THE HORRORS OF BEING SINGLE: AN INTRAPERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL PHENOMENON

By Sarah K. Adelson

The present research builds off of previous findings regarding the Fear of Being Single construct (FOBS) indicating that people with higher FOBS scores discriminate less between potential dating partners who show little or high responsiveness to being in a serious relationship. Previous research was expanded in the current study by incorporating interpersonal items to the FOBS scale, which previously contained only intrapersonally focused items. Participants were primed with either unconditional social acceptance or a control using a written visualization task, with the expectation that higher social acceptance will buffer the effect of FOBS (i.e., socially affirmed participants will show more discrimination between targets compared to the control condition). Heterosexual, undergraduate women (N = 127) completed a revised version of the FOBS scale as part of a prescreening process. Participants were randomly assigned to either a high acceptance visualization condition or a control visualization condition and then randomly assigned to read a dating profile depicting either a high responsiveness or a low responsiveness target. Specific predictions include a main effect of responsiveness condition among low FOBS participants only, such that more romantic interest will be shown in the high responsiveness profile than in the low responsiveness profile because participants will not face anxiety at the thought being single rather than date an unresponsive partner. Also predicted was an interaction of responsiveness and visualization condition for high FOBS participants only, such that less romantic interest will be shown for both profiles in the unconditional acceptance condition, with especially low romantic interest shown in the unconditional acceptance/high responsiveness profile condition, due to a buffering effect of the unconditional acceptance prime. Finally, a greater amount of variance was expected to be explained of these relationships when using the revised FOBS scale compared to the original FOBS scale, because the revised scale included socially-relevant items and because FOBS is conceptualized as a socially-relevant fear. Results show that profile manipulation significantly influenced romantic interest (i.e., less romantic interest was shown for the low responsiveness profile than the high responsiveness profile). The profile manipulation significantly interacted with visualization manipulation: less romantic interest was shown for the profile in the unconditional visualization/ high responsiveness profile condition than in the control visualization/high responsiveness profile condition, more romantic interest was shown in the control visualization/high responsiveness profile manipulation than in the control visualization/low responsiveness profile manipulation, and more romantic interest was shown for the profile in the unconditional visualization/high responsiveness profile condition than in the unconditional visualization/low responsiveness profile condition. Additional findings and implications are discussed.

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by

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The Fear of Being Single is an important psychological construct defined as "concern, anxiety, or distress regarding the current or prospective experience of being without a romantic partner" (Spielmann et al., 2013, p. 2). Past research has documented anxieties associated with being single. For instance, Adamczyk and Bookwala (2013) found that single people scored higher on an attachment anxiety dimension (described as a worry of being rejected or unloved). Similarly, Schachner, Shaver, and Gillath (2008) found that single people, compared to coupled people (i.e., participants reporting involvement in a romantic relationship), scored significantly higher on attachment anxiety as well as anxiety in general. Despite these findings, a quantitative measure of this specific anxiety associated with being single had not yet been created.

What is Fear of Being Single?

This lack of a quantitative measure was addressed in a multi-study paper from Spielmann and colleagues (2013), who questioned whether fear of being without a romantic partner would lead to lowered relationship standards ("settling for less"). The researchers created and refined a scale to measure the fear of being single (Fear of Being Single; FOBS). In study 1, 152 adults responded openly to the question of what they do or do not fear about being single or without a romantic partner. Responses were then coded for common themes, which informed the creation of an initial scale. Based on

exploratory factor analysis, six items were retained from the original set. Additional factor analysis confirmed that all FOBS scale items loaded on one factor and did not overlap with the second factor, which contained items tapping into romantic anxious attachment. This final 6-item FOBS scale was used in subsequent studies and included items such as "I feel anxious when I think about being single forever," "If I end up alone in life, I will probably feel like there is something wrong with me," and "As I get older, it will get harder and harder to find someone." However, the items included on Spielmann et al.'s scale *do not account for the effect of outward social pressures to be in a romantic relationship.* The items of the scale capture intrapersonal concerns related to "missing a window" to find a relationship for oneself, or worries about not finding a relationship, as opposed to interpersonal concerns such as societal pressure or the pressure of family and friends to be in a romantic relationship. The lack of consideration of possible outward pressures as an antecedent of a fear of being single is a conceptual limitation of Spielmann et al.'s work and the goal of my study was to address this limitation.

Conceptual Distinctions of the Fear of Being Single Construct

The Fear of Being Single may be connected to other constructs. The need or desire for the company of others has been studied by Baumeister and Leary (1995) as well as by Schachter (1959). This "need to belong" is a powerful drive, which manifests as individuals' desire to seek out interpersonal relationships with others, desire to maintain bonds even when formation was based on experimental chance, and to not

dissolve bonds even when they are harmful as in the case of abuse (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Schachter (1959) discussed the "need for affiliation", particularly as a way of coping with anxiety. When participants were led to anticipate an electric shock (though none was actually given), those who were told the shock would be intensely painful more strongly desired the company of others while waiting than did those who were told the shock would be no more than a tingle (p. 18). In a follow-up experiment by Schachter (1959), all participants were told the shock would be very painful, and were given the option to wait with others. The desire to wait with others was stronger when participants were told the others were also waiting for a shock. When told that the others were waiting for reasons unrelated to the experiment, participants showed less of a preference for waiting with them compared to waiting alone (p. 24). Therefore, social interaction was sought out as a form of anxiety-reducing coping strategy whose mechanism would be to alleviate or buffer the anxiety experienced due to the impending electric shock.

There is research to support the idea that being in a romantic relationship has benefits over being single. Subjective well-being increases as relationship commitment increases (for example when a dating relationship becomes more serious, or a cohabitating relationship becomes a marriage), and, longitudinally, increased commitment to a romantic partner positively predicted an increase in well-being over five years (Kamp Dush & Amato, 2005). Being in a committed relationship predicts better outcomes than being single. Zasloff and Kidd (1994) categorized women into groups based on whether or not they owned a pet and whether or not they lived with other

people. Compared to other women in the sample, those who both lived alone and did not own a pet were most lonely. Rokach (1998) even describes the act of pursuing relationship after relationship as a possible way to avoid loneliness. However, even though the fear of being single seems to be related to other constructs, this concept of Fear of Being Single is distinct from attachment style, relationship-contingent self-esteem, loneliness, and the need to belong. The fear of being single is proposed to be a facet of any romantic relationship, and can be assessed much like other constructs such as relationship satisfaction or quality (Spielmann et al., 2013).

Similarly, Spielmann et al.'s work suggests that there is an internal drive to be in a relationship to some degree, and that this drive manifests seemingly for the sake of not being alone rather than as a push for being with someone. They argue that to this purpose, people driven by this kind of fear will "settle for less" in order to acquire a coupled relationship status. The drive for a relationship in this case is not necessarily activated in order to receive the benefits of the relationship, but may be a strategy to avoid remaining single. A committed relationship, as addressed by the scale items of the original FOBS scale, may also be pursued in order to ease the access to other goals, such as having or raising children. The existing scale also implies in its phrasing the belief that after a certain age in life, finding a new relationship is impossible, thus a relationship must be found before it is too late. Most importantly, the relation of this fear to a social realm is not specific and is mostly reduced to evolutionary theories of the need for social connectedness. There is no mention of social pressures that an individual feels as a result of being single, especially social pressures that push towards being in a relationship.

Pressures from friends and family members, as well as general societal pressures almost certainly affect the experience of being single, and would influence any discomfort or fear of being single. Though the research of Spielmann et al. has successfully measured the fear of being single with individual-focused items, expanding the scale to include social- or interpersonally-focused items would more fully capture the underlying processes.

What Does the Fear of Being Single Predict?

Following the creation of the FOBS scale, studies conducted by Spielmann et al. (2013) revealed that individuals with high fear of being single (at least one standard deviation above the mean of FOBS) showed differences on a variety of relationship-related dependent variables, compared to those who had low fear of being single (at least one standard deviation below the mean). In Study 2C (Spielmann et al., 2013), participants, who were currently involved in a romantic relationship, reported *relationship satisfaction* (a global evaluation of the relationship) and *relationship dependence* (reliance on the relationship for self-identity) for their current relationship. A significant interaction was found between relationship satisfaction and FOBS scores on relationship dependence, while controlling for the length of current relationship. When relationship satisfaction was high, relationship dependence was also high, regardless of FOBS. However, when relationship satisfaction was low, those with higher FOBS were more dependent on this relationship than were their low FOBS counterparts. In other words, participants showing higher fear of being single showed higher dependence on

their current relationship regardless of whether the relationship was satisfying, which meets Spielmann et al.'s definition of settling for less.

In Study 3 (Spielmann et al., 2013), participants in dating relationships first completed the FOBS scale, attachment style questionnaire, and relationship satisfaction subscale from the Investment Model Scale, and were given the option to complete weekly follow-up questionnaires tracking relationship status. Among participants who reported breaking up with their partner during the following weeks, those with higher FOBS were marginally less likely to have initiated the breakup, regardless of relationship satisfaction, while low FOBS participants were more likely to report initiating the breakup in low satisfying relationships. Worded differently, participants with high FOBS were equally unlikely to initiate a breakup whether or not the relationship was satisfying, while participants with low FOBS were just as unlikely to initiate a breakup for a highly satisfying relationship, but more likely to initiate the breakup of a lowly satisfying relationship. This is further indication that people with high FOBS will "settle for less" and not attempt to break up unsatisfying relationships.

