

I LIKE IT WHEN YOU ACT LIKE A LEADER: A ROLE CONGRUITY ACCOUNT
OF ROMANTIC DESIRE FOR POWERFUL OPPOSITE-SEX OTHERS

A Thesis

by

BRIAN M. WILKEY

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Paul W. Eastwick
Committee Members,	W. Steve Rholes
	Jeffrey Winking
Head of Department,	Paul Wellman

May 2013

Major Subject: Psychology

Copyright 2013 Brian M. Wilkey

ABSTRACT

Powerful people perform observable agentic behaviors (e.g., directing tasks), and people expect powerful people to act in these agentic ways. Furthermore, Role Congruity Theory predicts that people are disliked when their behavior contradicts such expectations. To this end, we examined perceivers' romantic liking for opposite-sex targets depending on whether or not the targets conformed to a powerful role. Participants interacted with two opposite-sex partners in brief, recorded sessions. We manipulated (a) which of the opposite-sex partners was actually given power and (b) participants' perceptions of which opposite-sex partners was given power. Participants reported the most romantic liking for partners who actually were given power, but only when this reality matched participants' perceptions of who had power. This interaction effect on liking was mediated by the time the opposite-sex partner directed the conversation; that is, when perceptions of power were shared, the powerful partner behaved more agentially and was better liked.

DEDICATION

To my partner, Christina, my parents, Paul and Cheryl, my brother, Andrew, and my grandparents, Oda, Ellen, Helen, Mize, and Judy, who have supported me in my education and understand that knowledge is power.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give a great many thanks to Dr. Paul Eastwick, my advisor and committee chair for his aid and guidance while at Texas A&M University. Additionally, the thesis could not have been completed without the generous and timely help of Dr. W.S. Rholes and Dr. Jeffrey Winking. Finally, a thousand thanks to Dr. Emily Davidson whose compassion, breadth of knowledge, and cunning saw this document through to the end.

I'd also like to thank collaborators Eli Finkel, Nate Lambert, Grainne Fitzsimons, Frank Fincham, and Preston Brown. Their work with participants and in the initial stages of this project quite literally made this project possible. Finally, a thank you to my colleagues Natasha Tidwell and Lucy Hunt who encouraged and advised me during this process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
Power: Effects and Expectations	2
Power and Romantic Desire	5
The Current Research	6
METHODS.....	10
Participants	10
Materials	10
Procedure.....	11
RESULTS.....	16
Regression Analyses	16
CONCLUSION	20
REFERENCES	23

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1	A condition in which the opposite-sex participants have correct information regarding the identity of the leader and subordinate..... 13
Figure 2	A condition in which the opposite-sex participants have incorrect (i.e., flipped) information concerning the identity of the leader and subordinate 14
Figure 3	Romantic desire from Target’s Actual Role and Perception of Target’s Role 18
Figure 4	Examining if the amount of time spent direction conversation will significantly mediate the association of the “having power” × “perceptions of who has power” interaction on romantic desire 19

INTRODUCTION

Imagine an undergraduate student preparing to go to a review session led by a graduate teaching assistant (TA) whom she finds very attractive. She sees his position of power as sexy. She looks at his Facebook profile before leaving and sits in the front of the class when she arrives. As the TA attempts to review for the coming test, though, the other students are raucous, noisy, and inattentive. The TA attempts to control the class's wiles to no avail; defeated, he meekly begins to write review points on the blackboard. The undergraduate walks away from the session confused and believes she is silly to pine over the TA.

A vast literature contends that having power can make a person romantically desirable. For example, men in positions of high status report having more sexual partners than men of low status (Pérusse, 1994), and both men and women find others who exhibit powerful traits like ambition to be romantically appealing (Eastwick & Finkel, 2008). No research, though, has simultaneously examined the effects of powerful roles and powerful behaviors on romantic appeal. Indeed, role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) suggests that romantic desire for an opposite-sex individual should depend upon whether that individual is performing role congruous actions or not. This research sets out to examine how role congruity theory can illuminate the relationship between power and romantic desire. Specifically, we hypothesized that people in high status roles should be romantically desirable when they exhibit powerful behaviors, and people in

low status roles should be romantically desirable when they do not exhibit powerful behaviors.

Power: Effects and Expectations

The experience of power activates approach-related motivations (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003), and these motivations often manifest in observable behaviors. For example, feelings of power predict smiling (Keltner, Young, Heerey, Oemig & Monarch, 1998) and interrupting and dominating conversations (DePaulo & Friedman, 1998). Ward and Keltner found that powerful others are prone to taking a disproportionate share of food, and chewing with one's mouth open (as cited in Keltner, Gruenfeld & Anderson, 2003). Although these studies did not demonstrate that power causes observable behaviors, subsequent research by Galinsky and colleagues (2003) did find such causal evidence. They experimentally manipulated power and placed participants in a room with a noisy, annoying fan. Participants who were primed with power left their seats to silence the fan more often than participants who were not primed with power. Thus, people's observable behaviors are likely to differ depending on whether or not they occupy a position of power at the time.

