

UNDERSTANDING STIGMA BY ASSOCIATION:
THE ROLES OF PRIOR ATTITUDES
AND OBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION

by

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ABSTRACT

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The interaction between Stigma by Association (SBA), Objective Justification (an excuse) and prior negative attitudes (homonegativity) was examined using a mock scholarship application and a recommendation index. In Study 1, 139 participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions in a 2 (Stigma Alliance: allied vs. neutral) x 2 (Objective Justification: high GPA vs. low GPA) between-subjects factorial design. Prior attitudes toward homosexuals were measured using the Short-form ATLG (Herek, 1988). Study 2 ($N = 170$) replicated Study 1 and added an index for possible friendship. In both studies it was hypothesized that there would be a main effect of Objective Justification, and that Stigma Alliance and the ATLG scores would interact with Objective Justification. When applicants were allied, ATLG negatively predicted recommendation scores for lower GPA applicants, but not higher GPA applicants. When applicants were not allied, however, ATLG had no effect, and

only a main effect of Objective Justification (viz., GPA) was observed. These results were consistent in both studies and were also found for the friendship index in Study 2. Findings indicate a need for further research to discover when SBA begins to emerge so that interventions, be it personal or professional, can be adapted

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Many people can remember the names, or at least the stories, of the Caucasian-American men and women who were killed in the American Civil Rights movement of the 1960's. The movie *Mississippi Burning* (Gerolmo & Parker, 1989) was based on the true story of the disappearance and murder of Michael Schwerner, Andre Goodman, and James Chaney. Both Schwerner and Goodman were Caucasian college students helping with a voter registration drive for African-Americans. Viola Luouzo, a Caucasian housewife, was shot twice in the head for transporting Civil Rights protestors during the march from Montgomery, Alabama to Selma. These people are remembered by African-Americans for their bravery and the lives they gave for the Civil Rights movement. Hate crimes like these still happen today, not only to supporters of African-American rights, but also to those people who support other stigmatized groups, such as homosexuals.

In ancient times, stigma would reflect a "mark" given to someone like a slave or a criminal in order to identify them as undesirable (Goffman, 1963). Fiske (1998) explained that whereas prejudice is an attitude, discrimination is an act. Stigma would be the identifying characteristic that precedes such treatment (for a full review of prejudice and discrimination, see Fiske, 1998). The victims mentioned above were not African-Americans; they were merely associated with individuals who were. Is it possible that the characteristic of one person can affect those around them? The answer is, quite simply, yes. Goffman (1963) referred to this phenomenon as courtesy stigma. Neuberg, Smith, Hoffman, and Russell (1994) later referred to this same phenomenon as Stigma by Association (hereafter called SBA).

The purpose of this paper is to move toward a better understanding of SBA. To do this, I will first review a history of homonegativity, or prejudice and discrimination against

homosexuals as a group. Next, I will review the literature to date on SBA, and will point out unexplored, yet important, issues relating to SBA. Finally, I will examine the roles of Objective Justification and social desirability and its relationship to SBA.

1.1 Homonegativity

In a time when homosexuals are finally beginning to feel as if they can “come out,” a fight about equality rights has caused many people to feel as if they have to take sides. States are actively voting on amendments to their constitutions to prevent “gay marriage” or “civil unions” from being legally recognized. Although popular TV programs have made it almost chic to be gay, opposing sides are coming out in record numbers to stand up against it. This type of prejudice is referred to as homonegativity -- the holding of negative attitudes against homosexuals (Hudson & Ricketts, 1980). There have been a number of studies showing that homonegativity does indeed exist and is prevalent in our society.

Herek and a number of his colleagues have spent the better part of the last two decades (e.g., Herek, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1993, 2000, 2002, 2004; Herek & Berrill, 1990; Herek & Capitano, 1995, 1999; Herek & Gonzalez, 2006) researching homonegativity through the use of self-report measures. To study this phenomenon, a measure called the ATLG (Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gays) was created by Herek (1988). It consists of two subscales, reflecting attitudes toward lesbians and attitudes toward gay males. Each scale consists of 10 questions formulated on a Likert-type rating scale, usually from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating more negative attitudes. Herek (1988) initially found that heterosexual males tend to hold more negative attitudes overall toward gay men than toward lesbians, and that they also hold more negative attitudes than do heterosexual women hold against both groups. These results have been replicated and validated on numerous occasions (Herek, 2000).

A recent study suggests that women may not hold less negative attitudes at all, but may instead be more internally motivated to appear non-prejudiced (Ratcliff, Lassiter, Markman, & Snyder, 2006). If it was earlier believed, perhaps erroneously, that women in general held

different attitudes against homosexuals, how might this have changed the results of previously published research? In the area of SBA, in particular, which has been dominated by studies in which only male participants and male targets were examined, would the presence of female targets have made a significant difference in their findings?

1.2 Stigma by Association

Stigma by Association (SBA) has only been studied sporadically over the last 45 years. Many of the earliest studies were non-experimental. Research by Nunnally (1961) was mainly concerned with the differences in the ways mental health workers were treated differently than other workers. Several researchers have examined SBA targeted at parents with respect to their mentally challenged children (Birenbaum, 1970; Voysey, 1972). Other studies examined SBA targeted at the wives of incarcerated husbands (Sack, Seidler, & Thomas, 1976), at morgue attendants (Posner, 1976), and care givers to Alzheimer patients (Werner & Heinke, 2008). SBA studies of targets marked by homosexual associations have included wives of bisexual men (Gochros, 1985), parents of gay men and lesbians (Bernstein, 1990), and AIDS health care workers (Omoto & Snyder, 1995). All of these studies examined the degree to which the targets of SBA reported feeling stigmatized. Although this does not actually prove SBA occurred, it does confirm that these targets felt it was occurring.

Many experimental studies have been conducted on SBA. Whereas many of the previous studies examined how targets *perceived* stigma, other studies tried to show actual SBA occurring. Sigall and Landy (1973) examined the attractiveness of a man's girlfriend on how he was rated personally. They found that men with more attractive girlfriends were rated higher than men whose girlfriends were less attractive. Similar results were found in the ratings of the dating partners of the disabled (Goldstein & Johnson, 1997). Other experiments have included the ratings of wives (Stafford & Petway, 1977) and sons (Weyand, 1984) of alcoholics, who were rated less favorably than those not related to alcoholics. In all of these studies the stigmatized characteristic reflected negatively on a person who was related or at least in close

relationship to the stigmatized individual. In a study conducted by Hebl and Mannix (2003) however, the “mere presence” of an overweight female affected the ratings of possible job applicants, even when no relationship between the two people was evident. These “mere presence” findings have been recently replicated in children (Penny & Haddock, 2007).

