HOW GENDER ROLE STEREOTYPES AFFECT
ATTRACTION IN AN ONLINE
DATING SCENARIO

by

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ABSTRACT

Today, it is not uncommon to meet someone and begin a romantic relationship on the internet. Meeting on a dating website differs from meeting in person because a dating profile is created first that allows others to review potential romantic partners. Few studies have examined romantic attraction within an online dating context, and even fewer have examined how gender roles may influence attraction. Two studies were conducted. Study 1 (N = 447, 49.4% female) examined the effects of gender role congruence and physical attractiveness on romantic interest. Study 2 (N = 234, 100% female) examined if the effects of gender roles and physical attractiveness extended to changes in women's self-presentation. In both studies participants viewed online dating profiles that varied in their physical attractiveness and adherence to gender role norms. Study 1 results indicated that both men and women prefer attractive and gender role incongruent dating partners over average looking and gender role congruent. For Study 2, profile gender role congruence or incongruence did not appear to have an effect on women's self-presentation; however, there was a significant increase in self-reports of masculine traits over the sessions disregarding profile gender role congruence. This may suggest that being in a dating situation could increase women's self-presentation of masculine traits. The results of these studies go against current major theories and demonstrate a need for these theories to be altered to accommodate for the way gender roles truly play a role in our society today.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

α	Cronbach's index of internal consistency
df	Degrees of freedom: number of values free to vary after certain restrictions have been placed on the data
F	Fisher's F ratio: A ration of two variances
M	Mean: the sum of a set of measurements divided by the number of measurements in the set
N	Total sample size
η_p^2	Partial Eta-squared
p	Probability associated with the occurrence under the null hypothesis of a value as extreme as or more extreme than the observed value
r	Pearson product-moment correlation
t	Computed value of t test
$<$	Less than
$=$	Equal to

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. STUDY 1 METHODOLOGY	10
3. STUDY 1 RESULTS	18
4. STUDY 1 SUMMARY	22
5. STUDY 2 METHODOLOGY	24
6. STUDY 2 RESULTS	30
7. STUDY 2 SUMMARY	35
8. GENERAL DISCUSSION	36
REFERENCES	41
APPENDIX	45

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Examples of Profile Characteristics	16
Table 2. Participant Gender x Profile Attractiveness and Participant Gender x Profile Gender Role: Means and Standard Deviations	19
Table 3. Profile Attractiveness x Profile Gender Role x Participant Gender: Means and Standard Deviations	21
Table 4. Pleasant Activities List Means	31
Table 5. Pleasant Activities List MANOVA	31
Table 6. Personal Attributes Questionnaire Means	32
Table 7. Personal Attributes Questionnaire MANOVA	32
Table 8. Pleasant Activities List Means – Singles Only	34
Table 9. Personal Attributes Questionnaire Means – Singles Only	34

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Establishing a stable romantic relationship is a highly salient goal for college students as they make the transition from adolescence to adulthood (Arnett, 2000). This study examines how two attributes of a potential dating partner affect romantic interests, physical attractiveness and gender role congruency, in an online dating scenario. Gender roles are relatively unexplored in research on attraction even though they are thought to impact other important life decisions like career choices (Park, Young, Troisi & Pinkus, 2011; Diekmann, Clark, Johnston, Brown & Steinberg, 2011). In addition, there is a clear gap in the literature when it comes to gender roles in online dating. Incorporating the Similarity and Complementarity Hypotheses, the interactive effects of physical attractiveness and adherence to gender role norms on romantic attraction are explored in an online dating context. In addition, the study examines if the effects of gender roles and physical attractiveness extend to changes in self-presentation.

Online dating is more popular now than ever and is becoming a mainstream phenomenon. Cacioppo, Cacioppo, Gonzaga, Ogburn and VanderWeele (2013) reported in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that more than one-third of marriages in America now begin on-line. Regardless of whether a couple first meets face-to-face or online, most relationships begin when there is a mutual romantic attraction between the two individuals. Before turning to the issue of gender roles, physical attraction, and online dating, the major theories of romantic attraction will be briefly reviewed.

Literature Review

Factors Affecting Romantic Attraction

There are two main hypotheses for romantic attraction: the Similarity Hypothesis and the Complementarity Hypothesis. The Similarity Hypothesis indicates that people are attracted to others who share many characteristics and interests in common with them (Byrne, 1971).

Important dimensions of similarity in romantic partners include physical appearance, social/cultural background, personality, interests/activities, communication/social skills, religious background, political orientation and socioeconomic status (Buss & Barnes, 1986; Lydon, Jamieson, & Zanna, 1988). Perceived similarity between partners in a relationship is associated with higher relationship quality (Morry, Kito & Ortiz, 2011).

Research on the Similarity Hypothesis must deal with a conundrum. When people initially meet, the encounter is usually brief and not long enough to learn about the degree of similarity shared between the two individuals. Therefore, it would be best to test the similarity hypothesis after two people have cultivated a relationship. The problem is that over a period of time attraction can cause the individuals to alter themselves so that they might become more similar (Byrne, Ervin & Lamberth, 1970; Curran, 1975). It would be advantageous to test this hypothesis in an online dating context because individuals create personality and interest dating profiles before coming into contact with each other. Thus, the beginning of forming a romantic relationship is different in an online context, as compared to a face-to-face context, because individuals have access to dating profiles, and it is easier to assess the similarities between two people.

The second major hypothesis concerning romantic attraction is the Complementarity Hypothesis (Antill, 1983; D'Agostino & Day, 1991). This hypothesis points out that people are

attracted to others who have compatible qualities to their own. Thus, people may be attracted because of opposing needs or possibly for role-fulfillment (Antill, 1983; Dijkstra & Barelds, 2008).

Gender role influence on romantic attraction includes elements of similarity and complementarity. As noted earlier, gender roles have received little attention in previous research on romantic attraction, but there is some evidence that they are important to consider.

Gender Roles

Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) identifies different socially accepted roles for women (e.g. domestic chores, raising children) and men (e.g. supporting the family financially). These gender role expectancies span across time and generations and impact the social behavior of each gender (Eagly, 1987, 1997; Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000). Consequently, the behavior of men and women seems to be strongly influenced by stereotypical, traditional gender roles. Social Role Theory proposes that the different social roles of men and women are the foundation for the differences in what men and women seek in a long term partner. Eastwick, Eagly, Glick, Johannesen-Schmidt, Fiske, Blum and Volpato (2006) state:

According to this social role logic, within the conventional family system based on a male provider and a female homemaker, women can maximize their outcomes by seeking a mate who is likely to be successful in the wage earning role—in short, a good provider. In turn, men can maximize their outcomes by seeking a mate who is likely to be successful in the domestic role—in short, a good homemaker and child caretaker who will allow men to devote their attention to work outside the home (p. 604).

Gender role adherence affects a person's social attractiveness, and both men and women are considered more socially attractive when they adhere to stereotypical gender roles (Shaffer &

Johnson, 1980). Preference for a partner who adheres to traditional gender roles spans across different cultures. In a nine nation research study, those participants who had a traditional gender ideology (attitudes and beliefs based on their culture) strongly preferred more gender stereotyped partners (e.g. women homemakers and male breadwinners; Eastwick et al., 2006).

The Complementarity Hypothesis also applies to the adoption of gender roles (Orlofsky, 1982). For example, D'Agostino and Day (1991) found that when college students were asked about attributes they seek in a partner, they indicated that they generally preferred those attributes that were complementary to their own and adhered to gender stereotypes. For example a logical male may prefer an intuitive woman; both individuals would be adhering to the stereotypical gender roles and those traits are complementary.

