

# Intersectional Invisibility Revisited: How Group Prototypes Lead to the Erasure and Exclusion of Black Women

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Intersectionality theory allows us to examine how systems of power and oppression (e.g., racism, sexism) co-construct each other to create complex and unique forms of systemic harm and injustice. More particularly, intersectional invisibility provides a framework to understanding how Black women, who live at the intersection of racism and sexism, may be harmed when their unique experiences as Black women are not recognized. This study takes a stereotype content approach to explore how group prototypes result in Black women's intersectional invisibility. Employing a novel stereotypical attribute awareness task administered to more than 1,000 U.S. adults, we build on previous work regarding prototypes and intersectional invisibility. We also advance a differentiation hypothesis positing that the prototypical Black woman and Black man will be less distinct from each other than the prototypical White woman and White man. Respondents differentiated between White men and White women to a greater extent than they differentiated between Black men and Black women. Black women were also rated as being less similar to women in general than were White women. Using nonmetric multidimensional scaling techniques to visualize prototype similarity, we identify racial and gender dimensions in prototype similarity and depict how various group prototypes cluster along these dimensions. We conclude that demographic group prototypes lead to Black women being erased through masculinization and underdistinction from Black men and excluded through overdistinction from women in general. These findings help to explain Black women's simultaneous victimization by the criminal legal system and neglect from "single-axis" social justice movements.


## *What is the significance of this article for the general public?*

This study finds that demographic group prototypes underdifferentiate Black women from Black men and exclude them from women. This may explain why Black women face disproportionate negative contact with the legal system and why the feminism and antiracism movements often fail to address their concerns. Social justice movements should better advocate for Black women so as not to exacerbate the violence toward Black women that they are charged with combating.

**Keywords:** prototypes, intersectionality, intersectional invisibility, race, gender

Intersectionality theory provides an approach for examining how a group such as Black women experiences unique consequences as a

function of their race and gender identities. More particularly, intersectional invisibility (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008) suggests that

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Black women may be harmed when their unique experiences of both racism and sexism go unappreciated by larger movements. Social justice movements are a context in which being both recognized as a member of a marginalized group and also distinguished as different from other members of a marginalized group may be beneficial. Considering that large-scale social justice movements are often framed around single specific axes of identity or oppression (e.g., feminism, antiracism), the intersectional invisibility of Black women may hinder these movements' abilities to address Black women's unique concerns. At a time when both feminist and antiracist movements face criticism for not adequately addressing the needs of Black women (Grzanka, 2019), we must develop a deeper understanding of what leads to Black women's invisibility.

Existing conceptualizations of intersectional invisibility identify its source as a dual lack of recognition of Black women as women and as Black people—that is, intersectional invisibility occurs because the prototypical woman is a White woman and the prototypical Black person is a Black man. This is perhaps best captured by the famous Black feminist phrase “All the women are White and all the Blacks are men” (Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1982). We contend that intersectional invisibility also occurs through a lack of differentiation between Black women and Black men. Thus, Black women may be systematically harmed by single-axis feminist movements that fail to recognize Black women as women or for their unique concerns as Black women. Likewise, Black women may be harmed by single-axis antiracist movements that neglect the unique, intersectional experiences of race and gender discrimination that sometimes distinguish Black women's experiences of racism from Black men's experiences of racism (Crenshaw, 1989). As such, both kinds of single-axis social movements fail to address Black women as Black women, whose experiences of discrimination are not equivalent to White women's or Black men's. In doing so, both movements fail to address Black women's unique concerns. In this study, we take a stereotype content approach to examine how Black women are differentiated to greater and lesser degrees from other relevant groups, particularly Black men and race-unspecified women.