Sigelman, Howell, Cornell, Cutright, and Dewey (1991) examined SBA by having male participants rate a target on several traits, such as likeability and mental health. They hypothesized that “highly intolerant” participants would report more negative attitudes toward a male friend of a homosexual than would “less intolerant” participants. Additionally, they hypothesized that SBA would become non-significant when the target’s friendship was based on an involuntary forced friendship, in this case assigned college roommates. Participants were asked to read a description and view a picture of Paul D., a person who lived on campus. The description of Paul included things such as where he was from, and what he enjoys doing in his spare time. The description also included information about Paul’s college roommate, John, and what kind of activities Paul and John engaged in when they spent time together. In some descriptions, John was described as being gay, and in others he was described as being straight. According to the other experimental factor, Paul either knew John from high school, or instead met him when they were assigned as roommates. Results from this study indicate that SBA was present when Paul chose to be John’s roommate. Specifically, Paul was seen as having more homosexual stereotypic traits and was favored less (Sigelman et al., 1991; see also Smith, 1999).

Neuberg et al. (1994) investigated whether participants’ prejudice, after witnessing a “normal” target conversing with a “homosexual” target, could be reduced through balance theory (Heider, 1946). By using prior knowledge of participants’ interests, groups and hobbies, they manipulated the “normal” target to appear very similar to the participant, hypothesizing that this would reduce negative feelings about the homosexual. Surprisingly, they found that not only did it not increase liking of the homosexual, but that SBA was present for the “normal” target even

though he possessed many similarities to the participant. In a second study, they hypothesized that if the “normal” was seen as a high status individual this would reduce negative attitudes. Again, no reduction was observed. In fact, the high status individual received less favorable ratings than did the homosexual target.

1.2.1 Gender effects

Notably, the studies on SBA with homosexuals have lacked the inclusion of female participants. All three of the studies discussed above cited Herek’s (1988) findings (that females hold less prejudice attitudes than males) as the reason for their exclusion of female participants. In a study considering the persuasiveness of a lesbian dissenter in a group decision-making task, Swim, Ferguson, and Hyers (1999) found that women would distance themselves from a lesbian dissenter in order to avoid SBA. The participant would vote against the lesbian dissenter even if the participant held internal beliefs that the other group members were wrong. This raises the question: if females are internally motivated to seem non-prejudiced, why would they actively distance themselves from a lesbian dissenter?

1.3 Objective Justification

A simple PsycInfo search of “social desirability bias” will produce thousands of results, all criticizing, trying to control, or discussing the limitations of, social desirability. Krosnick (1999) defined social desirability bias as the misrepresentation of the presence of admirable characteristics or the absence of socially unacceptable behaviors in self-report measures. Research on prejudice alone has devised a variety of ingenious ways to control for, or circumvent, social desirability effects. Consider the work of Greenwald and Banaji (1995), for example, and their use of an implicit association test (IAT) to examine prejudice and stereotyping. This procedure, despite its theoretical limitations, uses reaction times of the categorization of words and social targets as either good or bad to measure participant attitudes. In some cases, however, it may not be necessary to use such methodologies to

discover true attitudes. Sometimes the person only needs an excuse or an *Objective Justification*, to express their true feelings.

In Objective Justification procedures, participants are given a reason to justify expressing their prejudice. This drastically reduces social desirability effects. Ensari et al. (2004) devised a study that used both implicit and self-report measures. Using electromyography (EMG) techniques that measure pre-conscious facial movements as a result of negative and positive affect, they were able to measure underlying or unexpressed negative emotions when discussing politically sensitive groups (homosexuals or African-Americans). They found that if participants believed that the member of the politically sensitive group had insulted their ingroup—in other words, had given them the justification to report disliking them—then EMG and self report measures were better correlated (they were both negative) than when no insult was given (Ensari et al., 2004). Without the justification, however, EMG measures indicated negativity toward those target groups, whereas self-reports indicated the positive attitudes that are expected under social desirability bias.

Moreno and Bodenhausen (2001) randomly assigned college students who were previously categorized into low and high anti-gay groups, and asked the participants to examine an essay written about lifting the “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” policy regarding homosexuals in the U.S. military. Half of the participants examined an essay written with no grammatical errors, while the other half of the participants examined an essay with numerous grammatical errors. It was hypothesized that unless there was a justifiable reason, a participant's anti-gay attitudes would not affect the ratings of the essay or its author. They observed that participants who scored high on anti-gay attitudes derogated both the essay and its author more when grammatical errors were present than those holding less negative attitudes (Moreno & Bodenhausen, 2001). When a person is caught in a place between social desirability and negative attitudes about a group, a good justifiable reason may be all that is needed for their behavior to match pre-existing negative attitudes.

Note that the two studies discussed above examined direct prejudice as a function of social desirability and Objective Justification. The research presented here examines SBA rather than direct negative attitudes. Specifically, this research examined the conditions under which anti-gay prejudice predicts negative evaluations of individuals merely associated with homosexuals.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY 1

Based on the literature above, a 2 (Stigma Alliance: allied vs. neutral) x 2 (Objective Justification: high GPA vs. low GPA) between-subjects experiment was conducted. A quasi-experimental individual difference variable was used to further divide participants into high and low prejudice groups. To accomplish this, participants participated in two phases. In the first phase, a shortened version of the ATLG (Herek, 1988) was given in a mass pre-testing session at the beginning of the semester. The second phase consisted of experimental manipulations of the factors described above. Participants reviewed a (bogus) scholarship application and rated the applicant on several dimensions. The first independent variable, Stigma Alliance, was a manipulation of the applicant's membership in a volunteer organization. The applicant either belonged to a gay ally organization (allied) or a student organization (neutral). The second independent variable, Objective Justification, was manipulated by giving the applicant either a high GPA or a low GPA. Once all participants were obtained, the previously acquired ATLG (Herek, 1988) scores were used to divide subjects into high and low prejudice categories. The following hypotheses were tested.