The Henry, Helm and Cruz (2013) review of a list of eighteen traits that college students look for in a partner from 1939 to 2011 provides further evidence for the Complementarity Hypothesis for gender roles. Throughout the years men valued physical attractiveness, health, and domestic skills in women. In a complementary fashion, women over the years placed the highest value on the man's breadwinning abilities (Henry et al., 2013). Consistent with Social Role Theory, individuals who hold traditional gender ideology will prefer a partner that completes a traditional homemaker-breadwinner division of labor (Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000).

Thus, despite the lack of research on gender roles in online dating, there is evidence that they could be important predictors of attraction. Physical attractiveness, in contrast, has received a great deal of attention in previous research and is known to be an important factor in online dating. It provides a point of comparison for the manipulation of gender roles in this study and the effects of gender role congruence on interest in physically attractive people will be explored.

Physical Attractiveness

There is a large amount of research on physical attractiveness as a predictor of attraction. On one hand research suggests that physically attractive individuals are more desired as romantic partners compared to those who are less physically attractive (Feingold, 1990), and the physical attractiveness of a potential dating partner is the best overall predictor of attraction (Luo & Zhang, 2009; Curran, 1973). On the other hand, the Matching Hypothesis proposes that individuals will tend to choose partners that are of approximately equal attractiveness (Berscheid, Dion, Walster & Walster, 1971; Curran, 1973; Walster, Aronson, Abrahams and Rottman, 1966).

However, this is an area in which men and women might differ, with men valuing physical attractiveness much more than women (Buss, 1989; Hitsch & Hortaçsu & Ariely, 2010). For example, in online contexts, men place more value on the woman's picture than the text of her profile, but women give approximately equal value to the picture and profile text (Hitsch, Hortaçsu, & Ariely, 2010; de Vries, 2010). However, Luo and Zhang (2009) point out that in face-to-face dating situations, men and women do not differ in how physical attractiveness affects their choices. Others have concluded that men generally choose partners based on physical attractiveness, and women choose partners primarily based on social status, but only when considering a long term relationship (Li, Yong, Tov, Sng, Fletcher, Valentine & Balliet, 2013). When looking for short-term relationships, physical attractiveness is found to be most important for both sexes (Li et al., 2013).

One of the goals of the current study is to determine if gender roles can actually discount the effects of a physical attractiveness (if the person is gender role incongruent) or enhance

someone who is of average attractiveness (if they are gender role congruent). If gender roles do have this kind of effect, this may influence how people present themselves in a dating situation.

Self-Presentation

According to Leary's (1995) impression management model, social desirability goals are of major importance to most everyone. If some attributes are known to make someone appear to be more socially desirable, then a person is highly likely to change his or her self-presentation. However, there is a limit to how much a self-image can be enhanced; a person must be accountable for the alterations and be able to justify them. If that limit is exceeded, a person would just appear to be a liar.

Walther's (1996) hyperpersonal model of computer mediated communication (CMC) extends impression management to online interactions, suggesting that CMC allows people to be more aware of and reflect on their self-presentation. This model also proposes that individuals edit their self-presentation without the limits of accountability that Leary mentioned to the extent of the likelihood that the individual must answer to reality in the future. In other words, a person could present him or herself any way he or she wanted in CMC if he or she never expect to have a face-to-face (FtF) interaction. However, if the person does plan to have a FtF interaction, then there should be hardly any difference compared to the limits of his accountability on a personal level (Walther, 1996; Guadagno, Okdie & Kruse, 2012).

In contrast, some evidence indicates that self-presentation via CMC on a dating website differs from self-presentation in person, at least initially. Dating profiles are unique because a person generally promotes themselves first before they have any idea who they may later have FtF contact (Fullick, 2013). Generally everyone wants to make a good first impression, but it is important for online daters to keep in mind the fine line between enhancing their authentic selves

and misrepresenting who they really are by creating a “hyperpersonal” dating profile (Leary, 1995; Walther, 1996). These issues are increasingly important with the growth of online dating.

Online Dating

According to a 2013 Pew Research Center study, 11% of American adults have tried out dating online. An important issue for research on the topic of online dating is how it compares to traditional face-to-face approaches with respect to relationship quality. Considerable evidence exists that relationships that begin online have an equal or better chance of longevity than those that begin in person. Approximately 1 in 3 online daters who were looking for a serious relationship report having been successful in finding what they were looking for (Rosen, Cheever, Cummings & Felt, 2008). McKenna, Green, and Gleason (2002) drew several important conclusions from a multi-study investigation of online dating. First, almost three quarters (71%) of romantic relationships that started online were reported as being closer and stronger compared to relationships that began face-to-face and were still together two years later. The stability of relationships that began online was comparable to relationships that began face-to-face. Second, intimacy developed at a faster rate than in a face-to-face setting. Third, the quality of the interactions online was more predictive of liking compared to face-to-face interactions in which liking was determined by more superficial factors (e.g. physical attractiveness). McKenna et al. propose that people who met online may like each other more than they would have if they had met in person probably because they got to know each other better through their online interactions.

The major principles of attraction, similarity and physical attractiveness, are also relevant in online dating. Some online dating websites match their members according to similarities shared between the two individuals (eHarmony.com, Match.com, OkCupid.com). Married

couples who met online through eHarmony.com had similar personalities and interests before they ever met (Gonzaga, Carter & Buckwalter, 2010). Perceived similarity between partners in a relationship is associated with higher relationship quality (Morry et al., 2011). However, none of this would come to be if the individuals did not like each other's profile pictures from the beginning. Pictures of the individual are very important characteristics in an online dating profile (Hitsch et al., 2010). As noted earlier, men may place greater importance on physical attractiveness conveyed through pictures compared to women (de Vries, 2010; Hitsch et al. 2010).

Evidence that men's traditional gender role as "provider" is a factor in the potential mate selection in on online dating websites is limited. Hitsch et al., (2010) examined the dating profile characteristics associated with men's and women's decisions to make contact with another person. Men showed little preference for a potential partner's occupation; however, women's preferences were strongly influenced by a potential partner's occupation, preferring men with higher status occupations. Similarly, although both men and women preferred partners with higher incomes over those with lower incomes, this preference is more striking in women than men. This partially supports Social Role Theory's prediction that men are socially expected to be the breadwinners.

The Present Study

It is not yet known how stereotypical gender roles affect attraction in online dating situations. However, it has been shown repeatedly that physical attractiveness is a major determinant of initial romantic attraction. The current study examines the effects of gender role congruence, physical attractiveness, and how the two affect each other. Contributions to the Similarity and Complementarity Hypotheses are made by examining participants' attraction to

those who are similar or complementary on these traits. Interactive effects of physical attractiveness and gender role congruence are also explored. A possible outcome is that dating profiles that are attractive, but gender role incongruent may be liked less than those that are attractive and gender congruent. Furthermore, effects of gender roles and physical attractiveness that may extend to changes in self-presentation are examined. This contributes to Social Role Theory by determining how important gender stereotypes are when it comes to attraction in an online dating scenario. Two studies will be conducted. In Study 1, gender role congruence and physical attractiveness are examined. Study 2 further examines the effects of gender roles on self-presentation, specifically in women.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY 1 METHODOLOGY

Study 1 Overview and Design

The purpose of Study 1 was to investigate how physical attractiveness and gender role congruence affect romantic interest. This study measured participants' interest in dating profiles when gender role congruence and physical attractiveness were manipulated. To achieve this goal, a 2 (Participant Sex) x 2 (Profile Gender Role Congruence) x 2 (Profile Physical Attractiveness) research design was developed. Profile Gender Role Congruence and Attractiveness were within subjects variables. The dependent variable was participant's interest in the profile. Four hypotheses were examined:

Hypothesis 1: Men and women will prefer attractive profiles over average profiles, but the effect will be greater for men than women. This is consistent with research by Hitsch et al., 2010 and de Vries, 2010.