Given that power changes observable behavior, it should come as no surprise that people form expectations about the specific behaviors that people in powerful roles perform. For example, organizational behavioral research has revealed a common theme: People expect powerful others (e.g., managers) to be agentic. Specifically, subordinates expect their leaders and managers to take charge of situations by demonstrating assertiveness and dominance (i.e., agency) rather than passivity and submissiveness

(Duehr & Bono, 2006). Moreover, three research paradigms—the think manager-think male paradigm (Schein, 1973), the agency-communion paradigm (Powell & Butterfield, 1979), and the masculinity-femininity paradigm (Shinar, 1975)—reveal that managerial and leadership roles are associated with agentic/masculine stereotypes (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). In short, people seem to expect that powerful people will be more likely than powerless people to engage in dominant, agentic behaviors.

A mismatch between people's behaviors and others' expectations can produce negative interpersonal consequences. Specifically, role congruity theory predicts that people will devalue and dislike those who fail to conform to role expectations (Eagly & Karau, 2002). For example, role congruity theory suggests that the passive female gender role is incongruous with the agentic role of "leader," and this incongruence breeds prejudice toward women in positions of power. That is, leadership roles frequently require agentic traits (e.g., dominance, assertiveness) , and this role requirement clashes with the injunctive norms of the female gender role (e.g., warm, cooperative; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Many studies have tested this assertion using the Goldberg paradigm, which requires participants to evaluate vignettes that depict the actions of a leader but manipulate the sex of the leader, as well as his/her leadership style (i.e., authoritative/agentic, relational/communal). For example, Rosen & Jerdee (1973) used this paradigm and found that participants evaluated women more positively when their leadership styles aligned with cultural expectations (i.e., communal behavior); and agentic women received more negative evaluations than agentic men, though this difference was not statistically significant. A subsequent meta-analysis of 61 studies that

used the Goldberg paradigm indicated that people routinely devalue female leaders, especially when the leadership roles call for agentic traits (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). Eagly and colleagues concluded that women in leadership roles face unique stressors because the warm female gender role conflicts with the agentic, masculine leadership role. This conflict leaves women with a smaller range of behaviors they can enact without being devalued for violating the requirements of at least one of the two roles.

However, role congruity effects are not limited to women in leadership roles; other research has documented prejudice toward men who inhabit incongruent roles. The Status Incongruity Hypothesis (SIH), for example, predicts that men in high status roles who act modestly (i.e., who violate expectations of agency/dominance) will experience a prejudicial backlash effect (Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Rudman, 2010). In one study, participants rated male and female confederates who acted either modestly or neutrally, and they liked modest men less than modest women. Additionally, ratings of low agency (i.e., role violations) mediated the backlash effect for men; thus, people may dislike males who act modestly, perhaps because people perceive modest men's behaviors to be incongruous with agentic roles.

This effect of role incongruity can emerge even when gender is irrelevant to the role in question; violating any behavioral norm can draw attention and subsequent scorn from others. For example, a large proportion of dissatisfying customer experiences in the service industry (41.5%) stem from the counternormative behaviors of the customer service representatives (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). This study found that, when

members of the service industry defied the cultural norm of “servant” by acting rude, unaccommodating, discriminatory, or impersonal, customers reported less satisfying experiences. Although this study did not directly measure negative feelings toward customer service representatives, it seems highly likely that these counternormative behaviors would produce such feelings in customers; thus, role congruity theory accounts for prejudice toward customer service representatives who do not conform to the requirements of their role.

Power and Romantic Desire

The role congruity perspective has implications for the study of power and romantic desire. The romantic appeal of power has received a large amount of empirical attention (e.g., Buss, 1989; Pérusse, 1994; Bargh, Raymond, Pryor, & Strack, 1995; Gonzaga, Keltner, & Ward, 2008; Kunstman & Maner, 2011). For example, traits associated with power (e.g., ambition, independence, assertiveness) make up an important category of people’s ideal characteristics in a romantic partner (Fletcher, Simpson, Thomas, & Giles, 1999). In addition, studies that have examined participants’ attraction to opposite-sex peers have documented that people desire these agentic traits: Both sexes, but especially women, experience greater romantic desire for opposite-sex peers to the extent that those peers are intelligent, hardworking, reliable, and have the qualities of a leader (Pillsworth, 2008). Other studies have found that earning prospects, a specific facet of agency, predicts romantic desire with approximately equal magnitude for men and women (Eastwick, 2009; Eastwick & Finkel, 2008). Additionally, men with greater wealth and power report having more sexual partners than men who have less

wealth and power, which could mean that women desire powerful men more than less powerful men (Perusse, 1994). Collectively, research seems to suggest that power can inspire romantic desire.

