Portrayals of Black Women in Media

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Abstract

This project studied the impact of stereotypical portrayals on Black women through their visibility and parasocial contact. We hypothesized that Black female participants would feel more visible and connected to astereotypical portrayals of Black women, and that negative, stereotypical portrayals would evoke less visibility and connection. Participants were (N = 476) Black women recruited on Prolific. They were asked to watch a clip fitting into one of four categories ranging from positive to negative and stereotypical to astereotypical. They were then asked to respond to several measures asking (1) a set of three questions to see how well they paid attention to the clip, (2) how visible they felt after watching the clip (Remedios & Snyder, 2018), (3) how they enjoyed the clip and current mood (Pietri, *et al.*, 2021), and (4) how they were able to connect to the Black female character emotionally (Pietri, *et al.*, 2021). Results demonstrated that the negative stereotypical condition caused Black women to feel the least visible, and they were unable to connect well with this portrayal. Feelings of invisibility were impacted by the importance of Valence (positive vs negative) in Stereotypical, but not Astereotypical, videos. These findings demonstrate the negative impact of negative, stereotypical portrayals of Black women in media on the members of this group and provide support for the elimination of these depictions from media at large.

Introduction

Our world is obsessed with media. People experience and actively participate in all types of media constantly, from how we use our phones, to the short videos we watch on YouTube, to the TV shows we ingest through various streaming platforms. However, with this constant consumption of media, we subconsciously consume the ideas and values that are carried with them. It is impossible to find an unbiased source of media; everything in the world is, after all, biased (Miller, et al., 2022). When we watch a movie, we are watching and ingesting a specific set of values and beliefs bestowed onto it by the director, writers, actors, editors, and every other person that has worked on the film. This is why when pieces of media represent characters that are a part of oppressed groups it is incredibly important that the creators are aware of what they are stating, and the impact of those portrayals on the population being depicted. In this project I will attempt to analyze the impact that portrayals of different qualities have on the population they depict, specifically Black women. It is my belief that the less stereotypical a portrayal is, the more Black women will become invested and empathetic towards them, whereas a stereotypical portrayal will create more distance. Additionally, I hypothesize that the more stereotypical a portrayal is, the more it can create a feeling of invisibility in the population being depicted, and cause them to feel less attached to these characters. In this study I will attempt to test these hypotheses and to find out how exactly different portrayals impact oppressed groups, specifically Black women.

Before discussing how stereotypical portrayals harm Black women, there needs to be a discussion on the existence of bias and how it functions. Most psychologists differentiate between two types of bias: implicit and explicit. Explicit bias is defined as a conscious thought process that results in set behaviors (Daumeyer et al., 2019). For example, if you loved chocolate

chip cookies and hated raisin cookies and were asked to choose one, you would probably think through your preferences and end up choosing the chocolate chip cookie. Implicit bias, on the other hand, is defined as an unconscious thought process (Brownstein, 2019), relying more on instinct and instantaneous paradigms than on conscious thoughts. Returning to the cookie example, if you were to have the same preferences, and were to just pick one cookie at random and accidentally chose a raisin cookie, you would probably spit it out without thinking. You would not have made the conscious decision to spit out the cookie, but instead it would have been an instinctive reaction. One important aspect to note on implicit biases is that they are rarely constant when measured (Payne, et al., 2017). Humans are incessantly being influenced by what occurs around them, and therefore it is difficult to have a constant measurement for implicit attitudes since they would change accordingly (Azar, 2008). More specifically, a recent study found that implicit bias scores tended to better reflect the environment respondents were in than their actual individual beliefs, due to the random fluctuation of scores (Vuletich & Payne, 2019). Finally, one must be aware that we are all influenced by biases, even if we are a part of the targeted group. A good example of this is in this riddle: “a father and son are in a horrible car crash that kills the dad. The son is rushed to the hospital; just as he’s about to go under the knife, the surgeon says, ‘I can’t operate—that boy is my son!’ Explain.” A study (Belle, et al., 2020) administered this riddle to college students and found that 36% of female students answered by saying that the doctor was the mother of the boy, which meant that 64% of the girls surveyed found other solutions than this simple one: that a woman was a doctor. This demonstrates the internalization of biased opinions and thoughts, to the point where it impacts our thought processes (Webb, 2017), and how, since women are not primed to believe they could succeed in the sciences, this impacts their own self-image of what they could achieve.

Being the target of bias and prejudice, whether it is in small or large events, carries a deep psychological impact. As Bair and Steele (2010) demonstrated in their study, even implied prejudice can take a significant toll on one's cognitive ability. When placing Black participants with a test partner tasked with making a statement that implied a racist ideology, the participants scored worse on a Stroop test administered after the fact than Black participants placed in a control group who were not faced with an implied racist statement. Additionally, being exposed to negative stereotypes can lead to a phenomenon termed "social identity threat," defined as the fear that individuals have of compromising the positive image of their ingroup by engaging in an activity that is associated with negative stereotypes (Steele et al., 2002). In practice, this manifests in a person through a fear that they will be devalued in a specific context, be it scholastic, social, or in their career, and can decrease their social approach motivation (Martiny & Nikitin, 2019). This fear creates additional obstacles for marginalized groups, leading to lowered test scores and a difficulty to succeed in subjects that the targeted groups are not "supposed" to be good at (Walton & Spencer, 2009). Specific cues can also heighten this threat (Murphy & Taylor, 2012) or lessen it, depending on the context and the way in which they are interpreted. For instance, a commercial emphasizing traditional gender roles - such as women being expected to cook and clean - was shown to heighten social identity threat and lower leadership aspirations, whereas commercials that emphasize women's ability to be leaders can lessen social identity threat (Davies, et al., 2005).

Social identity threat (Steele et al., 2002) is felt deeply, especially in individuals carrying two or more marginalized identities, such as Black women. The existence of dual marginalized identities adds the influence of the intersectional invisibility hypothesis (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). This hypothesis states that individuals with two or more marginalized identities

are not perceived as prototypical of either of their marginalized identities, so they tend to experience cultural invisibility. According to this theory, Black women are less likely to be portrayed on television, and when they are portrayed, they will often be mischaracterized and unidimensional. Therefore, when Black women are represented, those portrayals can have a strong influence on the way people view them, and causes Black women to feel more invisible within society compared to White women and Black men, both of whom only have a single marginalized identity (Remedios & Snyder, 2018). A symptom of this intersectionality lies in the unique and intersecting forms of discrimination Black women experience resulting in the double jeopardy hypothesis. This theory proposes that women of color experience both the discrimination of their race and of their gender (Beal, 2008). This also causes Black women to be penalized for their agency and desire to rise to leadership positions (Rosette et al., 2016) and ergo contributes to larger problems involving lack of representation in numerous areas, which can then strengthen the impact of social identity threat (Steele et al., 2002). Additionally, the intersectional identities of Black women lead to further obstacles in higher education; Dr. Eaton's study (Eaton et al., 2019) found that, when submitting eight identical applications to varying Physics and Biology doctoral programs while changing only the gender and race of the applicant via race-typical names, the applications of Black women were repeatedly judged as the least hireable (along with Latine men and women). This demonstrates the far-reaching implications of dual identities on experiences of prejudice.