## Intersectionality

Often attributed to legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) first published use of the term but with roots reaching further back in the history of Black women activists and intellectuals (Collins, 2000; Grzanka, 2019), *intersectionality* refers to how systems of power and oppression co-construct each other to create complex and unique forms of systemic harm and injustice. Living at the intersection of racism and sexism, Black women may experience unique forms of oppression that are not captured when we only attend to the impact of one system of oppression at a time (a single-axis approach). Intersectionality is not simply a theoretical tool for examining intergroup differences in a descriptive fashion. Instead, it is a theory employable for critiquing social institutions and dominant logics (May, 2015) in terms of how they fail to address the unique concerns of multiply marginalized individuals. Gendered racial oppression and awareness of harmful stereotypes of Black women has been shown to harm Black women's physical and mental well-being (Jerald, Cole, Ward, & Avery, 2017; Lewis, Williams, Peppers, & Gadson, 2017).

As an example relevant to the current inquiry, consider two distinct yet related contexts relevant to Black women (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016a): their negative treatment by the criminal legal system (Crenshaw, Ritchie, Anspach, Gilmer, & Harris, 2015), and how feminist and antiracism movements have both been criticized for not addressing their concerns (Freelon, Lopez, Clark, & Jackson, 2018; Goff & Kahn, 2013; Grzanka, 2019). Black women are at first victimized in raced and gendered ways by an apparatus of the state, then revictimized via neglect by the very movements that should aid them. How does this occur? We echo others (Goff & Kahn, 2013) in arguing that intersectional invisibility leads to Black women's exclusion and erasure from the “single-axis” (Crenshaw, 1989) groups at the focus of feminist and antiracism movements. We also suggest a new mechanism through which this exclusion and erasure occurs: via Black women's underdifferentiation from Black men (cf. Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016a). In other words, the work of social justice movements is a context in which it is beneficial for Black women to be recognized as a member of a marginalized

group (i.e., women) and to be seen as distinct from similarly racially marginalized others (i.e., Black men).

### Prototyping and Intersectional Invisibility

Prototyping literature has studied the typical individual that comes to mind when a group identity is invoked. Researchers have paid special attention to the seeming erasure of Black women from prototypes of both Black people and women (Goff & Kahn, 2013; Goff, Thomas, & Jackson, 2008; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Sesko & Biernat, 2010). Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008) hypothesized that this “intersectional invisibility” occurs for targets who belong to multiple subordinate identity groups (e.g., Black people and women). Previous studies on intersectional invisibility indeed find that individuals associate Blackness with masculinity, leading to errors when categorizing Black women’s gender (Goff et al., 2008). Similarly, people seem to have difficulty correctly attributing Black women’s own statements to them in group settings and recognizing Black women’s faces (Sesko & Biernat, 2010). And Black women are further erased because discussions on racism center on issues associated with Black men, and discussions of sexism center on the perspectives of White women (Goff & Kahn, 2013). Ideals of femininity center on Whiteness, such that to be “feminine” is to be a White woman, which requires adherence to norms of innocence, purity, and virtue (Goff et al., 2008; Hampton, LaTaillade, Dacey, & Marghi, 2008; Harris-Perry, 2011; Kulig & Cullen, 2017), as opposed to the stereotypes related to criminality and threat that are more often associated with Black women (Thiem, Neel, Simpson, & Todd, 2019). In this way, the dominant racial group transforms Black people into a monolith, and White women are thought to stand apart as prototypical of women in general (Ghavami & Peplau, 2013), giving an almost literal meaning to the proclamation that “All the women are White and all the Blacks are men” (Hull et al., 1982).

In this manner, our study builds on the hypotheses of Ghavami and Peplau (2013), who contended that Black women were rendered invisible as a result of dual racial and gender marginalization. As proposed in their gender hypothesis, we similarly expect that White

members of a gender group would be seen as prototypical of that group. In line with their ethnicity hypothesis, we also suggest that men, rather than women, will serve as the prototypical member of an ethnic group. In other words, the prototypical woman is a White woman, and the prototypical Black person is a Black man. In addition, earlier research suggests that ingroup members (here, White people, who are the dominant racial group in the U.S. and have the power to reinforce stereotypes) will tend to differentiate less between members of outgroups than members of ingroups, in what’s known as the outgroup homogeneity effect (Mullen & Hu, 1989). We therefore also hypothesize that the prototypical Black woman will be more similar to the prototypical Black man than will be the prototypical White woman and White man. We borrow from stereotype content research (e.g., Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) to operationalize differentiation between group prototypes as the total difference between groups along a series of stereotypical attributes.