To our knowledge, though, no research has explored what aspect of power inspires this romantic desire. That is, it is plausible that either (a) the powerful role itself or (b) the agentic behaviors of the powerful individual incites romantic desire. This confusion in the research, we believe, could be clarified by the application of role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Indeed, role congruity theory generates the novel hypothesis that the extent to which agentic behaviors inspire romantic desire will depend on whether or not the person exhibiting the behaviors inhabits a powerful role. Specifically, agentic behaviors should be more romantically desirable when the person performing the behaviors is in a leadership position rather than in a subordinate position. By the same logic, role congruity theory predicts that people in subordinate roles might be disliked to the extent they engage in agentic behaviors; that is, those in subordinate roles who act less agentially will be liked more than those who act more agentially. Role congruity theory essentially predicts two compatibility effects: A person who violates the expectations of either an authoritative or a subordinate role will be liked less than those who conform to those roles. This hypothesis, however, remains untested.

The Current Research

To test how power's attractive properties depend on role congruity, the current study used live, mixed sex interactions consisting of two men and two women. Our analyses primarily focused on the romantic desire reports that participants generated

about the two opposite-sex individuals after the interaction. Before the interaction, one participant was told that he/she would have power over the other group members in an upcoming task (Target's Actual Role: Leader or Target's Actual Role: Subordinate). This Actual Role manipulation would affect the opposite-sex participants' evaluations by modifying actual behavior (i.e., inspiring agentic behaviors). We also manipulated whom the opposite-sex participants perceived to inhabit this powerful role (Perception of Target's Role: Leader or Perceptions of Target's Role: Subordinate). This Perception of Target's Role manipulation would affect the opposite-sex participants' evaluations by tapping into their expectations for the powerful role. Taken together, these manipulations would allow for an examination of how both actual behaviors and role expectations affect the evaluations of an opposite-sex individual.

Given that these manipulations were orthogonal, the expectations of all four participants sometimes matched and sometimes mismatched. That is, in some cases, the opposite-sex participants mistakenly perceived that the powerful opposite-sex individual was actually powerless and that the powerless opposite-sex individual was actually powerful. From the perspective of the opposite-sex individuals, this procedure produced 4 cells in a 2×2 design: the strong leader (Target's Actual Role: Leader and Perception of Target's Role: Leader), the weak leader (Target's Actual Role: Subordinate, but Perception of Target's Role: Leader), the overconfident subordinate (Target's Actual Role: Leader, but Perception of Target's Role: Subordinate) and the deferential subordinate (Target's Actual Role: Subordinate and Perception of Target's Role: Subordinate). We hypothesized participants would feel more romantic desire for the

strong leader than the deferential subordinate (i.e., a main effect of Target's Actual Role), and for the overconfident subordinate than the weak leader (i.e., a main effect of Perception of Target's Role).

Consistent with role congruity theory, we predicted that the Target's Actual Role manipulation would interact with the Perceptions of Target's Role manipulation to predict romantic desire. We hypothesized that when participants rated actually powerful individuals, they would feel more romantic desire for the partner they believed had power than the partner they perceived had no power (the strong leader over the overconfident subordinate). We also predicted that when participants evaluated an opposite-sex partner whom they perceived had power, they would feel more romantic desire for those who actually possessed power than those who did not (the strong leader over the weak leader). Additionally, we predicted that when participants rated an actually powerless partner, they would feel more romantic desire for the partner they perceived to be powerless than the partner they perceived to be powerful (the deferential subordinate over the weak leader). Finally, we expected that when participants rated partners they perceived to be powerless, they would indicate more romantic desire for actually powerless partners than actually powerful partners (the deferential subordinate over the overconfident subordinate). This crossover interaction essentially would indicate that participants experience more romantic desire for role congruous others (i.e., the strong leader and deferential subordinate) than role incongruous others (i.e., the weak leader and overconfident subordinate). Thus, romantic desire for actually powerful others will depend upon participants believing him/her to have power. Moreover, we

hypothesized that this interaction will be mediated by the extent to which the opposite-sex partner demonstrates observable, agentic behaviors, such as his/her tendency to direct the conversation in the four-person interaction. Indeed, powerful individuals perform this type of behavior more often than powerless individuals (DePaulo & Friedman, 1998), and such a behavior should be consistent with people's expectations about the behavior of others in powerful roles.

Finally, evolutionary research suggests that power's effect on romantic desire may be stronger for women (Perusse, 1994), as mating with a powerful man may secure resources for a woman's offspring (Buss, 1989; Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Role congruity theory, however, predicts no such sex effects when the gender role is not salient; thus, we predict that no sex differences will emerge in romantic desire for powerful others.