Delving further into the way in which social norms can impact perceptions, the Good Hair Study (Johnson et al, 2017) looked at the way that natural hair versus smooth hair – specifically for Black women – is viewed by society. Bias against Black hair textures has been shown to lead to discriminatory behavior (Johnson et al., 2017), and therefore this study aimed to

explore the relationship between explicit and implicit biases. This study created the first Hair Implicit Association Test and used it in conjunction with a test for explicit attitudes to compare the results from each one. Women from natural hair communities were asked to respond, as well as men and women that were not in these communities (both White and Black). The results found that White women were less likely to find Black women's natural hair attractive and were biased against it, while Black women from the natural hair community were far less biased towards natural hair than any other group. Most of the Black women who responded, however, felt social stigma regarding their hair. Every group showed implicit bias against natural hair, demonstrating that even when participants had positive explicit attitudes, they usually carried negative implicit attitudes with them. This shows that the way Black women are presented impacts their own self-perceptions and beauty standards, despite their best efforts. Black natural hair is commonly depicted as "ugly" and "unprofessional," and the implementation of these attitudes into pop culture and media leads to Black women feeling less confident in something that is inextricable from them.

When it comes to media, there is a profound impact on the viewer's perception of the world based on what is being communicated. A 2016 study by Murphy et al. found that women studying math, sciences, or engineering who viewed a video meant to advertise a conference tended to feel less belonging and less desire to attend the conference when the clip had an unbalanced gender ratio (with more men). Men, however, were unperturbed by watching the video. Media has been proven to impact and convey stereotypes to the consumers engaging in it (Lamer et al., 2022), with evidence of it imparting gender roles on even young children. When looking specifically at the relationship between media and reality, there are many divergences that demonstrate how the two inform one another (Punyanunt-Carter, 2008). A questionnaire

focusing on portrayals of African Americans in TV shows found that participants were more willing to believe that Black people in blue-collar jobs and negative personality characteristics of Black characters were true to life. Comparatively, positive stereotypes and African American characters that were portrayed to be low-achieving were not viewed as realistic (Punyanunt-Carter, 2008). This transmission, internalization, and implementation of stereotypes conveyed by media causes real harm to those experiencing it, and limits marginalized groups, from lowered test scores (Walton & Spencer, 2009), to an increase in violence against Black women (Leath et al., 2021).

The internalization of these harmful biases perpetuated by the media are able to be reduced, however, through identification (Cohen, 2001). This process, outlined by Dr. Cohen (2001) involves being able to identify with other individuals, and is extremely important in the humanization of marginalized groups. Focusing further on media, the ability for people to relate to one another is emphasized again in the Parasocial Contact Hypothesis (Schieppa et al., 2005), which found that the comparatively intimate interaction viewers received with outgroup members led to decreases in reported prejudice, and were related with specific belief changes. Similarly, in a 2013 study (Johnson et al., 2013), researchers found that being tasked with reading a narrative from the perspective of an Arab-Muslim individual was able to lower the participants' implicit and explicit biases. This reading also helped lower intergroup anxiety (Johnson et al., 2013). Another study that supports the theory that media can help reduce bias used sitcoms and music videos to test the reduction and length of prejudice (Murrar & Brauer, 2018). They found that both of these forms of media, which focused on Arab/Muslim individuals in relatable and likable scenarios, resulted in prejudice reduction that lasted for four weeks in the

case of the sitcom. Murrar & Brauer (2018) also measured for identification with the characters presented in the videos shown, which was then associated with even more prejudice reduction.

In addition to reducing biases within members of the outgroup, relatable portrayals of marginalized groups have been associated with an increased sense of belonging and visibility for members of these groups (Pietri et al., 2021). Dr. Steinke (2017) discussed the impact of seeing female STEM professionals in media on adolescent girls planning on pursuing careers in said area, and touched upon the potential impact different portrayals of such professionals can have on adolescent girls' identity formation. To summarize, Dr. Steinke theorizes that positive, relatable portrayals of women in STEM could allow for an increase in interest in this field from adolescent girls, and allow them to feel more comfortable exploring this interest (Steinke, 2017). Exploring the impact of media portrayals on marginalized groups' sense of belonging, Simon and Hoyt (2013) observed the impact of counterstereotypical (what was dubbed as astereotypical in this research) roles on women's confidence as leaders. They found that women that were shown counterstereotypical media portrayals of women felt more confident and more desire to lead (Simon & Hoyt, 2013), compared to women that were shown stereotypical portrayals. Most appropriately for the purposes of this study, a 2021 study (Pietri et al., 2021) studied positive video portrayals compared to written portrayals for Black women in STEM. Throughout varying conditions, this study found that a short video of a Black female computer scientist worked best for creating parasocial contact (Schieppa et al., 2005), and resulted in the Black female participants being more interested in computer science than participants in other conditions (with only written, photographic, or audio formats). It is important to note that, unlike this study, the Pietri et al. (2021) study only utilized positive portrayals of Black women, and therefore does not provide a roadmap for the impact of negative portrayals on Black women. However, the

implication remains that positive portrayals of Black women in areas where they are not commonly represented (Pietri et al., 2021) can cause them to feel more visible.

Throughout this section I have explored the varying facets of bias, be it as a concept, or in practice. Overall it appears that the intersectionality of Black women (Remedios & Snyder, 2018) inadvertently places them in further situations where they could be harmed and disadvantaged (Leath et al., 2021). The impact of media on the formation of stereotypes (Lamer et al., 2022) helps further the harm Black women endure, but there is a possibility of that harm being lessened through inclusive, realistic portrayals (Johnson et al., 2013). Even more importantly for this study, there is a possibility of Black women feeling connected and visible with the creation of these realistic portrayals (Pietri et al., 2021). Before diving into the research conducted for this study, however, attention must be paid to the actual stereotypes I will be dissecting the impacts of, and the operationalization of astereotypical portrayals.

An Exploration of Stereotypes

Considering the focus this study has on stereotypes, it is important to delve more deeply into their creation, development, and impact both throughout history and in the present day. Stereotypes are far more complex than what we give them credit for, and oftentimes exist in multiple layers. Historically speaking, stereotypes of Black individuals are used to commodify Black bodies and justify Black people's enslavement (Green, 2022). Many stereotypes that we see today come from minstrel shows, where White actors put on blackface and pretended to be Black for the amusement of White audiences (Lemon, 1977). These were hugely popular and relied largely on the mutual understanding between performer and audience that Black people were subhuman and deserving of enslavement (National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2019). There are, however, stereotypes that can be interpreted as a set of positive

traits (Lott, 1991) and therefore tend to be viewed positively in most mainstream frames. They are harder to identify and far more palatable as a result, ensuring that many White audiences will not realize how these portrayals are complicit in oppression. They are still stereotypes, however, and help create a dehumanizing effect on the people they focus on (Czopp, 2008) through the inherent dismission of Black women's desires and existence. Naturally, there are also negative stereotypes that encompass a set of negative traits (Green, 2022) - such as anger, overt sexuality, and lust - that are also complicit in the dehumanization of Black individuals. Additionally, due to the inherent intersectionality of Black women (Rosette et al., 2016), the stereotypes they are presented with are unique, and while they hold roots in their identity as both women and as Black individuals, these two identities converge to create distinctive caricatures (Rosenthal & Lobel, 2016).