Hypothesis 2: Men and women will prefer gender role congruent profiles over incongruent profiles, but the effect will be greater for men than women. This is consistent with Social Role Theory and previous research (Shaffer & Johnson, 1980; Eastwick et al., 2006; D'Agostino & Day, 1991).

Hypothesis 3: Exploratory analyses will be included to determine if there are interactive effects between gender role congruence and physical attractiveness. There are two alternative hypotheses: (3a) For the attractive profiles, gender role incongruence could have a dampening effect on how interested the participants are in that particular profile or (3b) gender role

congruence for the average attractiveness profiles could possibly increase how interested participants are in that profile compared to average-incongruent profiles.

A second area of exploration will be gender differences and physical attractiveness.

Hypothesis 4a: Male participants may be most interested in the attractive profiles regardless of gender congruence, which is consistent with de Vries' (2010).

Hypothesis 4b: When compared with men, women may be more likely to take into account their own attractiveness level when looking for a potential date (Lee et al., 2008). Thus, it is possible that women who rate themselves as less physically attractive may be less interested in the attractive profiles because they do not perceive themselves as similar to the profile. Thus, profile physical attractiveness effects could be moderated by the participants' own attractiveness and gender. This finding would be consistent with the Matching Hypothesis (Berscheid et al., 1971), which states that people tend to be attracted to and pair up with others who are of an approximately equal level of attractiveness as themselves.

Participants

Participants were 503 male and female college undergraduates recruited through the Psychology Subject Pool and received course credit for participation. Out of the 503 participants that began the study, 481 completed the study. However, some of these participants failed to provide enough information to calculate interest ratings for the dating profiles described below, leaving a sample size of 447. The sample size was sufficient to detect a small to medium effect size according to the G*Power program (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). A preliminary power analysis was conducted with the alpha level set to .05, power set to .80. For an effect size of .15 to be detected, a sample of 220 participants was needed and the actual sample size exceeded this.

Participants were 50.6% male and the majority were Caucasian (82.5%), 10% African American, 2.8% Hispanic, 1.6% Asian, and 3% other. Eighty percent of participants were between 18 and 19 years old. Participants were asked to indicate their relationship status by choosing from the following categories: single & looking, single & not looking, in a short term relationship, in a serious, committed relationship, engaged, and married. Responses indicated that 66.6% were single and 33.4% reported they were in a romantic relationship.

Procedure

This study was conducted entirely online. To begin, participants were asked to read and agree to the consent statement. They then filled out a demographic information page (so that they could be matched to profiles with the correct gender and same race), were shown the first dating profile, completed a general likeability of the target measure (Reysen's (2005) Likability Scale and Campbell's (1999) Measure of Romantic Attraction). After they completed these measures, they were then shown the next online dating profile and repeated the likeability and attractiveness measures again for a total of four profiles. Each profile demonstrated one of the following combinations: gender role congruence/high physical attractiveness, gender role congruence/average physical attractiveness, gender role incongruence/high physical attractiveness, and gender role incongruence/average physical attractiveness. Once they were finished with those, they answered a physical attractiveness measure and other filler questions that were included to help avoid suspicion.

Measures

Demographics. All participants were asked to fill out a demographic information page which will include questions on gender, ethnicity, age, and relationship status. For all of these questions, participants were given a set of options to choose from. Age options were: 17 or

younger, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 or older. Ethnicity and relationship characteristics were described above.

Likeability and attractiveness of the target. General likeability was measured using Reysen's Likeability Scale (RLS; Reysen, 2005). This scale consists of eleven items and demonstrates a range of interpersonal qualities and contexts, some sample items being "*This person is friendly*" and "*This person is knowledgeable.*" Ratings were made on a 7-point scale, where 1 = *very strongly disagree*, 4 = *neither agree nor disagree*, and 7 = *very strongly agree*. The RLS has been found to have coefficient alpha ranging from .90 to .91 (Reysen, 2005). The coefficient alpha that was calculated for this study was .92.

Romantic attraction was assessed using the Romantic Attraction Scale (RAS; Campbell, 1999). The RAS consists of five items: 1) *How attractive do you find this person?*; 2) *How desirable would you find this person as a dating partner?*; 3) *How much would you actually like to date this person?*; 4) *How would you feel about yourself if you were dating this person?*; 5) *How do you think your friends would feel about you if you were dating this person?* The items were rated using the same 7-point scale format based on agreement as was used with the RLS. The RAS has been found to have a reliability measure of $\alpha = .89$ (Man et al., 2006). The coefficient alpha for this study was .96.

The Reysen's Likability Scale (RLS) and the Romantic Attraction Scale (RAS) were combined to determine the participants' interest in each profile. These two measures were highly correlated, $r(460) = .742$, $p < .001$ and have been used in combination this way in previous studies (Moss, 2010). Both the RLS and RAS use the same 7-point scale and were combined by adding all the items together and dividing by the total number of items. Thus, the dependent variable was the score from the combined attraction/liking scales with a possible range from 1 to

7.

Participant physical attractiveness. Participants self-reported their physical attractiveness by completing the Desirability Scale (Durante et al., 2008). The Desirability Scale measured participants' self-perceived attractiveness in comparison to their peers. The scale consists of five items that ask participants to rate themselves using a 9-point scale on how attractive their body and face are to the opposite sex, how sexy they are to the opposite sex, and how desirable the opposite sex finds them as a short-term/casual sex partner and as a long-term/marriage partner. Previous research reports a reliability of $\alpha = .91$ for the scale (Durante et al., 2008). The alpha coefficient measured for this study was .85. The mean for the sample as a whole was 6.08, *SD*: 1.56, *N* = 475. In general, women rated themselves as more attractive than the men did (women *M*: 6.25, *SD*: 1.45, *N* = 234; men *M*: 5.92, *SD*: 1.65, *N* = 241; $F(1, 473) = 5.42, p = .020$).

Stimuli

Online dating profiles. Participants in this study viewed four profile types: highly physically attractive with low and high gender role congruence and average physically attractive with high and low gender role congruence. An online dating profile is a generally public webpage that other users of the online dating website can access and find information about that user. These profiles can include a multitude of facts, such as age, sex, location, ethnicity, height, body type, education level, career, and more. Users typically include at least one photo of themselves on their profile. A user can also indicate what they are looking for on his or her profile (e.g. friends, long term relationship, and marriage). An important part of the user's profile is the essay section (usually called an 'about me' section) which is where the users write a description of themselves.

Dating profiles developed for this study included pictures that were of either average or high physical attractiveness. The pictures were collected from a public online source (www.hotornot.com) and were previously rated by at least 1,000 people on that website to determine their attractiveness (very attractive or average attractiveness). The rating scale used on the website was a binary “yes” or “no” and scores were calculated by converting the percentage of “yes” ratings received to a 10-point scale (the number of “yes” ratings a person received divided by their total number of ratings multiplied by 10). A rating of “1” would be considered the most unattractive, while a rating of “10” would be considered extremely attractive. Pictures with a rating of 5 to 6.9 were used for the average attractiveness profiles and pictures with a rating from 7 to 8.9 were used for the very attractive profiles.

Picture ratings were closely matched across profile conditions, within a tenth of a percentage point, and completely randomized so that no one profile was attached to the same picture repeatedly. Participants saw profile pictures that were their opposite sex and same race. There were 64 pictures used in total; 32 pictures of each race, which included 16 of each gender and 8 of each type (attractive and average). This means that for one race and one gender, for just the attractive pictures, there were 56 possible combinations of pictures that a participant could have seen. For the four profiles viewed by each participant (2 average and 2 attractive), the total possible combinations a participant could have seen was 3,136. Thus, the possibility of any one picture or picture combination having a significant effect on the results is minimal.