Although White people are the dominant racial group in the U.S., marginalized racial group members may be aware of similar stereotypes about their own group (e.g., Jerald et al., 2017) as well as other groups. Thus, when identifying group prototypes, we concern ourselves not just with the stereotypes that White people hold, but with the stereotypical attributes that individuals from various racial and ethnic backgrounds identify as being associated with people from different demographic groups (Augoustinos & Innes, 1990; Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske & Linville, 1980).

### The Current Study

We examine the intersectional invisibility of Black women using a novel stereotypical attribute awareness task (SAAT). We draw on a list of 41 stereotypical attributes to identify and measure differentiation between prototypical members of relevant social groups. In this context, we expect Black women’s intersectional invisibility to occur in three ways. First, in line with the gender hypothesis, we expect the prototypical White woman and the prototypical woman whose race is not specified to be more similar than the prototypical Black woman and the prototypical race-unspecified woman ( $H_1$ ). Second, in line with the ethnicity hypothesis,

we expect the prototypical Black man and the prototypical Black person to be more similar than the prototypical Black woman and the prototypical Black person ( $H_2$ ). Third, consistent with our differentiation hypothesis, we expect the prototypical Black man and the prototypical Black woman to be more similar than the prototypical White man and the prototypical White woman ( $H_3$ ).

We were also interested in the spatial clustering of all of our demographic groups based on their prototypes. Although we expected particular groups to be closer together (e.g., women and White women) or further apart (e.g., White women and White men), we did not know if there would be a clear dimensionality organizing how the groups would relate to one other. Thus, we regard the dimensional orientation of these groups as an open research question (RQ).

## Method

### Participants

A convenience sample of U.S. adults was recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) for a survey conducted via the Qualtrics website between July 30 and August 4, 2016 ( $N = 1,063$ ;  $M_{\text{age}} = 37.7$ ,  $SD = 12.3$ ; 52.4% women). Our intended sample size was 1,000; however, we let respondents complete the survey if they'd started it before we reached that goal. Most (74.8%) respondents identified as White, non-Hispanic; 7.8% as Black, non-Hispanic; 7.6% as Hispanic; 4.8% as Asian, and 5.0% as another race or multiracial. Respondents were paid \$0.50 for participating. MTurk produces samples comparable in terms of results and quality to student samples and those from market research companies (Coppock, 2019).

### Procedure

We asked U.S. adults whether they thought most people would use a series of stereotypical attribute terms to describe people of various demographic groups across a range of age categories. We then used these responses to identify how similar/different those prototypical group members were. The point of this inquiry was less about assessing what stereotypes our

individual respondents believed, but which ones they were aware of for different groups. The reasoning for this was threefold: First, we sought to eliminate concern for social desirability bias in responses. Respondents were told specifically and repeatedly that responding in a particular fashion was not admission to holding a particular stereotype themselves, but merely reporting that they believed most other people held such stereotypes. Second, rather than being solely concerned with stereotypes held by White Americans, this method allows us to gauge wider public perceptions about stereotypes, including the awareness that racial minority group members might have about stereotypes of their own and other groups. And third, although the composition of our sample may have been somewhat different from the public, it seems likely that any broad national population would have awareness of widely held stereotypes.