Positive Stereotypes

First, let us discuss "positive" stereotypes for Black women. This set of stereotypes consists of traits that align themselves easily with White mainstream audiences. The female characters that are assigned such stereotypes will be viewed positively and seen as desirable - socially speaking, of course. To begin with, there is the Mammy: a kind, older Black woman that serves as the warm helping hand of a (White) household, and helps the White main characters achieve success through wise advice (Green, 2022). She is inherently asexual and unattractive, therefore keeping herself from being a "threat" to any White women. She lives to serve her masters and raise their White children, often being portrayed as loving those children more than her own. She is the happy slave that gives harmless and humorous advice to her masters, while being harsh and cruel to her own family and in her own home (Pilgrim, 2000). This stereotype

has been seen frequently in media, most famously in Hattie McDaniel's performance as Mammy in "Gone with the Wind" (Selznick & Fleming, 1939).

The next two positive stereotypes are logical evolutions of the Mammy stereotype. The Aunt Jemimah, to start with, is similar to the Mammy in that she is also a large matronly woman, but for this stereotype she is only allowed to exist in the kitchen. Her main role in media is to be the cook of the household, and, once more, she is given little to no personality outside of this (Green, 2022). Then, there is the Black best friend. While there is less evidence of this stereotype being descended from the Mammy and Aunt Jemimah tropes, the role that this younger Black character plays is similar to the one Mammy historically played. The Black best friend is only allowed to exist within the life and problems of the White main character, giving them advice and a shoulder to cry on while increasing the diversity of a movie or TV show (Tilton, 2021). This is seen frequently throughout movies and TV shows from the 1990s and early 2000s, including "Clueless" and "High School Musical," and although there has been growth in recent years with writers and directors focusing more on Black girls' stories, movies like "Tall Girl" and "Moxie" unabashedly repeat these mistakes. While this character is inherently viewed positively since she is providing aid to the White main character, this is still a harmful stereotype since it reduces the existence of Black girls to palatable bite-sized versions of an actual, complex person.

Finally, we have the stereotype of the Strong Black Woman (Harris, 2016). This is a character archetype which is the most easily masked as positive: after all, she is depicted as being powerful and independent. This, however, leads to an expectation that Black women can handle all the stressors of life without any help (Leath, 2019). A study completed in 2019 (Liao, et al., 2019) found that the more Black women tried to adhere to this stereotype in their

day-to-day life, the more they felt the effects of depression, anxiety, and loneliness. When Black women are expected to be strong and proud at all times, they cannot show weakness or vulnerability, and lose the empathy they ought to have for themselves (Leath, 2019). Additionally, there exists a fine line between the strong Black woman stereotype and the Sapphire trope (Abagond, 2008) - which will be discussed in the next section - which keeps Black women from having their negative emotions validated. Therefore, they will be victimized for both their positive emotions, which show too much weakness, and for their negative emotions, which forces them to stereotype confirmation (Stewart, 2018).

Negative Stereotypes

All stereotypes are inherently harmful, but the ones that will be mentioned in this section explicitly villainize Black female characters. These characters are too sexual, too angry, too Black, and are the undesirable portrayals that are supposed to justify the oppression of Black women. To continue with the thread of the Strong Black Woman, let us first look at her more overtly negative counterpart: the Sapphire. The Sapphire, or the Angry Black Woman, was solidified through the show "Amos n' Andy," which began as a radio broadcast in 1926 and was then transitioned to live television (Abagond, 2008). The show featured White actors using Black face and "blaccent" (a portmanteau meaning a Black accent), and popularized several stereotypes commonly found today for Black people. The Sapphire is unequivocally the matriarch of a household, which simultaneously emasculates her husband and places her as an undesirably masculine figure; this diminishes her identity as a woman and her husband's identity as a man (Green, 2022). This stereotype was also used as a way to punish Black women who visibly expressed their discontentment with their oppression, and encouraged them to try to reject the Sapphire stereotype by being more passive and accepting of their own persecution (Pilgrim,

2008). This extremely popular stereotype lives on today in less obviously offensive modern incarnations of the sassy Black friend.

Throughout the period of active slavery in America, the rape and sexual assault of Black woman from slave owners was a constant. To excuse this despicable behavior, the myth of the Jezebel was born: she was the markedly sexual incarnation of Black women, who willingly seduced the men around her and enticed them away from their - typically White – wives and girlfriends (Green, 2022). This continued after the abolition of slavery, with Black women repeatedly being sexually assaulted by White men and then blamed for it due to their "undeniable" and "persistent" sexual energy. The portrayals of Jezebel tend to be framed as desirable through Eurocentric standards and traits, including smaller noses and lips, and lighter skin tones (Pilgrim, 2002). This stereotype also creates a set of expected behaviors for Black women. A study that explored the impact of this stereotype on Black women (Leath, 2021) found that, through a series of interviews with 50 Black women, they each felt that their bodies were consistently being policed, and they therefore felt more pressure to present sexually, with their main role model for such behavior becoming the Jezebel. This stereotype pushes Black girls to sexualize themselves from a very young age; the "Fast Tailed Girls" as Mikki Kendall, author of *Hood Feminism* calls them (Kendall, 2021); the girls that grow up too fast and hurry to try to fit into patriarchal, Eurocentric expectations of their sexuality.

The final stereotype to touch upon in this essay is that of the Welfare Queen, a common modern-day, American fantasy (Green, 2022). The Welfare Queen is a mother that continues to have children so as to gain more access to welfare. She is uncaring, cruel, dominant, and lazy, whilst still being a sexual figure through her repeated pregnancies. Made famous during the Reagan administration with the help of the first socially identified "welfare queen" Linda Taylor

(Sreenivasan, 2019), this stereotype is not necessarily Black but is often characterized as such. The stereotype in general aims to discredit the work that welfare accomplishes and attempts to stop the distribution of welfare by creating a character that is easy to dislike – a lazy, entitled Black woman that builds on the negative stereotypes of the past.

Astereotypical Portrayals

Although there are many portrayals of Black women that are narrow, small-minded, and stereotypical - as I have just discussed - there are also representations of Black women that do characterize them as holistic, realistic human beings. I have dubbed such portrayals astereotypical, since they show Black women in more than one, stereotypical light. For the purpose of this research, an astereotypical character has been defined by the research team as a character that does not conform to the stereotypes explored before. These characters are allowed depth that matches the context of the world they inhabit, which allows room for lighter, comedic portrayals as well as some more serious characters.

