Lonelier, Lazier, and Teased: The Stigmatizing Effect of Body Size

VIREN SWAMI
University of Westminster

ADRIAN FURNHAM
REENA AMIN
JAHANARA CHAUDHRI
KIRAN JOSHI
SHYMA JUNDI
REBECCA MILLER
JULIA MIRZA-BEGUM
FATEHA NISHA BEGUM
PINAL SHETH
University College London

MARTIN J. TOVÉE
Newcastle University

ABSTRACT. The authors conducted 2 studies to examine the stigmatization of the female and male body using photographic stimuli of real people. In the first study, 75 female and 55 male undergraduates rated a series of 50 photographs of women ranging in body mass index (BMI) on 3 items: gets teased, lonely, and lazy. Both male and female observers rated bodies on either side of BMI 19–20 kg/m² higher for the gets teased and lonely items. For the lazy item, there was a clear pattern of greater stigmatization with increasing BMI. In the second study, 40 male and 40 female observers rated a series of photographs of the male body that varied in BMI and waist-to-chest ratio on the same items. Results showed that men and women judged overweight and more tubular men to be lazier, lonelier, and teased. These findings suggest that body size is an important characteristic to consider when examining body stigmatization among men and women. These results also show support for the beautiful-is-good bias.

Keywords: body shape, body weight, obesity, stigmatization

PREVIOUS RESEARCHERS HAVE EXAMINED TARGETS of prejudice on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and age (Mackie, Hamilton, Susskind, & Roselli, 1996). However, more recently, researchers have shifted their attention to the stigmatization of obese and overweight individuals, which
some of them view as the last form of acceptable prejudice (Puhl & Brownell, 2003). Since Allon (1982) put forth the first commentary on widespread discrimination toward obese individuals more than 2 decades ago, researchers have shown weight-based stigmatization to be powerful, pervasive, and difficult to change. For example, in their reviews of the literature, Puhl and Brownell (2001, 2003) cite widespread evidence of weight-based discrimination (typically prejudice toward obese individuals) in multiple domains, including occupational, healthcare, and educational settings.

Weight-based stigma seems to be pervasive and have insidious consequences. Yet, several key questions remain unanswered. One particular issue concerns the origins of weight stigma, which researchers have explained through various perspectives. The most prominent of these perspectives is the psychological attribution framework, which suggests that people attempt to search for information that determines the causes of uncertain outcomes (Rush, 1998). When considering an individual with a potentially stigmatized condition such as obesity, people hypothesize a reason for that individual developing the condition and in turn form their reactions to the obese individual. In this perspective, stigmas are the overt representations of society’s negative perceptions about particular groups (Corrigan, 2000).

Researchers (e.g., Crandall, 1994; Crandall & Cohen, 1994; Crandall & Martinez, 1996; Crandall & Schiffhauer, 1998) have proposed that stigma related to weight, and in particular to obesity, results from a social ideology that uses negative attributions to explain negative life outcomes, including physical appearance. They argue that traditional Euro-American individualism provides a foundation for antifat attitudes in which people are thought to get what they deserve and to be responsible for their situation. Although a great deal of evidence suggests that body weight is determined by a complex interaction of biological and environmental factors (Fairburn & Brownell, 2001), there are widespread misconceptions that obese individuals are responsible for their condition and that weight gain or loss is under an individual’s personal control (Puhl & Brownell, 2001). Moreover, obesity is often associated with low self-discipline, which serves to reinforce beliefs that the cause of obesity is a combination of individual impulses and behaviors (Roehling, 1999).

Crandall and Martinez (1996) proposed that the attribution that a particular condition arises from a controllable behavior generates negative attitudes and stigmatizes out-groups who are perceived to be responsible for their fates. There is a great deal of research in the field on the attribution perspective, most of which focuses on attributions involving ideological conservatism (e.g., Crandall & Biernat, 1990),

The authors thank Dr. Keith Davis and an anonymous reviewer on an earlier version of this manuscript for their helpful comments.

Address correspondence to Dr. Viren Swami, Department of Psychology, University of Westminster; 309 Regent Street, London W1B 2UW, England; v.swami@westminster.ac.uk (e-mail).
just-world beliefs (e.g., Dion & Dion, 1987), and perceptions of causality and controllability (e.g., Crandall, 1994). Each of these attributions, labeled by Crandall (2000) as justification ideologies, places the blame and responsibility for the stigma on the targeted individual and serves to remove feelings of guilt for discriminatory behavior and biased attitudes in observers.