All participants were asked to evaluate how well most people thought a series of attributes would apply to members of particular demographic groups. Individuals were randomly assigned to one of two conditions to determine which groups they were asked about: Single or Multiple. Respondents in the Single condition evaluated 20 randomly selected stereotypical attributes for a single demographic group: "black females," "black males," "black people," "white females," "white males," "white people," "females," "males," or "people."<sup>1</sup> Respondents in the Multiple condition evaluated five randomly selected attributes across four demographic groups. Respondents in this condition were randomly assigned to one of two subconditions to determine which set of four demographic groups they would evaluate: Respondents in the superordinate condition each reported on the prevalence of a set of five stereotypical attributes for "females," "males," "black people," and "white people" (displayed in random order), and respondents in the subordinate condition each reported on the prevalence of five stereotypical attributes for "black females,"

<sup>1</sup> We used "females" and "males" because the demographic groups were evaluated across several age categories and we wanted to avoid signaling any sort of difference between categories that would otherwise have been referred to as "boys" and "girls" as opposed to "men" and "women."



“black males,” “white females,” and “white males” (displayed in random order; cf. McConnaughy & White, 2011). No respondents in the Multiple condition were assigned the “people” demographic group. In total, half the respondents were in the Single condition, one quarter in the Multiple-superordinate condition, and one quarter in the Multiple-subordinate condition. We make use of both of these designs simultaneously to ensure that no results depended on whether respondents were asked to evaluate one or multiple groups (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016b). We did not find a difference and therefore pooled the data for the analyses.

After completing the SAAT, all respondents answered questions related to anti-Black prejudice (Henry & Sears, 2002) and political orientation, then reported their gender, age, race, income, education level, and household size.

## Measures

Forty-one stereotypical attributes were chosen from those used in previous studies of stereotype content (Fiske et al., 2002), gender roles (Landrine, 1985), racial stereotypes (Goff, Jackson, Di Leone, Culotta, & DiTomasso, 2014; Levine, Carmines, & Sniderman, 1999; Peffley, Hurwitz, & Sniderman, 1997), the intersection of race and gender (McConnaughy & White, 2011), and age group stereotypes (Goff et al., 2014; Kite, Deaux, & Miele, 1991); see Table 1. We ensured that respondents evaluated attributes relevant to three of the most prominent stereotypes of Black women: the *sexually promiscuous* and *impulsive* Jezebel, the *aggressive* and *hostile* Sapphire, and the *nurturing* and *kind* Mammy (Harris-Perry, 2011). Attributes such as *dependable* and *determined to succeed* are also relevant to the Strong Black Woman stereotype (Harris-Perry, 2011; Jerald et al., 2017). We eliminated redundant attributes, as well as those that did not make sense as applied across all age groups (e.g., *keep up property* from Levine et al., 1999).

For the SAAT, respondents were asked, “How frequently do you think that people would use the term ‘[attribute]’ to describe [demographic group] of the following age groups?” (Example: “How frequently do you think that people would use the term ‘aggressive’ to describe white females of the following

Table 1  
*Stereotypical Attributes Categorized by Warmth/Competence*

Warmth	Competence
Happy	Ambitious
Talkative	Competent
Warm	Intelligent
Friendly	Self-confident
Law-abiding	Dependable
Attractive	Smart with everyday things
Sincere	Determined to succeed
Innocent	Hardworking
Trustworthy	Confused
Nurturing	Dependent
Kind	Dirty
Passive	Illogical
Self-centered	Impulsive
Emotional	Incoherent
Hostile	Gullible
Inconsiderate	Superstitious
Sexually promiscuous	Undisciplined
Vain	Lazy
Aggressive	Irresponsible
Violent	
Boastful	
Complaining	

age groups?”) Following the prompt was a grid-formatted list of seven age groups (0-to-4, 5-to-9, 10-to-13, 14-to-17, 18-to-24, 25-to-29, and 30-to-40 years old) for the assigned group, for example, “5-to-9 year old white females,” for which the response options were “Never” (coded: 0), “Rarely” (.25), “Sometimes” (.5), “Often” (.75), and “Always” (1). Because the current analyses do not concern age, we averaged the three latter age categories to create an “adult” score for each attribute for each group.