METHODS

Participants

Participants were 189 (100 female) Florida State University students (mean age = 19.29 years, SD = 1.73 years). In terms of race, 8.4% of participants reported that they were African American, 2.2% Asian American, 57.2% Caucasian, 15.4% Hispanic/Latino, 8.4% other/multiracial, and 8.4% did not answer. Ninety-eight participants received psychology course credit. These psychology students brought a same sex friend to the experiment with them; the friends comprised the remaining 91 participants. The experimenter divided participants into four person groups (hereafter, quads) made up of two men and two women and never assigned both a participant and his/her friend to the same quad.

Materials

Participants received a post-experiment questionnaire that asked them, using a rating scale from 1 (*Not at All*) to 7 (*Very Much*), to complete four items about the two opposite-sex partners in their quad. The four items (“This person is sexually attractive,” “I would be interested in going on a date with this person,” “I think this person is very much like my ideal romantic partner,” and “I find this person to be very attractive”) showed acceptable reliability ($\alpha=.91$) and were aggregated into one Romantic Desire variable.

Six independent coders, who were blind to the hypothesis and conditions of the study, coded the videos of the four interacting quad members. Coders (individually) watched all 44 videos of the quad interactions one time and rated each participant on a

conversation-directing item (“What percentage of time did he/she direct the flow/topic of the conversation”). One coder was eliminated for reducing the reliability of the measure (final $\alpha=.84$).

Procedure

Eight to twelve participants arrived at the lab for each experimental session. Each received an identifier (men were assigned numbers between 1 and 6; women were assigned letters between A and F) and quad assignment. Each quad used the same identifiers in every session (e.g., one quad always included participants D, E, 4, and 5 etc.).

After checking in, participants received instructions from the experimenter that contained the power manipulation (see Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003). The instructions informed participants that one member of their quad would have power (i.e., the “manager”) and that the other three would not (i.e., the “builders”). The instructions read:

“In the battery of questionnaires you completed online, we assessed your personality in order to select who should be the (1) manager and who should be the (3) builders for a portion of this experiment. According to the test results, _____ is best suited for the role of manager. The four people in each group will be tasked with building a Tanagram with a set of LEGOs. The manager will decide how to structure the process for building the Tanagram and the standards by which it will be evaluated. Additionally, the manager will be responsible for evaluating the builders at the end of the session in a *private* questionnaire. That is, the builders will never see the evaluation.

Also, the builders will not be able to evaluate the manager. In sum, the manager will direct the building, evaluate the building, *and* evaluate the builders. Please do not discuss these role assignments or the Tanagram task until the research assistant fully explains the task to you later in the experiment.”

In half the cases, the instructions were identical for all four members of the quad. For example, in this condition, if participant 4 received power, participants D, E, 4, and 5 would know that 4 had received power (see Figure 1). However, in the other half of the cases, the instructions differed for the men and the women in the quad such that the instructions for the sex who did not have power flipped the description of which opposite-sex partner had power. For example, in this condition, if participant 4 received power, participants 4 and 5 would know that 4 had received power; however participants D and E would believe that 5 had received power (see Figure 2).

Participant 4



Target's Actual
Role: Leader

Participant 5



Target's Actual
Role:
Subordinate

Participant D



Participant E



Perceptions of Target's Role
Participant 4: Leader
Participant 5: Subordinate

Figure 1. A condition in which the opposite-sex participants have correct information regarding the identity of the leader and subordinate

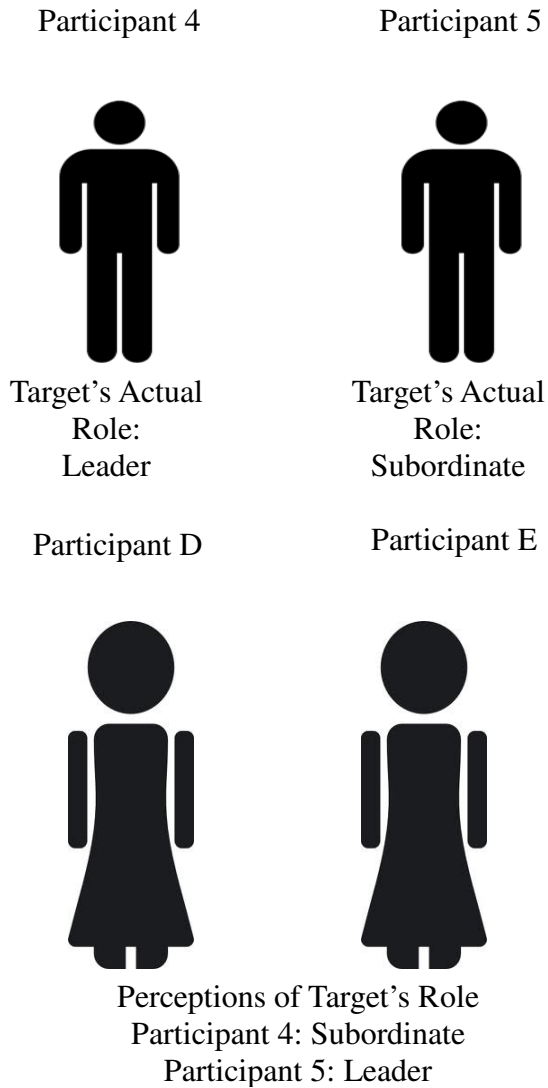


Figure 2. A condition in which the opposite-sex participants have incorrect (i.e., flipped) information concerning the identity of the leader and subordinate.