Additional information on each profile followed the same format and was used to manipulate gender role congruence. The profiles included headings of: a) location, b) age, c) occupation, d) looking for (type of relationship), e) about me (a short paragraph to describe themselves), f) hobbies/activities I enjoy, g) a typical Friday night for me, and h) what I’m

looking for in a partner. Gender role related words were manipulated in certain sections of the profiles, specifically in the occupation, about me, hobbies, a typical Friday night, and what I'm looking for in a partner sections. See the Table 1 for examples of gendered words for each category. Thus, to develop the profiles, the descriptors used for the masculine row were used to develop the profile for one female profile (low gender role congruence) and for one male profile (high gender role congruence). Similarly, the descriptors for the feminine row were used to develop the profile for one female profile (high gender role congruence) and for one male profile (low gender role congruence). There were 4 masculine profiles and 4 feminine profiles.

Table 1

Examples of Profile Characteristics

Gender Role	Occupation	About Me	Hobbies	Typical Friday Night	Partner
Masculine	Engineering Business Computer Science	Ambitious Analytical Competitive	Video games Sports Computers	Gaming	Sweet Kindness Supportive
Feminine	Art Psychology Nursing	Affectionate Intuitive Kind	Helping others Cooking Shopping	Reading books	Ambitious Career-driven Independent

The dating profiles were pilot tested on 27 undergraduate students. Participants were asked to rate the masculinity and femininity of the profiles using a masculine scale and a feminine scale. Example questions are “*Overall, how masculine does this profile seem?*” and “*Overall, how feminine does the profiles seem?*” Ratings were made on a 7-point scale where 1 = *not very masculine/feminine* to 7 = *very masculine/feminine*. Using t-tests, average scores for the masculine and feminine profiles were tested against the neutral midpoint (4) for the

masculine and feminine ratings. All tests were significant and in the predicted direction, all p 's < .001.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY 1 RESULTS

A 2 (Participant Gender: male/female) x 2 (Profile Gender Role: congruent/incongruent) x 2 (Profile Attractiveness: high/average) ANOVA was conducted to address the research questions. Profile Gender Role and Attractiveness were both within-subjects factors. It should be noted that analyses conducted separately for the RLS and RAS yielded similar results except for the Participant Gender x Profile Gender Role interaction (relevant for Hypotheses 2 and 4). This effect was primarily due to men, who rated the congruent profiles higher for the RLS than women did (men M : 5.27, women M : 4.95; $p < .001$). Because results were nearly identical across the RLS and the RAS, averaged scores are used below.

Hypothesis 1: Men and women will prefer attractive profiles over average profiles, but the effect will be greater for men than women. There was a main effect for profile attractiveness, such that attractive profiles were rated more favorably than average profiles $F(1, 445) = 6.75, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .359$. Means are presented in Table 2. The Participant Gender x Profile Attractiveness interaction was also significant $F(1, 445) = 19.08, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .041$. The simple effect comparison (with Bonferroni corrections) between men and women for the attractive profiles was not significant, but it was significant for the average profiles, with men having higher ratings than women, $p < .001$. As the means in Table 2 indicate, the difference between average and attractive profiles was greater for women (1.10) than men (0.50), which is in opposition to the previous prediction made.

Hypothesis 2: Men and women will prefer gender congruent profiles over incongruent profiles, but the effect will be greater for men than women. There was a significant effect for Profile Gender Role, $F(1, 445) = 25.86, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .055$; however, gender incongruent profiles ($M = 5.10$) were rated more favorably than congruent profiles ($M = 4.92$). There was also a significant Participant Gender x Profile Gender Role interaction, $F(1, 445) = 6.75, p = .010, \eta_p^2 = .015$. Means are presented in Table 2. Comparisons conducted with Bonferroni correction showed that the difference between congruent and incongruent profiles was significant for women, $p < .001$, and only marginally significant for men $p = .079$. This hypothesis was not supported, and in fact the results were in the opposite direction from what was predicted.

Table 2

Participant Gender x Profile Attractiveness and Participant Gender x Profile Gender Role: Means and Standard Deviations

	Male	SD	Female	SD	Total	SD
Attractive	5.42	.91	5.30	1.02	5.35	.96
Average	4.92	.96	4.40	1.04	4.65	1.03
Incongruent	5.21	.92	4.99	.99	5.08	.96
Congruent	5.12	.89	4.71	.99	4.93	.96

Hypothesis 3: There are two alternative hypotheses: (3a) for the attractive profiles, gender incongruence could have a dampening effect on how interested the participants are in that particular profile and (3b) meanwhile, gender role congruence for the average attractiveness profiles could possibly increase how interested participants are in that profile

compared to average-incongruent profiles. The Profile Gender Role x Profile Attractiveness interaction was not significant. Looking more closely at the means (Table 3), for the attractive profiles, gender role incongruence was preferred over congruence $p = .007$. For the average profiles, gender role incongruence was again preferred over congruence $p < .001$. According to these results, neither of the hypotheses was supported because the results show significant effects in the opposite direction.

Hypothesis 4a: Male participants, in comparison to females, may be more interested in the attractive profiles regardless of gender congruence. As mentioned above, there was a significant Participant Gender x Profile Attractiveness interaction showing that the difference between average and attractive profile ratings was greater for women than men, in opposition to predictions. There was also a significant three-way interaction between Profile Attractiveness, Profile Gender Role, and Participant Gender $F(1, 445) = 36.57, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .076$. Means are presented in Table 3. Men showed similar interest in average profiles, regardless of role congruency, but for attractive profiles, they preferred the gender role incongruent profile, $p < .001$. Women showed similar interest in the attractive profiles, regardless of role congruency, but for average profiles, they preferred the gender role incongruent profile, $p < .001$.

Table 3

Profile Attractiveness x Profile Gender Role x Participant Gender: Means and Standard Deviations

	Attractive				Average			
	Congruent		Incongruent		Congruent		Incongruent	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Male	5.29	1.02	5.55	1.04	4.95	1.08	4.87	1.15
Female	5.29	1.19	5.30	1.09	4.12	1.15	4.68	1.21
Total	5.29	1.11	5.42	1.07	4.54	1.19	4.78	1.18

Hypothesis4b: Women who rate themselves as less physically attractive may be less interested in the attractive profiles because they do not perceive themselves as similar to the profile. Correlations were calculated between self-reported physical attractiveness and ratings for each profile. Overall, individuals who rated themselves as more attractive were more interested in the attractive profiles (collapsing across gender role congruence), $r(456) = .121, p = .010$. Further breaking this down by gender, it is clear that the effect is being driven by the men, $r(228) = .231, p < .001$, not the women, $r(226) = .025, p = .707, Z = 2.23, p < .0129$. However, this effect did not hold true for the average looking profiles (overall: $r(456) = .013, p = .785$; men: $r(231) = .118, p = .072$; women: $r(223) = -.050, p = .457$).

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 1 SUMMARY

In contrast to theoretical predictions from Social Role Theory, gender role incongruent profiles were viewed more favorably than congruent profiles. Surprisingly, women differentiated more between profiles based on physical attractiveness than the men, (contrary to previous research), especially for gender role congruent profiles. Men were especially interested in attractive gender role incongruent profiles. After physical attractiveness, gender role incongruence was the greatest factor that determined participant interest in a profile. The findings for each hypothesis are summarized briefly below:

Hypothesis 1 was partially supported. Men and women did prefer the attractive profiles over the average profiles. However, this difference was greater for women rather than men counter to the prediction.

Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Men and women actually preferred the gender role incongruent profiles over the congruent profiles. Also, this effect was greater for women than men.

Neither Hypothesis 3a nor 3b were supported. Gender role incongruence did not dampen interest in attractive profiles and gender role congruence did not boost interest in average profiles. Because men and women preferred the gender role incongruent profiles, incongruence actually caused somewhat of a boosting effect, and for women, gender role congruence for the average profiles dampened interest.

Hypothesis 4a was not supported. This result follows in line with the findings from Hypothesis 1 not being supported. Men were actually more interested in the attractive profiles that were gender role incongruent than those that were congruent. For women, the difference between average and attractive profile ratings was greater than men.

Hypothesis 4b was also not supported. Correlational data showed that, while overall those who viewed themselves as more attractive tend to be more interested in the attractive profiles, this effect only held for men.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY 2 METHODOLOGY

Study 2 Overview and Design

The purpose of Study 2 was to further examine how gender roles play a part in women's attraction to men by examining self-presentation effects. If gender roles are an important factor in online dating profiles, it would be expected that women would alter their own profiles in one of two alternative ways. The first possibility based on Social Role Theory and Complementarity Hypothesis is that women would alter their profiles to make themselves appear more feminine (gender congruent) if they view an attractive male. The alternative, based on the attraction-similarity hypothesis, is that women may alter their profiles to seem like they have more in common with the man, for example sounding more masculine (gender incongruent) if the profile is traditionally masculine. Only female participants were included in this study because they are more likely to alter the way they present themselves than men in a dating situation (de Vries, 2010; Haferkamp et al., 2012).

This study measured changes in women's self-presentation after they viewed attractive male profiles in which gender role congruence was manipulated. The design of the study is a repeated measures pre-test and post-test comparison between two conditions. In a separate pretest session, women responded to questions related to gender role congruence, interests, and hobbies along with other filler questions. In the second session, women were presented with a male profile in which the gender role congruence was manipulated to be either high or low. They then rated how interested they were in the profile, and completed the post-test questions

(same as in the pretest) under the guise of creating their own dating profile. Self-presentation was assessed by examining the change in responses on the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ, gender congruence) and in their hobbies and interests rated on the Pleasant Activities List (PAL). Importantly, in this study, different theories lead to different predictions. Stated more formally, the alternative predictions are:

Hypothesis 5a: According to Social Role Theory and Complementarity, if the male profile were presented as more traditional (gender congruent), the women should present themselves as more traditional (gender congruent) in their own profiles, and this should also be reflected in her PAQ ratings and hobbies and interests. In addition, if the male profile were presented as less traditional (gender incongruent), then women should present themselves as less traditional in their profiles as well.

Hypothesis 5b: Alternatively, if the desire to appear similar drives self-presentation effects in a dating situation, then women who receive the gender congruent profiles should change their PAL and PAQ ratings to be more masculine and less feminine. The women who receive gender role incongruent profiles may change in the direction of being more similar to the man in the profile, but there might be little change if the women were stereotypically feminine. This would translate to very little to no change in their ratings on the PAQ and PAL.

Participants

For this study, 374 participants were recruited through the Psychology Subject Pool and received course credit for participation. Three participants were removed from the study because they indicated that they were either married or engaged. Out of the 371 original, eligible participants, 360 completed Session 1. Approximately one week later, these participants were then sent an email asking them to participate in Session 2 of the study and directing them to the

Psychology 101 research participant sign-up page. Out of those, 314 (87%) participants indicated a willingness to learn more about the study by clicking on the link on the participant sign-up page. After viewing the consent form, participants were further informed about the online dating procedures with the following directions:

This study is about factors that affect attraction in an online dating scenario. First, you will look at an online dating profile of a man who is also a student at UA and rate how interested you are in him. You will be making your own dating profile that will be viewed by the man that you saw. In the next part of this study we will bring the two of you together at the end of the semester to see how well you hit it off.

Before you make your profile you will fill out some questionnaires about personality and interests, similar to questions you may answer when creating an online dating profile.

Some of these questions may look similar to the ones you answered in part 1 of the study. This is because we need to ask you for this information again now so that it will be directly entered into our Automated Matching System. Please keep in mind that these questions help us to know how well you match up with the man in the profile. Before the two of you meet, we will give you a compatibility score based on both of your responses to these questions. He will also look at the profile that you create today. After the two of you meet in person, we will ask each of you separately to tell us how well you hit it off. Click next to begin.

After reading this information, 251 participants further indicated their willingness to continue (80% of those who completed Session1). However, some of these participants failed to provide enough information to calculate any of the scores for the measures described below, leaving a sample 234 women (65% of those completing Part1). In addition, the sample size

varied somewhat for each measure because of incomplete answers within this group of women. The sample size was sufficient to detect a small to medium effect size according to the G*Power program (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). A preliminary power analysis was conducted with the alpha level set to .05, power set to .80. For an effect size of .15 to be detected, a sample of 220 participants was needed and the actual sample size exceeded this.

The majority of the 234 participants were Caucasian (80.7%), 12.3% African American, 2.8% Hispanic, 1.4% Asian, and 1.9% other. Eighty-nine percent of participants were between 18 and 19 years old. Participants were asked about their relationship status using the same questions as for Study 1: 62.3% were single and 37.7% were in a relationship.

To determine if women who participated in Session 2 were different from those in Session 1 who did not participate in Session 2, comparisons were made between the two groups on the PAQ, PAL, age, and race using *t-tests* and Chi-square. Results indicated no significant differences between the two groups on any of these measures. Thus, selection bias was not an issue as far as these measures were concerned.

Procedure

This study was conducted entirely online and in two sessions (pre-test and post-test). For Session 1, the pre-test, the participants were asked to read and agree to the consent statement. They then filled out a demographic information page, the PAQ, the PAL, and other filler questions that were included to help avoid suspicion. For Session 2, participants reviewed the consent form and filled out the demographic form so that the profiles could be matched for race. They then received one profile of an attractive male that was either high or low in gender congruence. After viewing the profile, participants completed the PAQ and PAL under the pretext of creating their own dating profile.

Measures

The Demographic and Romantic Attraction and Likeability measures from Study 1 were also completed for Study 2.

Participant gender role orientation. The Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1974) was used to assess participants' gender role orientation for Session 1 and Session 2. The PAQ produces three scale scores with eight items each: the agency scale, the communion scale, and the unmitigated agency scale. However, only the agency and communion scales were used because those are the scales are most pertinent to the purpose of this study. Each item contained a pair of opposing traits with a scale ranging from 1 to 5 between them. Participants chose the number that represented where they fell on each pair of characteristics, for example, *not at all emotional* -- *very emotional* and *gives up easily* -- *never gives up*. The reliability score (coefficient alpha) for the agency and communion scales were .71, and .79, respectively for Session 1. This is comparable to those reported in previous research, .67 to .78 for the agency scale, .72 to .80 for the communion scale (Ward et al., 2006). Because agency usually refers to masculine traits and communion usually refers to feminine traits, these will be referred to as masculine and feminine traits from now on.

