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DO THE FACTORS OF WEIGHT AND RACE INFLUENCE
JUDGMENTS MADE ABOUT MOTHERS?

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Abstract

This study examined whether or not individuals would display biases in judgments made about mothers' parenting based solely on physical appearance. Specifically, weight and race were investigated as potential platforms for biased judgments regarding neglectful parenting, and both implicit and explicit biases were assessed. "Mothers" were represented through face stimuli that were manipulated to be heavy or of average weight. It was posited that black and heavier mothers would be judged to be more neglectful relative to Caucasian and average weight mothers. Also, it was posited that biased attributions would be made more frequently by individuals who expressed having stronger explicit biases toward black and heavy persons. Those who expressed having less positive self-body images were also hypothesized to rate heavier women as more neglectful. The sample was comprised of 131 university students. As predicted, results showed that black women were judged to be more neglectful than white women. Also, heavy white women were judged to be more neglectful than white women of average weight. Explicit biases against both heavy and black persons were found and correlated positively with judgments of neglect. These findings provide support for the theory that mothers may be seen to be more neglectful as parents simply due to their being overweight, black, or both. Implications regarding decisions made by those who work for Child Protective Services (CPS) will be discussed.

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Introduction

When reports of child maltreatment are made to state agencies, caseworkers of Child Protective Services (CPS) are responsible for making the official determinations of neglect and abuse. Although guidelines exist for CPS workers to make decisions regarding the presence of child neglect, the potential for bias to enter into this decision making process has been suggested (Azar & Goff, 2007). Weight and race in particular have been determined to be factors that may introduce negative, biased judgments made by individuals (Schwartz et al., 2003; Dixon & Maddox, 2005). These judgments could potentially lead to the presence of inaccurate and unjust decisions being made by CPS workers.

Work has been done in order to decrease errors in the explicit decision making processes of CPS workers, such as requiring them to follow certain procedures and protocols. Specifically, there have been questions established that CPS case workers must ask themselves when determining whether or not child neglect is present in a given circumstance. Considerations taken into account fall under two overarching questions: “Do the conditions or circumstances indicate that a child’s basic needs are unmet?” and “What harm or threat of harm may have resulted?” (DePanfilis & Salus, 2003).

While there have been guidelines established for determining the presence of child neglect, not much empirical work has been done to ensure that implicit decision making processes do not lead to errors in workers’ appraisals of mothers and their behaviors (Azar & Goff, 2007). The parenting practices of mothers have the potential to be unintentionally judged more negatively due to CPS workers’ implicit perceptions of unrelated aspects at hand. These

aspects could include how the mothers appear physically and how they are viewed by others because of this. As stated by McConnell and Llewellyn (2002), “legal scholars in North America, the United Kingdom, and Australia have questioned whether factors other than abuse and neglect or the risk of maltreatment have led to child removal (p. 301).” Termination of parental rights and child removal do occur unrightfully at times; this can be seen in the breadth of evidence that shows CPS having an overrepresentation of families and children who are racial minorities (McConnell & Llewellyn, 2002; Azar & Goff, 2007). African Americans in particular have been reported to have the highest rates of child abuse and neglect; however, this could be due to the presence of biased decision making in the evaluation process for child maltreatment (Lauderdale, Valiunas, & Anderson, 1980).

Race is a leading factor for which people are unrightfully judged. Persons’ judgments made about African Americans comprise our largest database on how visual appearance may influence the decisions of others. I will later review several studies related to biased judgments made against African Americans in detail to illustrate how these biases come to light in society. Reviewing such work is necessary as it is important to examine the reality of these biases to recognize that they are present and pose concern. People who hold such biased views against African Americans have the potential to adversely influence the lives of families equip with capable and caring mothers. A main purpose of the present study was to address this particular issue of biased judgments made due to the racial identities of others.

While race has been found to elicit a majority of the biased judgments people make, it is by no means the only factor for which individuals develop biases. A study conducted by Schwartz et al. (2003) examined whether or not biased views of individuals due to their weight were present amongst health professionals who specialized in obesity. They found that even

those who dealt with obese people for a living harbored biases toward heavier persons. This speaks strongly of the huge stigma placed against being heavy in our western society today. As CPS workers are only human, and are immersed in this western culture that looks down upon heavier persons, such biases could also potentially present themselves in circumstances regarding child protection decision making. That is to propose that mothers may be thought of more negatively if they are not at an average, more socially acceptable weight. In turn, another key aspect of this study examines whether or not biased attributions are made in regard to mothers' parenting behaviors due to their weight.

While CPS workers are likely to have good intentions and desire to fulfill their job properly, they are not immune to making biased judgments. Munro (1999) reviews the concept that social workers commonly display an unfortunately natural tendency toward intuitive thinking in their reasoning. The careful consideration of every piece of factual evidence that can be found in any given situation takes much effort and time. In turn, we as humans "tend to prefer imperfect but easier ways of reasoning," (Munro, 1999, p. 5). This utilization of intuition can lead those who work for Child Protective Services to make improper judgments as they unintentionally follow their instinctive thoughts which, inevitably, are not always correct. They may use mental short cuts and could be influenced more so by emotive rather than analytic reasoning. "Schema" is a term by which cognitive scientists commonly use to explain these short cuts, referring to structural organizations in the mind that help us organize the large amounts of information that we absorb each day. Flawed human reasoning could very likely come into play when individuals deal with cases concerning child neglect. This faulty reasoning can become particularly problematic when made by those who harbor negative biases against the people who they deal with and influence in their professional lives. In turn, it is important to

examine the presence of biases toward heavier and darker skinned people in relation to parenting to ensure that faulty decisions aren't being made in the field of child protection.

What Exactly *IS* Bias?

According to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, bias is "a tendency or an inclination of temperament or outlook, especially a personal and sometimes unreasoned judgment." It is a developed way of viewing certain situations or people which potentially guides and informs the way that we act in regard to them. Biases can be formed as people develop schemas to organize the overflow of information that they constantly receive day in and day out. At the same time, however, schemas as mental organizational tools have the potential to be very useful. They allow us to know what to do and how to act in countless situations without much effortful thought or time spent. For example, when young children first see dogs they may develop schemas indicating that dogs have four legs and are furry. When they see a cat for the first time, they may automatically then refer to it as a dog, utilizing the schemas that they have developed. Adults would then correct them, and their schemas for dogs and cats would be adjusted accordingly. As hinted at before however, schemas can also limit one's ability to take new information into account. This can potentially result in biases as people habitually think in close-minded ways about various groups of individuals. Thus, while schemas can be useful and beneficial in everyday life, they can have negative consequences as they have the potential to perpetuate people's biased views.