From the perspective of each participant, these instructions permitted the examination of two separate experimental manipulations. First, the instructions manipulated the opposite-sex partners' actual power (*Target's Actual Role* manipulation): The instructions told each opposite-sex partner that he/she was the "manager" (Target's Actual Role: Leader) or a "builder" (Target's Actual Role: Subordinate). In other words, the Target's Actual Role manipulation is what the

instructions conveyed to the opposite-sex partners about whether he/she actually had power or not. The instructions also manipulated the participants' perceptions about which opposite-sex partner had power (*Perception of Target's Role* manipulation): The instructions told each participant that the opposite-sex partner was either a "manager" (Perceptions of Target's Role: Leader condition) or a "builder" (Perceptions of Target's Role: Subordinate condition). In other words, the Perceptions of Target's Role manipulation is what the instructions conveyed to the participant about whether the opposite-sex partner had power or not.

The experimenter placed each quad in a separate room and videotaped them having a discussion about academic and fitness goals, telling the participants not to discuss the upcoming tanagram task. After five minutes the experimenter stopped the discussion and participants filled out a post-questionnaire about the opposite-sex participants in their quad, including the dependent measure of romantic desire. The experimenter then informed the participants that they would not have time to complete the tanagram task. Participants completed other experimental tasks not relevant to the present study before being thanked and debriefed.

RESULTS

We examined the effect of actual power (coded Target's Actual Role: Leader = 1, Target's Actual Role: Subordinate = 0) and perceptions of power (coded Perception of Target's Role: Leader = 1, Perception of Target's Role: Subordinate = 0) on romantic desire for the opposite-sex partners in the quad. We also used the Preacher and Hayes (2008) indirect model to test whether the opposite-sex partners' tendency to direct the conversation mediated the effect of the interaction of Target's Actual Role and the Perception of Target's Role on romantic desire. Additionally, although women reported significantly more romantic desire for others than men did ($t(201)=-2.81, p<.01$), participants' sex did not interact with our manipulations (all p 's $>.05$) and we collapse across sex for all further analyses.

Regression Analyses

We used multilevel modeling to account for nesting of interaction partners within participant and permitted the intercept to vary randomly across participants and across quads (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Romantic desire was regressed on the manipulations of actual power (Target's Actual Role: Leader vs. Target's Actual Role: Subordinate), perceptions of power (Perceptions of Target's Role: Leader vs. Perceptions of Target's Role: Subordinate), and their interaction. The main effect of the Target's Actual Role was not significant $F(1,203)=2.29, p=.13$, and the main effect of the Perception of Target's role was also nonsignificant, $F(1, 203) = 2.57, p= .11$. The interaction of the conditions, though, was significant: $B=.82, t(203)=2.14, p=.033$; that is, romantic desire for the actually powerful (vs. not powerful) opposite-sex partners depended on whether

participants believed the partner had power or not (see Figure 3). When participants reported on opposite sex partners who did not actually have power, they reported no significant difference between the Perceptions of Target's Role: Subordinate (Deferential Subordinate) and Perception of Target's Role: Leader (Weak Leader) conditions $B=-.33$, $t(203)=-1.60$, $p=.110$; however, when reporting on opposite-sex partners who actually had power, romantic desire was significantly greater in the Perception of Target's Role: Leader (Strong Leader) than the Perception of Target's Role: Subordinate (Overconfident Subordinate) condition $B=.49$, $t(203)=2.14$, $p=.049$. Additionally, when participants reported on opposite-sex participants they perceived to not have power, they reported no significant difference in romantic desire between the Target's Actual Role: Subordinate (Deferential Subordinate) and Target's Actual Role: Leader (Overconfident Subordinate), $B=-.33$, $t(203)=-1.51$, $p=.132$; however, when reporting on an opposite sex-participant they perceived to have power, romantic desire was significantly greater in the Target's Actual Role: Leader (Strong Leader) than the Target's Actual Role: Subordinate (Weak Leader) condition, $B=.51$, $t(203)=-2.06$, $p=.041$.