Participant activities. The Pleasant Activities List (PAL; Koks et al., 2006) measures the frequency and enjoyment of different hobbies and interests. Participants completed this measure at both sessions, and it consisted of 20 items total, 10 masculine items and 10 feminine items. Only the enjoyment scale was used in the analyses. The masculine and feminine scales were created directly from the activities that corresponded to those used in the dating profiles. These activities were validated in a previous pilot study to ensure they were identified as either masculine or feminine. (Some of these activities were not originally on the PAL.) Participants

were asked how much they enjoyed each of the activities on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). The reliability scores (coefficient alpha) for the masculine and feminine scales were .78, and .63, respectively. The reliability score for the feminine scale may be a low because of the limitations of including only female participants from the Psychology Subject Pool. The masculine activities were: going fishing, building a computer, problem solving, working with complex machines, working on/repairing/building cars, playing sports, watching football, watching or playing soccer, watching or playing basketball, and playing video games on a console. The feminine activities were: reading a book, drawing/painting, spending time with family, cooking, going to a museum/exhibit, people-watching, helping people, expressing your feelings, being affectionate and shopping/shopping online.

Stimuli

The same highly attractive male profiles from Study 1 were also used for Study 2.

CHAPTER 6

STUDY 2 RESULTS

As a follow-up to the previous study, preliminary analyses were conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in participant interest between the gender role congruent ($M = 5.29$) and incongruent ($M = 5.30$) profiles; no significant difference was found, which is consistent with Study 1.

The hypotheses for Study 2 were addressed using a 2 (Profile Gender Role: congruent or incongruent) x 2 (Session: pre-test and post-test) x 2 (Participant Attributes: masculine or feminine) research design. There were two dependent variables; the PAQ and the PAL, which each have masculine and feminine attributes scores. Separate analyses were conducted for each of these instruments because the PAQ measures masculine and feminine personality traits, while the PAL measures masculine and feminine hobbies and activities. Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 present the descriptive statistics and ANOVA results for the PAL and PAQ. It should also be noted that the analyses reported below were also conducted with participant interest in the profile (RLS/RAS) as a continuous factor and relationship status as a covariate; neither of these analyses altered the effects reported below.

Table 4

Pleasant Activities List (PAL) Means

	Congruent Profile			Incongruent Profile			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N
Masc. S1	2.39	.66	94	2.31	.71	91	2.35	.68	185
Masc. S2	2.50	.78	94	2.33	.77	91	2.42	.78	185
Fem. S1	3.63	.57	94	3.63	.51	91	3.63	.54	185
Fem. S2	3.79	.59	94	3.71	.59	91	3.75	.59	185

Note. Masc. = masculine, Fem. = Feminine, S1 = Session 1, S2 = Session 2

Table 5

Pleasant Activities List (PAL) MANOVA

Effect	λ	<i>F</i> (1, 184)	<i>p</i> ≤	η^2_p
Session	.943	11.027	.001	.057
Participant Attributes	.216	669.139	.000	.784
Session x Profile Type	.990	1.854	.175	.010
Participant Attributes x Session	.994	1.154	.284	.006
Participant Attributes x Profile Type	.997	.575	.449	.003
Participant Attributes x Session x Profile Type	.999	.100	.752	.001

Note: Participant Attributes = PAL masculine and feminine activity types

Table 6

Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) Means

	Congruent Profile			Incongruent Profile			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N
Masc. S1	3.67	.63	103	3.55	.58	101	3.61	.61	204
Masc. S2	3.78	.60	103	3.61	.54	101	3.70	.58	204
Fem. S1	4.10	.54	103	4.01	.57	101	4.06	.55	204
Fem. S2	4.09	.52	103	4.01	.52	101	4.05	.52	204

Note. Masc. = masculine, Fem. = Feminine, S1 = Session 1, S2 = Session 2

Table 7

Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) MANOVA

Effect	λ	<i>F</i> (1,202)	<i>p</i> ≤	η_p^2
Session	.99	2.49	.12	.01
Participant Attributes	.76	62.23	.00	.24
Session x Profile Type	1.00	.069	.79	.00
Participant Attributes x Session	.96	7.50	.01	.04
Participant Attributes x Profile Type	.99	.29	.59	.00
Participant Attributes x Session x Profile Type	.99	.77	.38	.00

Note: Participant Attributes = PAQ gender trait effects/ stereotypes

Hypothesis 5: (a) According to Social Role Theory and Complementarity, if the male profile is presented as more traditional (gender congruent), then women should present themselves as more traditional (gender congruent) in their own profiles and vice versa for

gender role incongruent profiles. (b) Alternatively, if the desire to appear similar drives self-presentation effects in a dating situation, then women who receive the gender congruent male profiles should change their ratings on the PAL to be more masculine and perhaps appear less feminine on the PAQ.

To test these hypotheses, two repeated measures MANOVAS (one for the PAL, one for the PAQ) were conducted based on the research design: 2 (Profile Gender Role: congruent or incongruent) x 2 (Session: pre-test and post-test) x 2 (Participant Attributes: masculine or feminine). Significant three-way interactions between Profile Gender Role, Session, and Participant Attributes, would support the hypotheses, but for both dependent measures, this interaction proved to be non-significant. See Tables 5 and 7. However, a significant interaction between the Participant Attributes and Session was found. Regardless of profile type, women showed an increase in their masculine scores. This may suggest that the women's self-presentation of masculine trait types increases when in a dating situation.

In addition, the same analyses were conducted again, but this time only for the participants that indicated they were single at the time they completed the survey. These analyses were conducted to determine if those participants who were in a relationship were skewing the results. Still, there were no significant interactions between Profile Gender Role, Session, and Participant Attributes for the PAL, $F(1, 117) = .280, p = .598$; or for the PAQ, $F(1, 126) = 1.757, p = .187$. See Tables 8 and 9 for means.

Table 8

Pleasant Activities List (PAL) Means – Singles Only

	Congruent Profile			Incongruent Profile			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N
Masc. S1	2.39	.66	57	2.31	.74	62	2.34	.70	119
Masc. S2	2.58	.83	57	2.39	.79	62	2.48	.81	119
Fem. S1	3.61	.54	57	3.65	.52	62	3.63	.53	119
Fem. S2	3.79	.55	57	3.77	.64	62	3.78	.59	119

Note. Masc. = masculine, Fem. = Feminine, S1 = Session 1, S2 = Session 2

Table 9

Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) Means – Singles Only

	Congruent Profile			Incongruent Profile			Total		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	N
Masc. S1	3.64	.63	61	3.59	.56	67	3.62	.59	128
Masc. S2	3.82	.60	61	3.62	.52	67	3.72	.57	128
Fem. S1	4.04	.58	61	4.01	.59	67	4.02	.59	128
Fem. S2	4.07	.57	61	3.99	.53	67	4.03	.55	128

Note. Masc. = masculine, Fem. = Feminine, S1 = Session 1, S2 = Session 2

CHAPTER 7

STUDY 2 SUMMARY

The results from Study 2 did not support either Hypothesis 5a or 5b. There were no significant interactions between Profile Gender Role, Session, and Participant Attributes for the PAL or for the PAQ. Profile gender role congruence or incongruence also did not appear to affect women's ratings in any particular direction. However, there was a significant change in the masculine ratings for the PAQ over sessions across profile types. This significant effect for Participant Attributes x Session for the PAQ suggested that being in a dating situation could increase women's presentation of masculine traits. There is some evidence in previous literature that hobbies/interests may be more stable over time than personality characteristics (Su & Rounds, 2009). This could be the reason why no effect for the PAL measure was found. However, the PAQ result opposes Role Congruity Theory and Complementarity Theory and is not easily explained by Similarity Theory (since it occurred for both role congruent and incongruent profiles). These results are further discussed in the General Discussion section.