In Study 5 (Spielmann et al., 2013), single participants rated a dating profile consisting of an attractive picture and "About Me" section that described the target with either low or high responsiveness. The *high responsiveness target* included a description such as "I figure the most important thing is that we're there for each other, no b.s." while the *low responsiveness target* included statements like "I love what I do, so I need someone who respects that and is willing to take the back seat when necessary" (Spielmann et. al., 2013, p. 14). Participants saw one of these ostensibly real dating

profiles (which had actually been created by the authors) and rated the perceived responsiveness, attractiveness, and romantic interest in the target, as well as expected romantic success with the target. While participants who scored low on fear of being single rated themselves as being more romantically interested in the highly responsive target than the non-responsive target (high discrimination), participants who scored high on fear of being single showed equally high romantic interest in both targets (low discrimination). It is interesting to note that all participants recognized lower anticipated romantic success with the low responsiveness profile, but high FOBS participants nonetheless expressed higher romantic interest in this potential partner.

All of Spielmann et al.'s studies indicate that experiencing higher fear of being single affects relationship choices (lowering standards or settling for less), whether by not initiating a breakup in a low satisfying relationship or by expressing high romantic interest to lowly responsive targets. Still, none of these studies involves consideration of the social environment outside of the individual or couple, even though past research has shown the strong influence of social expectations and socially held beliefs on the experience of being single. There is also little discussion of how the Fear of Being Single may itself be affected by external factors.

Interpersonal and Social Factors

While individual experiences as well as experiences within a couple are valid and important, it is impossible to divorce them from outward pressures. These pressures may come in the form of societal pressure to marry (DePaulo & Morris, 2005) or stereotypes

that are held against singles (Greitemeyer, 2009). The influence of these pressures on people with high fear of being single would affect both single and partnered individuals. This assumption was supported by Spielmann et al.'s (2013) findings that both single and partnered people showed high fear of being single. The state of being single falls upon a spectrum of romantic and sexual relationship commitment that is commonly accepted in modern culture. DePaulo and Morris (2005) proposed the existence of the Ideology of Marriage and Family in the U.S. This ideology, which they argue is largely unchallenged by society, establishes heterosexual, monogamous married couples as normative, leaving people who are single labeled as "unmarried" and, by extension, less "normal." Both single and coupled individuals recognize messages sent by Western society about what it means to be single, both good and bad, though single people are more strongly affected because the messages are implied to apply to them directly. In particularly, messages may include that being in an exclusive, committed, sexual relationship, as in the case of partnered (though particularly married) people, is a valuable goal, unreachable by single people. This and other messages revolve around negative stereotypes about singles, which were systematically investigated by Greitemeyer (2009).

In Greitemeyer's 2009 study, participants read short descriptions of eight different targets. Targets varied in sex (male vs. female), age (25 years old vs. 40 years old), relationship status (single vs. partnered) and amount of time living in Munich (the city where the research took place; 2 years vs. 5 years). Participants rated the targets on the Big Five personality inventory (openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, and extroversion), physical attractiveness, life satisfaction, and self-esteem. Participants

then rated themselves on the same dimensions. Single targets were rated by the participants as less extraverted, less agreeable, less conscientious, more neurotic, less physically attractive, less satisfied with their lives, and as having less self-esteem than partnered targets. It is relevant to note that while all participants in Greitemeyer's study (who varied in relationship status) endorsed existing stereotypes about single people, none of the single participants rated themselves this way. Additionally, in subsequent studies, raters who were blind to the participants' relationship status could not accurately judge whether a participant was single based on an observation of a conversation between the target participant and other people.

Despite these stereotypes not holding true in reality, the knowledge of these stereotypes and the belief that others may hold the stereotypes about one's single status are present and powerful. These meta-stereotypes ("a person's beliefs regarding the stereotype that out-group members hold about his or her own group," Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998), may indeed be internalized by people who are single, resulting in potential behavioral and emotional effects. For instance, in the case of younger workers' meta-stereotypes of their older co-workers, increased consciousness of meta-stereotypes (stereotypes of the younger age group believed to be held by most older workers) was associated with increased negative mood. Increased negative mood was in turn associated with increased positive impression management behavior (Ryan, King, & Finkelstein, 2015). In the case of meta-stereotypes held by people who are single, increased consciousness of these meta-stereotypes may increase negative mood, or even amplify one's Fear of Being Single.

In addition to this research showing that stereotypes against singles do indeed exist, a group of studies from Morris, Sinclair, and DePaulo (2007) reveal that single people may be discriminated against simply because of their single status. Using both undergraduates as well as adults working in rental agencies as participants, a series of four studies placed the participant in the role of a landlord whose task was to choose the rental applicant of their choice. Applicant options varied among the four experiments, but all included the option of a married couple. In all but the first study, there was also a cohabitating couple. The rental application of the married couple was preferred in all four studies. This was compared to single individuals, non-dating friends, and cohabitating couples. Even when the choice was between a married couple who had been married for six months and a cohabitating couple who had been together for six years, participants still favored the married couple as rental tenants. In a fifth study, participants were presented with six scenarios in which a landlord had chosen an applicant from a non-stigmatized group over an applicant from a stigmatized group, even though the latter was offering to pay more rent than the former. Examples include a White person chosen over a Black person, a young person chosen over an elderly person, and a married person over a single person. Participants were more likely to agree with the decision in the scenario with discrimination against a single person than other scenarios, and judged discrimination against a single person as more legitimate than discrimination against a woman, an obese person, a Black person, or a gay/lesbian person.

Based on this work and the work of Greitemeyer (2009), it is clear that not only do people hold negative stereotypes about single people, but that discrimination against

singles is both present and even seen as legitimate. To parallel the arguments made by Ryan, King, and Finkelstein (2015), knowledge of stereotypes held against singles could lead to perceptions of judgment by others, and may result in behaviors to avoid single status. In other words, an individual's awareness of these occurrences may be felt as outward social pressures to seek a relationship.

Goals of the Proposed Study

The review of literature included in the previous section makes it clear that social concerns can affect the drive of both single people and non-single people to be involved in a romantic relationship (particularly, marriage). Because the fear of being single may be driven by more than just intrapersonal drives, adding interpersonally focused items to the original FOBS scale will better predict the impact of social factors on romantic behaviors (romantic interest discrimination in dating profiles for the present study). My study aimed to show that the fear of being single could be more accurately measured by including items capturing interpersonal/social concerns.

Prior to coming to the lab, participants filled out, as part of the Psychology Department online prescreening questionnaire, an extended version of the Fear of Being Single scale originally from Spielmann et al. (2013). The revised scale included the items from the original scale, a set of similar items also assessing intrapersonal concerns, and a set of items assessing interpersonal/social concerns (e.g., Being single for too long makes me seem undesirable to potential partners, I believe others think less of me for being single). During later analyses, the two sets of matched intrapersonal items were compared to the original intrapersonal set combined with the new interpersonal set. The addition of the intrapersonal concern items to match the number of interpersonal concern items was done to rule out increased scale reliability as a possible confound.

Social Acceptance

It was predicted that the fear of being single would be influenced by social concerns about being single. The impact of social factors can vary based on the characteristics of the social influence. Baldwin and Holmes (1987) found that women who read a sexually permissive piece of fiction rated less enjoyment in the piece after imagining older family members, compared to after imagining two people from their college campus. In a second study, participants listened to a list of random objects, then were primed to visualize one of three conditions: noncontingent social acceptance (acceptance no matter what), contingent social acceptance (acceptance contingent on performing well), and a control (imagery of walking outside). Following the visualization participants completed a recall task for the list of words presented earlier: a task which was intentionally difficult and which participants were likely to fail. A mirror was present for some participants, as it was thought to increase the effect of the visualization. Participants who were primed with contingent acceptance attributed their recall failure to themselves (rather than the situation) equally high whether or not a mirror was present. Participants who were primed with noncontingent acceptance were less likely to attribute failure to themselves when a mirror was present. Framed differently, when participants were made especially aware of an unconditionally accepting private audience, they were less likely to blame themselves for poor performance on an intentionally difficult task. Applying these findings to my study, priming participants with unconditional acceptance from a friend was expected to buffer the impact of the fear of being single on ratings of romantic interest. To prime participants with either *unconditional acceptance* or *control*

conditions, a modification of the procedure used by Baldwin and Holmes (1987) was utilized.

Indeed, prior work suggests that, among children, social acceptance is a significant predictor of lowered anxiety (Festa & Ginsburg, 2011). A study from Swift and Wright (2000) measured anxiety symptoms, depression symptoms, stressful life events, and social support among college-aged women. One type of social support, self-esteem support, was significantly associated with a woman showing few or no symptoms of anxiety or depression. Self-esteem support was measured by assessing "personal worth validation by others as well as the likelihood of making a positive self/other comparison" (Swift & Wright, 2000, p. 28). Self-esteem support also interacted with impact ratings of interpersonal events, meaning that among women who experienced more impactful interpersonal events, they were less likely to experience anxiety or depression if they perceived more self-esteem support. Thus, this validating form of social support buffered anxiety felt over interpersonal stressors, which in some cases may be stress over one's single status. It was expected that in my study, a buffering effect would appear in the unconditional acceptance condition, as acceptance would decrease the negative effect of fear of being single, thereby decreasing participants' interest in the low responsiveness target and increasing discrimination of the two dating profiles. In contrast, a control prime would not change the influence of fear of being single on the dependent variable of romantic interest, leading to higher interest ratings in the low responsiveness target and less discrimination between the two dating profiles.

