observed main effect only emerged for men rating a female target: Although female nonconformists were rated as (marginally) more romantically attractive than female conformists, the same was not true when the targets were male. This is the first time that we have seen an effect of conformity moderated by gender. The direction of this effect, however, is the opposite of that suggested by prevailing folk theories of what men and women find attractive. We found that nonconformity is especially attractive, but *only* when men are judging women.

Study 4

Although the methods of Studies 1-3 provide good experimental control over our research question, they were all conducted in laboratory contexts, relying on self-reports of attraction. It is an open question whether these "clean", de-contextualized reports of preference would hold up in the messy cut-and-thrust of real-world mating. Indeed, a critical

indicator of whether people are attracted to conformist or nonconformist people is whether conformists and nonconformists are successful in their romantic endeavors. Therefore, Study 4 was designed to switch perspective, and test whether individual difference variables conceptually associated with conformity and nonconformity predict real-world dating success.

One challenge in Study 4 is to identify individual difference variables that can be used as proxies for a general orientation toward conformity and nonconformity (to our knowledge there is no established scale that directly measures individual differences in willingness to conform). To do this, we treated "conformity" as an umbrella term incorporating themes of willingness to stand out, uniqueness, independence, and willingness to sacrifice self-interest in favor of the collective. We adapted four scales as predictors: measures of independent self-construal and idiocentrism, which focus on independence from situational pressures; and measures of interdependent self-construal and allocentrism, which focus on deference to the wishes of the collective (Singelis, 1994).

Of course, ratings of attractiveness might not reflect more serious romantic intentions, or long-term dating success. It may be that conformity confers short-term mating advantages for women, but long-term net detriments. As such, we used multiple indices of relationship success as criterion variables: casual dating, one-time sexual encounters, casual sex relationships, and committed/romantic relationships.

A further limitation of Studies 1-3 is that they all sample from Western nations. It is well-established that Western cultures tend to have an unusually strong emphasis on individualism and independence (Hofstede, 2001), and so the preference for nonconformity that has emerged in Studies 1-3 may not emerge in other populations. To balance this, Study 4 sampled from both Western cultures (US and UK) and from a collectivist culture (India), where one might expect that the preference for nonconformity found in Studies 1-3 could be

reversed. If it is true that men have a preference for conformist women, it might be expected that this would be particularly evident in a country like India, which is still governed by relatively traditional gender roles. As such, Study 4 provides an especially sensitive test of the notion that men prefer conformist women.

Method

Participants

Indian participants were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk and were compensated $US1 for their time; non-Indian participants were recruited through an online research company. To be eligible, participants had to be either heterosexual or bisexual. Participants who did not fulfil these criteria were not directed to the main survey. There were 821 valid cases (55.7% male; M_{age}=27.67). Of these, 515 were from the US/UK and 306 were from India. Examination of the interaction between the nationality of the sample and the key predictors showed that the pattern of responses was equivalent between UK and US respondents, and so these participants were collapsed into a single "Western" category.

Materials

Independent self-construal. The Independent Self-Construal Scale is a 12-item sub-scale from the Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994). This sub-scale measures the extent to which an individual sees themselves as having "a bounded, unitary, stable self that is separate from social context" (Singelis, 1994, p.581), and was used as a measure of nonconformity. Items from this scale include: "My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me", and "I act the same way no matter who I am with" (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*; α=.86).

Interdependent self-construal. The Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994) assesses the extent to which an individual thinks of themselves as someone who emphasizes connectedness, relationships with others, and fitting in. This 12-item scale was

used as a proxy for conformity. Items from this scale include: “It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group”, and “It is important for me to respect decisions made by the group” (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*; α=.83).

Idiocentrism. The Horizontal Individualism Scale is an 8-item sub-scale from the Vertical and Horizontal Individualism and Collectivism Scale (Singelis et al., 1995). Based on validation studies conducted by Triandis and Gelfand (1998) and following the procedure adopted by Chen, Wasti, and Triandis (2007), this scale was used as a measure of idiocentrism; the personality attribute that corresponds to the cultural attribute of individualism. This scale was designed to measure the extent to which participants thought of themselves as an autonomous individual. Items include: “I often do my own thing”, and “One should live one’s life independently of others” (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*; α=.85).