CHAPTER 8

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Gender roles have hardly been explored in research on attraction, despite their impact on other important life decisions, and there is a clear gap in the literature when it comes to gender roles in online dating. The two studies presented examined the interactive effects of physical attractiveness and gender role congruency on romantic attraction in an online dating context. In addition, effects of gender roles on changes in self-presentation were explored. Testing the effects of these factors in an online dating context has advantages. In comparison to a face-to-face setting, online daters have access to dating profiles and it is easier for them to assess the similarities between themselves and the potential dating partner. As a result, conducting the study online mirrors the reality of an online dating service. In addition, typically individuals create personality and interest dating profiles *before* coming into contact with each other, which can be beneficial theoretically because their self-presentation may be more realistic (not affected by the prospect of meeting a dating partner). However, by manipulating when a profile is made, self-presentation effects can be assessed. Making a profile after coming into contact with a desired person could cause people to change their self-presentation somewhat to conform to the desired person's interests. Thus, the online dating context provides experimental realism to the two studies to adequately test the hypotheses.

Study 1 results indicated that both men and women prefer attractive and gender role incongruent dating partners over average looking and gender role congruent partners. The results for gender role congruency were surprising. Men's and women's behavior is thought to be

strongly influenced by stereotypical gender roles. Social Role Theory proposes that the different social roles of men and women are the foundation for the differences in what men and women seek in a long term partner (Eagly, 1987). Both men and women are considered more socially attractive when they adhere to stereotypical gender roles (Shaffer & Johnson, 1980). However, neither study's results support this well-established theory. The attractive, gender incongruent profiles were rated the highest by both men and women.

An explanation for the greater interest in incongruent profiles could be that participants were not asked to think of establishing a long-term relationship or marrying the person they viewed in the profile, so perhaps they were not considering future roles such as wife, mother, husband, or father. In addition, the incongruent profiles may have been preferred because they appeared to be more self-confident individuals because they expressed traits counter to gender role norms. Alternatively, gender roles have changed notably over time, especially in the past 10 years. For example, it is no longer surprising to see a woman running for president or holding other leadership roles, and so adhering to traditional gender role may be less important than it has been in the past.

Physical attractiveness seemed to be the greatest influential factor on a participant's interest in a profile (as evidenced by its large effect size- $\eta_p^2 = .359$), but there is some evidence that its influence may be modified some by gender role congruence. Study 1 demonstrates how influential physical attractiveness is, especially to women, when determining how interested they are in that profile. Study 1 also suggests that women may not be as affected by gender role congruence or incongruence when rating the attractive profiles compared to men. To demonstrate this even further, in Study 2 where all profiles were physically attractive, profile gender role congruence or incongruence did not appear to affect women's attraction or self-

presentation ratings in any particular direction. This suggests that physical attractiveness may be the key factor in why women were interested in these dating profiles in Study 2. As a result, it overshadowed other profile characteristics, resulting in a lack of sensitivity to the manipulation of gender role congruence and consequently no change in their ratings on the PAQ or PAL based on gender role congruence.

Another surprising finding in Study 2 was that women more strongly endorsed masculine items on the PAQ after they saw the dating profiles. One possible explanation of this finding, though unlikely, is that women could be aware that men might be more interested in less traditional women and so that is why they increased their masculine scores on the PAQ. Otherwise, the results suggest that even though gender role congruency affects attraction, it does not seem to influence self-presentation. A limitation to drawing this conclusion refers back to the limits of accountability when actually planning to meet a person face-to-face after initially meeting online. To the extent that the individual believes he or she will meet this potential partner face-to-face, the more accountable he or she will be for their self-presentation online (Walther, 1996; Guadagno, Okdie & Kruse, 2012). If the women in Study 2 truly believed they were going to have a face-to-face meeting with the man in the profile, they most likely would not have altered their self-presentations greatly.

A final finding related to physical attractiveness was that overall, men and women who rated themselves as more attractive were more interested in the attractive profiles regardless of gender role congruency and this finding supports Similarity Theory and the Matching Hypothesis. However, this effect was mostly driven by men rather than women, inconsistent with past research (Buss, 1989; Hitsch & Hortaçsu & Ariely, 2010). One possibility that might

explain this occurrence is that the length of the relationship was not specified which I will describe in more detail below.

Limitations and Future Directions

The literature is mixed when it comes to how much physical attractiveness affects a person's interest in dating that person. The reason for this is that it depends on the predicted length of the future relationship with the potential partner. For short-term relationships, men and women care equally about physical attractiveness; whereas, for long-term relationships, it seems that women then care more about the man's social status (Li et al., 2013). Similarly, the importance of adhering to traditional gender role norms could be affected by expectations for the length of the relationships, as noted above. This potentially limits the generalizability of this study because predicted relationship length was not measured.

The sample is another possible limitation of this study. The sample size could have been larger and more diverse than only PY101 students. The majority of these students were between 18 to 19 years old; a more varied age group would have been preferable.

For future research directions, Study 1 could be replicated, but with changing the amount of time the participants believed they would be spending with the target. The purpose of this study would be to examine how perceived length time to be spent with a target person could affect how interested someone would be in meeting or dating that person that followed traditional or nontraditional gender roles. For example, in one condition, participants would think they were going to meet the person and have to spend an entire week with that person on a vacation instead of just the one time face-to-face meeting.

The measures chosen for this study may not have been sensitive enough to measure differences between profile conditions. However, piloting suggested that the measures were

sensitive enough to detect the differences between the masculine and feminine profiles. Manipulation checks would have possibly helped with this issue, but they were not included because then the participants would be too aware of what was being measured, which could have skewed the results. Another possibility is that not all gendered traits are equal, and some gender characteristics might be more important than others. A new study could be conducted based off of Study 1 but with manipulating negative gendered words instead of only positive ones. Some examples are weak, insensitive, whiny, and arrogant. Perhaps if the target is physically attractive, this could cause someone to be more tolerant of the target's bad traits and vice versa for an average looking target.

Study 2 could be conducted again but with only average pictures or no pictures at all on the profiles. The purpose of this would be to control the over-powering effect of physical attractiveness on the participant's interest in the profile. Then it could be determined if gender role congruence is an influencing factor.

In conclusion, Study 1 and Study 2 have made significant contributions to the field by causing a wrinkle in some of the major theories in this area. These results demonstrate a need for the current major theories to be reexamined or expanded on to accommodate for the changes in how gender roles actually affect attraction in our society today.

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APPENDIX

Institutional Review Board Certification

November 14, 2014

Kelsey Chappetta
ISSR/Psychology
College of Arts and Sciences
Box 870216

Re: IRB # 14-OR-388, "Are you interested in me? Attraction in an Online Dating Scenario"

Dear Ms. Chappetta:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. You have also been granted the requested waiver of informed consent. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on November 13, 2015. If your research will continue beyond this date, please complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, please complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, please complete the Request for Study Closure form.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Measures

Reysen's (2005) Likability Scale (RLS)

Instructions: Circle how strongly you agree with each statement.

(1 Very Strongly Disagree/2 Strongly Disagree/3 Disagree/4 Neutral/5 Agree/6 Strongly Agree/7 Very Strongly Agree)

1. This person is friendly.
2. This person is likeable.
3. This person is warm.
4. This person is approachable.
5. I would ask this person for advice.
6. I would like this person as a coworker.
7. I would like this person as a roommate.
8. I would like to be friends with this person.
9. This person is physically attractive.
10. This person is similar to me.
11. This person is knowledgeable.

Campbell's (1999) measure of romantic attraction (RAS)

1. How attractive do you find this person?
2. How desirable would you find this person as a dating partner?
3. How much would you actually like to date this person?
4. How would you feel about yourself if you were dating this person?
5. How do you think your friends would feel about you if you were dating this person?