Following each attribute-group grid, we also asked respondents how accurate they thought the stereotypes of the demographic groups were. This was designed to allow respondents to explicitly reject the stereotypes, so that they would not feel like their answers to the awareness question constituted some kind of endorsement. These responses were not used in our analyses.

Overall, given that each respondent was assigned to answer a total of 20 stereotype questions—covering only some of the stereotype measures for only some of the groups—the average stereotype question was answered by

around 125 respondents.<sup>2</sup> Somewhat fewer respondents answered questions about “people” given that these were only offered to respondents in the Single group condition ( $n = 51$ ). We excluded this group from our analyses because of the small number of respondents it was assigned to, all of them in the Single condition. Thus, we would not be able to compare individuals assigned this group who were in the Single versus Multiple condition. Because of concerns for how the model would work to compute the scores for this group and the very small sample size as compared to the other groups, we decided to omit these observations.

## Results

To test our hypotheses, we used the SAAT to identify how similar or different the prototypes of the various groups were. We estimated differences between each pair of groups for each attribute using a linear mixed model, accounting for respondents’ age, race, gender, symbolic racism score, political conservatism, and whether they were assigned to the Single condition or the Multiple condition. We also included a respondent-level random effect to account for the fact that half the respondents provided observations of multiple groups. Then we summed the differences between each pair of groups across all attributes to compute a total difference score between each group pair, thereby yielding a matrix of distances between group prototypes; see Table 2. To ascertain whether the difference between one pair of group prototypes was significantly larger than another pair, we used a parametric bootstrap. We resampled cases from our overall data set with replacement 1,000 times and recalculated the distance between each pair of group prototypes (for each variable and overall) in each resampled data set. The average size and variability of this distance across data sets could be thus compared for any pair of prototypes, allowing us to establish statistical significance. The mean distance between any two prototypes, across all 1,000 data sets, was 3.38,  $SD = 1.14$ ; mean distance scores and standard deviations are reported in Table 3.

The difference between White women and women ( $M = 1.60$ ,  $SD = 0.18$ ) was smaller than the difference between Black women and women ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = 0.26$ ),  $t(1764.6) =$

209.88,  $p < .001$ , Cohen’s  $d = 9.39$ , confirming  $H_1$ . The difference between Black women and Black people ( $M = 1.90$ ,  $SD = 0.18$ ) was smaller than the difference between Black men and Black people ( $M = 2.38$ ,  $SD = 0.24$ ),  $t(1857.6) = 50.63$ ,  $p < .001$ , Cohen’s  $d = 2.26$ . Thus,  $H_2$  was not supported. The difference between White women and White men ( $M = 3.18$ ,  $SD = 0.22$ ) was greater than the difference between Black women and Black men ( $M = 2.85$ ,  $SD = 0.23$ ),  $t(1997.7) = -32.87$ ,  $p < .001$ , Cohen’s  $d = 1.47$ , confirming  $H_3$ . The gender hypothesis regarding men and the ethnicity hypothesis regarding White people were also supported. For the gender hypothesis regarding men, the difference between White men and men ( $M = 1.82$ ,  $SD = .18$ ) was smaller than the difference between Black men and men ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = .26$ ),  $t(1810.1) = -179.48$ ,  $p < .001$ , Cohen’s  $d = 8.05$ . For the ethnicity hypothesis regarding White people, the difference between White men and White people ( $M = 2.03$ ,  $SD = .19$ ) was smaller than the difference between White women and White people ( $M = 2.42$ ,  $SD = .21$ ),  $t(1970.2) = 43.12$ ,  $p < .001$ , Cohen’s  $d = 1.95$ .

We employed nonmetric multidimensional scaling (NMDS; Ding, 2018) to answer our RQ about the similarity of our demographic group prototypes and what dimensions could be detected from their ordination. Because NMDS employs distance or dissimilarity matrices, we considered how dissimilar demographic groups were, based on the previously developed distance matrix for our groups (see Table 2). We found a two-dimensional solution with a stress value of .00 after 94 iterations, goodness-of-fit  $R^2 = .99$ . The solution was then rotated for readability.