Predictions

Prediction 1: It was predicted that participants who have low fear of being single would report lower romantic interest for the low responsiveness profile than for the high responsiveness profile. This pattern was expected regardless of acceptance prime manipulation. In other words, among low FOBS participants, there would only be a significant effect of profile responsiveness on romantic interest (see Table 1).

Table 1
Predicted romantic interest of Low FOBS participants

	Unconditional Visualization	Control Visualization
High Responsiveness target	High	High
Low Responsiveness target	Low	Low

Prediction 2: However, among high FOBS participants, visualization condition and profile responsiveness would interact so that the lowest romantic interest would be shown for the low responsiveness profile in the unconditional acceptance condition (see Table 2).

Table 2
Predicted romantic interest of High FOBS participants

	Unconditional Visualization	Control Visualization
High Responsiveness target	Mid	High
Low Responsiveness target	Low	High

Prediction 3: In addition, it was predicted that the FOBS scale that includes both intrapersonal and interpersonal items would be a better predictor of these discrimination patterns than the FOBS scale that includes only intrapersonal items.

This pattern of predicted results would support the proposed study's theoretical assumption that social acceptance can buffer the effect of the fear of being single on romantic interest discrimination.

Method

Participants

Participants in this study were heterosexual women recruited from an introductory Psychology course at a regional university (N = 127). Participants, predominantly Caucasian, ranged in age from 18 to 36, with a mean of 19.47 years, and 46% of participants were single. Due to lack of participant availability, both single and romantically involved participants were tested for this study.

Design

This study was a 2x2 between-subjects design with FOBS scale scores as a moderating predictor. While running the study, the experimenter was blind to the manipulations of visualization and target responsiveness, as well as blind to FOBS scores of participants.

Procedure

Fear of Being Single Variable. As part of the prescreening process for entry into the participant pool, all potential participants completed the Fear of Being Single questionnaire online on the Psychology Department SONA-Systems website prior to arriving at the study facility. Appendix F lists the original six items on the Fear of Being Single scale as presented by Spielmann et al. (2013), with items such as "I feel anxious when I think about being single forever" on a 1 (Not at all true) to 5 (Very true) scale. Appendix G lists the six items created by the author intended to match the original FOBS

scale items, with items such as “Thinking about being single forever makes me anxious” on a 1 (Not at all true) to 5 (Very true) scale. Appendix H lists the six proposed additional items to the Fear of Being Single scale, with items such as “I believe others think less of me for being single” on a 1 (Not at all true) to 5 (Very true) scale. These data were retrieved for analysis only for individuals who participated in this study, and only after informed consent was obtained. These data were one of the three predictors, along with acceptance and target responsiveness (two variables that were manipulated in the lab).

Participants were tested individually in a lab setting, which included a clearly visible mirror directed towards the participant while she was seated. The presence of a mirror has shown to increase the impact of an imagined audience of visualization (Baldwin & Holmes, 1987).

Following the signing of the informed consent document (Appendix A), participants were given verbal instructions by the researcher, which included the cover story (Appendix B). The cover story consisted of an explanation that two studies were being conducted at one time because of limited lab space.

Manipulation of acceptance. Acceptance was manipulated by altering the wording of the visualization instructions given to participants during the first part of the study. Participants were randomly assigned to a visualization condition and received written instructions for one of two visualization tasks described above by Baldwin and Holmes’s 1987 study (visualization instructions found in Appendix C and D). For practical reasons, the conditional acceptance condition from Baldwin and Holmes (1987) was not used the present study; thus the visualization manipulation in the current study

included only two experimental conditions: the control and unconditional acceptance visualization tasks.

Manipulation of target responsiveness. The second independent variable (target responsiveness) was manipulated by altering the personal description portion of the dating profile to include either responsive or unresponsive phrases. Following the visualization task, participants began Part 2, presented to the participants as a completely independent study. The participants read the instructions for Part 2 (Appendix I) and viewed one of two dating profiles that were created for use by Spielmann and colleagues (2013). The dating profiles was manipulated to show either low responsiveness to a future romantic partner (Appendix J), or high responsiveness to a future romantic partner (Appendix K). These profiles were modified for the current study (compared to the original Spielmann et al. (2013) study) by using one of the provided pictures for both of the profiles, but the text of the profiles remained identical to those in the original study.

The two experimental independent variables of visualization and profile yielded four separate conditions: unconditional visualization/responsive profile (condition 1), unconditional visualization/unresponsive profile (condition 2), control visualization/responsive profile (condition 3), and control visualization/unresponsive profile (condition 4).

Dependent variables. Participants rated the profile in terms of romantic interest in the target and attractiveness (the main dependent variables). Romantic interest scores were calculated using the average of four items, on a scale from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely): "How much would you expect to 'click' romantically with this individual,"

"How interested are you in learning more about this individual," "How desirable is this individual as a romantic partner," and "How much would you desire to go on a date with this individual." (Cronbach's $\alpha = .948$). Attractiveness was calculated using a single item, "How attractive overall do you find this person," on a scale of 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely). See Appendix L for the Part 2 questionnaire.

Additional Measures. For exploratory purposes, participants were also asked to complete a log detailing aspects of their relationship history such as number and length of previous relationships (Appendix M).

Manipulation checks. After the visualization task, participants completed a short set of questions regarding the vividness of their imagined scenario (Appendix E). This questionnaire served as a manipulation check of the visualization, including the item "Please rate how accepted you felt in the scenario" on a scale from 1 (Not accepted at all) to 5 (Accepted unconditionally). The questionnaire was also used as a strategy to enhance the cover story (that each task with its associated questionnaire was part of a different study). As part of the final questionnaire, participants rated the profile they saw in terms of responsiveness: "How responsive does this individual seem toward his future partner's needs?" using a scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely). This question serves as a manipulation check for the profile responsiveness manipulation.

The participants were then fully debriefed by the researcher, probed for suspicion, and then excused (see Appendix N for a copy of the debriefing interview).

Results

Initial Analyses

Manipulation checks. Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to check the strength of both manipulations. For the acceptance manipulation, level of acceptance did not significantly differ between those in the unconditional visualization condition (M = 4.60, SD = .66) and the control visualization condition (M = 4.42, SD = .81), $t(125)$ = 1.38, p = .171. Such high acceptance scores for both conditions, out of a maximum of 5, suggests a ceiling effect. For the profile responsiveness manipulation, level of perceived responsiveness of the target was significantly different in the expected direction, with the responsive target rated as much more responsive to a future partner (M = 4.61, SD = .83) than the unresponsive target (M =1.63, SD = .70), $t(125) = 21.81$, $p < .001$.

Original FOBS, Replication FOBS, and New FOBS. Descriptive statistics showed that participants in the study scored between 1 and 6 on a 6-point scale of the original Fear or Being Single scale with matched items, with a mean of 2.13, SD = 1.09, α = .953. When Fear of Being Single was calculated using the original 6 item FOBS scale and the additional 6 interpersonal FOBS scale, participant scores ranged from 1 to 6 on a 6-point scale, with a mean of 1.95, SD = 0.95, α = .936. Participants who indicated a current romantic relationship had lower FOBS scores than participants who were single on both the intrapersonal FOBS scale (M = 1.93, SD =1.02; M = 2.38, SD = 1.11, respectively), $t(125)$ = -2.39, p = .018, and the mixed FOBS scale with additional items added (M = 1.79, SD = .95; M = 2.13, SD = .94), $t(125)$ = -2.06, p = .042. All analyses were run twice, once using the FOBS scale of Spielmann et al.'s original items with items

matched for wording (original/Intrapersonal FOBS), and again using the original FOBS items with the additional interpersonal items (New/Mixed FOBS).

Factor Analysis. A factor analysis was performed to test whether the two subscales of the Fear of Being Single Scale (6 original items and 6 new items) could be considered independent for analyses. Principal axis factoring with Varimax rotation yielded two factors with an Eigen value greater than 1. Five out of six original FOBS items loaded on Factor 1 (Intrapersonal) and five out of six new FOBS items loaded on Factor 2 (Interpersonal). The remaining one original item and one new item loaded on both factors. This suggests that the two factors are independent constructs. Factor loadings are included in Table 3, with the first six items drawn from the original intrapersonal FOBS scale and the latter six items included from the proposed additional interpersonal FOBS scale items.

