

# Inhibition of Lesbian and Gay Stereotypes for Story Characters

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61st Annual Meeting



**VIRTUAL PSYCHONOMICS**

# prior research & method

- People remember stereotypes about race, gender, etc. better than neutral information<sup>1</sup>  
↑ *stereotype-consistency bias*
- Limited research has examined this with LGBT characters in narratives<sup>2-5</sup>
- Instead of genuinely remembering stereotypes better, participants tended to guess them  
↑ *guessing bias*
- 135 participants
  - 103 heterosexual
  - 28 LGBT or removed
- Demographics:
  - 65% women, racially diverse, mean age 19.8 years
- Materials
  - Social desirability measure
  - Recall and recognition tests
  - Implicit Association Task
  - Explicit homophobia scales



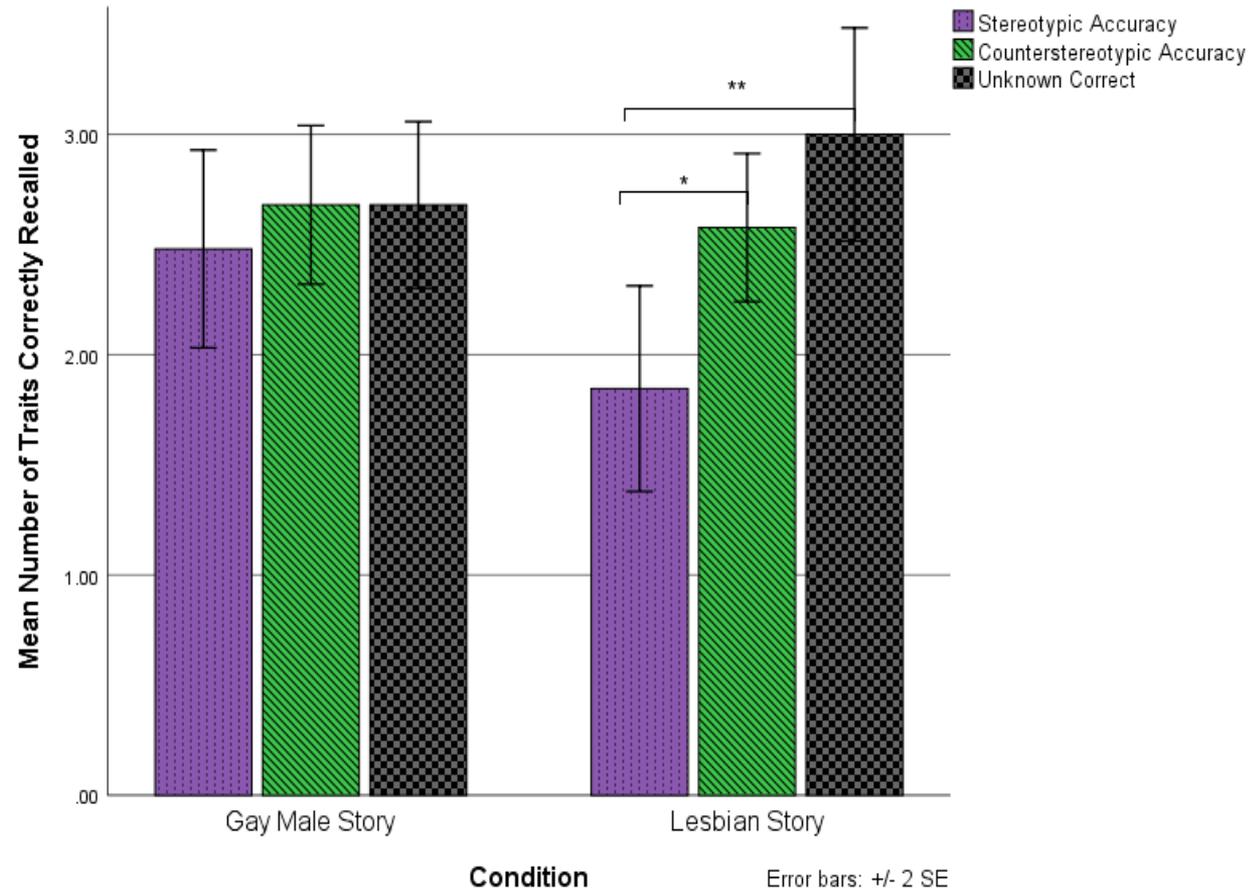
# hypotheses & findings

1. Participants will stereotype the characters more when the characters are gay (compared to when they are heterosexual).
  2. Participants will show stereotype-consistency bias after reading about gay characters.
  3. Participants will show some guessing bias after reading about gay characters.
- In contrast to previous studies, our experiment suggests that heterosexual young adults tend to avoid the use of gay and lesbian stereotypes  
↑ *stereotype inhibition*



# results

- Gay male condition:
  - Participants selected about the same number of correct stereotypes ( $M = 2.48$ ), counterstereotypes ( $M = 2.68$ ), and unknown answers ( $M = 2.68$ )
- Lesbian condition:
  - Participants selected significantly fewer correct stereotypes ( $M = 1.85$ ) than correct counterstereotypes ( $M = 2.58$ ), or correct unknown answers ( $M = 3.00$ ).