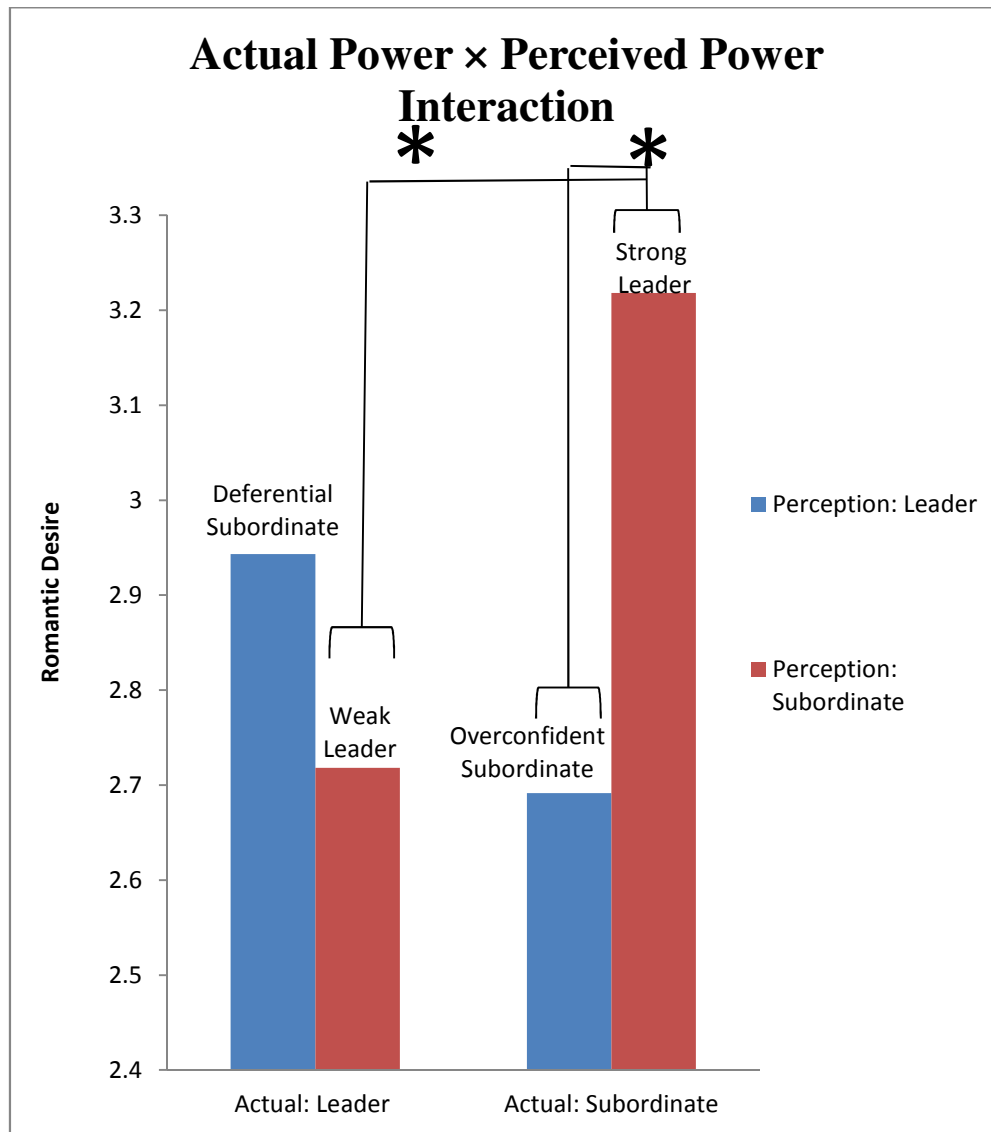


Figure 3 Romantic desire from Target's Actual Role and Perception of Target's Role

To test whether the directing conversation variable mediated this interaction, we employed an indirect mediational model as outlined by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Notably, the percentage of time an opposite-sex partner spent directing the conversation significantly mediated the interaction of actual power and perception of power on romantic desire (i.e., mediated moderation; see Figure 4). In this model, the interaction

term of actual power and perceptions of power predicted (albeit marginally significantly) the amount of time the opposite-sex partner spent directing the conversation, $B=5.816$, $t(370)=1.702$, $p=.090$. Also, the amount of time spent directing conversation significantly predicted romantic desire $B=.011$, $t(370)=2.22$, $p=.027$. Importantly, time spent directing the conversation significantly mediated the effect of the Target's Actual Role \times Perceptions of Target's Role interaction term on romantic desire, 95% CI [.0004, .2124]; that is, the direct effect of the interaction on romantic desire was significantly reduced from $B= .82$, $t(370)= 2.20$, $p=.028$, to $B=.69$, $t(370)=2.01$, $p=.045$ by including conversation directing in the model.