Two distinct, but not completely orthogonal, dimensions can be observed; see Figure 1. Racial groups are clustered along the horizontal axis, with clear distinctions between Black groups on the left side of the solution and both White and race-unspecified groups on the right side. We interpret the vertical axis as approximating a masculinity–femininity dimension,

<sup>2</sup> For any given attribute, the  $N$  for a comparison between two groups was approximately 250. Across all attributes, this translated to approximately 10,250 data points for such a comparison.

Table 2  
*Matrix of Dissimilarity Between Demographic Group Prototypes Based on the Original Data Set*

Group prototype	Black women	Black men	Black people	Women	Men	White women	White men
Black men	2.70						
Black people	1.53	2.25					
Women	3.33	5.64	3.98				
Men	2.89	3.50	2.83	3.23			
White women	3.53	5.89	4.15	1.16	3.73		
White men	3.07	4.13	3.41	2.60	1.44	3.02	
White people	2.87	4.72	3.22	1.65	2.04	2.15	1.64

with the “women” groups higher on the axis, followed by the “people” groups in the middle, and then “men” groups toward the bottom, within each racial group. Additionally, the entire cluster of Black groups is closer to the masculinity pole of this dimension, whereas the entire cluster of White groups and race-unspecified groups is closer to the femininity pole, although somewhat more dispersed. This indicates that race itself is partially constructed in terms of gender: Blackness is associated with masculinity, and Whiteness more so with femininity.

Of note is the positioning of Black women. Although they are clustered with the other Black groups along the racial dimension, they are much lower on the masculinity–femininity dimension than are White women or race-unspecified women because of the gendered positioning of the entire Black cluster. If the prototypical Black woman was considered to be as feminine as White or race-unspecified women, then Black women would still be toward the left side of the solution with the other Black groups, but higher along the masculinity–femininity dimension.<sup>3</sup> These results indicate that the prototypical Black woman is seen as more similar to the prototypical Black person than to the prototypical woman.

## Discussion

Our results reveal that prototypes of groups at various race-gender intersections differ in ways that particularly erase and exclude Black women. On the one hand, the prototypical Black woman is more similar to the prototypical Black man than the prototypical White woman is to the prototypical White man. On the other hand, the prototypical Black woman is very distinct

from the prototypical woman, whereas the prototypical White woman is incredibly similar to the prototypical woman. Additionally, all prototypes of Black people—Black men, Black women, and the gender-unspecified Black people—are identified as more masculine, whereas White people’s prototypes are identified as more feminine. In other words, the prototypes of Black and White racial groups are constructed in gendered ways that leave Black women unrecognized as women, as well as less distinguishable from Black men.

Interestingly, although our results support the ethnicity hypothesis among White people, they show the opposite among Black people: We found less differentiation between Black women and Black people than between Black men and Black people. Although this runs counter to the ethnicity hypothesis, it must be considered alongside our finding that there is less prototypical differentiation between Black men and Black women than between White men and White women. Underdifferentiation from Black men is another mechanism through which Black women’s intersectional invisibility may manifest itself. Because of the association between Blackness and masculinity (Goff et al., 2008), what may matter more than whether Black women or Black men are more similar to Black people as a group is the fact that Black women are considered more similar to Black men in the first place. Given the placement of Black women and the other Black demographic groups in the NMDS ordination in Figure 1 and

<sup>3</sup> To further illustrate this point, the difference between men and Black women ( $M = 3.12$ ,  $SD = .21$ ) is smaller than the difference between women and Black women ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = .26$ ),  $t(1907.9) = -54.77$ ,  $p < .001$ , Cohen’s  $d = 2.45$ .

