Emotional Judgment does not depend on perceived gender

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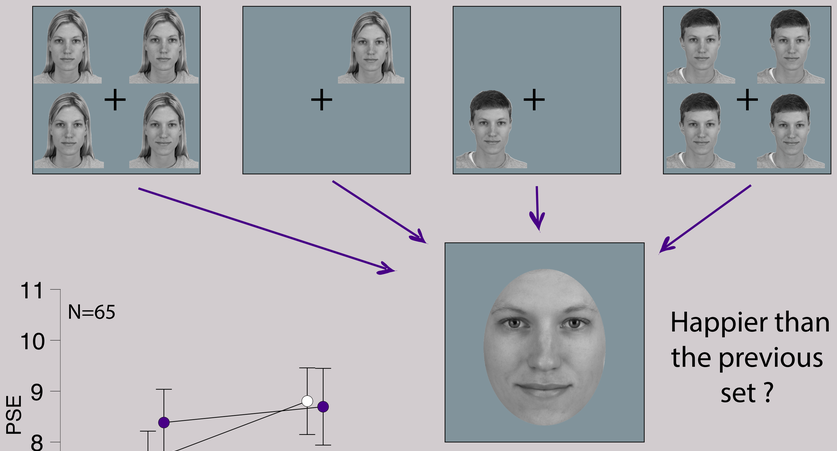
Introduction:

It is a common misconception that women are more emotional than men. The current work elucidates whether perceived gender influences perceived emotionality. One challenge with this work is determining whether perceived emotional differences are due to perceived gender or due to other factors that differ between stimulus categories. We addressed this by using identical androgynous faces that appeared either male or female based on cues unrelated to the actual faces (e.g., hair). We also examined whether any differences in perceived emotionality were amplified in the context of an ensemble.

Primary question: Does perceived gender influence perceived emotionality even when facial content is identical?

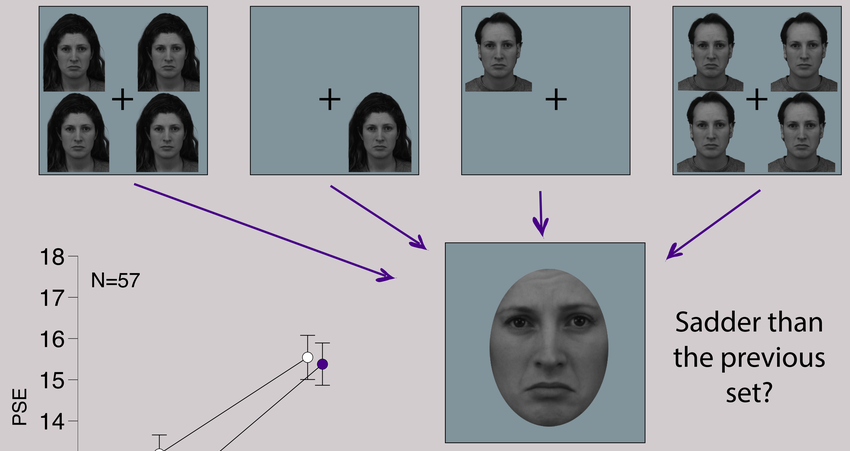
Experiment 1: Neutral to Happy



Happier than the previous set ?

No significant effect of gender or set type.

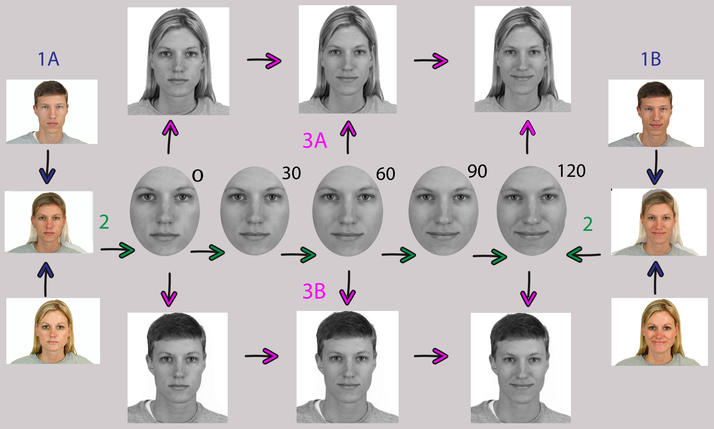
Experiment 2: Neutral to Sad



Sadder than the previous set?