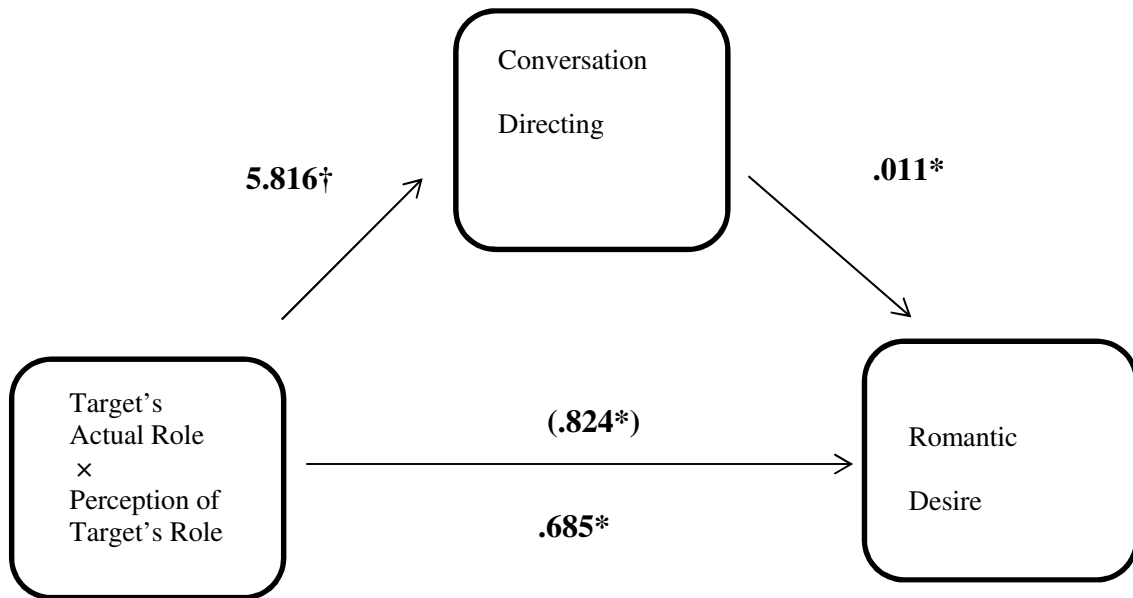


Figure 4. Examining if the amount of time spent directing conversation will significantly mediate the association of the "having power" \times "perceptions of who has power" interaction on romantic desire. The values represent unstandardized coefficients. The coefficient in parentheses represents the association of the "having power" \times "perceptions of who has power" interaction effect with romantic desire when the directing conversation variable is not included in the model

CONCLUSION

These results indicate partial support for our hypotheses; participants felt significantly more romantic desire for the strong leader (i.e., a role congruent condition) than the weak leader and overconfident subordinate (i.e., the two role incongruous conditions). However, there were no significant differences in romantic desire for the deferential subordinate (i.e., the other role congruous condition) than the aforementioned role incongruous participants. Additionally, the effect of the interaction on romantic desire was mediated by the extent to which the leader directed the conversation (i.e., an observable, agentic behavior). Overall, these findings support role congruity theory prediction that romantic desire for leaders arises when leaders fulfill the expectations placed upon their role.

This research used a unique methodology with a novel manipulation to explore the romantic desirability of powerful others. Building off previous research that used live interactions (Gonzaga, Keltner, & Ward, 2008), this research manipulated not only the actual possession of power but the expectations of the powerless participants as well. These two separate manipulations allowed for a more precise examination of the romantic desirability of the powerful role and the expected agentic actions of the leader, and as only role congruity theory predicts, participants felt the most desire for the targets that occupied the powerful role *and* met the expectations placed on the powerful role.

Also, no sex differences arose, which is consistent with a role congruity theory account. Most evolutionary theories would predict that the female participants would have more romantic desire for a long-term mate in an actual role of power who would

provide resources for her offspring (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). This lack of sex differences more supports the role congruity account of the data. It is possible that the role of leader was more salient than a gender role and had a greater effect on the expectations of group members.

This research also primed power in a very specific situation (i.e., the upcoming task). As well, the leader had direct power over the subordinates, which is commonplace in experimental research on power. However, results might differ if the leader had a more “general” power, or power over others who were *not* participants in the same study. This might actually approximate a more “real-world” setting—where the object of one’s desire is not his/her direct superior but still a person of power. Future research should examine if having more direct power (i.e., a direct supervisor) over an individual or a more global, nonspecific power (i.e., a mayor) affects romantic desire for a powerful other. Role congruity theory, though, would still predict that romantic desire would be greater for those who behaved in a way consistent with their role of power, so long as that role was salient.

Additionally, this research may have been limited by the two combinations of targets in each quad (i.e., the strong leader and deferential subordinate in one and the weak leader and overconfident subordinate in the other); we believe people may have felt more romantic desire for one of the role congruous targets (the strong leader) because he/she was directly compared to the other role congruous target (the deferential subordinate). Future research should use these manipulations to examine other comparisons; that is, directly comparing two actually powerful targets with different

expectations placed upon them (i.e., the strong leader and overconfident subordinate in the same quad). This research may also have been limited by collecting romantic evaluations before the leader *actually led* group members in the described task. Future research should examine romantic desire for a leader after participants complete the “tanagram” (or similar) task. Finally, future research should attempt to examine this phenomenon in more naturalistic settings; the results may further support that attractive leaders are also widely regarded as agentic leaders.