Fiske and Taylor (1984) write that "a schema is a cognitive structure that represents organized knowledge about a given concept or type of stimulus." Though this cognitive ability is undoubtedly important and useful, it has negative consequences as it provides potential for discrimination in many circumstances. Role schemas, in particular, deal with classifications

such as race, age, and sex and provide scripts for what the behavioral norms are for each particular societal and social group (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). Thus, role schemas can influence the development of stereotypical views of others as individuals within any particular in-group are seen to be more similar and those in the corresponding out-groups are seen to be more different, often in a negative sense.

Individuals commonly take in information around them in ways that support their stereotypical views (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). Thus, when individuals develop biased views toward groups or persons, their minds will typically look for and attend specifically to any information that may support their preconceived notions. This concept in particular is referred to as confirmation bias. It perpetuates the possibly generalized, negative views that people hold concerning certain social groups as any evidence against their biases is not processed or is disregarded. Bias, the tendency to view particular groups or individuals in commonly unreasoned ways, thus has the potential to wreak havoc on the way in which certain people are perceived, and in turn treated, by others.

Biased views and stereotypes, simplified ideas and beliefs held about specific groups of people based on assumptions, undoubtedly influence the way in which we make judgments and decisions. This concept is nicely illustrated in a study performed by Bodenhausen and Wyer (1985). They conducted an experiment regarding the effects of prompted stereotypes on information-processing strategies and decision making. The eighty-four introductory psychology students who participated were presented with two case files regarding prisoners who were up for parole. They were asked to relay parole recommendations, their prediction of the likelihood that each perpetrator would commit the same crime again, and their recommended jail sentence for each offender if they were to commit the crime again. The first file presented to the

participants was a control regarding a sexual molestation case. The second file shown was experimental as participants were randomly assigned to be presented with a certain combination of conditions within the file. The name of the prisoner was either not described or presented to be Hispanic or WASP. Also, crimes shown were stereotypically known to be associated with either WASPs or Hispanics, and further explanation of the criminal's personal life either supported or contradicted a stereotypical explanation for the crime that they committed.

Bodenhausen and Wyer found that participants recalled the prisoner's life circumstance less accurately when the crime was stereotypically related to the name presented. Also, under these circumstances, participants gave weaker recommendations for parole and reported higher likelihoods that the perpetrator would reoffend. This was even true if the criminal's life story presented information that went against a stereotypical explanation for the crime, essentially providing a logical reason for why the crime was committed (Bodenhausen & Wyer, 1985). The results from this study indicate that when an association with a stereotype can be made, it plays a role in the judgments that people make. This speaks to the concept that once people have identified information that pertains to a schema laced with a bias that they harbor, they typically do not pay mind to contrary information. This potential disregard for new, seemingly contradictory knowledge thus can perpetuate and strengthen the negative ways in which people may see and treat others due to their initial biases against them. Such is the case, even though schemas do also have the potential to help process information in a positive and helpful manner. The examination of such biases is central to the present study as people could associate images of women as being more negative, and in turn more neglectful mothers, based solely upon superficialities.

Biased Views toward Those Who Are “Heavy”

The weight of individuals is undoubtedly a factor for which people are capable of holding biased views. People often presume that the weight of others must be due in part to them being lazy, careless, and unmotivated individuals. Clearly, this is not true in many circumstances, and good, honorable people who happen to be heavier have to pay the price of society’s ignorance. Various studies have looked into people’s biased perceptions of those who are clinically obese. It is reasonable to surmise, however, that results from these studies could be further applied to any individual perceived to be “heavier” by others. This is the case as what constitutes being “heavy” is to some extent a subjective concept for which people’s opinions can vary.

As it was touched on above, Schwartz et al. (2003) conducted a study which looked into whether or not biased views of people due to weight were present among health professionals who specialized in obesity. The study was administered during an academic conference. It utilized a written version of the Implicit Association Test (IAT), a social psychological measure used to determine individuals’ automatic associations made when presented with various stimuli. In this circumstance, the IAT targeted biases against fat persons through a timed word classification task (Schwartz et al., 2003). One hundred and eighty-nine professionals who work with those who are overweight participated in the study. Each participant went through the IAT two separate times: “once with ‘thin people’ paired with ‘good’ and ‘fat people’ paired with ‘bad’ and again with ‘thin people’ paired with ‘bad’ and ‘fat people’ paired with ‘good’,” (Schwartz et al. 2003, p. 1034). These word pairings were placed at the head of two columns, with each pairing at the top of one column. In between the columns was a list a various adjectives such as “determined,” “lazy,” “thin,” and “large.” Participants were asked to place a checkmark next to each word on the list. Checkmarks were placed under whichever side column

perceived to have a word or phrase at its top that was synonymous to each word under consideration. By being told to perform this task as quickly as they could, participants' schemas were activated as they tried to reason through their responses at a fast pace.

Three separate versions of yet another IAT were also randomly administered to the professionals, each testing associations of the words "thin" and "fat" with either "lazy and motivated", "stupid and smart", or "worthless and valuable." Schwartz and her colleagues found that a significant implicit bias against heavier people was held among the health professionals, along with the tendency to associate the word "fat" with the terms "lazy, stupid, and worthless," (Schwartz et al. 2003). These findings suggest that a very strong bias against fat people exists in our society as even those whose professions focus on working with overweight people present biases against those who are heavier.

Looking further into the presence of biased views held against people who are overweight, a study performed by Pingitore, Dugoni, Tindale, and Spring (1994) examined whether or not obese people would be faced with discrimination in a mock job interview. The study took place at Loyola University of Chicago, and participants consisted of 99 men and 221 women who were introductory psychology students. During the study, participants were randomly assigned to watch one of eight videotaped interviews. Each interview varied regarding the interviewee being of normal weight or overweight, male or female, and applying for either a systems analyst or a sales representative position. After each participant watched an interview, they made ratings in regard to the applicant and completed a body schema and demographic questionnaire (Pingitore, Dugoni, Tindale, & Spring, 1994).

One male and one female actor were videotaped for the various conditions to ensure that possible confounding factors such as mood, personality, and voice did not affect the participants'

ratings. Each actor was deemed to be of normal weight according to guidelines established by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW). In order to have the actors appear to be overweight for certain videos, a professional makeup artist was hired to apply prostheses and make them look about twenty percent heavier. This made their images qualify as being moderately obese according to the DHEW (Pingitore, Dugoni, Tindale, & Spring, 1994).