2.1 Hypotheses

I expect a main effect of Objective Justification, such that applicants with higher GPAs will be recommended more strongly than those with lower GPAs. However, I also expect Stigma Alliance and the ATLG scores to interact with Objective Justification. Specifically, when applicants are allied, ATLG should (negatively) predict recommendation scores for lower GPA applicants, but not higher GPA applicants. When applicants are not allied, however, ATLG should have no effect, and only a main effect of Objective Justification (viz., GPA) should be observed.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Participants and Design

Study 1 consisted of 139 participants who received course credit in exchange for their participation. The participants consisted of 98 females (70.5%) and 41 males (29.5%) ranging in ages from 18 to 44 ($M = 20.54$, $SD = 3.89$). Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions in a 2 (Stigma Alliance: allied vs. neutral) x 2 (Objective Justification: high GPA vs. low GPA) between-subjects factorial design. Prior attitudes toward homosexuals were used to create two levels (high and low prejudice) of a quasi-experimental factor.

2.2.2 Materials

2.2.2.1 ATLG (Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gays) Short Form.

A 6-item version of the Herek (1988) ATLG was given during a mass pre-testing session. The first three questions consist of attitudes toward lesbians (ATL) and the final three questions measure attitudes toward gay males (ATG). An example of a question is: *Sex between two women is just plain wrong.* (For the full version, see Appendix A).

2.2.2.2 Scholarship Application

The scholarship application consists of three major sections. The first section consists of personal information including name, address, social security number, etc., with all possible identifying clues blackened out. The only question that was not blackened out was the name of the high school attended and the applicant's GPA. In this section the listed GPA was determined by experimental condition, and was either high (3.8) or low (2.4). The name of the high school attended was listed as Truman High School (to control for familiarity bias, an extensive search of local high schools produced no such school). The second section included three spaces in which applicants indicated their volunteer or community service. The only difference between conditions is the Stigma Alliance manipulation. In the allied condition, the applicant showed membership in the organization "PFLAG: A support group for parents and friends of lesbians and gays." In the neutral condition, the applicant showed membership in the

organization “SHA: Student Heritage Association.” The final section was a list of blackened out references.

2.2.2.3 Scholarship Recommendations

A recommendation form was created for this experiment and consisted of seven questions using a Likert-type format with a rating scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). An example of a question was: *The applicant would be a worthy recipient of this scholarship.* The recommendation form asked about perceived possible friendship, worthiness, and qualifications. (For the full version of the recommendation form, see Appendix B).

2.2.2.4 Demographics and Manipulation Check

This final questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part included basic demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity and nationality of birth. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of several manipulation checks. These included questions measuring how much the participant paid attention to the application including questions such as, “*How much was the scholarship for?*” followed by multiple choice answers and then a rating scale to indicate the certainty of their answer. This was used not only as part of the cover story, but as a reason for the participant to pay close attention to the details of the scholarship (For a full version of the post-test questionnaire, see Appendix C). The final question asked the participant to indicate the scholarship applicant’s sexual orientation (allowing for *did not indicate*). This was measured as a check on whether the participant believed they were reviewing a scholarship application of a heterosexual person who was allied with homosexuals, rather than a homosexual person.

2.3 Procedure

When participants arrived at the lab (in groups of 1 to 5) they were handed a folder and given instructions to wait until instructed to open it. Next they were given the cover story which was read from a script to avoid variation:

“You will be given one of ten applications that have passed initial screening to review. All personally identifying information on the application will be covered for privacy issues. Please review the scholarship eligibility requirements and look over the application. You will then be asked to complete a recommendation form from your observations. Once that is completed please close your packet, once all participants are finished reviewing their applicant you will be asked to complete a form with questions about the student in your packet and general demographic information.”

Once all instructions were given, participants were instructed to examine their folder, which contained the scholarship application. The application in each folder was determined by random assignment to represent one of the four experimental conditions. Also in the folder were the scholarship information and a recommendation form. The scholarship information was as follows:

“Scholarship Information: This is a \$5000 per year scholarship for new incoming UTA students who have shown academic excellence and commitment to the community. Applicants should show commitment to their community through activities and volunteering. Applicants should have spent at least 5 hours per week volunteering over the last 2 years. “

Participants were given ample time to look over the application and to complete the recommendation form. Once all participants had closed their packets the demographics and manipulation checks were distributed. Again, participants were asked to place the completed form in their packet so the experimenter was aware of when all participants had finished. Once all participants had finished, the group was debriefed and asked about suspicions of the true nature of the experiment. They were then thanked and excused. Before analysis, each participant’s pretest score on the ATLG (Herek, 1988) was added to the datafile.

2.4 Results and Discussion

2.4.1 Manipulation Checks

Participants were asked to indicate the assumed sexual orientation of the scholarship applicant. No participants identified that the applicant was a homosexual, eight (5.75%) identified the applicant as heterosexual, and 131 (94.24%) choose the option that it was not indicated. Because no participants indicated that the applicant was a homosexual all participants were analyzed.

2.4.2 ATLG

A composite measure of ATLG was computed by averaging the six items (after appropriate reversals; Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$; $M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.11$). Female participant scores ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.14$) were not significantly different, $F(1, 137) = 1.63$, $p > .05$, than male scores ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.12$). The ATLG variable was centered (Aiken & West, 1991) and used as a continuous factor in the multiple moderated regression analyses below.

2.4.3 Applicant Recommendations

Because this form was created for this procedure, factor analysis was performed on the set of seven items, revealing two components. The first component consisted of four items (items 2, 4, 5, and 7, from Appendix B) and had an eigenvalue of 3.83 accounting for 54.57% of the variance. The second component consisted of three items (items 1, 3, and 6, from Appendix B) and had an eigenvalue of 1.17 accounting for 16.76% of the variance. The Cronbach's alpha values for these two components are .93 and .53, respectively. Because the first component has a straight forward interpretation (viz, recommendation), whereas the second component did not display adequate internal reliability, only the first component will be analyzed and reported here below.

In order to test the key hypotheses, a series of regression analyses were conducted to predict the recommendation scores. For the models reported here below, the Objective Justification variable was entered as -1 (low GPA) and 1 (high GPA), so that positive

coefficients indicate more positive recommendations for high GPA applicants, whereas negative coefficients indicate more positive recommendations for low GPA applicants. Stigma Alliance was entered as -1 (allied) and 1 (neutral), so that positive coefficients indicate more positive recommendations for neutral Stigma Alliance conditions, whereas negative coefficients indicate more positive recommendations for allied Stigma Alliance conditions. ATLG was coded with higher numbers indicating stronger prejudice, and thus interpretation of any main effects is straightforward.