There does need to be an additional differentiation made between positive astereotypical and negative astereotypical characters. Since both villains and heroes can be given the hopes, desires, and emotional range needed to be a full-fledged character, it was decided that there would be two separate categories, similarly to how stereotypes have been separated: positive and negative. Positive astereotypical characters reasonably defy the stereotypes created for them and allow said character to be viewed in a positive light outside of racist, confining, expectations. Similarly, negative astereotypical characters do not conform to stereotypes, but these characters are portrayed negatively; they might be villains or some otherwise unlikable character. However, their level of likeability and virtue does not mean that they are stereotypical and vapid, and therefore this is an important distinction to make; after all, if the purpose of this study is to

observe the impact realistic portrayals of Black women in media, there must be room for them to be human, in all the flaws and qualities that that encapsulates (Monet, 2022). This difference will hopefully allow for a deeper understanding of the impact different portrayals have on Black women's implicit biases, and will allow us to detect whether the positive or negative placement of a character impacts the internalization of Black characters for Black women.

Methods

Participants

Participants were Black women currently living in the United States that were recruited through Prolific's database of respondents. Utilizing Prolific gave access to a wide range of Black women from very different backgrounds, ergo not limiting us to college populations. Each participant was paid $2 for completing the study, which took approximately eight minutes to finish. The survey received 545 responses, 54 of which were left out due to incomplete answers, and 15 more of which were left out due to failing an attention check - meaning that they scored less than 2 out of 3 on a short questionnaire on the contents of the video they had just watched. This left us with 476 participants. The average age of participants was 37 years old, with a range of 18 to 78 years old and a standard deviation of 13.72 years.

Stimuli

This study included the selection and use of several short videos that aligned with two different factors: Valence (positive and negative) and Stereotypicality (stereotypical and astereotypical. Five to seven clips for each category were initially selected by a researcher, and one of which was then selected by two other researchers (one of whom was a Black woman) that was believed to best fit into their respective category. The decision behind the selection of each clip is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Positive Stereotypical Portrayals

The clip that was selected as an example of a positive stereotypical character is a two-minute clip from *Good Girls* (Paulhaus & Pariset, 2018) featuring the character of Ruby. This clip involves Ruby being asked by her boss to apologize to a teenager who burned his hand on a dish during her shift as a waiter at a diner.

This clip presents a fairly stereotypical portrayal of a Black woman which exemplifies the strong Black woman. Ruby is strong and ready to talk down the disrespectful White boy and mother in front of her, a trait that on the surface appears to be favorable, but that forces her in this clip to show no weakness. She is sassy and ready to fight, but does not get full ownership of her emotions. Admittedly, the White characters are being portrayed as clearly being in the wrong, but such a cartoonish instance of White entitlement being put down by a Black woman without any further context feels strangely stereotypical. Within the overall show, the character does find growth and an identity outside of stereotypes (Davis, 2018) but this stand-alone clip does portray a more stereotypical portrayal of a Black woman, albeit a positive one. Additionally, Ruby's position as a waiter creates a dichotomy between this clip and the clip selected for the Positive Astereotypical category, since she essentially has no power in this clip.

Negative Stereotypical Portrayals

The clip selected for the negative stereotypical portrayal is from the Canadian TV show *Letterkenny* (Bennett & Tierney, 2018) featuring the character of Gail. This clip occurs at a Christmas party appearing to be amongst friends, where the host, Wayne, gives Gail a present: a framed photo of his Uncle Eddy with whom Gail had had sexual relations with.

This excerpt shows Gail off as inappropriately sexual for the situation, making the other characters visibly uncomfortable at her behavior. This is an easily identifiable example of the Jezebel stereotype in motion. Throughout the series, Gail's entire character can be described in two words: horny and angry, a perfect stereotypical roadmap. Although not fully visible in the clip, her character is easily contrasted to the more "desirable" White women who are equally as interested in sex but are not shamed or made the butt of the joke for it. Through the blatant

uncomfortable sexual advances Gail makes, she ergo becomes a stereotypical, explicitly undesirable Jezebel.

Positive Astereotypical Portrayals

How To Get Away With Murder is often discussed as a primary example of good representation for Black women that creates a holistic view of Blackness within a high-stakes, primarily White, environment (Chukwu, 2016). Therefore, it was inevitable that one of the clips selected would be from this series. The excerpt (Davis et al., 2014) features Annalise Keating expertly manipulating several job interviews to ensure that she gets the best offer by pitting each law firm against one another. This portrayal demonstrates a cool, firm, highly intelligent Black woman that does not fit into any stereotypical box and instead takes complete control of every situation she is in. Annalise, in this video, is perfectly calm and capable of handling each situation she is in, slightly modifying her attitude based on who she is being interviewed by to demonstrate to the audience that she is not completely stone-cold, simply in control of her emotions and aware of her value.

Negative Astereotypical Portrayals

Similar to *How To Get Away With Murder*, *Abbott Elementary* (Brunson et. al., 2021) has frequently been praised for its diverse Black female characters. The series, which focuses on Janine Teagues, demonstrates her experience as a fairly new teacher at an underfunded elementary school in Philadelphia. This particular clip demonstrates her learning that a student has requested to be transferred to her class away from an older, more experienced teacher and immediately reacting with a haughty, overconfident attitude. This obvious insult, however, doesn't stray into any stereotypical area, since Quinta Brunson (the actress portraying Janine) assures that the character's reaction is visibly born from a relatable human insecurity, rather than

a defect in her personality. Regardless, the attitude is still unflattering and insulting to Melissa, the senior teacher, and Janine's behavior is obviously framed in a negative light although she remains an astereotypical character.

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to watch one of the four clips preselected by researchers that were either Stereotypical or Astereotypical and Positive or Negative, thereby creating a 2 by 2 between-subjects design. After watching the clip, participants were asked three comprehension check questions to determine whether or not they had paid enough attention to the video to be included in the final collection of data. Next, participants were asked whether or not they had viewed the specific episode or show from where the clip had come from, and were asked to name the show if they could. Then, they responded to an Invisibility scale, the main dependent variable of this study, to determine how visible they felt as Black women after watching the clip. After this, participants were asked to rate their current mood, and then had to respond to a measure to test how connected they felt to the characters they saw (Parasocial Contact). To account for the experience of watching the clip, participants were asked to respond to two measures asking about Clip Enjoyment and Video Transportation (how immersed they felt in the world of the clip). Finally, to add validity to researcher ratings of the clips, participants were asked to rate the Valence, Stereotypicality, and Typicality of the Black women in the clips.

Measures

Comprehension Questions and Previously Watched Measure

A comprehension and attention check was included in this study ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 0.29$, $\alpha = 0.10$) to determine which participants would be included in the study. Three simple questions were designed by the researchers for each clip to test how much attention participants had paid to

the video. Each clip had a different set of questions asking participants simple questions about the setting, emotions, and reactions seen in the video. Participants were also asked if they had seen the specific episode or entire TV show that the video came from (M = 0.22, SD = 0.37, α = 0.76), and were asked to try to name what TV show it came from.

Invisibility in Television

To assess how invisible Black women felt after having watched each clip, they were asked to complete a measure developed by Remedios & Snyder (2018). This is a short, 3-question measure that asked respondents how visible and represented they felt after having watched the assigned clip (M = 4.88, SD = 1.52, α = 0.81). The responses were rated with a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The first question had to be reverse-coded so that for all the questions, a higher score (7 or "Strongly Agree") indicated a stronger feeling of visibility.