Their findings revealed that participants recommended visibly overweight interviewees for the job significantly less than they recommended individuals who appeared to be of normal, average weight (Pingitore, Dugoni, Tindale, & Spring, 1994). Also, gender was found to play a significant role in decisions made as the female, when appearing to be obese, received more biased judgments and was less likely to be recommended for the job than the man when he was appearing to be obese. Furthermore, the man, when of normal weight, was no more likely to be considered for hire than the woman appearing to be of normal weight. Though there was not a significant effect of the type of job being interviewed for, a more public sales person or a behind the scenes computer analyst, overweight applicants were perceived more negatively overall and were given fewer positive personality traits compared to applicants of normal weight (Pingitore, Dugoni, Tindale, & Spring, 1994).

From Pingitore and her colleagues' results, it is clear that people who are overweight, especially women, are placed under increased scrutiny and must deal with being negatively judged by others due to commonly held and perpetuated biased views. This study particularly revealed support for the presence of such biases in circumstances regarding the hiring of new employees. These findings could potentially be applicable in other important circumstances involving roles that require judgments to be made in regard to the competence of others. Individuals' role of assessing mothers who are reported for child maltreatment is a clear example

of such a circumstance. It will be seen that this study examines whether or not women who are heavier would be more likely to be thought of as neglectful and unfit parents, compared to mothers of normal, average weight. There is a common assumption that being heavier is shameful and that the larger weight of others is inherently negative and due to the perceived lack of action and care of those being judged. It is an unfortunate truth that, in our society where “thin is in,” many are biased against people who are overweight or heavier.

Biases and Race

Just as individuals who are heavier are commonly subjected to the biased views and assertions of others, black people are as well. People’s potential biases held against racial minorities such as African Americans can be clearly seen in cases involving the issue of racial profiling. Racial profiling refers to the law enforcement’s utilization of biased assumptions in their policing tactics. When racial profiling occurs, an individual in power - typically a police officer - makes an assumption that a person he or she has spotted is likely to be doing something illegal solely on the basis of their physical appearance – indicative of their race and possibly religion (Novak, 2004). As judgments are made about potential offenders based on appearances in these instances, it is not unreasonable to draw a parallel to judgments made concerning mothers in circumstances regarding child neglect. Perpetuated by the media, many people see black persons as being comparatively more dangerous and not to be trusted. Consequently, it may be more likely for them to be seen as maltreating parents.

Dixon and Maddox (2005) examined whether or not the race, or particularly the skin tone, of a criminal within a story influenced persons’ emotional concern regarding what had happened and their perceptions of the perpetrators and of the victims within the story. One-hundred and thirty undergraduate students participated in the study and were told that they were

being tested on their memory for the news. They were subsequently shown a video tape of a news program that was reporting on a crime. The criminal in each scenario was randomly assigned to be either, “White, light-skinned Black, medium-skinned Black, or dark-skinned Black,” (Dixon & Maddox, 2005). After viewing the news program, they were asked a series of questions regarding their feelings about what they had seen and their opinions of the individuals within the story. An additional questionnaire was also administered in order to determine the extent to which each participant typically watched news programs. Participants’ responses were dichotomized by a median split and were categorized as either “heavy” or “light” in terms of their televised news viewing habits (Dixon & Maddox, 2005).

Though limits within the study existed in that the sample of participants was not particularly diverse (73% white), results indicated that participants who were shown criminals with darker skin tones expressed significantly more emotional concern in regard to the story presented than participants who were presented with lighter-skinned perpetrators (Dixon & Maddox, 2005). In addition, participants who were heavy news viewers expressed more concern regarding what had happened in the story when the criminals were darker-skinned. This increased concern for the severity of a particular news report when black people were involved supports the notion that the media perpetuates the stereotype that African Americans should be viewed negatively, through the overrepresentation of blacks as criminals within their news stories (Dixon & Maddox, 2005). Unfortunately, it can be seen that many people today still seem to harbor biases and prejudiced views against black people. Though they may not be as vocal or open about their views as in previous decades, people still make judgments that are influenced by the race of other people that they encounter.

As was mentioned previously, circumstances regarding racial profiling allow for individuals' potential biased views toward racial minorities to be seen. In a study performed by Antonovics and Knight (2009) the reality of racial profiling in the Boston area was examined. Antonovics and Knight found that "between April 2001 and January 2003, over 43 percent of all searches conducted by officers from the Boston Police Department were of cars driven by African-American motorists even though cars driven by African-Americans made up less than 33 percent of the cars that were pulled over," (Antonovics & Knight, 2009). They investigated further into whether these results came from statistical discriminations or preference-based discriminations of the officers. It was found that officers were more likely to conduct searches if the person's race was different from their own (Antonovics & Knight, 2009). This indicates that "preference-based discrimination plays a substantial role in explaining differences in the rate at which motorists from different racial groups are searched during traffic stops," (Antonovics & Knight, 2009). Evidently, for one reason or another, officers are more inclined to stop individuals who are of a different race than their own. This is certainly inherently discriminatory, and it is evidence that racial profiling is still ever present in today's society. It clearly speaks to the fact that biased views against blacks continue to be held by many individuals, including people in positions of power such as law enforcement officers.

In-Group/Out-Group Effects

It may be the case that people harbor biased views against blacks and heavy persons simply due to the fact that they consider them to be within an out-group relative to themselves. As it was explained above, role schemas that apply to constructs such as race lead people to see those who are within their own particular in-group to be more similar, and persons in out-groups to be more different (in a negative sense) than they actually are (Fiske & Taylor, 1984).

Lindholm and Christianson (1998) performed a study in Sweden which examined intergroup biases and eyewitness testimonies. Forty-four Swedes, forty-one immigrants, and ninety-two non-psychology students participated in the study. Participants were randomly presented with a video of a robbery performed by either an individual with a typical Swedish appearance or a person with black hair and darker skin (Lindholm & Christianson, 1998). After viewing the video, people partaking in the study were then asked to answer questions regarding their ratings of the film and the criminal. They were also tested on their memory of what had occurred and their ability to pick the correct perpetrator of the crime from a line-up of individuals.

Lindholm and Christianson found that participants, whether Swedish or not, rated “a perpetrator of dissimilar ethnicity as more culpable than an ethnically similar perpetrator,” (Lindholm & Christianson, 1998). These results support the concept of in-group and out-group biases in that more fault and negative characteristics were associated with people who were dissimilar to the individuals answering the questions. It was also found that all categories of participants more commonly identified immigrants as perpetrators when they actually were not, rather than Swedes. This provides further evidence supporting that the race of individuals has the potential to play a major role in their lives as it can influence the views and actions of people they encounter who harbor biases against them.