Table 3  
*Matrix of Dissimilarity Between Demographic Group Prototypes Based on Mean Difference Scores From 1,000 Bootstrapped Samples*

Group prototype	Black women	Black men	Black people	Women	Men	White women	White men
Black men	2.85 (.23)						
Black people	1.90 (.18)	2.38 (.24)					
Women	3.70 (.26)	5.88 (.28)	4.51 (.27)				
Men	3.12 (.21)	3.62 (.26)	3.20 (.23)	3.58 (.21)			
White women	3.77 (.26)	5.98 (.30)	4.55 (.28)	1.60 (.18)	3.99 (.23)		
White men	3.32 (.27)	4.24 (.31)	3.78 (.30)	2.97 (.20)	1.82 (.18)	3.18 (.22)	
White people	3.24 (.28)	4.91 (.30)	3.77 (.29)	2.04 (.19)	2.38 (.20)	2.42 (.21)	2.03 (.19)

*Note.* Standard deviations are in parentheses.

the positioning of Black women as compared to White women or race-unspecified women along the masculinity–femininity dimension, two things become evident. First, Black women are considered much more masculine than their White counterparts. Second, the operative word in defining how similar to other groups Black women are is more “Black” and less “women.”

The result is that Black women are dually excluded from the superordinate category of women, and their distinction within the Black community is erased via underdifferentiation from Black men, in ways that may carry social and political import. For example, the exclusion of Black women from the superordinate group of women may hinder the degree to which

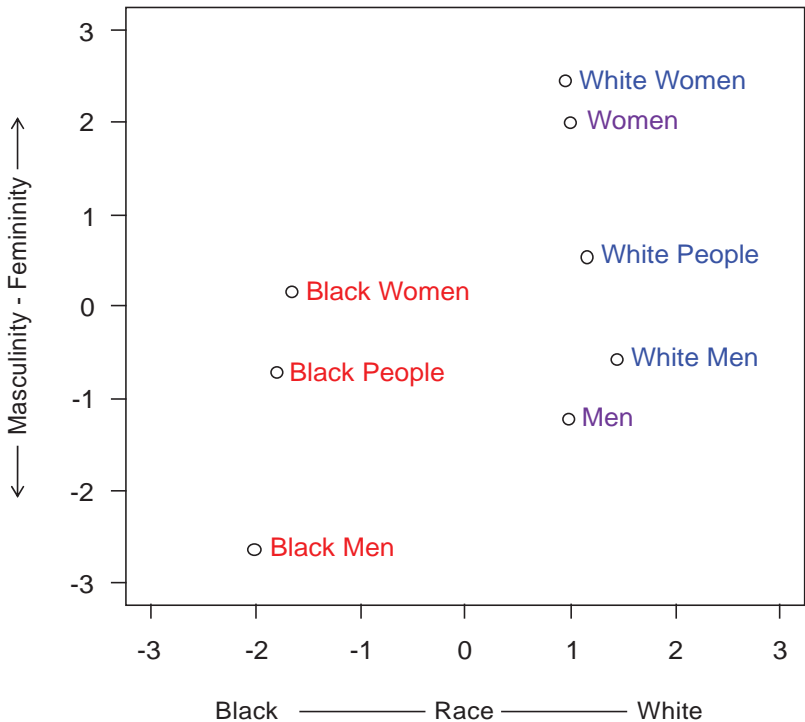


Figure 1. Rotated two-dimensional solution of dissimilarity of eight demographic groups. See the online article for the color version of this figure.



Black women's concerns are addressed within feminist movements (Goff & Kahn, 2013; Grzanka, 2019), as highlighted by hashtags such as #SolidarityIsForWhiteWomen (Freelon et al., 2018). Likewise, the underdifferentiation of Black women from Black men may also explain why movements against anti-Black racism have often been criticized for not doing enough to address the issues that affect Black women—not because people necessarily do not think of Black women as Black people, but because people think of Black women similarly to how they think of Black men. As a result, a one-size-fits-all approach to anti-Black racism leaves Black women's concerns overlooked.