Despite these limitations, we believe this research indicates that the strongest romantic desire for powerful others is a combination of the powerful role and expected behavior. When these two aspects of power are congruous, a powerful person is much more romantically desirable. The powerful role attracts much attention from researchers and laypersons alike. These results indicate, however, that unless one conforms to the expectations placed on the role, the aphrodisiacal qualities of powerful roles will be of no help in attracting a mate. The romantically desirable aspects of the powerful role only extend so far as a person is willing and able to demonstrate the behaviors associated with it.

REFERENCES

- Bargh, J.A., Raymond, P., Pryor, J.B., & Strack, F. (1995). Attractiveness of the underling: An automatic power-sex association and its consequences for sexual harassment and aggression. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*, 768-781.
- Bitner, M.J., Booms, B.H., & Tetreault, M.S. (1990). The service encounter: Diagnosing favorable and unfavorable incidents. *The Journal of Marketing, 54*, 71-84.
- Buss, D.M. (1989) Sex differences in human mate preferences: Evolutionary hypotheses tested in 37 cultures. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 12*, 1-14.
- Buss, D.M. & Schmitt, D.P. (1993) Sexual strategies theory: An evolutionary perspective on human mating. *Psychological Review, 100*, 204-232.
- DePaulo, B.M. & Friedman, H.S. (1998). Nonverbal communication. In D. Gilbert, S.T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed. Vol. 2, pp. 3-40). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Duehr, E.E. & Bono, J.E. (2006). Men, women, and managers: Are stereotypes finally changing? *Personnel Psychology, 59*, 815-846.
- Eagly, A.H., Makhijani, M.G., & Klonsky, B.G. (1992). Gender and the evaluation of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 111*, 3-22.
- Eagly, A.H. & Karau, S.J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review, 109*, 573-598.

- Eastwick, P.W. (2009). Beyond the Pleistocene: Using phylogeny and constraint to inform the evolutionary psychology of human mating. *Psychological Bulletin*, *135*, 794-821.
- Eastwick, P.W. & Finkel, E.J (2008). Sex differences in mate preferences revisited: Do people know what they initially desire in a romantic partner? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *94*, 245-264.
- Fletcher, G.J.O., Simpson, J.A., Thomas, G. & Giles, L. (1999). Ideals in intimate relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *76*, 72-89.
- Galinsky, A.D., Gruenfeld, D.H., & Magee, J.C. (2003). From power to action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *85*, 453-466.
- Gonzaga, G.C., Keltner, D., & Ward, D. (2008). Power in mixed-sex stranger interactions. *Cognition and Emotion*, *22*, 1555-1568.
- Keltner, D., Young, R.C., Heerey, E.A., Oemig, C, & Monarch, N.D. (1998). Teasing in hierarchical and intimate relations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *75*, 1231-1247.
- Keltner D., Gruenfeld, D.H., & Anderson, C. (2003). Power, approach and inhibition. *Psychological Review*, *110*, 265-284.
- Koenig, A.M., Eagly, A.H., Mitchell, A.A., & Ristikari, T. (2011). Are leader stereotypes masculine? A meta-analysis of three research paradigms. *Psychological Bulletin*, *137*, 616-642.

- Kuntsman, J.W. & Maner, J.K. (2011). Sexual overperception: Power, mating, and biases in social judgment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 100*, 282-294.
- Moss- Racusin, C.A., Phelan, J.E., & Rudman, L.A. (2010) When men break the gender rules: Status incongruity and backlash against modest men. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity, 11*, 140-151.
- Pérusse, D. (1994). Mate choice in modern society: Testing evolutionary hypotheses with behavior data. *Human Nature, 5*, 255-278.
- Pillsworth, E.G. (2008).Mate preferences among the Shuar of Ecuador: Trait rankings and peer evaluations. *Evolution and Human Behavior, 29*, 256-267.
- Powell, G.N. & Butterfield, D.A. (1979). The “good manager”: Masculine or androgynous? *Academy of Management Journal, 22*, 395-403.
- Preacher, K.J. & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior Research methods, 40*, 879-891.
- Prentice, D.A. & Carranza, E. (2002). What women and men should be, shouldn't be, are allowed to be and don't have to be: The contents of prescriptive gender stereotypes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 26*, 269-281.
- Raudenbush, S.W. & Bryk, A.S. (2002). *Hierarchical linear model: Applications and data analysis methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Rosen, B. & Jerdee, T.H. (1973). The influence of sex-role stereotypes on evaluations of male and female supervisory behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 57, 44-48.
- Schein, V.E. (1973). The relationship between sex role stereotypes and requisite management characteristics. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 57, 95-100.
- Shinar, E.H. (1975). Sexual stereotypes of occupations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 7, 99-111.