Parasocial Contact

To assess how much participants are able to relate and get attached to the Black female character portrayed (Pietri, *et al.*, 2021), the Parasocial Contact scale was utilized (M = 3.51, SD = 1.08, α = 0.94). This scale includes eight questions with 5-point answer scales ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" ergo indicating that the higher one scored, the more connected they felt to the character in the clip. The questions ask participants to contextualize how they liked the character in the clip; whether they would be willing to read about a similar character, or whether they would like to have a similar character as a friend for instance.

Mood and Clip Enjoyment

Several additional questions were asked to account for the mood of participants while watching the clip and asking to recount their enjoyment of the video they had watched. The Mood Measure ($M = 70.16$, $SD = 21.60$) was adapted from Rijsbergen's 2012 study (Rijsbergen et al., 2012) and Clip Enjoyment ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 0.79$, $\alpha = 0.82$) was a continuation of Pietri's Parasocial Contact measure (Pietri, et al., 2021). Participants rated their mood on a scale from 0 to 100, and then rated how much they enjoyed the clip, how scary they found it, how informative they found it, and how entertaining it was with a 5-point scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

Video Transportation

Similarly to the previous measure, the Video Transportation (Williams et al., 2010) measure was incorporated into this study to test the enjoyment and quality of the video shown to participants ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.95$, $\alpha = 0.50$). This measure had five questions asking participants how transported they were by the clip, how mentally involved they were, and how relevant the story was to their life, to give a few examples. Two questions had to be reverse-coded in Rstudio, and after the scores to all five questions were then averaged to give a final score.

Stereotypicality, Typicality, and Valence Check

Considering the selected clips had only been approved by members of the research team, two measures asking participants to rate the stereotypicality (stereotypical vs. astereotypical) and the valence (positive vs. negative) of the clip they watched. These measures were created by adapting a measure from Masser (Masser et al., 2010). This created more reliability in the placement of each clip, and could account for any possible findings that do not align with the stated hypothesis. Upon analysis of the Stereotypicality measure, the scale appeared to be asking

two separate things: the Stereotypicality of the Black female character in regards to American stereotypes, and how Typical the Black female character was compared to the Black women the participants personally knew or knew of. For the Stereotypicality measure ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.42$), participants were asked one question asking "Within American culture, how stereotypical of Black women would you consider her to be?". The two other questions that were initially a part of the Stereotypicality measure (Masser et al., 2010) asked about the Typicality of the Black characters from the participants' individual experiences involving other Black women ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.61$, $\alpha = 0.92$). Participants then answered each question with a 7-point scale ranging from "Very Atypical" to "Strongly Typical." Similarly for the Valence measure ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 1.67$, $\alpha = 0.90$), there were three questions with answers ranging from "Very Negative" to "Very Positive" on a 7-point scale.

Analysis

To analyze the data gained from this study, a linear model was used with RStudio (RStudio Team, 2020).

Results

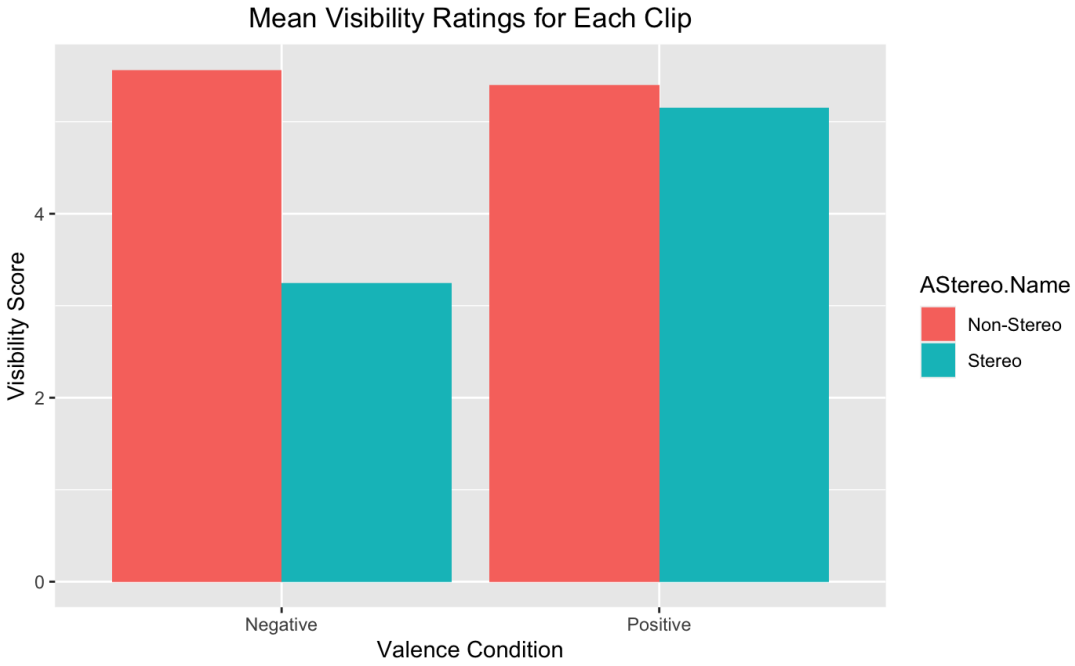
Invisibility Measure

The mean Invisibility scores for each clip were: for the Negative Stereotypical clip M = 3.25, for the Negative Astereotypical clip M = 5.15, for the Positive Stereotypical clip M = 5.40, and for the Positive Astereotypical clip M = 5.57 (Figure 1). Therefore, for this measure, the Negative Stereotypical clip resulted in lower Visibility than the other clips.

Model 1 (Table 1) utilized a linear regression model and found a strong correlation with Valence, Stereotypicality, and participant Visibility, with an intercept of 4.84 ($p < .001$). Valence demonstrated a significant impact on Visibility ($b = 0.87$, $t(472) = 7.84$, $p < .001$) so that as the clip went from negative to positive, Visibility scores increased by 0.87 points. Astereotypicality showed a similar significant result ($b = 1.28$, $t(472) = 11.50$, $p < .001$) so that as a clip went from stereotypical to astereotypical, Visibility increased by 1.28 points.

The interaction between Astereotypicality and Valence was significant ($b = -2.08$, $t(472) = -9.32$, $p < .001$). To understand this interaction, we calculated the simple effects of Valence within the Stereotypical and Astereotypical clips. Within the Stereotypical clips, Valence had a significant positive impact on Visibility ($b = 1.91$, $t(472) = 11.88$, $p < .001$). Within the Astereotypical clips, Valence had no impact on Visibility ($p = 0.285$). Ergo, we can conclude that Valence only mattered within the Stereotypical clips.

Figure 1:



To ensure the validity of these findings, several additional analyses were performed to control for the following variables: Mood, Previously Watched, Clip Enjoyment, and Transportation.