Significant effect for set type; No significant effect for gender.

Stimuli:



1A. Neutral male was morphed to neutral female.

1B. The same morph sequence was created for happy male to happy female. A pilot experiment was run to determine the face that was perceived as most androgynous.

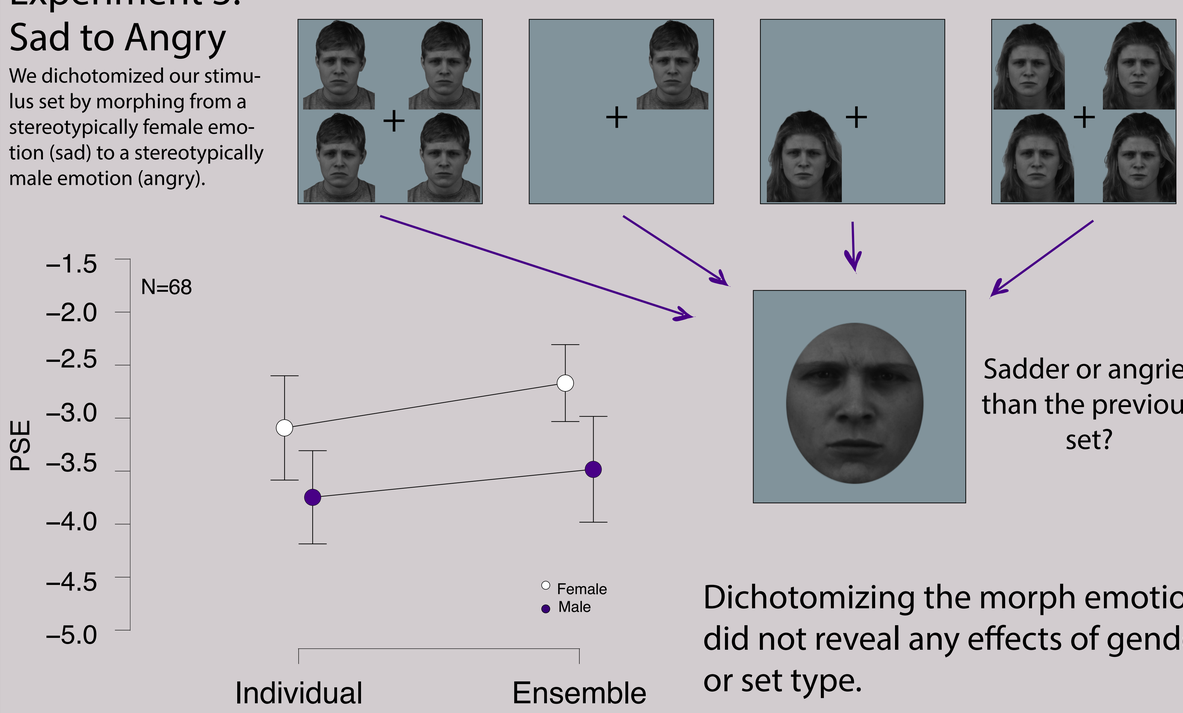
2. The center of the faces were cropped, creating the oval faces. The oval neutral was morphed to oval happy. (0 being most neutral, 120 being happiest)

3A. long hair was added to the morphed sequence to create percived female.

3B. Short hair was added to the morphed sequence to creat percived male.

Experiment 3: Sad to Angry

We dichotomized our stimulus set by morphing from a stereotypically female emotion (sad) to a stereotypically male emotion (angry).



Sadder or angrier than the previous set?

Dichotomizing the morph emotions did not reveal any effects of gender or set type.

Conclusion:

Our results challenge previous findings showing an influence of percived gender on perceived emotionality. These results do not discount the fact that gender stereotypes exist, only the notion that they are driven by perceptual effects.

References:

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