Present Study

Prior research discussed above indicated the presence of societal biases against heavy people and black people. Expanding on this previous literature, this study extends the possible implications of race and weight biases to judgments of mothers in cases of child neglect. Both implicit and explicit biases were examined in this study. In regard to implicit biases examined, it was proposed that black and heavier women, identified to be mothers, would be judged as being

more neglectful parents than their Caucasian and average weight counterparts solely based upon their physical appearances. Thus, heavier, black mothers were predicted to be judged as the most neglectful overall. Second, it was posited that the body images and the explicit biases of participants making the judgments would significantly influence their responses. Specifically, it was predicted that those who had stronger explicit race biases would judge black mothers as being more neglectful parents. It was also posited that participants who had stronger explicit weight biases would judge the heavier mothers of each race to be more neglectful. Similarly, participants who were seen to have more negative body images were predicted to judge the heavier mothers as more neglectful as well. This prediction was founded on the concept that weight could presumably be a factor which people with low self-body images associate with negativity in others, being that they negatively associate it with themselves. Exploratory analyses were conducted as well to examine potential relationships between participants' demographic information and their ratings of neglect for the pictures of mothers.

Hypotheses for this study were founded on the logical argument that since black populations and overweight populations are two distinct marginalized groups in Western society, those subject to intersectionality would be met with the most bias and would be rated as being the most neglectful parents. This study, to my knowledge, was unique compared to previous research on weight and race bias as it examined the potential for biased judgments to be made in decisions regarding child neglect. Examining these potential biases against mothers in particular allows for insight into whether such superficialities as race and weight could potentially influence CPS caseworkers' decisions and lead them to false conclusions.

Methods

Participants

Participants consisted of 131 university students (27 males and 104 females) who were recruited from the Penn State Subject Pool. Subjects were enrolled in an introductory Psychology course and were compensated with research credit for their participation. Respective majors of participants varied greatly with the highest percentage (18.3) of participants belonging to the College of the Liberal Arts. Participants' ages ranged between 18 and 29 ($M= 19.23$ years, $SD= 1.68$). Background information regarding age, gender, self-identified race, height, approximate weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), and college major are presented Table 1.

Procedure

Study instruments were anonymously completed via a website for research data collection (Qualtrics.com). Research credit was provided as compensation for the study's completion. Subjects were asked to respond to a demographics questionnaire followed by four different surveys regarding personal body image, the rating of face stimuli, and explicit weight and race biases, respectively. All participants received the same protocol. However, face stimuli utilized were administered in two versions such that each participant only viewed the "average" or "heavy" version of each particular face. Half of the faces each participant viewed were heavy and the other half were of average weight. Also, half of the faces presented were white and the other half were black. Participants in each phase were presented with all of the same other measures with the exception of the face stimuli they were asked to rate.

Measures

The Ben-Tovim Walker Body Attitudes Questionnaire (BAQ; Ben-Tovim & Walker, 1991; Appendix A) was first presented. This is a 44-item self-report questionnaire used to

measure individuals' views on their body and physical appearance. Specifically, items address "six aspects of body appearance: feeling fat, body disparagement, strength of fitness, salience of weight and shape, attractiveness, and lower body fat" (Ben-Tovim & Walker, 1991). Items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from "1 = Strongly Agree" to "5 = Strongly Disagree". In the development of the measure, a high correlation coefficient of 0.92 was found, along with internal consistency of 0.87 (Ben-Tovim & Walker, 1991). In testing the measure's validity, Ben-Tovim and Walker compared results on the BAQ with the results on previously existing questionnaires regarding body experience. A significant positive correlation of 0.83 was found between the BAQ results and results on the Body Dissatisfaction Subscale of the Eating Disorders Inventory (EDI) (Ben-Tovim & Walker, 1991; Garner et al., 1983). In assessing discriminant validity, it was found that the BAQ scores for patients with anorexia nervosa were more indicative of poorer body attitudes compared to scores from a general community sample, supporting that the BAQ accurately assesses body attitudes. Cronbach's alpha for the items of the BAQ in this study was .94.

The Assessment of Parenting Competency Questionnaire (Appendix B) presented next was focal to the investigation at hand. This measure was used to examine whether participants held *implicit* biases toward mothers and their parenting competency in relation to the mothers' weight and race. To develop stimuli for this measure, a pilot study was conducted. 40 faces were originally compiled, each of which had been morphed twice through Photoshop to represent an average weight and a heavy person. The pilot then tested the 80 faces that resulted from this morphing process. 47 pilot participants (7 males and 40 females) rated the weight of one face from each average-heavy face pair on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "Not at all Overweight" to "Very Overweight". 32 faces (16 average-heavy face pairs) that received high

“average weight” and “heavy” ratings were chosen to be used. The pilot tested 30 statement items as well, each of which detailed a mothering practice or quality, or lack thereof, that could be judged as neglectful behavior. Pilot study participants rated each statement on how well it reflected neglectful parenting. 10 statements that received the highest ratings, showing that they were indicative of neglect, were chosen.

In the Assessment of Parenting Competency Questionnaire itself, participants were presented with 16 stimuli of adult female faces labeled as mothers. Half of the face stimuli each participant received were white and the other half were black. Also, half were heavy and the other half were of average weight. Each participant was presented with only one version of the chosen stimuli. To ensure that the two versions of face stimuli utilized were equivalent and rated in the same manner, four t-tests were run comparing the mean ratings for the groups of faces across the two versions (see Table 2 for means and standard deviations): white, average faces ($t(129) = 1.79, p = .334$), white, heavy faces ($t(129) = -.103, p = .360$), black, average faces ($t(129) = 3.38, p = .141$), and black heavy faces ($t(129) = -.360, p = .139$). As planned, there were no significant differences between the two versions of face stimuli. In relation to each of the 16 face stimuli shown to each participant, the 10 items assessing mothers' neglectfulness were rated. Ratings were made on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. “This mother tires of her children easily” is an example of a rated statement. The measure proved to be reliable in the study as Cronbach's alpha for the different groups of stimuli was computed and found to be .89.

The Anti-Fat Attitudes Questionnaire (Crandall, 1994; Appendix C) is a 13-item questionnaire used to measure individuals' *explicit* anti-fat biases. Items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from “1 = Strongly Agree” to “5 = Strongly Disagree”. It assesses three specific

factors of anti-fat bias: “Dislike,” “Fear of Fat,” and “Willpower” (which examines beliefs about the controllability of weight). This measure was shown to adequately assess anti-fat bias as, within its development, “a principal-components factor analysis of the items [was conducted], [in which] varimax rotation of factors with eigenvalues [were] greater than 1” (Crandall, 1994). Validity and reliability data for items on this questionnaire are presented in Crandall (1994). Cronbach’s alpha for this measure’s items was .77.