This is no more evident than in the call to address the way that police violence harms Black women, often including sexual violence (Crenshaw et al., 2015). The underdifferentiation of Black women from Black men may also explain why Black women face similar rates of racial disparities in terms of traffic and pedestrian stops, frisks, and arrests. Among Black children, Black girls face racialized and gendered discrimination sometimes at rates even greater than their male counterparts (Crenshaw, Ocen, & Nanda, 2015), and Black women and girls are more associated with threat and danger than are White women and girls (Thiem et al., 2019). These realities speak to how Black women are doubly victimized: first, by a criminal legal system that harms them disproportionately; then, by social justice movements that, in their foci on single axes of identity, often fail to fully address the first type of victimization (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016a, 2016b). Thus, both the apparatuses of the state and the social justice movements engaged in fighting state violence actually work to reinforce the unique brand of raced and gendered harm that befalls Black women. It is therefore imperative that social justice movements work to improve their advocacy for Black women so as not to engage in the same harms toward them that they are charged with combating.

We contribute to the extant literature in four ways. First, we extend the work of Ghavami and Peplau (2013) by demonstrating that, in addition to the exclusion of Black women from women in general, Black women are also less differentiated from men of their racial group than are White women from White men. Second, we employ the evaluation of stereotypical

attributes, common in the stereotype content literature (e.g., Fiske et al., 2002) and in political science (Levine et al., 1999; McConaughy & White, 2011; Peffley et al., 1997), to the study of intersectional invisibility. Our findings support the model put forth by Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008) and complement the work of Goff and Kahn (2013); Goff et al. (2008), and Sesko and Biernat (2010). Third, we employ novel methods in the study of socially and politically relevant stereotypes. Using our new SAAT, we were able to identify the prototypes of various demographic groups and ascertain the degree to which they differ, while being able to make a greater number of comparisons between groups than has been possible using pre-existing methods of data collection. Using NMDS, we identified racial and gender dimensions in the clustering of those prototypes and depicted where our groups lie along these dimensions. Finally, we believe the results of this study endorse the SAAT as a way of both assessing the perceived prevalence of stereotypes and identifying when intersectional identities yield prototypes that most differ from those of superordinate groups.

## Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is the inherent subjectivity in interpreting NMDS solutions. It should be noted that NMDS solutions do not specify which axes denote what dimensions, and the specific rotation of the solution varies between the parameters of the ordination techniques. Therefore, we do not present our interpretation of the solution as “exact” in any sense of the term, but as an additional way to envision the data that aligns with more analytically rigorous methods. It is important to remember that the demographic groups were not ranked or evaluated based on how White or Black they were or how masculine or feminine they were, nor are the measures of dissimilarity based on asking respondents how alike or different any two groups were. Rather, our interpretations of the dimensions and the positioning of the groups on them are based on the similarity of the group prototypes, as determined by what stereotypical attributes people think are associated with the groups. Given the very low stress level and very high goodness of fit, we

have confidence in the ordination of the groups within the solution.

Another limitation is the disadvantage inherent in any self-report measure, particularly for a socially sensitive domain such as intergroup bias in which social desirability may be at play. Although we attempt to reduce the potential for such bias by asking respondents about their awareness of stereotypes and offering the opportunity to directly reject those stereotypes, it is not even clear whether implicit measurement could fully address this concern (Brownstein, Madva, & Gawronski, 2019).

### Future Directions

The goal of this study was not to identify the sources of or effects of specific stereotypes nor to investigate the specific attributes associated with stereotypes of Black women (e.g., hostile and aggressive for the Sapphire), but to examine the differentiation between group prototypes that may have social and political ramifications for Black women in particular. The current study furthers our understanding of intersectional invisibility and identifies another mechanism through which it may work: the underdifferentiation of Black women from Black men. There are several areas to expand on this research. First, future work should probe this differentiation across the life cycle. Second, in line with research on the stereotype content model, subsequent research should examine how the masculinity–femininity and racial grouping dimensions uncovered through our NMDS analysis align with warmth and competence, in line with Fiske et al. (2002). Third, upcoming work should include other racial and ethnic groups in the SAAT and also examine group differentiation along more intersections of identity.

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