One interesting aspect of the attributional perspective is the role of physical attractiveness in the formation of weight-based attitudes. A great deal of evidence exists to support the notion that body weight is an important component of both male and female physical attractiveness (Fan, Dai, Liu, & Wu, 2005; Fan, Liu, Wu, & Dai, 2004; Maisey, Vale, Cornelissen, & Tovée, 1999; Swami & Tovée, 2005a, 2005b; Tovée, Hancock, Mahmoodi, Singleton, & Cornelissen, 2002; Tovée, Maisey, Emery, & Cornelissen, 1999; Tovée, Reinhart, Emery, & Cornelissen, 1998). Other research supports the beautiful-is-good stereotype (e.g., Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972; Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani, & Longo, 1991), in which physically attractive people are ascribed more positive qualities than unattractive individuals.

Most studies of the relation between the beautiful-is-good bias and body weight have tended to rely on self-report measures (e.g., Bacon, Scheltema, & Robinson, 2001; Morrison & O’Connor, 1999) or silhouettes and line-drawn figures (e.g., Kraig & Keel, 2001). However, researchers studying aspects of physical attractiveness have argued that drawings are an imperfect stimulus format for the measurement of aesthetic preferences and have taken to using photographic images (see Tovée & Cornelissen, 2001). Because of the dearth of studies examining the link between physical attractiveness and obesity stigma using photographic stimuli, we sought to rectify this lack with a preliminary investigation of the negative stereotypes associated with various body weights of women (Study 1) and men (Study 2).

Specifically, we examined observers’ associations of various male and female body weights with three negative descriptors: gets teased, lonely, and lazy. These descriptors were taken from Staffieri (1967, 1972) and have also been used more recently (Kraig & Keel, 2001). As such, they offer a direct extension of previous work. More generally, getting teased and being lonely are useful descriptors to examine, as they appear to be central to processes of social exclusion (see Leary & Kowalski, 1995). As Leary (1990) suggested, a great deal of social behavior is directed at improving inclusion in groups. By contrast, social rejection or ostracism typically involves getting teased and other similar behaviors directed at target individuals, which can lead to social isolation, loneliness, negative affect, ill health, anxiety, and even criminality (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

In this sense, the descriptors gets teased and lonely offer a useful link among body weight, social attributions, and subsequent patterns of treatment of ostracized individuals. The descriptor lazy is similarly useful as it involved the attribution of a personal trait for which one is personally responsible (cf. Crandall & Martinez, 1996). Researchers have examined the association between perceived
laziness and body weight, particularly in applied settings (see Puhl & Brownell, 2003), but such research has typically been limited to overweight and obese target individuals. In the present studies, we examined the association among three negative attributions and women and men’s body weight. By using photographic stimuli, we provided more exact measurements of body-weight stigmatization than was possible in previous studies using line drawings.

**STUDY 1: FEMALE BODY SIZE**

In Study 1, we asked participants to rate a series of photographs of women in a standard pose and at a standard distance from view. We used photographs of real people as opposed to line drawings, and because we knew the actual body weight of the women in the pictures, we could accurately gauge its effects on stigmatization. A further advantage of these stimuli is the fact that the heads of the men and women in the photographs were obscured so that facial attributes would not be a factor in participants’ ratings. Last, we were able to compare the results with those of previous studies where participants rated the same images for physical attractiveness (e.g., Swami & Tovée, 2005a; Tovée et al., 2002, 1999, 1998). A robust finding of such studies is that peak attractiveness is usually ascribed to women with a body mass index (BMI) of about 19–20 kg/m², with significant drop-offs in ratings on either side of this peak. As such, we hypothesized that participants would rate stimulus persons deviating from these BMI values more negatively on the three descriptors. That is, participants would rate both underweight and overweight stimulus persons as lonelier, lazier, and teased more often than women with BMIs of about 19–20 kg/m².

**Method**

**Participants**

Participants were 130 British university undergraduates (75 women, 55 men). The mean age of the male participants was 26.02 years (SD = 11.49 years), and that of the female participants was 26.01 years (SD = 11.56 years). We recruited participants opportunistically through advertisements on campus notice boards that invited participation in a study about the attitudes that people held about female bodies. To minimize the effect of ethnicity on ratings, only participants of European Caucasian descent were invited to take part in the study. All participants were unaware of the study’s hypotheses and were not remunerated for their participation.