For predicting recommendations, three regression models were tested sequentially. First, the main effect terms (ATLG, Objective Justification, and Stigma Alliance) were entered together. Then, the two-way cross-product interaction terms were entered in the next step. Finally, the three-way interaction was entered in the third step. Interactions are signified by significant effects for the cross-product terms, and a significant change in R^2 with the addition of the interaction term to the model. Unstandardized regression coefficients (B) will be reported.

In the first model, $R^2 = .30$, $F(3, 135) = 19.12$, $p < .001$, there was a main effect for Objective Justification, $B = .66$, $t(135) = 7.13$, $p < .001$, $s^2 = .27$, such that recommendations were higher in the high GPA conditions than in the low GPA conditions. There was a marginal main effect for Stigma Alliance, $B = .16$, $t(135) = 1.76$, $p < .08$, $s^2 = .02$, indicating that there was a tendency toward stronger recommendations in the neutral conditions, compared to the allied conditions. The effect of ATLG was not reliable. In the next model, none of the two-way interactions emerged as significant. Finally, in the third model, the three-way interaction was significant, $\Delta R^2 = .03$, $\Delta F(1, 131) = 5.08$, $p < .03$.

To interpret the three-way interaction, two-way interactions (between ATLG and Objective Justification) were computed within the allied and neutral conditions separately. No interaction was observed in the neutral condition, but there remained a main effect of Objective Justification, $B = .77$, $t(64) = 2.04$, $p < .05$, such that recommendations were higher in the high GPA conditions than in the low GPA conditions.

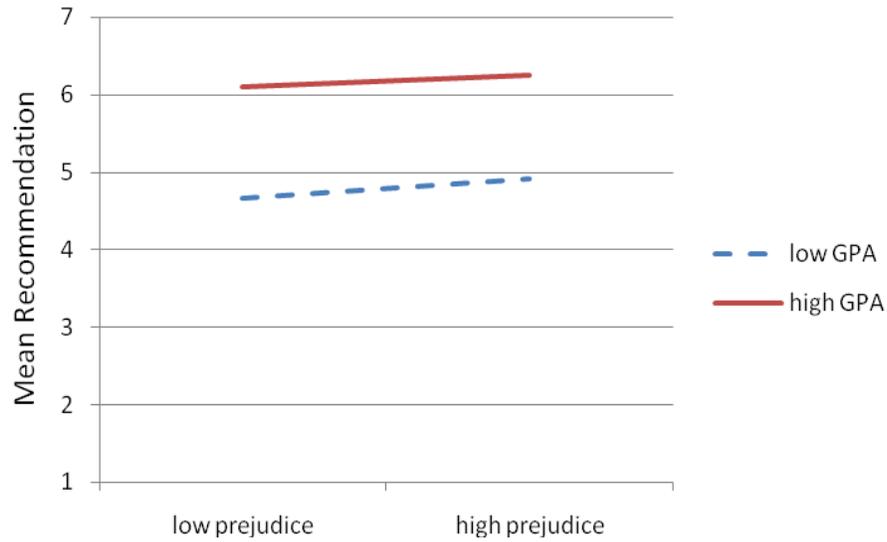


Figure 2.1 Simple slopes for target recommendation in Study 1, as predicted by ATLG scores and Objective Justification, within neutral conditions.

As expected, however, an interaction between ATLG and Objective Justification was observed in the allied conditions, $B = .87$, $t(67) = 3.17$, $p < .01$. Simple slopes analyses, regressing recommendation scores onto ATLG as a function of Objective Justification clarified the nature of the interaction. Dummy codes were used such that the low and high GPA conditions were coded as 1, 0 (respectively) when analyzing the high GPA condition and 0, 1 (respectively) when analyzing the low GPA condition. In the high GPA condition, there was no effect of ATLG. However, in the low GPA conditions, the predicted effect of ATLG was significant, $B = -1.16$, $t(67) = -2.94$, $p < .01$, such that for low GPA applicants, as ATLG scores increased recommendation scores decreased.

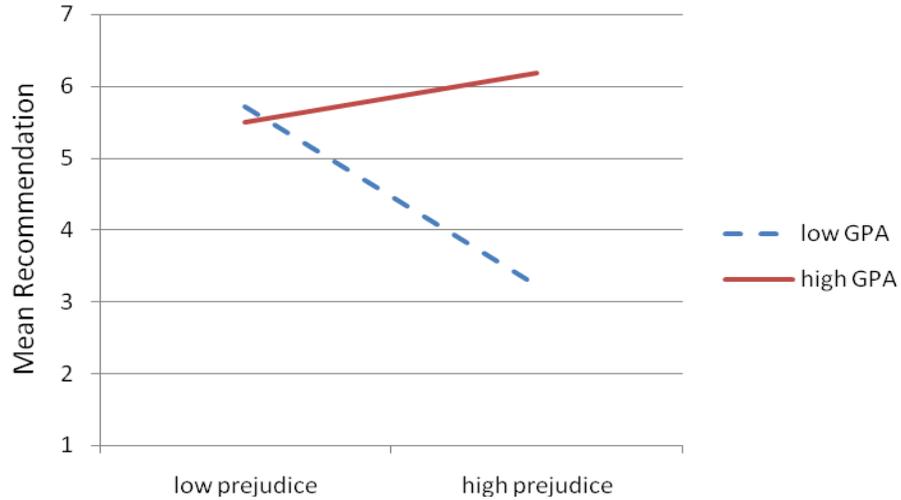


Figure 2.2 Simple slopes for target recommendation in Study 1, as predicted by ATLG scores and Objective Justification, within allied condition

There was a main effect of Objective Justification and a marginal effect of Stigma Alliance, but a two-way interaction was not obtained. However, when the additional factor of prior attitudes (ATLG) was added, a significant three-way interaction was obtained, and focused comparisons revealed that Objective Justification and ATLG did indeed interact in the allied conditions, but not in the neutral conditions. This is consistent with the results of Sigelman et al. (1991), but the factors of Objective Justification and the inclusion of female participants helps add to this body of literature.