Allocentrism. Allocentrism is the personality attribute that corresponds to the cultural attribute of collectivism. Based on Triandis and Gelfand (1998), allocentrism was measured using the Vertical Collectivism Scale by Singelis and colleagues (1995). This scale was designed to measure the extent to which participants think of themselves as part of the collective and was used as a measure of conformity. Participants rated the extent to which they agree with 8 statements including: “I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group” and “I hate to disagree with others in my group” (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*; α=.85).

Relationship success. The Dating History Questionnaire (DHQ; Urbaniak & Kilmann, 2006) was developed by to assess relationship success within four contexts: casual dating relationships, one-time sexual encounters, casual sex relationships (i.e., ongoing sexual relationships with little emotional commitment), and committed relationships (i.e., long term romantic relationships). Success in each context was assessed using three items

(the wording of the items reported here is phrased as it would be for a male participant completing the casual sex scale): "About what percentage of the time that you wanted to have an ongoing casual-sex relationship with a woman did she actually agree to participate in this type of relationship?" (1=*less than 20% of the time*; 5=*80% of the time or more*); "Overall, how satisfied would you say you have been with your overall success in terms of being able to engage in casual-sex relationships?" (1=*very dissatisfied*; 5=*very satisfied*); and "Overall, how successful would you rate yourself in terms of being able to engage in casual-sex relationships as compared to most men?" (1=*much less successful than most men*; 5=*much more successful than most men*). All scales were reliable (αs .69 to .83).[1]

Social desirability. The Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale-Short Form C (Reynolds, 1982) was included as a control variable. This 13-item scale includes items such as: "I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake" and "There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone". Participants respond using a true/false scale. For five of the items a "True" response indicates high social desirability and is scored a 1, whereas "False" responses are given 0. For the remaining items it is the "False" responses that indicate high social desirability and are scored a 1. The total is then summed such that high scores indicate highly social desirable responding.

Results and Discussion

Overview of analyses. In the DHQ scales, each of the 3 items included an option for participants to indicate that they had neither desired nor pursued a particular relationship type. Following standard procedure (Urbaniak & Kilmann, 2006), if participants reported that they had not desired or pursued a particular type of relationship they were excluded from that analysis. This resulted in the deletion of 270 participants from the casual dating analyses, 454 participants from the one-time sexual encounter analyses, 382 participants from the casual

sex analyses, and 181 participants from the committed relationship analyses. This left between 367 and 640 valid responses for each analysis.

Separate regressions were conducted for each measure of relationship success. One cluster of analyses examined the predictive role of independent and interdependent self-construals, with both predictors entered simultaneously so we could disentangle the unique predictive power of each, and so interactions between the two types of self-construal can be detected. The second cluster of analyses used the same strategy to simultaneously examine the predictive role of allocentrism and idiocentrism.

In each regression, the main effects were included in the first step. This included main effects of gender (female=0, male=1), culture (Western=0, Indian=1), age, social desirability, and the (centered) predictor variables. Two-way interaction terms were added in the second step and the three-way interaction term was added in the final step. Results are summarized in Tables 3 and 4, but because of the complexity of the analyses these tables summarize only the focal effects: the main effects of our proxies for conformity and nonconformity, as well as the respective interactions with participant gender. [2] Significant effects are highlighted in bold.

Conclusions. As can be seen in Tables 3 and 4, people who displayed nonconformist personality traits also reported higher levels of romantic achievement and satisfaction. In 7 out of 8 analyses, proxies of nonconformity (independent self-construal and idiocentrism) were positively related to relationship success. In contrast, proxies of conformity (interdependent self-construal and allocentrism) predicted success in just 2 of 8 analyses. Thus, the relationship between success and nonconformity mirrored the preferences observed in Studies 1-3.

Of more direct relevance to the current question, gender moderated the effect of our predictors on 3 of the 8 analyses (in each case gender X allocentrism interactions). But the effects contradict the assumed wisdom that conformity would be especially attractive in

women. Analysis of simple slopes showed that in each case there was a positive effect of allocentrism for male participants (casual sex: β=.20, *p*=.004; committed relationships: β=.20, *p*=.001; casual dating: β=.13, *p*=.035). For female participants, in contrast, the effect of allocentrism was non-significant (all *p*s>.730). Separate analyses conducted for male and female participants (reported in the notes to Tables 3 and 4) confirm that there was no evidence that traits traditionally associated with conformity led to greater relationship success for women (average effects were roughly equal for men and women). Indeed, there was some evidence for the notion that it is men who are more likely to benefit from allocentrism. It should be noted that the pattern of results was largely independent of culture: on no occasion was there a significant interaction between culture and gender.