Mood Measure

In Model 2 (Table 1) we ran a linear regression predicting Visibility with Valence, Astereotypicality, their interaction, and the Mood Measure. The intercept, which is the mean Visibility score across all conditions at Mood = 0, was 3.74 and was significantly greater than 0 ($p < .001$). The Valence of the clip was also a significant predictor of Visibility ($b = 0.81$, $t(471) = 7.51$, $p < .001$). This means that as the clip increased in Valence from negative to positive, participant Visibility scores rose by 0.81. Astereotypicality was also a significant predictor for Visibility ($b = 1.19$, $t(471) = 11.02$, $p < .001$) so that as a clip went from stereotypical to astereotypical, viewer Visibility rose by 1.19 points. The interaction between these two factors

(Valence and Astereotypicality) was also a significant predictor of Visibility (b = -1.91, t(471) = -8.82, p < .001). However, as we found in the analysis for the Invisibility measure, Valence was found to be important for stereotypical but not astereotypical clips. Therefore, primary effects remained significant when accounting for Mood. Finally, Mood was a significant predictor of Visibility (b = 0.02, t(471) = 6.23, p < .001) so that as participants' Mood increased by 1 point, their Visibility scores increased 0.02 points.

Previously Watched

Model 5 (Table 1) observed the impact of Valence, Stereotypicality, and the Previously Watched measure on Visibility with a linear regression model. An intercept was found with a value of 4.73 (p < .001). Valence was a significant predictor of Visibility in this model (b = 0.80, t(471) = 7.15, p < .001) so that as the video went from negative to positive, Visibility scores increased by 0.80 points. Astereotypicality was also a significant predictor for Visibility (b = 1.22, t(471) = 10.92, p < .001), meaning that as a clip went from stereotypical to astereotypical, Visibility increased by 1.22 points. The interaction between Valence and Astereotypicality was also significant (b = -1.95, t(471) = -8.72, p < .001), although we must also consider the findings of the Simple Effects, which found that Valence was only significant for Stereotypical clips. These results do however maintain the primary effects when controlling for the Previously Watched measure. Whether or not participants had watched the show or episode from which the clip came from was also significantly correlated with Visibility (b = 0.54, t(471) = 3.45, p < .001) which demonstrates that Previously Watched status did not change the importance of the central interaction. The more participants had been exposed to the piece of media the clip came from, the more their Visibility increased by 0.54 points.

Clip Enjoyment

Clip Enjoyment was added to the model in Model 4 as a moderator through a linear regression analysis. This model observed the impacts of Valence, Astereotypicality, and Clip Enjoyment on Visibility, and had a significant intercept of 2.13 ($p < .001$). Valence did not have a significant impact on Visibility in this model ($p = 0.19$). Astereotypicality did have a significant impact on Visibility however ($b = 0.74$, $t(471) = 6.37$, $p < .001$) so that as the clip went from stereotypical to astereotypical, Visibility increased by 0.74 points. Additionally, the interaction between Astereotypicality and Valence was significant ($b = -1.16$, $t(471) = -5.20$, $p < .001$), although it should be taken into account that the results of the simple effects analysis demonstrated that Valence was only significant for Stereotypical clips. Clip Enjoyment was found to be significantly positively associated with Visibility ($b = 0.70$, $t(471) = 9.89$, $p < .001$) so that as participants rated higher enjoyment for the clip, their Visibility increased by 0.70 points. Ergo, although Clip Enjoyment detracted from the impact of Valence, Astereotypicality remained important and the interaction between Astereotypicality and Valence were still significant.

Transportation

To test the transportation of the video clip as an additional variable with Valence and Astereotypicality to Visibility, a linear regression analysis was used (Model 3, Table 1). The intercept was significant, at 2.66 points ($p <.001$). Valence was significantly correlated with Visibility ($b = 0.57$, $t(471) = 5.00$, $p < .001$) so that as the clip went from negative to positive, Visibility scores increased by 0.57 points. Astereotypicality also had a significant impact on Visibility ($b = 1.21$, $t(471) = 11.43$, $p < .001$) so that as a clip went from stereotypical to astereotypical, Visibility increased by 1.21 points. The interaction between Valence and

Astereotypicality was also significant (b = -1.66, $t(471)$ = -7.54, $p < .001$), although it should be noted that according to the simple effects, Valence was only important for Stereotypical clips. Regardless, the primary effect was maintained when accounting for Transportation.

Transportation itself was found to have a significant positive impact on Visibility (b = 0.44, $t(471)$ = 7.18, $p < .001$), meaning that as participants felt more transported by the video, their Visibility scores increased by 0.44 points.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	4.84***	3.74***	2.66***	2.13***	4.73***
Valence	0.87***	0.81***	0.57***	0.16	0.80***
Astereotypicality	1.28***	1.19***	1.21***	0.74***	1.22***
Valence*Astereotypicality	-2.08***	-1.91***	-1.66***	-1.16***	-1.95***
Mood	-	0.02***	-	-	-
Transportation	-	-	0.44***	-	-
Clip Enjoyment	-	-	-	0.70***	-
Previously Watched	-	-	-	-	0.54***

Table 1. Models predicting Visibility scores by beta values. For Model 5 (Previously Watched), there is an interaction between Previously Watched and the other 3 predictors (Valence, Astereotypicality, and their interaction). This means that the values show for the 3 predictors are simple effects for participants that have not previously seen the show. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Parasocial Measure

The mean Parasocial contact scores for each clip were, for the Negative Stereotypical clip, M = 2.25, for the Negative Astereotypical clip, M = 4.08, for the Positive Stereotypical clip, M = 3.92, and for the Positive Astereotypical clip, M = 3.71 (Figure 2). This demonstrated that

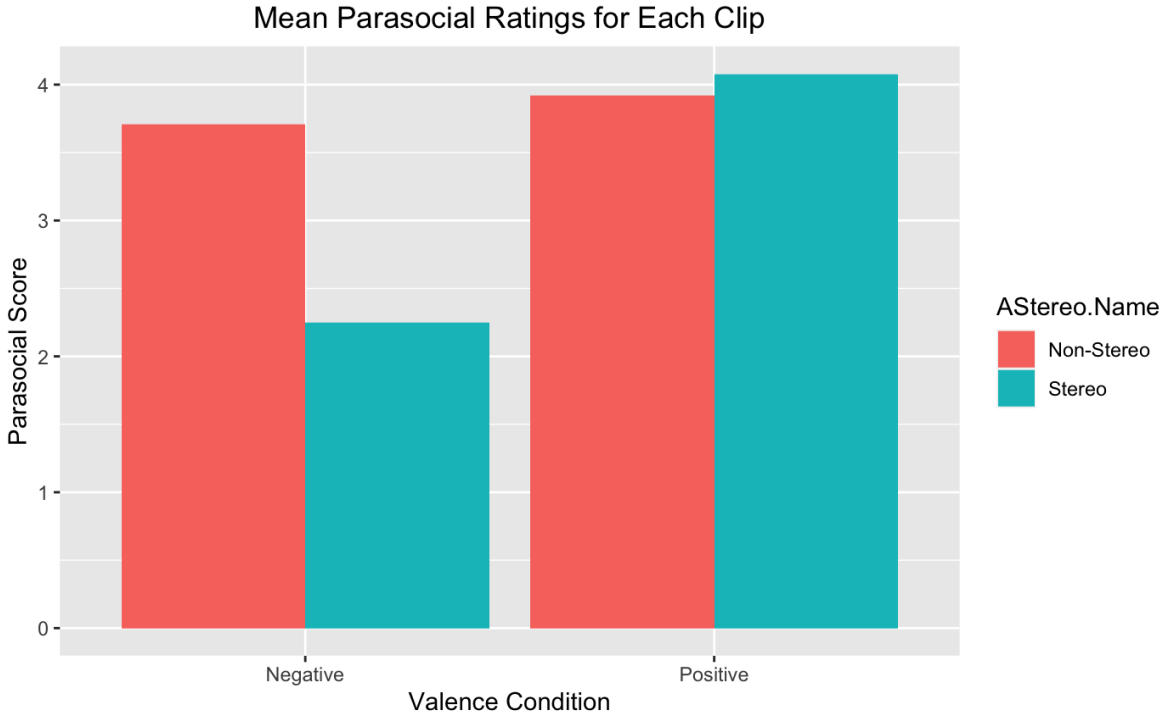
the Black character from the Negative Stereotypical clip inspired the least amount of connection in participants.