Romantic Interest

To examine the overall effect of visualization condition, profile condition, and FOBS score on romantic interest, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted twice to predict romantic interest from the three independent variables, once using the intrapersonal FOBS scale, and then again using the mixed FOBS scale. Centered variables for visualization condition, profile condition, and FOBS scale were entered into step 1. Two-way interaction terms for Visualization x Profile, Visualization x FOBS scale, and Profile x FOBS scale were entered into step 2, and the three-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS scale was entered into step 3. As seen in Table 4, the

Table 3
Factor Loadings of Original FOBS Scale Items and Additional FOBS Scale Items

Scale Item	Intrapersonal FOBS	Interpersonal FOBS
1. It scares me to think that there might not be anyone out there for me.	**.65**	.36
2. I feel it is close to being too late for me to find the love of my life.	**.51**	**.57**
3. I feel anxious when I think about being single forever.	**.76**	.39
4. I need to find a partner before I'm too old to have and raise children.	**.70**	.29
5. If I end up alone in life, I will probably feel like there is something wrong with me.	**.77**	.24
6. As I get older, it will get harder and harder to find someone.	**.70**	.31
7. Being single for too long makes me seem undesirable to potential partners.	**.72**	**.51**
8. I worry about how others will judge me if I am ever single for too long.	**.50**	**.67**
9. I believe others think less of me for being single.	.25	**.82**
10. I cannot meet the expectations put on me by others unless I am in a committed relationship.	.26	**.67**
11. I am afraid others will pity me for being single	.35	**.77**
12. I feel like I'm supposed to be in a serious romantic relationship by now.	.43	**.62**

Note. Factor loadings > .50 are bolded.

step 3 model did not significantly contribute additional variance, $\Delta R^2 = .004$, $p = .297$. Only the main effect of profile condition and interaction of Visualization x Profile condition were significant. The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was

not significant. The step 3 model of the regression using scores on the *mixed FOBS scale* did not significantly contribute additional variance, $\Delta R^2 = .003$, $p = .388$ (see Table 5). Only the main effect of profile condition and interaction of visualization condition and profile condition were significant. The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. A one-way ANOVA with planned contrasts was conducted to compare means across the four different visualization/profile conditions on the measure of romantic interest (see Table 6 for means). The first contrast (1 -3 1 1) showed that those in the unconditional acceptance/unresponsive profile condition showed significantly less romantic interest in the target than in any other conditions, $t(123) = 6.41$, $p < .001$. The second contrast (-1 0 1 0) showed that those in the unconditional visualization/responsive condition reported significantly less romantic interest in the target profile than did those in the control visualization/responsive condition, $t(123) = 2.73$, $p = .007$. The final contrast (0 0 1 -1) showed that those in the control visualization/responsive profile condition also showed significantly more romantic interest than those in the control visualization/unresponsive profile condition, $t(123) = 10.90$, $p < .001$.

Single participants. When the above regression analyses were run using only data from participants who were single, the final model using the *intrapersonal FOBS* scale was significant (see Table 4). There was a significant main effect of profile condition and a significant interaction of profile and visualization conditions.

Table 4

Predictors of Romantic Interest (Intrapersonal FOBS)

Predictor	Overall						Single Participants Only						Involved Participants Only					
	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p
Step 1	0.557	0.557	51.64**				0.563	0.563	23.16**				0.592	0.592	31.47**			
Visualization				0.18	0.15	0.221				0.1	0.24	0.674				0.28	0.18	0.125
Profile				-1.8	0.15	<.001				-1.95	0.24	<.001				-1.7	0.18	<.001
FOBS (intra)				0.05	0.07	0.505				0.03	0.11	0.778				-0.02	0.09	0.852
Step 2	0.581	0.024	27.75**				0.605	0.042	13.01**				0.61	0.018	16.16**			
Visual x Profile				-0.73	0.29	0.012				-0.99	0.46	0.036				-0.58	0.36	0.114
Visual x FOBS (intra)				-0.01	0.14	0.938				0.1	0.21	0.653				-0.02	0.19	0.9
Profile x FOBS (intra)				-0.06	0.13	0.632				-0.14	0.21	0.511				0.09	0.18	0.596
Step 3	0.585	0.004	23.96**				0.615	0.01	11.40**				0.612	0.002	13.74**			
Visualization				0.17	0.14	0.234				0.08	0.23	0.747				0.28	0.18	0.119
Profile				-1.8	0.14	<.001				-1.94	0.23	<.001				-1.7	0.18	<.001
FOBS (intra)				0.05	0.07	0.947				0.05	0.11	0.631				-0.03	0.09	0.763
Visual x Profile				-0.73	0.29	0.012				-0.98	0.46	0.037				-0.58	0.36	0.113
Visual x FOBS (intra)				0.002	0.14	0.99				0.12	0.21	0.562				-0.01	0.19	0.972
Profile x FOBS (intra)				-0.04	0.14	0.778				-0.12	0.21	0.569				0.13	0.19	0.499
Visual x Profile x FOBS (intra)				-0.29	0.27	0.297				-0.49	0.43	0.263				-0.21	0.38	0.573

*p < .05. **p < .001

Table 5

Predictors of Romantic Interest (Mixed FOBS)

	Overall						Single Participants Only						Involved Participants Only					
Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p
Step 1	0.557	0.557	51.64**				0.562	0.562	23.14**				0.592	0.592	31.44**			
Visualization				0.18	0.15	0.216				0.1	0.24	0.666				0.28	0.18	0.127
Profile				-1.81	0.15	<.001				-1.96	0.24	<.001				-1.7	0.18	<.001
FOBS (mixed)				0.05	0.08	0.504				0.03	0.13	0.822				0.003	0.1	0.974
Step 2	0.585	0.028	28.19**				0.606	0.044	13.09**				0.61	0.018	16.19**			
Visual x Profile				-0.73	0.29	0.012				-1.02	0.46	0.03				-0.56	0.36	0.12
Visual x FOBS (mixed)				0.01	0.16	0.935				0.01	0.26	0.971				0.11	0.2	0.582
Profile x FOBS (mixed)				-0.18	0.15	0.246				-0.23	0.26	0.374				-0.08	0.19	0.691
Step 3	0.588	0.003	24.22**				0.608	0.002	11.07**				0.615	0.004	13.91**			
Visualization				0.18	0.14	0.214				0.1	0.23	0.673				0.28	0.18	0.122
Profile				-1.81	0.14	<.001				-1.96	0.23	<.001				-1.69	0.18	<.001
FOBS (mixed)				0.06	0.08	0.425				0.05	0.13	0.723				-0.01	0.1	0.922
Visual x Profile				-0.73	0.29	0.012				-1.02	0.46	0.032				-0.57	0.36	0.117
Visual x FOBS (mixed)				0.04	0.16	0.818				0.04	0.27	0.885				0.14	0.21	0.507
Profile x FOBS (mixed)				-0.15	0.16	0.363				-0.2	0.54	0.66				-0.03	0.2	0.893
Visual x Profile x FOBS (mixed)				-0.28	0.32	0.388				-0.24	0.54	0.66				-0.34	0.41	0.408

**p < .001

Table 6
Mean Romantic Interest in Dating Profile by Condition

	Unconditional Visualization	Control Visualization
High Responsiveness target	2.93_a	3.48_c
Low Responsiveness target	1.50_b	1.31_b

Means with different subscripts across rows and columns indicate significant differences at $p < .05$

The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. The final regression model using the *mixed FOBS* as a predictor (step 3) was significant (see Table 5). There was a significant main effect of profile condition suggesting that participants expressed more romantic interest in the responsive profile than in the unresponsive profile, and a significant interaction of profile and visualization conditions. The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. A one-way ANOVA with planned contrasts was run to compare means across the four different visualization/profile conditions on the measure of romantic interest (see Table 7 for means). The first contrast (1 -3 1 1) showed that those in the unconditional visualization/unresponsive profile rated less romantic interest than any other condition,

Table 7
Mean Romantic Interest in Dating Profile by Condition for Single Participants Only

	Unconditional Visualization	Control Visualization
High Responsiveness target	3.18_a	3.81_a
Low Responsiveness target	1.73_b	1.34_c

Means with different subscripts across rows and columns indicate significant differences at $p < .05$

$t(54) = 4.00$, $p < .001$. A second contrast (0 0 1 -1) revealed those in the control visualization/responsive profile condition showed significantly more romantic interest than those in the control visualization/unresponsive profile condition, $t(54) = 7.74$, $p < .001$. No other conditions significantly differed, although there was a trend towards significance for the contrast between condition 1 and condition 3 (-1 0 1 0), suggesting lower romantic interest in the unconditional visualization/responsive profile condition than the control visualization/responsive profile condition, $t(54) = 1.93$, $p = .059$.

Romantically involved participants. When the same regression analyses were conducted using only data from participants who indicated being in a current romantic relationship, the final model using the *intrapersonal FOBS* scale (step 3) was significant (see Table 4). Only the main effect of profile condition was significant. The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. The final regression model using the *mixed FOBS* scale as a predictor (step 3) was also significant (see Table 5) and again only the main effect of profile was significant such that participants expressed more romantic interest in the responsive profile ($M = 2.99$, $SD = .92$) than in the unresponsive profile ($M = 1.29$, $SD = .46$). The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant.