An important distinction in evolutionary psychology concerns long-term and short-term mating (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Li & Kenrick, 2006), and it seems theoretically consistent that the only main effect of interdependence was found in the context of (long-term) committed relationships. When predicting committed relationship success, allocentrism also featured in a significant interaction with culture, β=.13, *p*=.045, CI[.028-.436]. Consistent with cultural expectations, allocentrism predicted committed relationship success in India, β=.22, *p*=.001, but not in the West, β=.04, *p*=.47. Note, however, that the positive effects of conformity traits on committed relationship success seems to be as strong (or stronger) for men as for women. It is therefore possible that the communal qualities that reflect conformity make for happy long-term relationships irrespective of gender. Further, the positive effects of *nonconformity* were found across all four dimensions of dating, suggesting that the general bias toward selection of nonconformist mates is context-independent.

One side-point to note is that the interaction between independent and interdependent self-construals was significant for one-time sexual encounters, β=.12, *p*=.030, CI[.015-.255], casual sex, β=.15, *p*=.003, CI[.062-.311], and casual dating, β=.10, *p*=.017, CI[.027-.225]. In

each case the pattern of results was the same. Where interdependence was high, the relationship between independence and success was positive and significant (one-time sexual encounters: β=.35, *p*=.001; casual sex: β=.25, *p*=.011; casual dating: β=.26, *p*=.001). Where interdependence was low, the relationship between independence and success was non-significant (all *p*s>.26). A similar interaction between idiocentrism and allocentrism was significant for casual sex, β=.15, *p*=.010, CI[.047-.282], and casual dating, β=.11, *p*=.035, CI[.011-.214]. Where allocentrism was high, the relationship between idiocentrism and success was positive and significant (casual sex: β=.29, *p*=.004; casual dating: β=.20, *p*=.020). Where allocentrism was low, the relationship between independence and success was non-significant (all *p*s>.82). In sum, then, nonconformity was associated with relationship success, but in many cases this was only true when it was balanced by an ability to be sensitive to contextual influences and pressures. Although this was not predicted, it is broadly consistent with the finding that dominance is associated with increased attractiveness for males, but only for those who are also agreeable (Jensen-Campbell, Graziano, & West, 1995).

In sum, traits associated with nonconformity were typically more predictive of relationship success than those related to conformity. More importantly for the current research question, there was no evidence that traits traditionally associated with conformity led to greater relationship success for women (and some evidence for the notion that it is men who are more likely to benefit from conformity). Of course Study 4 is a correlational study, with all the interpretational challenges that this implies. The reverse causal path seems plausible: Dating success may make people more nonconformist. Alternatively, it is possible that a third variable is driving both qualities of nonconformity and dating success. For example, people who are highly nonconformist may exert more effort in the dating context. But to be able to defend the hypothesis that men prefer conformist partners and women prefer

nonconformist partners, one would have to make the case that (a) the alternative pathways overwhelm the direct negative influence of nonconformity on attractiveness, creating a positive overall relationship, and that (b) the alternative pathways only distort the relationship for women (not for men). This is conceivable, but unlikely.

Study 5

In Study 5 we sought to complete our research by taking into account the dyadic nature of romantic interactions. Accordingly, we designed a study that could account for both actor and partner. Dyadic data is costly and time-intensive to collect. However, peer/partner nominations can overcome these constraints, while still assessing real-life actor-partner effects. In Study 5 participants judged the level of conformity in both their current and ex-partners. They also rated their level of attraction and attachment to these targets. If Studies 1-4 are reliable, one would predict that the proposed series of results would emerge in an actor-partner setting; that is, there should be a positive association between participants' ratings of their partners' levels of nonconformity and their desire for (or attachment to) that partner. Furthermore, one would expect that this relationship should be of comparable magnitude for men and women.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk and were compensated $US1. To be eligible, participants had to be either heterosexual or bisexual. There were 310 valid cases (59.7% male; M_{age}=31.95). Of these, 294 could identify an ex-partner, and 243 had a current partner.