There were several limitations to this study. First, the set of questions given for ratings was limited. The factor analysis of the recommendation form revealed that several questions were inconsistent with the items in component one. However, if a second component of friendship were to be included, and additional questions about likeability were added to the questionnaire, these questions might prove to be useful. By comparing the friendship component to the recommendation component, a more concise view of a participant's attitude may become apparent. Also, although no participants indicated the participant was a homosexual, there is no way to be positive that we are measuring SBA in this format. This

problem would be better suited for a forced-choice question (i.e., an item without “did not indicate” as an alternative).

The Objective Justification and the Stigma Alliance manipulations were salient and effective. The general attitude about homosexuals in our sample was equally distributed for both males and females and no significant differences were found. By using post-experimental interviews, I received positive feedback about the application’s realism and no participants reported any suspicions about the cover story. I incorporated several changes into the second study in an attempt to address the limitations of the first study and to elaborate on the measurement of potential target friendship.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY 2

As a replication and extension of Study 1, a 2 (Stigma Alliance: allied vs. neutral) x 2 (Objective Justification: high GPA vs. low GPA) between-subjects experiment was conducted on two potential dependent measure constructs. The first measure assessed scholarship recommendations, similar to Study 1. The second measure assessed hypothetical friendship variables. Like Study 1, a quasi-experimental individual difference variable was used to further examine the effects of pre-existing anti-gay prejudice (viz., ATLG).

Following the design of Study 1, participants participated in two phases. In the first phase, the 6-item version of the ATLG (Herek, 1988) was given in a mass pre-testing session at the beginning of the semester. The second phase consisted of experimental manipulations of the factors described above. Participants reviewed a (bogus) scholarship application and rated the applicant on several dimensions. The first independent variable, Stigma Alliance, was a manipulation of the applicant's membership in a volunteer organization. The applicant either belonged to a gay ally organization (allied) or a student organization (neutral). The second independent variable, Objective Justification, was manipulated by giving the applicant either a high GPA or a low GPA. In addition to the dependent measures of Study 1, however, two additional measures were added to the recommendation portion of the questionnaire that attempted to measure hypothetical friendship. Once all participants were obtained, the previously acquired ATLG (Herek, 1988) scores were used to compute the composite ATLG index variable.

3.1 Hypotheses

As Study 2 was a replication of Study 1, the hypotheses remained the same. However, for this study, measures of friendship were added to increase the generalizability of the findings. For both dependent measures (recommendation and friendship), I expected a main effect of Objective Justification, such that applicants with higher GPAs would be recommended and liked more strongly than those with lower GPAs. I also expected Stigma Alliance and the ATLG scores to interact with Objective Justification: when applicants were allied, ATLG would (negatively) predict recommendation and friendship scores for lower GPA applicants, but not for higher GPA applicants. When applicants were not allied, however, ATLG would have no effect, and only a main effect of Objective Justification (viz., GPA) was expected.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Participants and Design

The study consisted of 170 participants who received course credit in exchange for their participation. The participants consisted of 113 females (66.5%), 54 males (31.8%), and 3 participants of unidentified gender (1.7%). The participants ranged in ages from 18 to 53 ($M = 21.38$, $SD = 4.53$). Participants included 71 Caucasians (41.7%), 35 African Americans (20.5%), 24 Hispanics (14.1%), 25 Asians (14.8%), 7 Middle Eastern (4.1%) and 8 other (4.8%). Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions in a 2 (Stigma Alliance: allied vs. neutral) x 2 (Objective Justification: high GPA vs. low GPA) between-subjects factorial design. Prior attitudes toward homosexuals were measured and used to create the ATLG index as in Study 1.

3.2.2 Materials

3.2.2.1 ATLG (Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gays) Short Form

A 6-item version of the Herek (1988) ATLG was given during a mass pre-testing session. The first three questions consist of attitudes toward lesbians (ATL) and the final three questions measure attitudes toward gay males (ATG). An example of a question is: Sex

between two women is just plain wrong. (For the full version, see Appendix A). The six ATLG items again exhibited good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). After appropriate reversals, these items were combined into the ATLG index.

3.2.2.2 Scholarship Application

There was one change made to the scholarship application. In the manipulation of SBA the word "straight" was added into the description of the allied group: "PFLAG: A support group for the straight parents and friends of lesbians and gays." In Study 1, the word "straight" was not included in the description of the purpose of PFLAG. This was added to increase the salience of the sexual orientation of the applicant as straight.

3.2.2.3 Scholarship Recommendations

The recommendation form used in this study consisted of 16 Likert-type questions on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating more favorable ratings, with the exception of reverse-scored items. These questions included more measures of likeability and possible friendship to assess a second component of the recommendations with greater reliability (there were too few of such items in Study 1). In the last part of this section, the participant was asked to give a 'yes' or 'no' answer to the question of whether she or he would recommend the applicant. This question was not in the pilot study, and was included to clarify participants' recommendations.

A new section was added to the recommendation form, consisting of stereotype-based questions, modified from Smith (1999). There are six questions, which asked participants to make inferences about the applicant: Ambitious/Lazy (GPA-Stereotype), Religious/Atheist (Homosexual-Stereotype), Heterosexual/Homosexual (Forced choice sexual orientation manipulation check), Democrat/Republican (Homosexual- Stereotype), Intelligent/Unintelligent (GPA-stereotype) Conservative/Liberal (Homosexual- Stereotype). These were followed by Likert-type scales, asking participants to rate the degree to which they believe the applicant possesses these stereotypical characteristics (for a full version of all sections, see Appendix D).

3.2.2.4 Demographics and Manipulation Checks

There were only minor changes made to the demographics and manipulation checks, compared to Study 1. The questions asking the participant to indicate the sex and the sexual orientation of the applicant were removed. Because the manipulation check for sexual orientation was moved into the main recommendation form, it was no longer needed at this point. The gender portion was also removed to prevent any unnecessary confounds. Two additional questions were added that inquired about the participant's own GPA and whether the participant had received any scholarships. The last part of this section asks for demographic information as discussed in the *Participants and Design* section above.

3.3 Procedure

Apart from the changes made to the measures themselves, there were no procedural changes from Study 1.