Attraction

To examine the overall effect of visualization condition, profile condition, and FOBS score on self-reported attraction to the individual depicted in the profile, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted twice to predict reported attraction from

the three independent variables, once using the *intrapersonal FOBS* scale, and then again using the *mixed FOBS* scale. Centered variables for visualization condition, profile condition, and FOBS scale were entered into step 1. Two-way interaction terms for Visualization x Profile, Visualization x FOBS scale, and Profile x FOBS scale were entered into step 2, and the three-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS scale was entered into step 3. When accounting for scores on the *intrapersonal FOBS scale*, the final model (step 3) was significant, (see Table 8). There was a significant main effect of profile condition and a marginally significant interaction of visualization condition and profile. The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. The final model of the regression using scores on the *mixed FOBS* scale (step 3) was significant (see Table 9). The main effect of profile condition was significant and the interaction of visualization condition and profile condition was marginally significant. The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. A one-way ANOVA with planned contrasts was conducted to compare means across the four different visualization/profile conditions on the measure of attraction to the target (see Table 10 for means). The overall contrast (1 -3 1 1) showed that those in the unconditional visualization/unresponsive condition reported significantly less attraction to the target profile compared to any other condition, $t(123) = 3.01$, $p = .003$. A second contrast (0 0 1 -1) showed that those in the control visualization/unresponsive profile condition showed less attraction to the target than those in the control visualization/responsive profile condition, $t(123) = 5.69$, $p < .001$. The final contrast

Table 8

Predictors of Attraction (Intrapersonal FOBS)

	Overall						Single Participants Only						Involved Participants Only					
Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p
Step 1	0.238	0.24	12.80**				0.355	0.355	9.92**				0.183	0.183	4.87*			
Visualization				0.16	0.18	0.36				-0.01	0.25	0.981				0.34	0.25	0.171
Profile				-1.09	0.18	<.001				-1.38	0.25	<.001				-0.86	0.25	0.001
FOBS (intra)				-0.02	0.08	0.782				-0.08	0.12	0.491				-0.04	0.12	0.746
Step 2	0.258	0.02	6.95**				0.384	0.028	5.29**				0.236	0.052	3.19[a]			
Visual x Profile				-0.62	0.35	0.084				-0.7	0.51	0.179				-0.65	0.49	0.187
Visual x FOBS (intra)				0.06	0.17	0.722				-0.01	0.24	0.979				0.3	0.25	0.25
Profile x FOBS (intra)				-0.02	0.17	0.89				-0.16	0.34	0.517				0.28	0.24	0.24
Step 3	0.258	0	5.91**				0.387	0.003	4.51*				0.243	0.007	2.80[b]			
Visualization				0.16	0.18	0.367				0.004	0.26	0.988				0.37	0.24	0.14
Profile				-1.09	0.18	<.001				-1.38	0.26	<.001				-0.84	0.24	0.001
FOBS (intra)				-0.03	0.08	0.729				-0.08	0.12	0.53				-0.12	0.13	0.363
Visual x Profile				-0.62	0.36	0.086				-0.7	0.51	0.18				-0.66	0.49	0.183
Visual x FOBS (intra)				0.06	0.17	0.735				-0.02	0.24	0.93				0.33	0.26	0.211
Profile x FOBS (intra)				-0.03	0.17	0.866				-0.17	0.24	0.495				0.34	0.25	0.179
Visual x Profile x FOBS (intra)				0.06	0.34	0.855				0.25	0.48	0.603				-0.39	0.51	0.446

*p < .005. **p < .001

[a]p = .009 [b]p - .014

Table 9

Predictors of Attraction (Mixed FOBS)

	Overall						Single Participants Only						Involved Participants Only					
Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p
Step 1	0.239	0.239	12.85**				0.365	0.365	10.35**				0.182	0.182	4.83*			
Visualization				0.16	0.18	0.362				-0.02	0.25	0.944				0.34	0.25	0.175
Profile				-1.09	0.18	<.001				-1.37	0.25	<.001				-0.86	0.25	0.001
FOBS (mixed)				-0.04	0.09	0.663				-0.16	0.14	0.257				-0.01	0.13	0.937
Step 2	0.26	0.021	7.01**				0.393	0.028	5.51**				0.225	0.042	2.99*			
Visual x Profile				-0.63	0.35	0.08				-0.72	0.51	0.162				-363	0.49	0.2
Visual x FOBS (mixed)				0.09	0.19	0.637				-0.04	0.28	0.899				0.32	0.28	0.248
Profile x FOBS (mixed)				-0.05	0.19	0.776				-0.18	0.28	0.528				0.18	0.26	0.497
Step 3	0.26	0	5.962**				0.4	0.007	4.76**				0.239	0.014	2.74*			
Visualization				0.16	0.18	0.372				-0.02	0.25	0.944				0.36	0.24	0.149
Profile				-1.09	0.18	<.001				-1.36	0.25	<.001				-0.84	0.24	0.001
FOBS (mixed)				-0.05	0.1	0.617				-0.12	0.15	0.41				-0.08	0.14	0.571
Visual x Profile				-0.63	0.36	0.081				-0.72	0.51	0.162				-0.61	0.49	0.193
Visual x FOBS (mixed)				0.1	0.2	0.631				-0.09	0.29	0.757				0.67	0.28	0.194
Profile x FOBS (mixed)				-0.05	0.2	0.803				-0.24	0.3	0.421				0.27	0.28	0.336
Visual x Profile x FOBS (mixed)				-0.04	0.4	0.919				0.45	0.59	0.453				-0.6	0.56	0.286

*p < .016. **p < .001

(-1 0 1 0) showed that those in the unconditional visualization/responsive profile condition showed less attraction than those in the control visualization/responsive profile condition, though the difference was only marginally significant, $t(123) = 1.90$, $p = .059$.

Single participants. When the above regression analyses were run using only data from single participants, the final regression model using the *intrapersonal FOBS* scale (step 3) was significant (see Table 8). There was a significant main effect of profile manipulation. The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. The final regression model using the *mixed FOBS* as a predictor (step 3) was significant (see Table 9); again only the main effect of profile manipulation was significant, indicating that participants were more attracted to the responsive target ($M = 3.96$, $SD = .88$) than to the unresponsive target ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.00$). The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant.

Romantically involved participants. When the same regression analyses were conducted using only data from participants who indicated being in a current romantic relationship, the final model using the *intrapersonal FOBS* scale (step 3) was significant (see Table 8). There was a significant main effect of profile condition. The 3-way

Table 10
Mean Attraction to the Target of the Dating Profile by Condition

	Unconditional Visualization	Control Visualization
High Responsiveness target	3.44_a	3.91_a
Low Responsiveness target	2.67_b	2.52_c

Means with different subscripts across rows and columns indicate significant differences at $p < .05$

interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant. The final regression model using the *mixed FOBS* as a predictor (step 3) was significant (see Table 9); again only the main effect of profile manipulation was significant. Just as for single participants, romantically involved participants were more attracted to the responsive target (M = 3.44, SD = 1.03) than to the unresponsive target (M = 2.58, SD = 1.00). The 3-way interaction of Visualization x Profile x FOBS was not significant.

Replication of Results from Spielmann et al. (2013)

A statistical replication of Spielmann et al.'s 2013 findings from Study 5 of their paper was conducted. As outlined in their publication, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to predict romantic interest using the main effects of responsiveness condition and FOBS in step 1 and the interaction of these terms in step 2. In order to match the sample from the original study, the present analysis was restricted to single participants only, and only the original six FOBS items were used to calculate FOBS score. The final model of the regression (step 2) was significant (see Table 11). Corresponding with the original findings, there was a significant main effect of profile

Table 11
Statistical Replication of Spielmann et al. (2013)

Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p
Step 1	.561	.561	35.21*			
Profile				-1.94	.23	<.001
FOBS (6 item)				.04	.11	.329
Step 2	.565	.004	23.40*			
Profile x FOBS (6 item)				-.15	.22	.496

*p < .001.

manipulation, such that participants were more interested in the responsive profile than in the unresponsive profile. Contrary to the original findings, there was not a statistically significant interaction of profile manipulation and FOBS. In Spielmann et al.'s 2013 paper, the interaction of Profile condition and FOBS score showed no difference in romantic interest between high and low FOBS when viewing the high responsiveness profile. When viewing the low responsiveness profile, those with high FOBS were much more romantically interested in the profile than the low FOBS participants.

Comparing the Intrapersonal and Interpersonal FOBS items

The factor analysis reported above indicated that the Intrapersonal and Interpersonal FOBS scales were independent constructs. This allowed for a simultaneous test of their relative contribution to romantic interest. To compare the effectiveness of the original 6-item FOBS scale and the proposed 6-item interpersonal FOBS scale, romantic interest was predicted by entered Profile manipulation, Visualization manipulation, intrapersonal 6-item FOBS, and interpersonal 6-item FOBS into step 1, the five 2-way interaction terms into step 2, and two 3-way interaction terms into step 3. The 2-way interaction term and 4-way interaction term allowing the intra- and inter-personal FOBS scores to interact were not included, as they did not make theoretical sense. As seen in Table 12, the main effect of Profile manipulation and interaction of Visualization x Profile continued to be the only significant predictors of romantic interest. While neither was significant, the intrapersonal FOBS scale seemed to be a stronger predictor of romantic interest than was the interpersonal FOBS scale. However, on the

Visual x FOBS and Profile x FOBS interactions, the terms using the interpersonal FOBS scale appeared to predict romantic interest better than using the intrapersonal FOBS scale.