Materials

Conformity and nonconformity. In Study 5, to provide targeted measures of orientation toward conformity versus nonconformity, we designed our own 11-item scale.

The scale incorporated 6 items that tapped into conformity (e.g., “Adjusts how s/he acts to fit in with others”; “He/she tries to be as normal as possible”; “In a social situation she/he would conform to fit in”) and 5 items that tapped into nonconformity (e.g., “Often expresses opinions that are different to those of other people”; “He/she tries to stand out by being unconventional”; “Often behaves in a way that is different to others”). All items used 7-point scales (1=*not at all*; 7=*very much*).

These items were responded to twice: once on behalf of their current partner, and once on behalf of their “most recent ex-partner”. We initially envisaged the scales to be independent of each other, but the correlations were high (*r*s>.44, *p*s<.001) and factor analysis suggested a single-factor solution. Thus, we reversed the nonconformist items and created a single 11-item scale such that high scores indicated high levels of nonconformity. This scale was reliable (αs>.84).

Attraction for target. Participants evaluated their current partner on a 5-item scale (1=*not at all*; 7=*very much*). Items included: “I am attracted to my partner”; “I have intense positive feelings about my partner”; and “I love my partner” (α=.93). These five items were then repeated in relation to their ex-partner (α=.91). To minimize the extent to which the ratings of the ex-partner were contaminated by bitterness about the break-up we measured and controlled for “who broke up with who” (1=*It was entirely my ex-partner's decision*; 5=*It was entirely my decision*) and how upset they were when the relationship broke up (1=*not at all*; 7=*extremely*). Note, however, that the effects were the same regardless of whether or not we controlled for these items.

Results and Discussion

Moderated regressions were performed with participant sex (1=male; -1=female) and nonconformity (centered) entered at the first step, and the interaction term entered at the second step. Participants’ attraction ratings of their current partner were unrelated to

nonconformity ratings, β=.05, *p*=.41, CI[-.049-.191]. [3] However, participants reported feeling more attracted to their ex-partner the more nonconformist their ex-partner was rated to be, β=.18, *p*=.002, CI[.090-.369]. Sex did not significantly moderate the relationship between nonconformity and attraction toward either their current partners, β=-.09, *p*=.16, or their ex-partners, β=.03, *p*=.65. Separate analyses across participant sex showed that, averaged across the two targets, qualities of nonconformity predicted attraction at β=.16 for female participants and β=.09 for male participants.

The results broadly converged with expectations, and with the results of Studies 1-4. Participants were more attracted to their ex-partners the more they judged their ex-partners to be nonconformist. This effect was non-significant when making judgments about current partners, suggesting (perhaps not surprisingly) that conformity traits were swamped by other considerations in determining the extent to which people report love and attraction for their significant other. But the finding that is most relevant to the current question was the fact that the effects were not reliably moderated by participant gender. Statistically, men and women showed comparable associations between their judgments of (non)conformity traits in romantic partners and the extent to which they reported feeling attracted to those partners.

General Discussion

Studies 1-5 converged on the conclusion that nonconformity is more attractive than conformity for women *and* men. We investigated the issue through diverse methods: we asked people to report what they found most attractive (stated preferences), asked them to choose from nonconformist and conformist potential mates (revealed preferences), and asked them to report on current and ex-partners (actor-partner effects). Nonconformity was seen to be relatively attractive (Study 1), and opposite-sex targets were rated as more attractive when they were described as nonconformist (Study 2), or when they acted in a nonconformist way (Study 3). Furthermore, participants who reported possessing qualities typically associated

with nonconformity (i.e., independent self-construal and idiocentrism) generally reported being more successful in sex, dating, and relationships (Study 4). Participants also reported more love and attraction for an ex-partner the more nonconformist they were remembered to be (Study 5).

Of more relevance to the current question, however, is whether these main effects were moderated by gender. In the majority of analyses they were not: the qualities of nonconformity that "work" for men in terms of attracting romantic partners tend to "work" equally well for women. But where effects of (non)conformity *did* have different effects for men and women, it was in the reverse direction to the assumed wisdom. Specifically, nonconformity was seen to be an especially attractive quality in women (Study 3), and allocentric orientations were more likely to be beneficial in dating success for men than for women (Study 4). In short, there is mixed support for the assumed wisdom that women prefer nonconformist men, and no support at all for the notion that men prefer conformist women.[4]

If this is the case, then why did the women in Griskevicius and colleagues' (2006) study behave in a more conformist way after a mating prime? One answer can be extrapolated from Studies 1 and 2: Although men accurately predict that women prefer nonconformist partners, women mistakenly believe that men prefer conformist partners. So when faced with a mating prime, women behave in a way that they (mistakenly) presume will attract partners. In short, women buy into a stereotype of what men like in women, a stereotype that appears to be a myth.