The Racial Attitudes Questionnaire (Katz & Hass, 1988; Appendix D) is a 20-item questionnaire aimed at examining peoples’ *explicit* anti- and pro-black attitudes and biases. 10 items on the scale reflect anti-black sentiments, and the other 10 (reversed scored for analyses) are pro-black statements. Items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from “1 = Strongly Agree” to “5 = Strongly Disagree”. In the development of the questionnaire’s items, analyses were performed in which each item that was found to significantly correlate with the other items of its type (anti-black or pro-black) was utilized. Items that did not meet these criteria were discarded. Cronbach’s alpha was .80 for the anti-black items and .73 for the pro-black items (Katz & Hass, 1988). In examining the construct validity of the Racial Attitudes Questionnaire, Katz and Hass found that responses for the anti-black items correlated highly with responses on the Derogatory Beliefs subscale of the Multifactor Racial Attitude Inventory (MRAI) and responses for the pro-black items correlated highly with responses on the Ease in Interracial Contacts subscale of the MRAI (Katz & Hass, 1988; Woodmansee & Cook, 1967). Cronbach’s alpha for this measure’s items in the present study was .73.

Results

Influence of Weight and Race on Neglect Ratings

To examine the primary hypothesis, that pictures of heavy and black mothers would be rated as more neglectful, a 2 x 2, within-subjects ANOVA was performed (see Table 3). Again, means and standard deviations for ratings on each category of faces can be viewed in Table 2. Results from the ANOVA indicated, as predicted, that there was a significant main effect for race on the Assessment of Parenting Competency Questionnaire such that black mothers were rated as more neglectful [$F(1,130) = 4.341, p = 0.039$]. There was no significant main effect for weight [$F(1,130) = 0.489, p = 0.486$]. A significant interaction between race and weight was found as predicted [$F(1,130) = 6.129, p = 0.015$]. Simple effects analyses (paired sample, one-tailed t-tests) revealed that it was significant for black average mothers to receive higher ratings of neglect compared to white average mothers ($M = 2.84, SD = 1.22$ vs. $M = 2.61, SD = 1.05$; $t(130) = -1.640, p = .002$). Significant simple effects were also found for black heavy mothers to be rated as more neglectful compared to white average mothers ($M = 2.78, SD = 1.22$ vs. $M = 2.61, SD = 1.05$; $t(130) = -1.247, p = .030$) and for white heavy mothers to be rated as more neglectful compared to white average mothers as well ($M = 2.76, SD = 1.13$ vs. $M = 2.61, SD = 1.05$; $t(130) = -1.114, p = .004$). All other simple effects were not significant (Table 4).

Influence of Body Image and Explicit Race and Weight Bias

To test the hypothesis that participants with more negative body images would rate heavy participants as more neglectful, one-tailed Pearson's correlations were performed (see Table 5 – includes means and standard deviations). Ratings on the BAQ and ratings on the Assessment of Parenting Competency Questionnaire were utilized for these analyses. Items that were indicative of positive body attitudes were reverse scored. No statistically significant relationship was found

between people's negative body images (responses on the BAQ) and their ratings of heavy mothers ($r = -.071$, n.s., $df = 130$). There was also no statistically significant relationship found between reports of negative body images on the BAQ and neglect ratings for average weight mothers ($r = -.097$, n.s., $df = 130$).

It was also hypothesized that participants who held strong explicit weight biases would rate heavy mothers as more neglectful than individuals who did not. This hypothesis was tested with one-tailed Pearson's correlations (Table 5). A statistically significant negative relationship was found between participants' responses on the Anti-Fat Attitudes Questionnaire and their neglect ratings regarding heavy mothers ($r = -.314$, $p = .000$). Since "1" indicated increased explicit weight bias on the Anti-Fat Attitudes Questionnaire and "5" indicated a high rating of neglect in regard to the faces, this inverse relationship shows that those who expressed stronger explicit weight biases were more likely to rate heavy mothers as more neglectful, thus supporting the proposed hypothesis. Significant correlations were also found for responses on the Anti-Fat Attitudes Questionnaire and neglect ratings of average weight mothers ($r = -.252$, $p = .002$), black mothers ($r = -.334$, $p = .000$), and white mothers ($r = -.239$, $p = .003$). Thus, increased ratings of explicit race bias correlated with higher ratings of neglect overall.

Subjects who expressed strong explicit race biases were predicted to rate black mothers as more neglectful than those who did not report explicit race biases. This hypothesis was also tested by running one-tailed Pearson's correlations (Table 5). Items that were pro-black were reversed scored to be utilized in the analyses. There was a statistically significant negative relationship found between ratings on the Racial Attitudes Questionnaire and neglect ratings for black mothers, supporting this hypothesis ($r = -.228$, $p = .004$). Similar to the Anti-Fat Attitudes Questionnaire ratings, a "1" on the Racial Attitudes Questionnaire indicated increased explicit

race bias. Thus, the negative relationship found indicates that those who expressed stronger explicit race biases were more likely to rate black mothers as more neglectful. A trend, though not statistically significant, was found between high ratings of explicit bias on the Racial Attitudes Questionnaire and neglect ratings of white mothers ($r = -.117, p = .092$). Significant correlations were also found between explicit bias ratings on the Racial Attitudes Questionnaire and neglect ratings for heavy mothers ($r = -.160, p = .034$) and average mothers ($r = -.183, p = .018$).

Exploratory Analyses

Analyses were also run in regard to participant demographic information and ratings of mothers' neglectfulness dependent upon the weight of mothers in the pictures. No significant correlation was found between participants' weight and their rating of heavy mothers as more neglectful ($r = .229, p = .106$). However, a trend was also found between participants' BMI and their rating of heavy mothers as more neglectful ($r = .349, p = .082$).

Between-subject factorial ANOVAS were run to examine whether ratings for mothers differed depending upon the gender and race of participants. A significant main effect for gender was found such that male participants rated all mothers as more neglectful than female participants did [$F(1,130) = 4.022, p = .047$] (see Table 6 for means and standard deviations).

No significant effect of participants' race was found.

Discussion

This study attempted to examine whether implicit biases against black and heavy persons have the potential to present themselves in specific circumstances involving mothers and child neglect. Though unsettling, findings did support a portion of the main hypotheses posed. The main effect of race observed indicates that black mothers were judged more negatively in regard to their parenting behaviors. Further, in examining the significant interaction found, simple effects showed that both black mothers who were heavy and black mothers who were of average weight were rated to be comparatively more neglectful parents than white mothers of average weight. This provides support for the unfortunate notion that biased views against black people are still held in society today and are active in influencing judgments made regarding people of color.