Table 12
Predicting Romantic Interest from both Intrapersonal and Interpersonal FOBS

Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	F	B	SE	p
Step 1	.563	.563	39.32*			
Visualization				.18	.15	.218
Profile				-1.79	.15	<.001
Intrapersonal FOBS (6 item)				.15	.11	.158
Interpersonal FOBS (6 item)				-.13	.13	.314
Step 2	.604	.040	19.80*			
Visual x Profile				-.67	.29	.021
Visual x Intrapersonal FOBS (6 item)				.34	.21	.099
Visual x Interpersonal FOBS (6 item)				-.41	.26	.112
Profile x Intrapersonal FOBS (6 item)				.18	.21	.391
Profile x Interpersonal FOBS (6 item)				-.40	.27	.131
Step 3	.610	.007	16.36*			
Visualization				.17	.14	.224
Profile				-1.78	.14	<.001
Intrapersonal FOBS (6 item)				.16	.11	.143
Interpersonal FOBS (6 item)				-.12	.13	.359
Visual x Profile				-.68	.29	.019
Visual x Intrapersonal FOBS (6 item)				.27	.22	.208
Visual x Interpersonal FOBS (6 item)				-.32	.27	.234
Profile x Intrapersonal FOBS (6 item)				.18	.22	.410
Profile x Interpersonal FOBS (6 item)				-.38	.27	.163
Visual x Profile x Intrapersonal FOBS				-.59	.43	.171
Visual x Profile x Interpersonal FOBS				.52	.53	.334

*$p < .001$.

Discussion

While predicting romantic interest, there was a significant interaction of visualization condition and profile condition. When this interaction is analyzed further, participants in the unconditional visualization condition showed significantly less romantic interest in the responsive profile than do those in the control visualization condition. When participants visualized being unconditionally accepted by a close friend, they were less interested in an objectively desirable romantic partner than were those who were not primed with this acceptance ($p < .001$). These findings would suggest that social support in the form of unconditional acceptance acts as a buffer for romantic feelings and desires and, when present in real world settings, may reduce relationship-seeking behavior (like going on a date) when there is no motivation for pursuing a relationship other than achieving coupled status.

A literature search yielded no previous studies finding the effect of social acceptance or affirmation as a buffer to romantic interest or attraction to a romantic target. Most prior work has investigated the effects of self-affirmation in buffering the effects of threats to the self. For instance, Miron, Branscombe, and Biernat (2010) found that positive group affirmation (in this case, affirming the participant's identity as American) reduced defensive behavior the ingroup (Americans) from negative information (the history of Americans' slavery of Africans). The present findings are novel among affirmation literature because no previous research has investigated effects of self-affirmation in response to *positive* information (an objectively desirable romantic prospect). Individuals who do not receive perceived or actual social support (compared to

those who do) may be more romantically interested in attractive others and enter into relationships with them while not prepared for the costs of breaking up that relationship. Based on Spielmann et al.'s findings (2013), individuals with higher FOBS, who are significantly less likely to initiate a breakup, could face additional negative emotions. Perilloux and Buss (2008) found that individuals who were rejected by their romantic partner (their romantic partner initiates a breakup), reported far more depression, more rumination, and lower self-esteem than individuals who had done the rejecting (individuals who initiated the breakup).

Coupled participants (who held lower FOBS scores on average compared to single participants), rated more romantic interest in the responsive individual than in the unresponsive individual. Visualization condition did not significantly influence this relationship. This pattern of results is in the same direction expected from Prediction 1; however Prediction 1 cannot be clearly supported, as coupled relationship status is likely contributing more to this relationship than FOBS scores alone. Indeed, perhaps coupled participants have on average a lower FOBS score *because* they are in a relationship, protecting them from the stigma associated with being single. Another possible explanation is that their significant other may be a source of continuous unconditional acceptance, countering the expected trend of differing visualization conditions.

Relationship status seemed to be a more useful predictor of the results than FOBS score. Based on the finding that Fear of Being Single scores are significantly higher for participants who are currently single than for participants currently involved in romantic relationships, perhaps FOBS may be more of a flexible *state* measure than a stable

personality measure. Future research could focus longitudinally on measuring FOBS scores over time, across multiple relationships. It is possible that FOBS scores naturally fluctuate across the lifespan. Following relationship dissolution, which is often a stressful life event and is associated with higher levels of depression (Reyes-Rodríguez, Rivera-Medina, Cámara-Fuentes, Suárez-Torres, & Bernal, 2013), it would follow that FOBS score would also increase given the saliency and personal relevance of one's single status and relative social status. As discussed previously, individuals who are not dating, or are dating multiple people non-exclusively have lower levels of subjective well-being, measured by self-esteem, distress, life satisfaction, and overall happiness (Kamp Dush & Amato, 2005). If FOBS scores end up increasing over time as single status continues, this increase could lead to higher frequency of relationship seeking behavior. Once coupled status is obtained, FOBS would likely decrease.

It is interesting that nearly all of the analyses showed no significant effect of Fear of Being Single. Even a statistical replication of the original findings from Spielmann et al. (2013) did not yield statistically significant effects of Fear of Being Single. The current sample is comparable to that of Spielmann et al.'s in terms of sample age and education (mean age of the current study is .74 years older than in Spielmann et al.; both samples drawn from undergraduate women). Population comparisons of race and ethnic group cannot be drawn as this information was not reported for the sample in Spielmann et al. The previous sample was drawn from a university in Canada, while the current study took place at a university in the United States. Though it does not follow that all participants were, respectively, Canadian and American, it is in the realm of possibility

that the surrounding cultures at these universities were different for participants who are single, which may have affected not only FOBS scores (mean of FOBS scores on the original 6 item scale was .18 points higher for single participants in the Spielmann et al. sample than in the current sample), but could have affected the interplay of the manipulated conditions. Though an interaction of visualization and profile manipulations was only predicted for those with high FOBS, this interaction was significant when all participants were included in analyses, as well as for analyses including single participants only.

Another difference between the two studies was time of FOBS measurement. The study of Spielmann et al. (2013) measured participant scores of FOBS in the same research session as the profile manipulation, so the FOBS scores was temporally linked to the dependent outcome of romantic interest. In the current study, FOBS scores were collected anywhere from a few days to a few months prior to the experimental manipulations and collection of dependent measures. This was chosen so that the act of measuring FOBS would not accidentally manipulate the saliency of relationship status. Separating FOBS measurement from visualization manipulation was designed to make the effect of the manipulation easier to isolate. Additionally, FOBS was not measured directly after profile manipulation so that the profile evaluation would not then manipulate FOBS score. If the FOBS scale is a variable state measure, latency of the experimental manipulation following initial measurement would certainly impact the results.

Comparing Fear of Being Single Subscales

When predicting romantic interest from both the Intrapersonal FOBS subscale and Interpersonal FOBS subscale, neither subscale seems particularly effective. Indeed profile manipulation remains the most effective predictor of romantic interest in the profile target. When looking at the unstandardized beta weights of each predictor, unstandardized beta weights for intrapersonal predictors are positive while unstandardized beta weights for interpersonal predictors are negative. Future work should further test the differential predictive value of the two types of scales.

Limitations of the Current Study

One limitation of the current study is the low number of single participants. Though the total sample consists of 127 participants, only 58 participants were of single status, compared to 88 single women in the Spielmann et al. 2013 study. This difference in sample size may have contributed to the difference in results across the two studies.

Another limitation would be the timing of initial measurement of FOBS scores. Because there is the possibility that FOBS may fluctuate over time, the FOBS score for those who participated months after answering the prescreening questions may no longer be accurate. Measurement of FOBS immediately before the experimental manipulation is likely better, as was the procedure in Spielmann et al. (2013), but additional planning would be needed to ensure that the measurement of FOBS is not unintentionally manipulating saliency of relationship status or cultural stereotypes of singles, which may affect measures of romantic interest or attraction.

Based on manipulation checks, the visualization manipulation was not successful. Participants in both the unconditional acceptance and control condition felt equally highly accepted. If all participants were then considered to be in the unconditional acceptance conditions then the remaining factors predicting romantic interest would be FOBS score and Profile manipulation. However, since there also seemed to be little difference in romantic interest on different level of FOBS scores, the predictions would collapse further into a predicted main effect of Profile manipulation, which indeed was a significant predictor of romantic interest across all analyses. Though additional research should certainly further investigate the role of social acceptance on relationship seeking behaviors, the predicted pattern did occur for participants perceiving high social acceptance.

An alternate explanation of why participants in the control condition behaved the same as those receiving unconditional acceptance priming is that perhaps mindfulness procedures were inadvertently primed. Instructions to imagine the sights and sounds of your surroundings may relate to the constructs measured by the Describing and Acting with Awareness facets of the Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer et al., 2008). Bränström, Kvillemo, Brandberg, & Moskowitz (2010) found correlations between higher ratings of Describing and Acting with Awareness and lower levels of anxiety after mindfulness intervention. If the control prime in this study is indeed acting as a mindfulness prime, anxiety may have been lowered, resulting in a pattern of results similar to the unconditional acceptance group.

Future Directions

Future research could expand further on the interaction of visualization condition and profile manipulation. Other forms of social acceptance manipulation should be explored. Perhaps participants could arrive to the lab in pairs, with one participant being responsible for bringing either a close friend, versus having two participants sign up together without pre-selecting for personal acquaintance. The act of coming to a research lab with uncertain expectations of the upcoming study could activate support seeking behaviors, or increase feelings of relationship closeness between the two friends. In the case of two unfamiliar participants, this may create the opposite effect, with less support being felt upon arriving to a study with a stranger. Manipulating the level of emotional closeness to the research partner may even be a stronger acceptance prime than leaving the participants to read and write about imagined scenarios.