The overall pattern of results emerged across multiple paradigms, using multiple conceptualizations of conformity. (Non)conformity was variously operationalized in terms of standing out from others, wearing non-conventional clothes, being independent, being unique, resisting convention, and resisting pressure from others. People evaluated these behaviors in abstract contexts (Study 1), in dating profile contexts (Study 2), in ostensibly

live, interactive, small-group contexts (Study 3) and in dyadic contexts (Study 5). Studies 2-3, based on thin, slice-of-life perceptions, were balanced with retrospective accounts of behaviors (Study 4). Quasi-experiments and correlations (Studies 1, 4 and 5) were complemented by controlled experiments (Studies 2 and 3). Outcome measures included perceptions of attractiveness (Studies 1-5), short-term dating intentions (Studies 2-4), and long-term "settling down" intentions and behaviors (Studies 3 and 4). Exclusively Western samples (Studies 1, 2 and 5) were complemented by a heterogeneous ethnic sample (Study 3) and by a cross-cultural sample (Study 4). Across all these methods, contexts, and measures, there was no evidence that men preferred conformity in women.

Griskevicius and colleagues (2006) advanced an evolutionary argument for why, when faced with a mating prime, their male participants behaved in a less conformist fashion and their female participants behaved in a more conformist fashion. This argument maintained that nonconformity is advantageous for males because (a) it is important for men to distinguish themselves from rivals in terms of attracting the attention of potential mates, and (b) nonconformity implies social dominance, willingness to take risks, independence, and assertiveness, all factors that signal good earning potential and higher social status (Brauer & Bhouris, 2006). For women, conversely, conformity is advantageous because men value partners who promote group cohesion (Griskevicius et al., 2006).

Although the current data do not correspond to this presumption, it is important to note that this does not rule out an underlying evolutionary mechanism. Rather, it could simply mean that the evolutionary forces are distal and have been overwhelmed by more proximal social forces; that the distal and proximal forces are intertwined so closely that they can no longer be separated; or that we are operating in evolutionarily novel conditions leading to some changes in what preference mechanisms are producing as output (Kenrick, Li, & Butner, 2003). This paper does not attempt to referee between the evolutionary and

social role accounts, due to an acknowledgement that both theories recognize the interaction between evolved dispositions and social roles and structures (Archer, 1996; Eagly & Wood, 1999; Schaller, 1997).

It is possible, of course, that the assumption that men prefer conformist women *used* to be based in fact. A cursory glance at early twentieth century books on etiquette, courting, and "properness" paints a consistent picture: Women were expected to be submissive, modest, subdued, agreeable, and "supportive" of their husbands in terms of attitudes and behavior. Society expected "good" women to be background players to their husbands, and to violate that prescription by standing out, being different, or disagreeing with others would have resulted in social censure. It is not surprising that the assumption that men preferred relative conformity in women took hold, because the societal expectation for women to be conformist had been entrenched in the cultural psyche over centuries.

Since World War II, however, there have been two major sociocultural movements that challenged the notion that being conformist is a prescriptive expectation of women. First, the rapid acceleration of the feminist movement means that the social expectations of women (and men) have radically altered. A centrepiece of this movement is the proposition that women, like men, should be allowed to display agentic, competent, disagreeable, and dominant qualities without fear of social censure. Second, since the 1960s there has been a rapid growth of what some call the "cult of individualism" (Baumeister, 1991). Increasingly, the notion of compromising one's individual vision to "fit in with the crowd" is seen as immature and a sign of incomplete self-actualization (Bellah et al., 1985; Wallach & Wallach, 1983). Instead, children and adults alike are taught to do what is right for them; to hold firm in the face of peer pressure; to "let one's light shine". The word "conformist" has an increasingly pejorative tone to it, and popular culture celebrates nonconformity and independence from others as heroic and courageous (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004).