Model 1 (Table 2) observed the impact that Valence and Astereotypicality had on Parasocial Contact using a linear regression model. The intercept was significant, at 3.49 points (p <.001). Valence was positively correlated with Parasocial Contact (b = 1.02, t(472) = 13.53, p < .001) so that as Valence went from negative to positive, participant scores for Parasocial Contact increased by 1.02 points. Astereotypicality was also positively correlated with Parasocial Contact (b = 0.65, t(472) = 8.63, p < .001) meaning that as the clip went from stereotypical to astereotypical, participant scores for Parasocial Contact rose by 0.65 points.

The interaction between Valence and Astereotypicality was also significant (b = -1.62, t(472) = -10.70, p < .001). To understand this interaction, an analysis of the simple effects was run to observe the effect of Valence within the Stereotypical and the Astereotypical clips. For solely the Stereotypical clips, Valence had a significant positive relationship with Parasocial Contact (b = 1.83, t(472) = 16.78, p < .001). For the Astereotypical clips, Valence also had a significant impact on Parasocial Contact (b = 0.21, t(472) = 2.05, p = 0.04), although it was less significant than for Stereotypical clips. This demonstrates that for Parasocial Contact, unlike for Invisibility, the Valence of the clips mattered for both the Stereotypical and Astereotypical clips.

A followup analysis of Simple Effects was performed to observe the impact of Stereotypicality within the Positive and Negative clips. Within the Positive clips, Stereotypicality did not have a significant impact on Parasocial Contact (p = 0.145). For the Negative clips, however, Stereotypicality did have a significant impact on Parasocial Contact (b = 1.46, t(472) = 13.68, p = 0.04). Ergo, for Parasocial Contact, the Stereotypicality of a clip only mattered for Negative clips.

Figure 2:



To ensure the validity of these findings, several additional analyses were performed to control for the following variables: Mood, Previously Watched, Clip Enjoyment, and Transportation.

Mood Measure

Model 2 (Table 2) observed the impact of Valence, Astereotypicality, and Mood on Parasocial Contact through a linear regression model. The intercept for this model was significant at 3.73 points ($p < .001$). Valence was found to be significant ($b = 1.02$, $t(471) = 13.53$, $p < .001$) so that as Valence went from negative to positive, Parasocial Contact scores increased by 1.02 points. Astereotypicality was also significant ($b = 0.65$, $t(471) = 8.60$, $p < .001$) so that as the clips went from stereotypical to astereotypical, Parasocial Contact scores increased by 0.65 points. The interaction between Valence and Astereotypicality also had a significant impact on Parasocial Contact ($b = -1.59$, $t(471) = -10.54$, $p < .001$), although it should

be noted that, as the simple effect results demonstrated, the stereotypicality of a clip only mattered for clips with a negative Valence. Mood was not significant in this model, however (p = 0.057), and therefore had no impact on Parasocial Contact scores. We can then conclude that the primary effects are maintained when accounting for Mood.

Previously Watched

Model 5 (Table 2) used a linear regression model to observe the effects of Valence, Astereotypicality, and the Previously Watched measure on Parasocial Contact. This model found an intercept score of 3.40 ($p < .001$). Valence was found to have a significant effect on Parasocial Contact ($b = 0.96$, $t(471) = 12.77$, $p < .001$), so that as Valence went from negative to positive, the scores of the Parasocial Contact measure increased by 0.96 points. Astereotypicality also had a significant positive effect on Parasocial Contact ($b = 0.60$, $t(471) = 7.99$, $p < .001$) meaning that as a clip went from Stereotypical to Astereotypical, Parasocial Contact scores increased by 0.60 points. The interaction between Valence and Astereotypicality was also significant (b = -1.51, $t(471) = -10.04$, $p < .001$), although it should be noted that stereotypicality was found to only matter for clips with a negative Valence. These findings do demonstrate, though, that primary effects were maintained when accounting for the Previously Watched measure. Finally, the Previously Watched measure showed a significant impact on Parasocial Contact scores (b = 0.43, $t(471) = 4.11$, $p < .001$). This signifies that the more participants had seen of the piece of media from which the clip came from led to their Parasocial Contact scores increasing by 0.43 points.

Clip Enjoyment

To account for the impact of clip enjoyment on Parasocial Contact scores, Model 4 used a linear regression to observe the impact of Valence, Astereotypicality, and the Clip Enjoyment

measure on Parasocial Contact. This model had a significant intercept of 0.56 points ($p < .001$). Valence was significantly correlated with Parasocial Contact ($b = 0.25$, $t(471) = 3.65$, $p < .001$) meaning that as a clip went from negative to positive, Parasocial Contact scores rose by 0.25 points. Astereotypicality was not significantly associated with Parasocial Contact ($p = 0.346$). There was a significant interaction between Valence and Astereotypicality ($b = -0.62$, $t(471) = -5.01$, $p < .001$), while noting the finding that stereotypicality was only significant for clips with negative Valence. Clip Enjoyment had a significant impact on Parasocial Contact ($b = 0.76$, $t(471) = 19.19$, $p < .001$) meaning that as participants enjoyed the clip more, they were able to connect more with the character featured in it, which led to an increase in their Parasocial Contact score by 0.76 points. These findings contrast with the ones from the Invisibility measure's findings for Clip Enjoyment, which showed that Valence was not significantly correlated with Visibility in this model (Table 1). In this Model (Table 2), however, the opposite findings are shown, with Valence being significant, but Astereotypicality not being significantly correlated with Parasocial Contact. There was still, for both these models, a significant interaction between Valence and Astereotypicality.