3.4 Results and Discussion

3.4.1 Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (with Varimax rotation) was conducted to evaluate the underlying factor configuration for the 16 items of the recommendation form. Two principal factors were extracted, based on scholarship recommendation and friendship. After rotation, the first factor accounted for 33.1% of the variance, and the second factor accounted for 10.4% of the variance. Table 1 displays the items and factor loadings for the rotated factors, with loadings less than .40 omitted to improve clarity.

The first factor measures scholarship recommendation, and had an Eigenvalue of 7.73. Reliability statistics were conducted on the six-item subscale, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha of .90. The second factor measures possible friendship and had an Eigenvalue of 1.76. A reliability analysis for these six items yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .70.

Table 3.1 Factor Loadings for the Rotated Factors

| Item | Factor Loading | |
|---|----------------|------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| This student is intelligent. | .792 | |
| Overall, I have a positive impression of this student. | .707 | |
| This student is worthy of this scholarship. | .759 | |
| The student meets eligibility requirements. | .721 | |
| This student has displayed academic excellence. | .879 | |
| I would recommend this person for this scholarship. | .824 | |
| This student would not fit in my peer group. (Reversed) | | .673 |
| I feel sorry for this student. (Reversed) | | .401 |
| This student would enjoy going to UTA. | | .454 |
| I would like to meet this student. | | .642 |
| I would feel comfortable with this student | | .718 |
| I would not like to have this student as a friend. (Reversed) | | .549 |

Note. Loadings < .40 are omitted.

3.4.2 Scholarship Recommendations

For predicting recommendations, three regression models were tested sequentially, as in Study 1. First, the main effect terms (ATLG, Objective Justification, and Stigma Alliance) were entered together. Then, the two-way cross-product interaction terms were entered in the next step. Finally, the three-way interaction was entered in the third step.

In the first model, $R^2 = .49$, $F(3, 166) = 53.48$, $p < .001$, there was a main effect for Objective Justification, $B = .85$, $t(166) = 12.6$, $p < .001$, $s^2 = .49$, such that recommendations were higher in the high GPA conditions than in the low GPA conditions. The main effects for

Stigma Alliance and ATLG were not significant. In the next model, there emerged a two-way interaction between ATLG and Objective Justification, $B = .11$, $t(163) = 1.97$, $p = .05$, $s^2 = .02$. Finally, in the third model, the three-way interaction was not significant. However, based on the results of study 1 and the a priori expectations regarding the simple effects, the interactions within the allied and neutral conditions were examined separately.

Replicating Study 1, no interaction was observed in the neutral condition, but there remained a main effect of Objective Justification, $B = .81$, $t(80) = 8.07$, $p < .001$, such that recommendations were higher in the high GPA conditions than in the low GPA conditions.

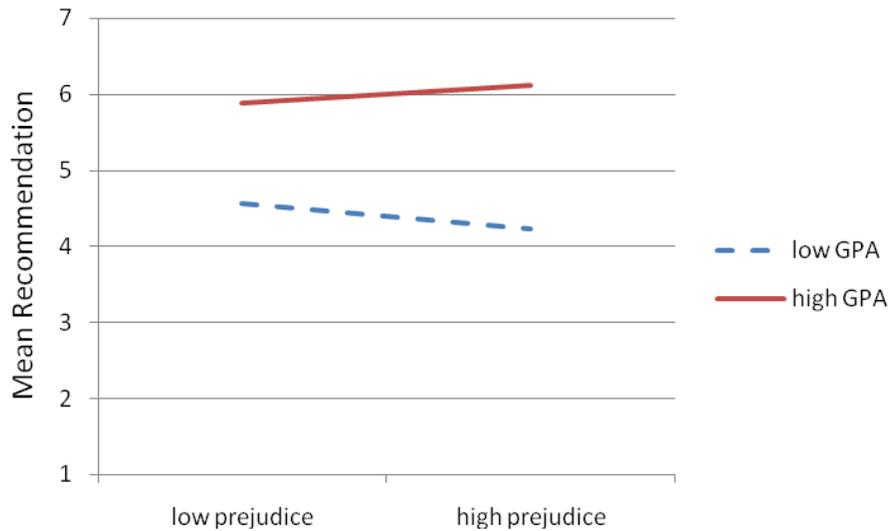


Figure 3.1 Simple slopes for target recommendation in Study 2, as predicted by ATLG scores and Objective Justification, within neutral conditions.

As expected, however, and again replicating Study 1, an interaction between ATLG and Objective Justification was observed in the allied conditions, $B = .15$, $t(82) = 1.95$, $p = .05$. Simple slopes analyses, regressing recommendation scores onto ATLG as a function of Objective Justification clarified the nature of the interaction. Dummy codes were used such that the low and high GPA conditions were coded as 1, 0 (respectively) when analyzing the high GPA condition and 0, 1 (respectively) when analyzing the low GPA condition. In the high GPA condition, there was no effect of ATLG. However, in the low GPA conditions, the predicted

effect of ATLG was significant, $B = -.28$, $t(82) = -2.60$, $p < .01$, such that for low GPA applicants, as ATLG scores increased recommendation scores decreased (see Figure 2, top panel). This simple effect supports the key hypothesis, and replicates Study 1.

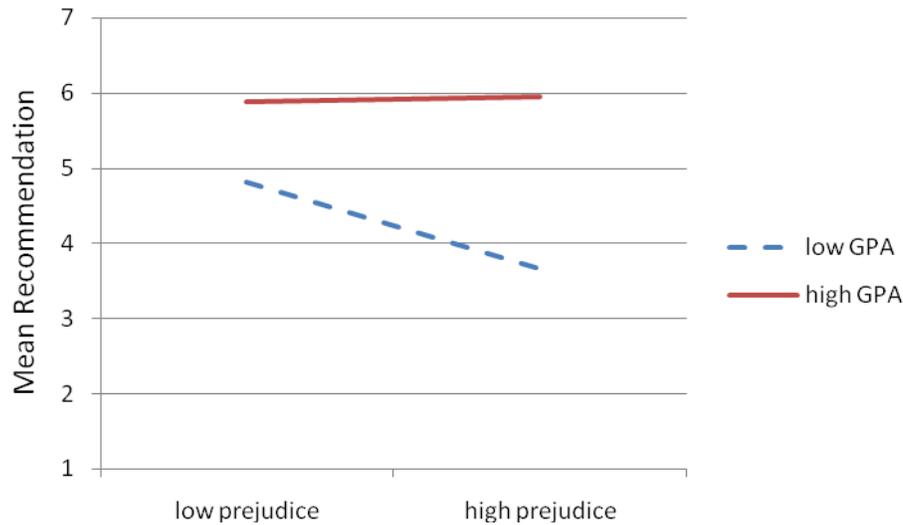


Figure 3.2 Simple slopes for target recommendation in Study 2, as predicted by ATLG scores and Objective Justification, within allied conditions.