In some ways, then, the current data should not be surprising at all: If society tells us all that independence from social pressures is a sign of integrity and strong character, then why would we expect anything other than a preference for nonconformity in our boyfriends *and* girlfriends, husbands *and* wives? The more slippery question is why women should believe the opposite; that is, why do women persist with the notion that men prefer conformist women?

One possible answer is that we are witnessing an example of cultural learning that has been slow to update with changing realities. Evolutionary theorizing by Boyd and Richerson (Boyd, Richerson, & Henrich, 2011; Richerson & Boyd, 2005) helps articulate why people might adopt cultural beliefs or practices that might contradict real environmental cues. They argue that the extraordinary ability of humans to expand and adapt to different geographical realities is not a function of exceptional cognitive ability or an enhanced ability for individuals to learn from environmental cues. Rather, they posit that our success in thriving in novel and hostile conditions is linked fundamentally to our ability to learn from others (a "cultural niche" hypothesis). Furthermore, this reliance on cultural learning is most pronounced when learning from environmental information is costly or inaccurate. Adaptive packages of cultural learning might be internalized or imitated even if individuals do not understand why elements are included in the design, or cannot assess whether alternative designs would be superior. In this way, cultural learning may trump environmental cues, first-hand experience, and personal intuition. In the context of changing contingencies then (e.g., where ideas about what is attractive in a woman change), the reliance on cultural learning can become maladaptive, leading to anachronistic mythologies about what men and women want.

In short, old cultural assumptions are slow to die, even when they are no longer grounded in reality. For both men and women romantic success and relationship satisfaction are core factors that determine health, happiness and wellbeing (Dush & Amato, 2005). This

means that such cultural assumptions, when wrong, have the potential to have a raft of negative downstream consequences. In this case, for women, the consequence may be that they continue to adjust their behavior in front of men in a way that is counter-productive and impairs, rather than promotes, relationship success. Like the women in Griskevicius and colleagues' (2006) study, they may respond to dating contexts by emphasizing conformity, when they would be better served by being different and standing out.

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Notes

1. The original DHQ also contains items designed to test the overall quantity of success (e.g., how many casual sex partners they have had over the last month). We were mindful, however, of not confounding attractiveness with effort, and so have focused on items that are not explicitly quantity-based.

2. Age and social desirability were included as control variables, but the conclusions were the same regardless of whether or not they were included in analyses. Although the main effects of gender and nationality were not of theoretical interest, note that women reported more success than men on three of the outcome variables; and Indians reported greater success in committed relationships than Westerners.

3. Analysis of individual items within the attraction scale revealed only one significant effect for current partners, and interestingly it was on the item most central to the scale. Participants endorsed the item "I am attracted to my partner" to a greater extent the more their current partner was perceived to be nonconformist, β=.15, p=.022, CI[.046-.273].

4. It seems unlikely that the failure to support the original hypothesis can be credited to lack of statistical power. In each experiment there were >25 participants in each cell, and the two correlational studies had a collective N>1100. Furthermore, gender often *did* moderate the effects of conformity; just in a different direction to the original hypothesis.

Table 1

Study 1: Mean Level of Attraction to Conformity Characteristics in Potential Romantic Partners

Context	Male Participants	Female Participants
Own preferences	3.47 (0.63)	3.35 (0.54)
Beliefs about the preferences of men	4.13 (0.71)	3.95 (0.54)
Beliefs about the preferences of women	3.68 (0.59)	3.81 (0.61)

Note. Standard deviations are given in parentheses. Higher scores indicate greater preference for conformity characteristics.

Table 2

Study 2 Desirability of Conformist and Nonconformist Targets (Opposite-Sex Targets Only)

Measure	Conformist Target	Nonconformist Target
Males' own preferences	4.49 (0.82)	4.70 (0.83)
Males' beliefs about the preferences of other males	4.82 (0.87)	4.65 (0.78)
Females' beliefs about the preferences of males	4.88 (0.72)	4.79 (0.81)
Females' own preferences	4.10 (0.69)	4.28 (0.78)
Females' beliefs about the preference of other females	4.68 (0.61)	4.59 (0.63)
Males' beliefs about the preferences of females	4.40 (0.48)	4.34 (0.55)

Note. Standard deviations are given in parentheses. Higher scores indicate target is more desirable.