Transportation

Model 3 (Table 2) used a linear regression model to observe the impact of Valence, Astereotypicality, and Transportation on Parasocial Contact. The intercept for this model was 1.76 ($p < .001$) which was significant. Valence had a significant impact on Parasocial Contact ($b = 0.78$, $t(471) = 10.34$, $p < .001$) showing that as the clips went from negative to positive, Parasocial Contact scores increased by 0.78 points. Astereotypicality was also significant ($b = 0.60$, $t(471) = 8.49$, $p < .001$) so that as clips went from stereotypical to astereotypical, Parasocial Contact increased by 0.60 points. The interaction between these two variables (Valence and

Astereotypicality) was also significant (b = -1.28, $t(471)$ = -8.80, p < .001). Transportation was found to have a significant positive impact on Parasocial Contact scores (b = 0.35, $t(471)$ = 8.55, p < .001). This means that the more participants felt transported by the clip, the more they were able to connect with the Black female character, thereby increasing their Parasocial Contact score by 0.35 points. Therefore, when accounting for Transportation the primary effects of Valence and Astereotypicality were maintained.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	3.49***	3.73***	1.76***	0.56***	3.40***
Valence	1.02***	1.02***	0.78***	0.25**	0.96***
Astereotypicality	0.65***	0.65***	0.60***	0.06	0.60***
Valence*Astereotypicality	-1.62***	-1.59***	-1.28***	-0.62***	-1.51***
Mood	-	-0.003	-	-	-
Transportation	-	-	0.35***	-	-
Clip Enjoyment	-	-	-	0.76***	-
Previously Watched	-	-	-	-	0.43***

Table 2. Models predicting Parasocial Contact scores by beta values. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Participant Ratings

To add validity to the categories researchers had placed clips in (Positive vs Negative, and Stereotypical vs Astereotypical), participants were asked to rate the Stereotypicality, Typicality, and Valence of the clip they had watched. Overall, participants tended to rate clips

differently from what researchers had. For Valence, the Negative Stereotypical clip was rated as more negative than the others (*M*(Negative Stereotypical) = 2.71, *M*(Negative Astereotypical) = 4.50, *M*(Positive Stereotypical) = 5.08, *M*(Positive Astereotypical) = 5.44) (Table 3). Stereotypicality showed similar differences, although this time the Positive Stereotypical clip was rated as more typical of American stereotypes of Black women than the other depictions (*M*(Negative Stereotypical) = 3.54, *M*(Negative Astereotypical) = 3.94, *M*(Positive Stereotypical) = 4.79, *M*(Positive Astereotypical) = 3.78) (Table 4). Finally, Typicality showed a similar result to Valence, with the Negative Stereotypical clip being rated as far less Typical of Black women in the participants' personal experience than the other portrayals (*M*(Negative Stereotypical) = 2.39, *M*(Negative Astereotypical) = 4.44, *M*(Positive Stereotypical) = 4.74, *M*(Positive Astereotypical) = 4.42) (Table 5). From these results, it appears that participants noted differences in the ways each clip portrayed Black women, although the results do tend to recognize one particular clip as an outlier for each category. For instance, the Negative Stereotypical clip had markedly lower scores for Valence and Typicality, whereas the Positive Stereotypical clip had an average score that was higher than the other clips' in terms of Stereotypicality.

	Negative	Positive
Stereotypical	2.71	5.08
Astereotypical	4.50	5.44

Table 3: Mean values of participant ratings of Valence for each clip

	Negative	Positive
Stereotypical	3.54	4.79
Astereotypical	3.94	3.78

Table 4: Mean values of participant ratings of Stereotypicality for each clip

	Negative	Positive
Stereotypical	2.39	4.74
Astereotypical	4.44	4.42

Table 5: Mean values of participant ratings of Typicality for each clip

General Discussion

The initial goal of this study was to observe the impact that different portrayals of Black women had on Black women's feelings of visibility and connection with these characters, with the belief that stereotypical portrayals would cause lowered visibility and less ability to connect. The results suggest that Negative, Stereotypical portrayals of Black women cause decreased feelings of visibility and connection. For Visibility, we found that Valence did not have an impact on feelings of Visibility for Astereotypical characters, but that there was a difference in how participants reacted to Negative and Positive Stereotypical portrayals of characters. For Parasocial Contact, Valence was found to impact all results, but the difference between Stereotypical and Astereotypical portrayals only mattered for characters with a negative Valence.

Given the control variables included throughout this study, we can eliminate several confounding variables including the enjoyability and quality of the clip, the participants' present mood at the time of completing the study, and the impact of prior knowledge of the piece of media being observed. For the Invisibility measure, most of these constructs showed a small effect on the participants' feelings of Visibility, but did not remove the impact of clip Valence and Stereotypicality. Clip Enjoyment appeared to be the exception to this rule, since Valence did not appear to have a significant effect on Visibility in this model (Table 1). The Parasocial Contact measure showed similar results, although for this variable participants' Mood had no impact on their Parasocial Contact scores (Table 2). Clip Enjoyment also nullified the impact of Astereotypicality on Parasocial Contact (Table 2).

Gathering participant responses in regards to the clips' Valence, Stereotypicality, and Typicality also proved to be useful, since it allowed researchers to compare the initial categorizations for each clip with the categorizations respondents placed them in. This

knowledge could be useful for future iterations of this research, and could push for the selection of more markedly different clips. Most interestingly were the participant ratings for Typicality that indicated that the Negative Stereotypical clip was perceived as not being typical of Black women. Despite these ratings and the acknowledgement that this portrayal was unlike any Black woman they knew, the participants that watched that clip still had lower Invisibility and Parasocial Contact scores than the participants in every other condition.

From these results, we conclude that negative, stereotypical portrayals of Black women have a negative impact on their visibility. The findings of this study fit well with the current findings in this area of research, contrasting with Steinke's (2017) research focusing on the positive implications of counterstereotypical portrayals in media. Additionally, these findings compliment the findings of Pietri et al.'s 2021 study by supporting the positive impact of positive and astereotypical portrayals of Black women, juxtaposed by the negative repercussions of negative, stereotypical portrayals.

Limitations and Future Directions

There were several limitations in this study, the main one being the finding that participant ratings of clips (for Valence and Stereotypicality) did not match researcher ratings. This indicates that, due to clip selection having been executed solely by researchers, there is a possibility that the clips chosen were not truly representative of the categories they were placed into. Despite a consultant on this study having been a Black woman the other key researchers for this study were not, and assuming that the opinions of one person represent their entire group is a fallacy that should be rectified in future iterations of this study. The potential for error in clip selection and placement is compounded by the fact that there was only one clip per category (Valence by Stereotypicality). Had there been several videos chosen and placed into their

respective categories by a sample of Black women, this difference in ratings could have been minimized. Additionally, the responses to the Negative Stereotypical clip were so different from the responses to the other three clips that there is a possibility of said clip being an outlier.

Due to these weaknesses, future research should include more valid methods of selecting videos to be evaluated. For instance, conducting a pilot study asking Black women to rate the stereotypicality, typicality, and valence of a larger number of clips could help create more internal validity for this study. Another amendment would be the inclusion of Typicality as a measure utilized by researchers could also be valuable, since it allows for more subtleties in the ratings than solely asking participants to rate Stereotypicality. The presence of Typicality helps recognize that people do sometimes conform to stereotypes, and allows for the range of personalities and behaviors that actually exist in the world. It would be interesting to add several more moderating variables to account for how each clip made the participants feel rather than simply gathering general mood ratings. For instance, finding out if specific clips made participants angry or offended could help better explain the relationship between the clip categories and the participants' results. Finally, it would also be of interest to analyze the effects of a similar study design on other individuals with multiple marginalized identities, such as LGB individuals, trans individuals, and East Asian women, for instance. The results could vary due to their different statuses in American society, and could grant a more holistic view of the media impact of the intersectional invisibility hypothesis (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008).

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