Even though there was no main effect for the influence of mothers' weight on judgments made, simple effects revealed that implicit weight biases presented themselves in relation to judgments of white mothers. Specifically, white mothers who were heavy were rated as being more neglectful as parents compared to white mothers who were of average weight. Neglect ratings for black mothers who were heavy and for black mothers who were of average weight did not significantly differ, however. Thus, increased biased judgments due to weight were only seen in relation to white mothers, partially supporting the hypothesis that biased judgments are more commonly made in regard to people who are heavier. It may be speculated that such is the case due to the potential lack of experiences in regard to relations with black people characteristic of those within the population sampled from (largely white and fairly rural). This potential lack of frequent contact and familiarity with black people may lead to difficulties in

discriminating between, and making judgments regarding, black faces. To make such statements with certainty, however, future empirical studies would have to be conducted.

These results found reveal that judgments, particularly important judgments, are in fact made by individuals founded on biased attributions attained solely from visual information regarding race and weight. White mothers of average weight were rated to be comparatively less neglectful parents than mothers from all other groups were (each of which was marginalized in some way being either white and heavy, of average weight and black, or both heavy and black). Future studies should be conducted to examine these potential biases specifically among adults working in Child Protective Services. If findings are replicated in such a population, results might partially account for the overrepresentation of blacks in the child protection system. In turn, if study results are replicated among CPS workers, specific interventions should be created and implemented to help workers become more cognizant of their biases and less likely to be affected by them while making important judgments and decisions.

In addition to testing implicit biases in regard to the race and weight of mothers, explicit biases for such factors were examined as well. Specifically, the potential relationships between participants' explicit race and weight biases and their neglect ratings for mothers indicative of implicit biases were examined. Those who expressed greater explicit race and weight biases were seen to have stronger implicit race and weight biases, respectively, as they rated images of black and heavy mothers as more neglectful. Findings could be seen to help further validate results in regard to implicit biases found since those who outwardly agreed with biased sentiments were more likely to judge images of mothers belonging to marginalized populations as more neglectful. However, these associations should be examined with caution since increases in explicit weight bias ratings also significantly correlated with judgments of neglect

for average weight, black, and white mothers. Similarly, increases in explicit race bias ratings also correlated with neglect judgments for both average weight and heavy mothers. An explanation for such results cannot be stated with complete certainty. However, it can be posited that those who judged mothers across the board to be more neglectful, when compared to other participants' judgments, may be more judgmental and less cognitively flexible in general and may have rated all mothers as more neglectful despite the changing factors of the faces presented to them.

Exploratory analyses regarding the demographic information of participants revealed that while there was no significant relationship found between participants' weight and their neglect ratings for heavier mothers, a trend was found between increased BMI of participants and ratings of heavy mothers as more neglectful. It is logical that association were found regarding BMI's in particular, rather than simply the weight of participants, as it has been suggested that BMI is the best measure of true "fatness" (Kraemer, Berkowitz, & Hammer, 1990). It was also found that male participants rated all groups of mothers as more neglectful than female participants did. However, these results could likely be due to the small sample size of male participants relative to females.

In summary, as this study shows support for *implicit* race and weight biases against mothers, those who hold such biases may not necessarily even be aware that they do. Thus CPS workers, susceptible to the same biases as everyone else, may be unwittingly influenced by them when they are on the job. When these biases arise, families may be unnecessarily and unjustly broken apart due to the potential faulty judgments made by child protection workers based upon biased attributions rather than upon the children's need for protection and safety in given situations (McConnell & Llewellyn, 2002). These possibly wrongful judgments may be made as

persons utilize intuitive reasoning skills which could be inevitably tainted by the biases that they have developed over time. This study supports the notion that such biased views against mothers are held and calls to attention the need for more research in the field and the possible creation of interventions to help eradicate the influence of such biases.

Limitations

While many factors were controlled for in this study, several confounding factors still must be taken into account. One must take the population from which participants were sampled into consideration when interpreting the results from this study. The central Pennsylvanian location of the Pennsylvania State University provides for a rather homogenous sample of Caucasian participants. 112 out of the 131 persons who completed this study were white. This has the potential to influence study results, as one may predict very different outcomes in diverse populations. For example, it can be predicted that black mothers would receive lower ratings of neglect overall if study participants were sampled from an urban area, since participants themselves would likely be more racially diverse. Also, 79.4% of the participants were females. Although this may fit the goals of this particular study since a large number of CPS workers are females, results are undoubtedly biased toward the female gendered point of view. This largely white, female population of subjects may have led to particular results compared to a more heterogeneous population. It can also be said that since the study looked to apply its results to the population more generally, and specifically CPS workers, undergraduate college students may not have been the prime population from which to sample. However, while college students may not have the same maturity or be in the same mindset as those in the workforce, they will very rapidly be entering the workforce themselves, free to take on positions in countless job areas, including social work and Child Protective Services. Thus, while the population of

college students at hand was not ideal, it was sufficient for a beginning look into the empirical questions posed.

There are also limitations that must be noted in the stimuli themselves. While the pilot portion of the study tested the validity of the face stimuli being “average” or “heavy,” no test was used to determine whether each face was considered to be equally “beautiful” or “attractive”. It is possible for individuals to feel more positive feelings toward certain images, and less positive feelings toward others, just based on this factor. Thus, an image’s attractiveness, regardless of race or weight, may have influenced participants’ responses regarding their perceived concept of individuals being warm and caring, or neglectful mothers.

Implications

As results provided support for the main hypothesis posed, this may indicate that CPS workers have the potential to be influenced by mothers’ race and weight when making judgments regarding the occurrence of neglect. This may consequently lead to biased decision making. In turn, this calls attention to the need for steps to be implemented in the field to ensure that these biased judgments are not being made. In order to work toward preventing and eradicating the possibility of individuals’ biases affecting child neglect outcomes, it should be a priority to make sure that all persons who work for CPS follow absolutely every step in determining whether a mother is neglectful or not, taking no shortcuts in reasoning. Future work can build upon this study through extending the participant pool to different demographics. Most beneficial would be studying CPS workers directly if that opportunity is available. One could look to other populations that may be discriminated against in these proposed circumstances as well, such as Hispanics and the physically disabled, and attempt to examine biases in regard to those particular marginalized groups. As results found did support the hypothesis that black and heavy mothers

are judged as being more neglectful parents, it may be very beneficial to attempt to replicate and build upon this study.