Table 3

Relationship success as a function of gender and self-construal: Study 4

Predictor	β	*p*	*CI* 95%
Casual dating relationships			
Independent self-construal	**.21**	**<.001**	**.134, .344**
Interdependent self-construal	.06	.272	-.055, .174
Gender X Independence	.05	.540	-.179, .292
Gender X Interdependence	.09	.311	-.152, .357
One-time sexual encounters			
Independent self-construal	**.14**	**.026**	**.024, .262**
Interdependent self-construal	.07	.311	-.065, .194
Gender X Independence	.03	.780	-.201, .269
Gender X Interdependence	.08	.455	-.144, .381
Casual sex			
Independent self-construal	**.16**	**.005**	**.051, .294**
Interdependent self-construal	.07	.246	-.038, .197
Gender X Independence	.09	.327	-.114, .406
Gender X Interdependence	.09	.365	-.173, .377
Committed relationships			
Independent self-construal	**.10**	**.023**	**.013, .210**
Interdependent self-construal	**.09**	**.047**	**.002, .231**
Gender X Independence	.09	.176	-.058, .344
Gender X Interdependence	.02	.768	-.213, .262

Note: The average main effect of independence on success was β = .15 for men; β = .13 for women. The average main effect of interdependence was β = .08 for men; β = .04 for women.

Table 4

Relationship success as a function of gender, idiocentrism, and allocentrism: Study 4

Predictor	β	*p*	*CI* 95%
Casual dating relationships			
Idiocentrism	**.11**	**.011**	**.027, .215**
Allocentrism	**.11**	**.025**	**.015, .185**
Gender X Idiocentrism	.01	.841	-.182, .217
Gender X Allocentrism	**.13**	**.084**	**-.025, .324**
One-time sexual encounters			
Idiocentrism	**.11**	**.049**	**.001, .199**
Allocentrism	.04	.564	-.059, .122
Gender X Idiocentrism	.01	.932	-.205, .234
Gender X Allocentrism	.12	.204	-.067, .317
Casual sex			
Idiocentrism	.08	.129	-.016, .182
Allocentrism	.08	.146	-.024, .167
Gender X Idiocentrism	-.03	.660	-.259, .148
Gender X Allocentrism	**.21**	**.012**	**.052, .444**
Committed relationships			
Idiocentrism	**.11**	**.006**	**.044, .228**
Allocentrism	.07	.131	-.022, .164
Gender X Idiocentrism	-.03	.636	-.251, .137
Gender X Allocentrism	**.14**	**.028**	**.014, .386**

Note: The average main effect of idiocentrism on success was β = .08 for men; β = .12 for women. The average main effect of allocentrism was β = .16 for men; β = -.02 for women.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Two of twenty dating profiles participants received in Study 2.

Figure 2. Interactive chat and stimulus presentation screenshot: Study 3.

PROFILE 1

Name: Jess **Occupation:** University student
Birthday: 31st March **Nationality:** Australian

Jess has moved to Brisbane to study at university, and lives in a share-house with 3 friends she met in one of her courses. Her father and mother are both high school teachers, and she has one younger sister who is in grade 12. Jess likes to stand out from the crowd, and enjoys expressing different opinions from her friends, as well as making decisions for herself. In group situations she is not easily convinced to change her ideas, and often does her own thing rather than fit in with the group.

PROFILE 2

Name: Amy **Occupation:** University student
Birthday: 12th Nov **Nationality:** Australian

Amy has lived in Brisbane all her life and now goes to university a few suburbs away from her childhood home. She has three brothers, and they were all brought up mainly by her mother, as her father is an airline pilot. Amy has always liked hanging out with her family and friends, and likes being part of the group. She is quite happy to go along with what others are doing, and to change her opinions and preferences rather than cause too much fuss.

071

score

5.8

Comments:

008

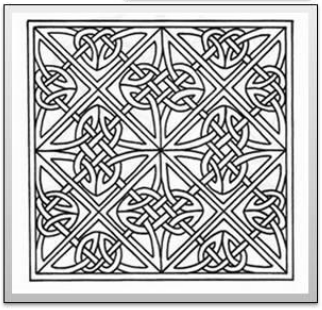
score

2.6

Comments:

Looks like I'm going to have to go against the crowd again!

File name stimulus_4.jpg



036

score

5.6

Comments:

003

score

5.1

Comments:

Instructions