It would also be interesting to expand the sample demographics. Both Spielmann et al. (2013) and the present study restricted samples to heterosexual women. If samples were opened up to other genders and sexualities, comprehensive pilot testing would be needed to define what other genders consider a responsive or unresponsive dating partner, as well as if women who date men define responsiveness differently than women who date women, and so on. Definitions may be relatively stable between participant-profile target gender combinations (a “responsive” male partner could look the same to women and men), but they may also vary greatly (what appears to be a “responsive” female partner from a woman’s perspective may appear less responsive from a man’s perspective).

Taking the findings relating social affirmation to a practical perspective would prove valuable as well. In the case of abusive relationships, women who are abused by their partner often struggle with the decision to leave the relationship or stay with their partner. Hendy, Eggen, Gustitus, McLeod, and Ng (2003) drew upon themes in previous literature and developed the Decision to Leave Scale, consisting of 40 items capturing various reasons why women in particular decide to remain with their abusive partner ("I fear the loss of income," "I believe he/she loves me and wants to change," "I have little support from my friends," "I fear loneliness"). Many of the items, such as the third and fourth listed above, seem to thematically align with the concepts contributing to the Fear of Being Single. For the women in the sample, reporting the decision to stay in the relationship was strongly and significantly associated with the Fear of Loneliness subscale of the Decision to Leave scale. If the positive impact of social support can be applied to cases of abuse, women may feel more able to separate themselves from any factors that draw them to their partners (potentially at times when future abuse is perceived as unlikely, despite repeated abusive episodes in the past).

Future research should aim to capture not only a better understanding of the contributors to the Fear of Being Single (relationship status or relative cultural pressures), but also of how behavioral changes following social support may positively impact people seeking romantic relationships, ideally leading to more healthy and individually-empowered romantic relationships.

APPENDIX A

Consent form

The purpose of today's session is twofold. Part 1 of today's session will focus on the effectiveness of a visual imagery task. Part 2 of today's session will focus on the qualities of online dating profiles. The following information is provided so you may decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you wish to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so without penalty.

If you decide to participate, your participation in Part 1 will consist of responding to a writing prompt and completing a short questionnaire. Participation in Part 2 will consist of reading through a dating profile and making evaluations based on that profile. Completion of both parts should not take longer than 30 minutes total.

Participation in this study will not directly benefit you nor do we believe this study will present any risk of physical or psychological harm to your health. Your responses will be held confidential and will not be seen by anyone other than myself and my thesis advisor. If, for some reason, you choose to withdraw from the study you will still receive credit for your research participation.

Once Part 2 is completed, you will be provided with a more detailed description of both parts. Please feel free to ask any questions before, during, or after the study is complete. If you would like additional information concerning this research do not hesitate to contact me or my thesis advisor:

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Oshkosh, WI 54901
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If you have any complaints about your treatment as a participant in this study, please call or write:

Robert Roberts
Institutional Review Board
For Protection of Human Participants
UW Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI 54901
(920) 424-1415

I have received an explanation of the study and agree to participate. I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary.

PRINTED NAME SIGNATURE DATE

APPENDIX B

Verbal Instructions for Part 1

You may be aware that the Department of Psychology has moved this year. Because of this, we are a little short on research space, so I will be running you through two separate, shorter studies during this timeslot. This lab space is also shared with a couple of other research teams, so I just ask that you don't touch any of the equipment you see, as not disturb any of their things. We are going to start with a visualization study, then follow that up with a study about online dating profiles.

Study 1 involves reading the instructions provided and writing a short paragraph based on those instructions. Make sure you read everything carefully. Please wait to open the folder until I have left the room, and return all materials to the folder before I enter the room. You will have 5 minutes to write a short paragraph or two. If you finish before the 5 minutes you may return everything to the folder and open the door. Otherwise, at the 5 minute mark, I will knock on the door. Please then finish writing your sentence, return the materials to the folder, and then open the door. After you complete the task, there will be a questionnaire about your experience.

APPENDIX C

Unconditional Visualization Instructions

Please take 5 minutes to elaborate on following scenario in the space below. You are encouraged to use an example from your own life if you have one. If you finish early, you can come get me from outside; otherwise I will knock on the door when 5 minutes is over.

Imagine that you are talking to someone close to you (e.g. a friend or family member). You are eager to hear their advice about something that is troubling you. This person thinks highly of you and you know that they will accept you no matter what happens. As you share your thoughts with this person, you feel their warmth and acceptance towards you. This is a person who has supported you through good times and bad times and this is no exception. After you explain what is troubling you, they calmly give you a suggestion that perfectly matches what you had been thinking. It is nice to hear that they agree with your idea for a solution.

APPENDIX D

Control Visualization Instructions

Please take 5 minutes to elaborate on the following scenario in the space below. You are encouraged to use an example from your own life if you have one. If you finish early, you can come get me from outside; otherwise I will knock on the door when 5 minutes is over.

Imagine that you are taking a break from your work and, while thinking of how to spend your time, you decide to go for a walk. You walk around, taking note of the colors and sounds around you. You consider walking to pick up something to eat or going to a nearby park. As you walk down the sidewalk, you know that either choice would be a good one.

APPENDIX E

Post-Visualization Questionnaire for Part 1

Keeping your written scenario in mind, please answer the following questions.

1. How easy was it to imagine the scenario described on in the prompt? (circle one)

Not at all easy	A little easy	Somewhat easy	Fairly Easy	Very easy
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

2. What aspects of the prompt made it easier to write about the scenario? (please write)

3. Were you able to describe a memory of your own life or did you imagine a new scenario?

(circle one)

Memory from real life Imagined new scenario

4. Please rate your enjoyment the scenario you described. (circle one)

Not at all enjoyable	A little enjoyable	Neutral feelings	Fairly enjoyable	Very enjoyable
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

5. Please rate your overall enjoyment of the task. (circle one)

Not at all enjoyable	A little enjoyable	Neutral feelings	Fairly enjoyable	Very enjoyable
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

6. Please rate how accepted you felt in the scenario. (circle one)

Not accepted at all	A little accepted	Neutral feelings	Accepted under certain conditions	Accepted unconditionally
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

7. Please rate how happy you felt in the scenario. (circle one)

Not happy at all	A little happy	Neutral feelings	Fairly happy	Very happy
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

8. How clearly could you imagine the environment? (circle one)

Not at all clearly	A little clearly	Somewhat clearly	Fairly clearly	Very clearly
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

When you have completed this questionnaire, please notify the researcher

APPENDIX F

Original Fear of Being Single Scale

1. It scares me to think that there might not be anyone out there for me.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

2. I feel it is close to being too late for me to find the love of my life.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

3. I feel anxious when I think about being single forever.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

4. I need to find a partner before I'm too old to have and raise children.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

5. If I end up alone in life, I will probably feel like there is something wrong with me.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

6. As I get older, it will get harder and harder to find someone.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

APPENDIX G

Matched Fear of Being Single Items

1. The thought that there may not be anyone out there for me is troubling.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

2. At this point, I may have missed my chance to find my life partner

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

3. Thinking about being single forever makes me anxious.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

4. If I want to have and raise children, I need to find a partner before it is too late.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

5. There would be something wrong with me if I stay alone in life.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

6. Every year it feels like it is harder to find someone.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

APPENDIX H

Proposed Additional Items to Fear of Being Single Scale

1. Being single for too long makes me seem undesirable to potential partners.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

2. I worry about how others will judge me if I am ever single for too long.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

3. I believe others think less of me for being single.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

4. I cannot meet the expectations put on me by others unless I am in a committed relationship.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

5. I am afraid others will pity me for being single.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

6. I feel like I’m supposed to be in a serious romantic relationship by now.

Not at all true		Somewhat true		Very true
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

APPENDIX I

Written Instructions for Part 2

When it comes to online dating, there are many aspects involved in creating an online profile which people can use to appeal to potential dates.

In this part of the study, we are interested in which aspects of online dating profiles people find most appealing, as well as how online dating profiles as a whole come together to appeal to the intended viewer.

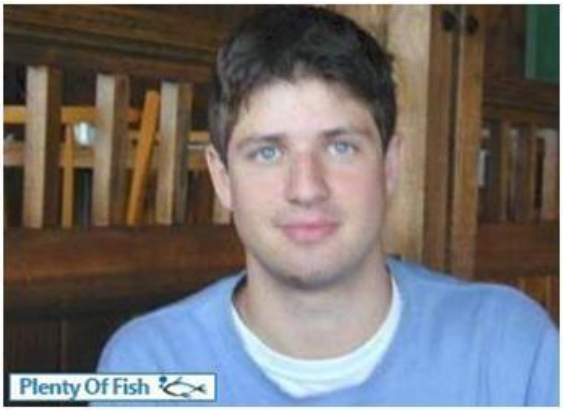
The profile you will see today has been copied directly from **a popular online dating site, chosen from users in Fox Valley Area**. To isolate the actual profile, we have removed all extraneous features of the online profile, such as advertisement space and demographic information of each individual, leaving only the individual's photograph and the blurb they have written about themselves.

Please examine the dating profile carefully. Afterwards, you will be asked to evaluate the individual in the profile on a number of traits and provide your overall response to each profile. Write your responses on directly on the questionnaire.

Please be as honest as possible. Also keep in mind that your responses will remain confidential, and these individuals will NOT view your responses to their profiles.