Tables

Table 1-
Demographics

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Gender	104 (79.4)	27 (20.6)	131(100)
Race			
White	89 (67.9)	23 (17.6)	112 (85.5)
Black	6 (4.6)	0 (0.0)	6 (4.6)
Asian	6 (4.6)	4 (3.1)	10 (7.6)
Hispanic	2 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.5)
Indian	1 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.8)
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Age (years)	19.05 (1.52)	19.96 (2.07)	19.23 (1.68)
Height (in.)	64.69 (3.04)	69.96 (2.21)	66.00 (3.59)
Weight (lbs.)	139.00 (30.41)	165.37 (23.24)	144.44 (30.91)
BMI	23.48 (5.04)	23.74 (3.07)	23.54 (4.69)

Table 2–
Means and Standard Deviations for Neglect Ratings on Faces

Face Category	M	SD
White and Average	2.61	1.05
White and Heavy	2.76	1.13
Black and Average	2.84	1.22
Black and Heavy	2.78	1.22

Table 3-

ANOVA Summary Table for Neglect Rating

	F(df)	p
Main effects		
1. race	4.341 (1,130)	0.039*
2. weight	0.489 (1,130)	0.486
Interactions		
1. race*weight	6.129 (1,130)	0.015*

*p < .05

Table 4 –
Simple Effects Analyses

Categories Compared	M	SD	t	p
White & Heavy vs. Black & Heavy	2.76 2.78	1.13 1.22	-0.174	.365
White & Heavy vs. Black & Average	2.76 2.84	1.13 1.22	-0.555	.189
White & Average vs. Black & Average	2.61 2.84	1.05 1.22	-1.640	.002**
White & Average vs. Black & Heavy	2.61 2.78	1.05 1.22	-1.247	.030*
White & Average vs. White & Heavy	2.61 2.76	1.05 1.13	-1.114	.004**
Black & Average vs. Black & Heavy	2.84 2.78	1.22 1.22	0.367	.289

*p < .05; **p < .01

Table 5-
Means, Standard Deviations, & Correlations for Body Image & Explicit Bias Measures

	M	SD		
BAQ	3.38	0.60		
Anti-Fat Attitudes	3.20	0.56		
Racial Attitudes	3.21	0.37		
Neglect Ratings:	Black Moms	White Moms	Heavy Moms	Average Moms
BAQ	-.100	-.068	-.071	-.097
Anti-Fat Attitudes	-.334**	-.239**	-.314**	-.252**
Racial Attitudes	-.228**	-.117	-.160*	-.183*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 6 –
Means and Standard Deviations for Effects of Gender

	M	SD
White & Average		
Female	2.60	1.06
Male	2.66	1.04
White & Heavy		
Female	2.74	1.13
Male	2.84	1.12
Black & Average		
Female	2.76	1.17
Male	3.16	1.37
Black & Heavy		
Female	2.71	1.19
Male	3.08	1.29

Appendix A

The Ben-Tovim Walker Body Attitudes Questionnaire

BAQ

This questionnaire contains a number of statements. Please read each one and tick the box that shows how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

1. I usually feel physically attractive.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

2. I prefer not to let other people see my body.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

3. People hardly ever find me sexually attractive.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

4. I get so worried about my shape that I feel I ought to diet.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

5. I feel fat when I can't get clothes over my hips.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

6. People avoid me because of my looks.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

7. I feel satisfied with my face.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

8. I worry that other people can see rolls of fat around my waist and stomach.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

9. I think I deserve the attention of the opposite sex.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

10. I hardly ever feel fat.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

11. There are more important things in life than the shape of my body.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

12. I think it is ridiculous to have plastic surgery to improve your looks.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

13. I like to weigh myself regularly.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

14. I feel fat when I wear clothes that are tight around the waist.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

15. I have considered suicide because of the way I look to others.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

16. I quickly get exhausted if I overdo it.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

17. I have a slim waist.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

18. My life is being ruined because of the way I look.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

19. Wearing loose clothing makes me feel thin.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

20. I hardly ever think about the shape of my body.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

21. I feel that my body has been mutilated.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

22. I am proud of my physical strength.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

23. I feel that I have fat thighs.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

24. I couldn't join in with games or exercise because of my shape.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

25. Eating sweets, cakes or other high calorie food, makes me feel fat.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

26. I have a strong body.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

27. I think my buttocks are too large.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

28. I feel fat when I have my photo taken.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

29. I try and keep fit.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

30. Thinking about the shape of my body stops me from concentrating.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

31. I spend too much time thinking about food.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

32. I am preoccupied with the desire to be lighter.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

33. If I catch sight of myself in a mirror or shop window it makes me feel bad about my shape.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

34. People laugh at me because of the way I look.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

35. I often feel fat.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

36. I spend a lot of time thinking about my weight.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

37. I am a bit of an 'Iron-man'.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

38. I feel fat when I am lonely.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

39. I worry that my thighs and bottom look dimply.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

40. People often compliment me on my looks.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

41. Losing one kilogram in weight would not really affect my feelings about myself.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

42. I feel fat when I can no longer get into clothes that used to fit me.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

43. I have never been very strong.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

44. I try to avoid clothes which make me especially aware of my shape.

Strongly agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree

Appendix B

Assessment of Parenting Competency Questionnaire– Item Examples



1. **She ignores her children.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
2. **This woman is detached in relation to her kids.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
3. **She puts little effort into getting her children the help they need when they struggle academically.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
4. **This mother cares more about her personal needs than her children's.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
5. **This mother leaves her kids unsupervised sometimes.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
6. **This mother does not keep a clean house.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
7. **This mother is self-absorbed.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
8. **This mother is easily overwhelmed.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
9. **She believes that a seven year old can take care of himself or herself while home alone.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
10. **This mother tires of her children easily.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree



1. **She ignores her children.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
2. **This woman is detached in relation to her kids.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
3. **She puts little effort into getting her children the help they need when they struggle academically.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
4. **This mother cares more about her personal needs than her children's.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
5. **This mother leaves her kids unsupervised sometimes.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
6. **This mother does not keep a clean house.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
7. **This mother is self-absorbed.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
8. **This mother is easily overwhelmed.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
9. **She believes that a seven year old can take care of himself or herself while home alone.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
10. **This mother tires of her children easily.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree



1. **She ignores her children.**
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2. **This woman is detached in relation to her kids.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
3. **She puts little effort into getting her children the help they need when they struggle academically.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
4. **This mother cares more about her personal needs than her children's.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
5. **This mother leaves her kids unsupervised sometimes.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
6. **This mother does not keep a clean house.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
7. **This mother is self-absorbed.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
8. **This mother is easily overwhelmed.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
9. **She believes that a seven year old can take care of himself or herself while home alone.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
10. **This mother tires of her children easily.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree



1. **She ignores her children.**
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8. **This mother is easily overwhelmed.**
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9. **She believes that a seven year old can take care of himself or herself while home alone.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree
10. **This mother tires of her children easily.**
Strongly Disagree 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 Strongly Agree

Appendix C

Anti-Fat Attitudes Questionnaire

1. I really don't like fat people much.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

2. I don't have many friends that are fat.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

3. I tend to think that people who are overweight are a little untrustworthy.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

4. Although some fat people are surely smart, in general, I think they tend not to be quite as bright as normal weight people.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

5. I have a hard time taking fat people too seriously.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

6. Fat people make me feel somewhat uncomfortable.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

7. If I were an employer looking to hire, I might avoid hiring a fat person.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

8. I feel disgusted with myself when I gain weight.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

9. One of the worst things that could happen to me would be if I gained 25 pounds.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

10. I worry about becoming fat.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

11. People who weigh too much could lose at least some part of their weight through a little exercise.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

12. Some people are fat because they have no willpower.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

13. Fat people tend to be fat pretty much through their own fault.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

Appendix D

Racial Attitudes Questionnaire

1. The root cause of most the social and economic ills of Blacks is the weakness and instability of the Black family.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

2. Although there are exceptions, Black urban neighborhoods don't seem to have strong community organization or leadership.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

3. Black people do not have the same employment opportunities that Whites do.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

4. On the whole, Black people don't stress education and training.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

5. Many Black teenagers don't respect themselves or anyone else.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

6. Too many Blacks still lose out on jobs and promotions because of their skin color.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

7. Blacks have more to offer that they have been allowed to show.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

8. Blacks don't seem to use opportunities to own and operate little shops and businesses.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

9. Very few Black people are just looking for a free ride.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

10. Black children would do better in school if their parents had better attitudes about learning.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

11. Sometimes Black job seekers should be given special consideration in hiring.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

12. Most big corporations in American are really interested in treating their Black and White employees equally.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

13. Blacks should take the jobs that are available and then work their way up to better jobs.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

14. The typical urban ghetto public school is not as good as it should be to provide equal opportunities for Blacks.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

15. Many Whites show a real lack of understanding of the problems the Blacks face.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

16. One of the biggest problems for a lot of Blacks is their lack of self-respect.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

17. Most Black and White are no longer discriminated against.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

18. This country would be better off if it were more willing to assimilate the good things in Black culture.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

19. Most Blacks have the drive and determination to get ahead.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

20. It's surprising that Black people do as well as they do, considering all the obstacles they face.

Strongly Disagree – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – Strongly Agree

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Education

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA

Expected Graduation: May 2013

The Schreyer Honors College

College of the Liberal Arts

B.S. Candidate in Psychology – Biological/Evolutionary Option

B.A. Candidate in Anthropology

Research Experience

Social Cognition Lab, University Park, PA

January 2011 – Present

Advisor: Sandra T. Azar, Ph.D.

Research Assistant

- Work with research team examining cognitive and contextual factors regarding mothers at risk for child abuse and cognitive/affective factors in dating violence
- Collect data for a study of dating violence in college students
 - Consent participants, administer psychological tests such as Wisconsin Card Sorting Test and WAIS digit span, supervise completion of questionnaires, and debrief participants
- Input data from lab studies into SPSS databases
- Code videotaped mother/child interactions for degree of mother's warmth, intrusiveness, and parent-child synchrony during puzzle tasks
- Perform literature searches
- Participate in and present at weekly lab meetings discussing the nature of research within the lab
- Aid in lab housekeeping duties

A Study of Judgments, Self-Perceptions, and Behaviors (Senior Honors Thesis)

Advisor: Sandra T. Azar, Ph.D.

- Examines if race and weight affect individuals' judgments of women's parenting abilities
- Created visual stimuli for the study through morphing faces
- Completed IRB protocol for pilot and main study and received approval
- Have run forty-seven participants in internet-based pilot study to test validity of stimuli comprised
- Analyzed results from pilot study and currently running participants for main study
- Data analyses will be conducted from main study results and final paper will be produced

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Clinical Experience

Mental Health Practicum with Children, University Park, PA

August 2011 – May 2012

Intern at Child Study Center – Friendship Group Coach

- Learned facilitative techniques developed by Dr. Karen Bierman to help children with social difficulties better interact with their peers
- Led weekly group sessions with five children and promoted children's use of learned skills
- Met with parents of children and led conference regarding children's progress within the program

Community Help Centre, State College, PA

September 2011 – Present

24-Hour Hotline Short Term Counselor

- Completed 180 hours of intensive counseling training
- Counsel callers and daytime walk-ins struggling with emotional crises
- Provide support and information to people with basic living needs
- Keep logs of all client interactions
- Help to train and supervise new volunteers

Strawberry Fields Inc., State College, PA

August 2012 – Present

Community Residential Rehabilitation (CRR) Intern

- Assist individuals who have primary mental health diagnoses such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder
- Monitor residents' medication consumption
- Help scaffold independent living skills in residents
- Provide emotional support for residents
- Keep logs of interactions with, and occurrences regarding, residents
- Aid in daily housekeeping operations

Honors

Paterno Liberal Arts Undergraduate Fellows Program

Dean's List Academic Achievement: Fall 2009 – Fall 2012

Phi Beta Kappa National Honor Society

Psi Chi – The International Honor Society in Psychology

National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS)

Presentations

Martin, V. (2012, April). *Do the Factors of Weight and Race Influence Judgments made about Mothers? – A Prospective Study*. Poster session presented at the Psi Chi Research Conference, State College, PA.

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Computer Skills

Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

Experienced in SPSS and Photoshop

Leadership Experience

Psi Chi – The International Honor Society in Psychology

- Philanthropy Chair ‘12 – ‘13
 - Oversee Psi Chi’s involvement in the Penn State Dance Marathon (THON) and organize mentorship program for up-and-coming Psychology majors
- THON Fundraising Chair ‘11 – ‘12
 - Organized fundraisers to raise money for Psi Chi THON
- Academic Liaison ‘11 – ‘12
 - Aided students with questions in the Psychology Undergraduate Advising Office

Friends with Diabetes Club

- Secretary ‘11 – ‘13
 - Take thorough meeting notes and keep members informed through listserv emails