Desirability Scale (Durante et al., 2008)

Five items were used to form an average composite attractiveness score:

- (1) "Compared with most women, how attractive is your body to men?"
(anchors: 1 = *not at all attractive*, 9 = *extremely attractive*)
- (2) "Compared with most women, how attractive is your face to men?"
(1 = *not at all attractive*, 9 = *extremely attractive*)
- (3) "Compared with most women, how sexy would men say you are?"
(1 = *not at all sexy*, 9 = *extremely sexy*)
- (4) "How desirable do you think men find you as a *short-term mate or casual sex partner*, compared to most women?" (1 = *not at all desirable*, 9 = *extremely desirable*)
- (5) "How desirable do you think men find you as a *long-term mate or marriage partner*, compared to most women?" (1 = *not at all desirable*, 9 = *extremely desirable*)

Extended Version of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence et al., 1979)

Instructions: The items below consist of a pair of contradictory characteristics--that is, you cannot be both at the same time. The numbers form a scale between the two extremes. You are to circle the number that describes where you fall on the scale.

not at all arrogant 1 2 3 4 5 very arrogant

not at all independent 1 2 3 4 5 very independent
not at all emotional 1 2 3 4 5 very emotional
looks out for self 1 2 3 4 5 looks out for others
very passive 1 2 3 4 5 very active
not at all egotistical 1 2 3 4 5 very egotistical
difficult to devote self easy to devote self
completely to others 1 2 3 4 5 completely to others
very rough 1 2 3 4 5 very gentle
not at all helpful to others 1 2 3 4 5 very helpful to others
not at all boastful 1 2 3 4 5 very boastful
not at all competitive 1 2 3 4 5 very competitive
not at all kind 1 2 3 4 5 very kind
not at all aware of others' feelings 1 2 3 4 5 very aware of others' feelings
can make decisions easily 1 2 3 4 5 has difficulty making decisions
not at all greedy 1 2 3 4 5 very greedy
gives up easily 1 2 3 4 5 never gives up
not at all self-confident 1 2 3 4 5 very self-confident
feels very inferior 1 2 3 4 5 feels very superior
not at all dictatorial 1 2 3 4 5 very dictatorial
not at all understanding of others 1 2 3 4 5 very understanding of others
not at all cynical 1 2 3 4 5 very cynical
very cold in relations with others 1 2 3 4 5 very warm in relations with others
not at all hostile 1 2 3 4 5 very hostile
goes to pieces under pressure 1 2 3 4 5 stands up well under pressure

Agency

independent
active
competitive
can make decisions easily
never gives up
very self-confident
feels very superior
stands up well under pressure

Communion

emotional
easy to devote self to others
gentle
helpful
kind
aware of others' feelings
understanding
warm

Unmitigated Agency

arrogant
boastful
egotistical
greedy
dictatorial
cynical
hostile
looks out for self

Pleasant Activities List (PAL)

Instructions

This questionnaire contains a diversity of activities that people sometimes enjoy. Please rate the frequency that you have done each activity in the **past 30 days** and how enjoyable you found it.

For example “driving a car”

Please rate the frequency and enjoyability of driving a car in the past 30 days. If you drove a car moderately in the past 30 days and you enjoyed it a bit, please complete your answer by circling number 3 on the frequency scale, and score number 2 on the enjoyability scale, as follows:

	Frequency					Enjoyability				
	Not at all	A bit	Moderate	Much	Very much	Not at all	A bit	Moderate	Much	Very much
1. Driving a car.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Several activities mentioned in this questionnaire might not have been performed by you in the past 30 days. We do not expect that you performed all the activities mentioned in the questionnaire. It may even be possible that you have never performed a certain activity. If you did not perform an activity in the last 30 days, or you never performed an activity, please complete your answer by circling number 1 “not at all” on the frequency scale. In these cases, please also indicate how much potential pleasure you think it would have given to you.

For example “going to the movies”

Imagine that you have not gone to the movies in the past 30 days, while engaging in this activity could have given you moderate enjoyability. Please complete your answer as follows:

1. Going to the movies.

Frequency					Enjoyability				
Not at all	A bit	Moderate	Much	Very much	Not at all	A bit	Moderate	Much	Very much
<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/>

1. Watching TV
2. Listening to music
3. Solving a puzzle
4. Reading a book
5. Hanging out with friends
6. Going fishing
7. Reading newspapers, magazines, and/or blogs
8. Drawing or painting
9. Photography and filming
10. Having a meal with friends or family
11. Spending time with family
12. Re-arranging or redecorating my room or home
13. Doing a chore in or around the house
14. Making / repairing clothes, sewing
15. Cooking
16. Traveling/ taking a vacation
17. Travel to a foreign country
18. Going to the movies
19. Going to a restaurant / eat out
20. Going to a bar or café
21. Going to a concert
22. Going to a museum or exhibit
23. Going to big parties (lots of people)
24. Going to small parties (just close friends)
25. Doing things alone
26. Doing things with a group of people
27. People-watching
28. Meeting someone new of the same sex
29. Meeting someone new of the opposite sex
30. Making small-talk
31. Talking on the phone with your friends
32. Talking on the phone with your significant other
33. Having a deep conversation
34. Texting
35. Asking for help or advice
36. Counseling/ giving advice to someone
37. Helping people
38. Hugging someone
39. Flirting

40. Dating
41. Being in a romantic relationship
42. Expressing your feelings
43. Being affectionate
44. Kissing
45. Cuddling
46. Having sex
47. Sleeping late
48. Taking a nap
49. Watching movies
50. Watching videos
51. Taking a walk/walking a dog
52. Hiking, camping, picnicking, exploring, etc.
53. Star gazing
54. Visiting caves, waterfalls, scenic wonders
55. Shopping/ shopping online
56. Buying something for someone else
57. Buying something for myself
58. Understanding/ figuring out how things work
59. Building a computer
60. Problem solving
61. Working with complex machines
62. Working on/ repairing/ building cars
63. Improving my health (having my teeth fixed, getting new glasses, changing my diet, etc.)
64. Jogging/Running
65. Going to the gym/working out
66. Weightlifting
67. Dancing, ballet, gymnastics, aerobics, etc.
68. Going to a sports event
69. Talking about sports
70. Playing sports
71. Playing volleyball/ softball/ tennis
72. Playing football
73. Watching football
74. Watching or playing soccer
75. Watching or playing golf
76. Watching or playing combat sports (UFC/MMA, boxing, etc.)
77. Watching or playing basketball
78. Surfing the internet
79. Chatting/posting on the internet
80. Chatting/posting anonymously on the internet
81. Finding potential dates online/ on apps
82. Playing games on a cell phone or tablet
83. Playing video games on a console (Xbox/PlayStation/Wii)
84. PC video games

85. Playing first person shooter/ fighting/ action video games (Call of Duty, Halo, Mortal Kombat, Street Fighter, Grand Theft Auto, etc.)
86. Playing role playing/ adventure/ open world video games (Skyrim, Far Cry, Assassin's Creed, Legend of Zelda, etc.)
87. Playing sports / racing video games (FIFA, Madden, Forza, etc.)

Activity Frequency Scale

Items:	Feminine	Masculine	Neutral	On Profiles
	4	3	1	50
	8	6	2	51
	11	58	5	52
	12	59	7	53
	13	60	9	54
	14	61	10	56
	15	62	16	57
	22	66	17	63
	27	68	18	64
	31	69	19	65
	32	70	20	78
	33	72	21	79
	35	73	23	80
	36	74	24	81
	37	75	25	82
	38	77	26	55
	42	83	28	59
	43	84	29	60
	55	85	30	61
	67	86	34	62
	71	87	39	64
			40	65
			41	70
			44	73
			45	74
			46	77
			47	83
			48	
			49	
Raw Total				
/ # of Items	/ 21	/ 21	/ 44	/ 27
Mean Score				