3.4.3 Friendship Scores

For predicting friendship scores, three regression models—analogue to the above models—were tested sequentially. First, the main effect terms (ATLG, Objective Justification, and Stigma Alliance) were entered together. Then, the two-way cross-product interaction terms were entered in the next step. Finally, the three-way interaction was entered in the third step.

In the first model, $R^2 = .04$, $F(3, 166) = 2.42$, $p < .07$, there was a main effect for Objective Justification, $B = .15$, $t(166) = 2.35$, $p < .03$, $sr^2 = .03$, such that friendship scores were higher in the high GPA conditions than in the low GPA conditions. The main effects for Stigma Alliance and ATLG were not significant. In the next model, there emerged a two-way interaction between ATLG and Stigma Alliance, $B = .14$, $t(163) = 2.57$, $p = .01$, $sr^2 = .04$. Collapsing across Objective Justification, this interaction was analyzed for interpretation. There was no effect of ATLG within the neutral conditions, but a significant effect emerged within the allied conditions,

$B = -.21$, $t(163) = 2.79$, $p < .01$. Although not part of the key hypotheses for this study, the effect makes sense. Regardless of a target applicant's qualifications, friendship was strongly (negatively) predicted by ATLG scores within the allied condition, but not within the neutral conditions.

Finally, in the third model, the three-way interaction was not significant. However, based on the results of study 1 and the a priori expectations regarding the simple effects, the interactions within the allied and neutral conditions were examined separately. Neither of these interactions were significant, but to be consistent with the above analyses, the simple effects were examined.

Simple slopes analyses were conducted within the allied and neutral conditions separately, regressing friendship scores onto ATLG as a function of Objective Justification. Dummy codes were used such that the low and high GPA conditions were coded as 1, 0 (respectively) when analyzing the high GPA condition and 0, 1 (respectively) when analyzing the low GPA condition. There were no effects for ATLG in either the neutral—high GPA or neutral—low GPA conditions. However, the predicted difference emerged in the allied conditions. As before, in the high GPA condition there was no effect of ATLG. However, in the low GPA conditions, the predicted effect of ATLG was significant, $B = -.23$, $t(82) = -2.38$, $p < .05$, such that for low GPA applicants, as ATLG scores increased, friendship scores decreased.

In Study 2, although the interactions were slightly different from those of Study 1, the key hypothesis received support. Specifically, ATLG negatively predicted recommendation scores (and friendship) only when the target was allied with homosexuals and when there was Objective Justification for a negative evaluation (i.e., low GPA).

CHAPTER 4

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Across both Study 1 and Study 2 the key hypotheses were (a) that there would be a main effect of Objective Justification, such that applicants with higher GPAs would be recommended more strongly than those with lower GPA, and (b) that Stigma Alliance and the ATLG scores would interact with Objective Justification. Specifically, when applicants are allied, ATLG should (negatively) predict recommendation scores for lower GPA applicants, but not higher GPA applicants. When applicants were not allied, however, ATLG would have no effect, and only a main effect of Objective Justification (viz., GPA) should be observed. Additionally, in Study 2 a measure of friendship was added to increase the generalizability of the findings. Similar to recommendation it was predicted that there would be a main effect of Objective Justification, such that applicants with higher GPAs will be liked more strongly than those with lower GPAs. It was also expected that Stigma Alliance and the ATLG scores would interact with Objective Justification: when applicants are allied, ATLG should (negatively) predict friendship scores for lower GPA applicants, but not higher GPA applicants. When applicants are not allied, however, ATLG should have no effect, and only a main effect of Objective Justification (viz., GPA) should be observed.

In both studies a main effect for Objective Justification was observed. This result was expected due to the nature of the manipulation. Higher GPA's should be rated more favorably than lower GPA's as they indicate better qualification for a scholarship. Also, in both studies no overall effect was observed for ATLG. Having no effect from ATLG would suggest that people holding different attitudes about homosexuality would not score participants differently solely based on their prior attitudes. In other words, more anti-gay prejudiced people do not discriminate unless homosexuality is involved. This speaks to the validity of the measure.

Although the hypotheses from both studies were supported by the findings, the similar results manifested themselves in slightly differing ways before the simple slopes were examined. In Study 1, a significant three-way interaction was observed, whereas in Study 2 the key differences manifested themselves only in the theoretically-expected, specific ATLG X Objective Justification interactions within the allied conditions, but not within the neutral conditions. Specifically, anti-gay prejudice predicted lower recommendations ratings toward targets only when targets were allied with a homosexual group and when they had a low GPA. By contrast, when targets were allied, but with a high GPA, ATLG did not predict the outcomes.

In Study 2 the additional dependent variable of friendship was added. This helped to generalize the finding that Objective Justification is important. The lower GPA was not only effective in reducing the willingness to give out scholarship money to a nameless target person, but also in reducing potential friendship ratings. Similar to the recommendation findings, targets had to be in both the Allied category and have lower GPAs before they were rated more negatively by those individuals holding prior negative attitudes.

Limitations of this study includes the inability to prove SBA, an unusually diverse population, and a limited prior knowledge of theories and data in the interaction of SBA and Objective Justification.

Although an attempt was made between Study 1 and Study 2 to clarify that the target was indeed a heterosexual and only allied with homosexuals, it is still difficult to conclude that I was measuring only SBA through the chosen method. Removing the “did not indicate” choice from the sexual orientation check did not clarify the results as hoped. A new problem emerged: individuals who chose “homosexual” were often unsure about this choice, and this happened in both the Allied and Neutral conditions. However, just as many people were unsure when they marked “heterosexual”, even in the neutral condition.

The population of our study was made up of significantly more woman than men, and from more diverse ethnic populations than are currently represented in the United States. Although it was important to include women in the sample, it was not the intention to sample

primarily women. In most studies, the lack of diversity available in participant pools is usually stated as a limitation. However, in our study this was not the case and our population was heavily populated with not only diverse ethnic backgrounds but many foreign students as well. This could have created unseen confounds from participants' different cultural or religious upbringings that were not accounted for in this design.