APPENDIX J

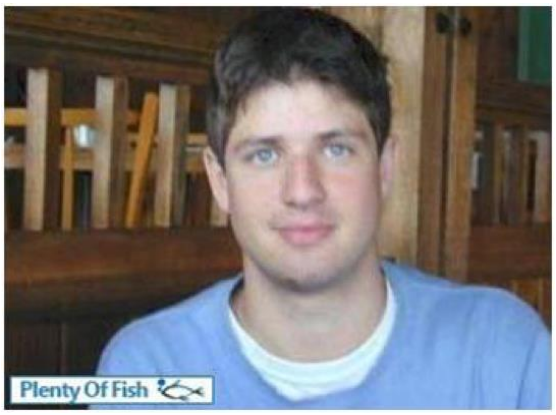
Low Responsiveness Profile



"Hello ladies! I'm enjoying life! I'm a working man with lots to offer. I'm pretty focused on my career so I don't expect my relationship to always come first. I love what I do, so I need someone who respects that and is willing to take the back seat when necessary. Otherwise, I'm a cool guy who's fun to be around. I like to keep conversations light and not too serious when they're not work-related, and I most prefer situations that are easy and problem-free. I deal with enough of that stressful stuff at work. Who needs that drama in their relationship? If I sound like the guy for you, give me a shout. I'm ready to enjoy life and I'm looking for someone to come along for the ride!"

APPENDIX K

High Responsiveness Profile



"I'm not too sure what to say about myself. I like the typical things, like hanging out on a patio in the summer. When I'm dating someone, I really care about putting in the effort and making it work. For me, that means paying attention to my girlfriend and getting to know who she really is as a person. You know, making sure I'm someone she can talk to in a real way. That's what I want from her, so it's important I'm that kind of person for her. I figure the most important thing is that we're there for each other, no b.s. I'm serious about finding love and I'm willing to sacrifice to do it right."

APPENDIX L

Questionnaire for Part 2

1. How caring is this individual?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

2. How considerate is this individual?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

3. How responsive does this individual seem toward his future partner's needs?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

4. How much would you expect to "click" romantically with this individual?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

5. How interested are you in learning more about this individual?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

6. How desirable is this individual as a romantic partner?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

7. How much would you desire to go on a date with this individual?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

8. How attractive overall do you find this person?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Fairly	Extremely
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

APPENDIX M

Relationship Log Questionnaire

This questionnaire asks about previous relationships you may have had. For the purposes of this study, please answer the questions focusing only on your past or current exclusive dating relationships (e.g. exclusive to one person, more than just a fling) Please complete as much as you are able about each relationship, beginning with the most recent, followed by the next most recent, etc.

CURRENT RELATIONSHIP:

1. Are you currently in a relationship right now? YES NO
2. For how long have you been in this relationship? (please write down the number of years and months): Years_____Months_____
3. In general, do you prefer a short or long term relationship?

   Check one: Short _____ Don't care_____ Long_____

PAST RELATIONSHIPS:

1. RELATIONSHIP 1 (start with the most recent one):

Relationship start date: _____ Who ended the relationship? (circle)

Relationship end date: _____ I did They did

Estimated relationship length: _____ Gender of other person: _____

Type of relationship (circle one): Short Distance Long Distance Online only

Combination (please explain): _____

How did you meet this person:

Shared a class Through a friend Online At an event (e.g. party)

Other (please explain): _____

While in this relationship how would you have described it? (circle no more than 3)

Satisfying Troubling Happy Frustrating

Passionate Lonely Exciting

Destructive Uneventful Supportive Emotionally distant

2. RELATIONSHIP 2:

Relationship start date: _____ Who ended the relationship? (circle)

Relationship end date: _____ I did They did

Estimated relationship length: _____ Gender of other person: _____

Type of relationship (circle one): Short Distance Long Distance Online only

Combination (please explain): _____

How did you meet this person:

Shared a class Through a friend Online At an event (e.g. party)

Other (please explain): _____

While in this relationship how would you have described it? (circle no more than 3)

Satisfying Troubling Happy Frustrating

Passionate Lonely Exciting

Destructive Uneventful Supportive Emotionally distant

3. RELATIONSHIP 3

Relationship start date: _____ Who ended the relationship? (circle)

Relationship end date: _____ I did They did

Estimated relationship length: _____ Gender of other person: _____

Type of relationship (circle one): Short Distance Long Distance Online only

Combination (please explain): _____

How did you meet this person:

Shared a class Through a friend Online At an event (e.g. party)

Other (please explain): _____

While in this relationship how would you have described it? (circle no more than 3)

Satisfying Troubling Happy Frustrating

Passionate Lonely Exciting

Destructive Uneventful Supportive Emotionally distant

4. RELATIONSHIP 4

Relationship start date: _____ Who ended the relationship? (circle)

Relationship end date: _____ I did They did

Estimated relationship length: _____ Gender of other person: _____

Type of relationship (circle one): Short Distance Long Distance Online only

Combination (please explain): _____

How did you meet this person:

Shared a class Through a friend Online At an event (e.g. party)

Other (please explain): _____

While in this relationship how would you have described it? (circle no more than 3)

Satisfying Troubling Happy Frustrating

Passionate Lonely Exciting

Destructive Uneventful Supportive Emotionally distant

APPENDIX N

Demographic Questionnaire

1. Date of birth: _____

2. Year in school:

   _____ Freshman

   _____ Sophomore

   _____ Junior

   _____ First year Senior

   _____ Second year Senior or further

   _____ Graduate

3. What is your sexual orientation? Please write (e.g. heterosexual, lesbian, etc.)

   _____

4. Have you ever been married?_____ Yes_____ No

5. Are you engaged to be married? _____ Yes _____ No

6. Which best describes your race? (Check all that apply)

   ____ American Indian or Alaska Native

   ____ Asian

   ____ Black or African American

   ____ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

   ____ White

   ____ Prefer not to answer

7. Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latina? _____ Yes_____ No

APPENDIX O

Debriefing Procedure

I would like to ask you a few questions, to get your reactions. Do you mind if I take notes? YES NO
Have you participated before in another psychology study? YES NO
What was the other study about?
_____
What was your reaction to this study?
_____
You may be aware that in some studies participants are not told everything about a study until the end of the study. Do you think that may be true about this study? YES NO
If they answer YES, why so?
_____
Do you think there was anything strange or unusual about this study?
_____
Even though I gave you two separate tasks, did you think they were connected in any way? _____
Did your experience during Part 1 influence your experience of Part 2?
_____

What did you think about the profile? Do you know the person?

Even though I told you that I was conducting two different studies at the same time, these were actually two parts of one study. The visualization task of Part 1 was intended to put you in a certain state of mind that would influence how you perceived the dating profile in Part 2. During the visualization task, some people received instructions to visualize asking advice of someone close to them, while others received instructions to visualize taking a walk on a pleasant day. The difference between these conditions is level of social acceptance.

During Part 2, some people read a dating profile that described a person who would be very responsive to their future partner, while others read a profile describing a person who would be less responsive to their future partner. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THE PROFILES ARE FAKE, and not of real people from the area. The profiles were only used for this study.

Did you think the profile was real at the time? YES NO
Why not?

The expectation would be that people who read about a less responsive person would show less romantic interest in that person than those who read about a more responsive person. These different conditions are expected to combine in a way so that each combination shows different results. For example, someone who felt more accepted by someone close to them and also read about a more responsive person would overall show more romantic interest in the dating profile. You were told that these were two separate studies because knowing that there was a connection between Part 1 and Part 2 may have

swayed you to answer in a particular way that would be different than if you did not know the connection. You were also asked many different questions as part of the prescreening for the participant pool system. Among these questions were items from a scale called the Fear of Being Single scale. Just like any other scale, someone may have a low score, a high score, or anywhere in the middle. Your responses to these items will also be used for this study, to see if your responses before today's session are related to your responses to today's questions. I assure you that your name will not be connected to any of your responses today. Past research has shown that people with a higher Fear of Being Single score show equal romantic interest in both responsive and unresponsive dating profiles. The current study adds the visualization task from Part 1. One prediction of this study is that for people with high Fear of Being Single, after visualizing the unconditional support of a friend or family member, that they will show less romantic interest in the unresponsive profile and more romantic interest in the high responsiveness profile.

Does this make sense?

Do you have any questions or comments about this study?

In order for us to learn what motivates people to select a dating partner, we needed to create the cover story that we are conducting two separate studies and also we needed participants to believe that the dating profiles are real. I hope you are not too upset at this point about not telling you ahead of time about these things. If you are, please let me know. If you would like additional information about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Anca Miron, who is my Master's Thesis Advisor, via email or by phone (mirona@uwosh.edu or 920-424-2328).

If you experience distress following the completion of this study, please contact Dr. Miron (you have her information on the consent form) or the resource listed below (give them a slip a paper with the info, if they want it):

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Counseling Center
Dempsey Hall 201
800 Algoma Blvd
Oshkosh, WI 54901-8613
Office: (920) 424-2061
Fax: (920) 424-1066
Hours: 9am - 4pm

Any last questions?

Okay, thank you very much for your participation; I would like to ask you if you **could**

please not tell other people about this study so we could get their true reactions when

they come to this study. Thank you very much. I appreciate your help with this study.

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