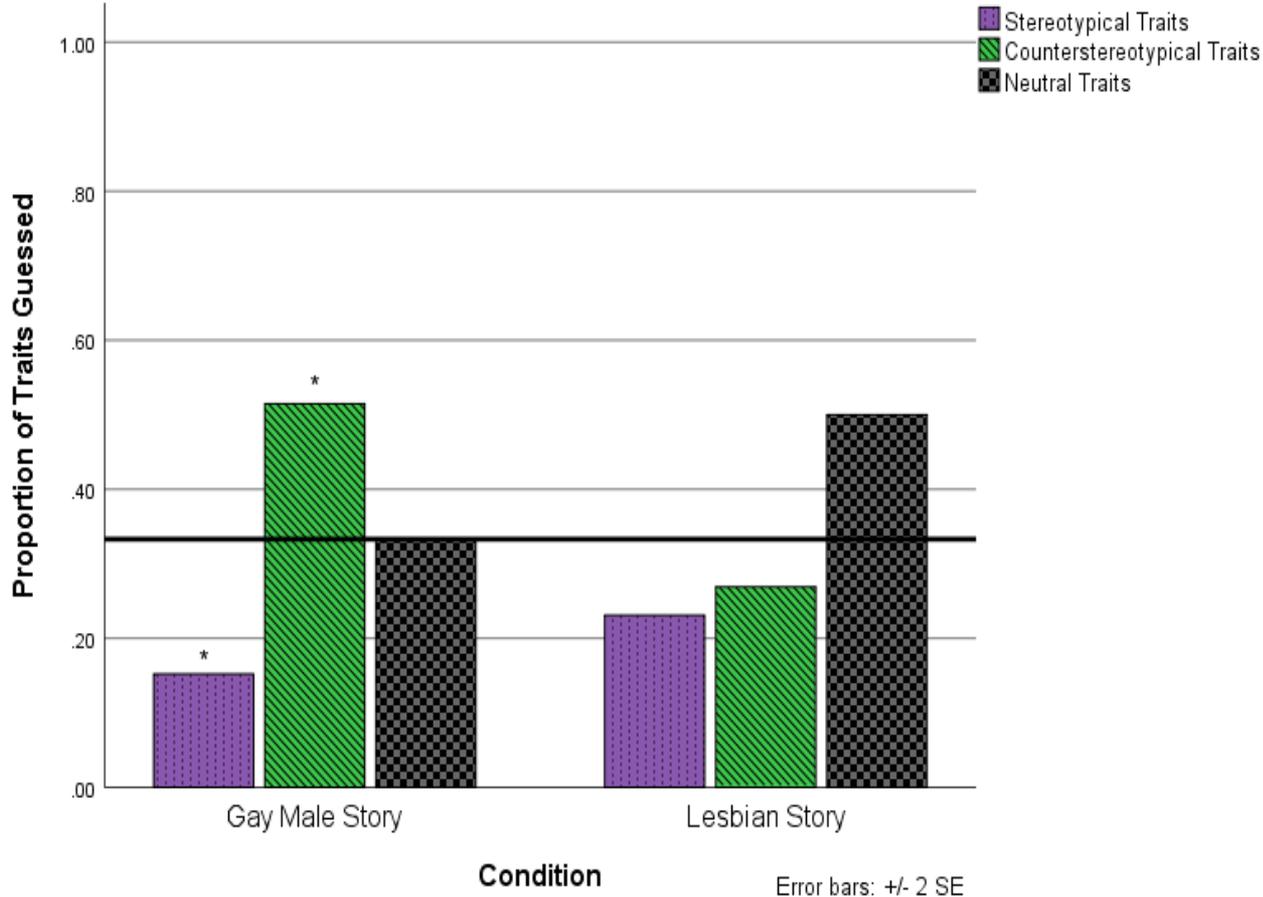


\*  $< 0.05$ , \*\*  $< 0.01$ .



# results

- When answering “This information was not provided” questions...



\* < 0.05, \*\* < 0.01, chance = 0.333

#psynom20

# evidence of stereotypes

- **activated stereotype** → “He was very bitchy, as he held back urges to roll his eyes. He is impatient. He is emotional.”
- **inhibited stereotype** → “He seemed fairly serious about his job and life, like he is not some sort of party animal.”