Finally, this is the first study of its kind that we are aware of to examine these variables together in this way. Although this makes for exciting possible research it adds its own unique set of complications. In the history of research programs, the "first" of its kind is often exciting and breakthrough but often has a number of unforeseen complications. Not until a study has been replicated many times and over many different populations are these unforeseen issues resolved. However, this does bode well for future researchers willing to explore these possible problems and find solutions for them that were beyond the scope of this design.

Stigma by Association (SBA) could affect an unknown number of people. Stigmatized groups not only include homosexuals and minority ethnicities, but extend to categories such as obesity, mental illness, and even type of job. This could unknowingly affect someone's ability to get a job, join a prized group, or obtain a friendship. It is important from both a personal and professional stand-point for individuals to understand SBA.

By better understanding SBA, companies, individuals and future researchers could benefit. For companies, helpful interventions may be put in place so that individuals are not unknowingly discriminated against. Individuals, armed with this information can make informed decisions on when and where to reveal potentially harmful information about their friends or loved ones. Finally, by understanding the origins of SBA, research can be conducted to help find ways of reducing its effects. This research hopes to further the understanding of not only SBA but when and why it emerges. According to our findings, not only does the person have to belong to a stigmatized group, but prior negative attitudes and Objective Justification was important to when the effects were felt

APPENDIX A

ATLG SHORT FORM

Please circle the corresponding number for the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. Sex between two women is just plain wrong.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly agree
2. I think lesbians are disgusting.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly agree
3. Female homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in women.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly agree
4. I think male homosexuals are disgusting.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly agree
5. Male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in human men
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly agree
6. Homosexual behavior between two men is just plain wrong.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly agree

APPENDIX B

STUDY 1 RECOMMENDATION FORM

For all of the following questions, the applicant referred to is the applicant whose application you just reviewed.

1. The applicant would enjoy going to UTA.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I strongly agree

2. The applicant has displayed academic excellence.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I strongly agree

3. The applicant would not fit into my peer group.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I strongly agree

4. The applicant would be a worthy recipient of this scholarship.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I strongly agree

5. The applicant meets the eligibility requirements.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I strongly agree

6. The applicant has not demonstrated commitment to community.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I strongly agree

7. I would recommend this person for this scholarship.
I strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I strongly agree

APPENDIX C

STUDY 1 DEMOGRAPHICS AND MANIPULATION CHECKS

Please answer the following questions about yourself:

Your age: _____ Your gender: ____female ____male

Your ethnicity: _____

Your nationality (of birth) _____

Please answer the following questions about the scholarship and/or the applicant:

-How much was the scholarship for? (Please circle one)

\$250/year \$500/year \$1,000/year \$5,000/year \$10,000/year

-How certain are you of your answer to the previous question (amount of scholarship)?

Not at all certain 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely certain

-What Were 2 of the qualifications for receiving the scholarship?

-What was the name of the High School the applicant attended? (Please circle one)

Truman Roosevelt Southwood Woodlawn

-How certain are you of your answer to the previous question (high school)?

Not at all certain 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely certain

-Name the organizations for which the applicant has volunteered.

What was the gender of the applicant? (Please circle one)

Female Male Did not indicate

How certain are you of your answer to the previous question (gender)?

Not at all certain 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely certain

What was the sexual orientation of the applicant? (Please circle one)

Heterosexual Homosexual/Bisexual Did not indicate

How certain are you of your answer to the previous question (sexual orientation)?

Not at all certain 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely certain

APPENDIX D

STUDY 2 RECOMMENDATION FORM

Section 1

Please respond to each statement by circling the NUMBER that most accurately describes your opinion. We recognize that you may not always feel like you have enough information available to you to form a strong opinion.

| | | Strongly Disagree | | | Neutral | | | Strongly Agree |
|----|---|--------------------------|---|---|----------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | This student is tolerant of diverse beliefs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | This student would not fit in my peer group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3 | I feel sorry for this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | I do not admire this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5 | This student is intelligent. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6 | Overall, I have a positive impression of this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7 | I feel this student is a good person. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | This student is worthy of this scholarship. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | I respect this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10 | The student meets eligibility requirements. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11 | This student would enjoy going to UTA. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12 | This student has not displayed a commitment to the community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13 | I would like to meet this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14 | I would feel comfortable with this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15 | I would not like to have this student as a friend. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16 | This student has displayed academic excellence. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Section 2

We are interested in inferences people sometimes make on the basis of limited information. Based on your impression of the individual so far, would you guess that he/she is (circle one of each of the following options):

| | | | |
|----|--------------|-----|---------------|
| 1. | Ambitious | Vs. | Lazy |
| 2. | Religious | Vs. | Atheist |
| 3. | Heterosexual | Vs. | Homosexual |
| 4. | Democrat | Vs. | Republican |
| 5. | Intelligent | Vs. | Unintelligent |

Please answer the following questions regarding your impressions of the candidate. (Circle a number)

| | | Not at all | | | | | | Extremely |
|----|--|------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|
| 6 | To what degree do you think this person is ambitious? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7 | To what degree do you think this person is religious? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | How <i>likely</i> do you think it is that this person is homosexual? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | How <i>likely</i> do you think it is that this person is a Republican? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10 | To what degree do you think this person is intelligent? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11 | I would recommend this person for this scholarship. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

If I were asked to give a 'yes' or 'no' answer to whether this person should receive this scholarship I would vote: _____ Yes _____ No

Section 3

We would like to test your memory regarding the details about the scholarship and/or the applicant. Please answer the following questions without rechecking the scholarship:

-How much was the scholarship for? (Please circle one)

\$250/year \$500/year \$1,000/year \$5,000/year \$10,000/year

-How certain are you of your answer to the previous question (amount of scholarship)?

Not at all certain 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely certain

-What were two (2) of the qualifications for receiving the scholarship?

-What was the name of the High School the applicant attended? (Please circle one)

Truman Roosevelt Southwood Woodlawn

-How certain are you of your answer to the previous question (high school)?

Not at all certain 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely certain

-Name the organizations for which the applicant has volunteered.

Section 4

Finally, please answer the following questions about yourself:

Your age: _____

Your gender: ____ female ____ male

Your current GPA: _____

Your ethnicity: _____

Your nationality (of birth): _____

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