**Stimuli**

All participants rated grayscale images of 50 consenting real women in front view that researchers have used and described previously (e.g., Swami & Tovée,
2005a; Tovée et al., 2002, 1999, 1998). Each image depicted women in a set pose, at a standard distance, and wearing tight grey leotards and leggings (for an example of the stimuli, see Tovée et al., 2002). The images were presented in grayscale so that the ethnicity of the stimulus person would not be a factor in observers’ ratings. In addition, the heads of the women in the images were obscured so that facial attractiveness would not be a factor in observers’ ratings. Of the 50 images, 10 were drawn from each of the following five BMI categories: emaciated (< 15 kg/m²), underweight (15–18.5 kg/m²), normal (18.5–24.9 kg/m²), overweight (25.0–29.9 kg/m²) and obese (> 30 kg/m²). The range of BMI values was 11.6–41.2 kg/m², representing the widest range that we had available. The images were printed on sheets of paper measuring 210 × 297 mm so that each image covered the entire page. We presented participants with a booklet to record their ratings. The first page consisted of brief instructions, and the final page requested participants’ demographic details. Other pages in the booklet provided Likert-type scales on which participants made their ratings.

Procedure

We tested all participants individually and told them they would be given a quick preview of a series of female images to get an idea of the range of bodies being shown. Within the image set, individual images were presented in a randomized order. The images were then presented a second time, and we asked participants to record ratings of each image using three separate negative descriptors: gets teased, lonely, and lazy. Participants rated each image on a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (very unlikely to get teased, not at all lonely, not at all lazy) to 9 (very likely to get teased, very lonely, very lazy). We chose not to ask participants to make attractiveness ratings so as not to introduce a potential bias into the data from the halo effect of physical attractiveness (cf. Eagly et al., 1991). There were two randomly generated orders for presentation of the three descriptors. Descriptor order was not significantly associated with ratings \((p > .10)\). For each participant, the entire procedure took approximately 45 min to complete.

Results and Discussion

Sex Differences

To explore whether there were differences between the ratings of male and female participants, we carried out Spearman rank correlations \((r_s)\). We found very high correlations between male and female ratings for each descriptor, suggesting participants were ranking the images in the same way (gets teased, \(r_s = .98, p < .001\); lonely, \(r_s = .97, p < .001\); lazy, \(r_s = .99, p < .001\)). This result is consistent
with the correlations between attractiveness ratings by male and female observers found in previous studies (Swami & Tovée, 2005a; Tovée & Cornelissen, 2001; Tovée et al., 2002).

Therefore, we calculated intraclass reliabilities for the male and female observer groups separately and together, and then we tested for intraclass variation. We tested intraclass variation using Winer’s (1970) intraclass reliability for $k$ means, which tests to what extent all the observers in a particular group are rating the images the same way. The measures showed a very high degree of agreement among the observers’ ratings for each variable (gets teased, male = .97, female = .98; lonely, male = .97, female = .96; lazy, male = .95, female = .97). This finding suggests that the reliability was very high and consistent across both gender groups. Amalgamating the male and female observers did not significantly change the intraclass reliability measures (gets teased = .97; lonely = .97; lazy = .96). Therefore, we pooled the results of the male and female observers in our further analyses.

Multiple Regression Results

We first asked whether BMI was a reliable predictor of the variance in the data. To this end, we used a multiple polynomial regression to model the contribution of BMI to the different descriptor ratings. Following previous studies (Swami & Tovée, 2005a; Tovée et al., 2002, 1999, 1998), we chose the simplest approach possible, which was to include second- and third-order terms for BMI in a multiple regression model. This approach balances the amount of variance accounted for with the simplest possible regression model. The model, run separately for the different descriptors, was as follows:

$$y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + e,$$

where $y$ is the attractiveness rating; $a$ is the intercept; $x_1$ is the BMI; $x_2$ is the BMI$^2$; $x_3$ is the BMI$^3$; and $e$ is random error.

Figure 1 shows plots of ratings as a function of BMI for each of the three descriptors, with all sets being significantly explained by BMI ($p < .001$ in all cases). The total variance explained by the regression model for the relation between BMI and descriptor ratings was very high: 83.2% for gets teased, 81.5% for lonely, and 96.3% for lazy. These results indicate that BMI is a very strong predictor of the ratings.

As noted earlier, when participants are asked to rate the same images for physical attractiveness, a typical finding is that peak attractiveness is ascribed to stimulus persons with a BMI of about 19–20 kg/m$^2$, with drop-offs in ratings on either side of this peak. Given Figure 1, it is noticeable that for two of the descriptors (gets teased and lonely) there is a trough of ratings at about 19–20 kg/m$^2$, with more positive ratings on either side of this trough. In other words, ratings for gets teased and lonely appear to be direct opposites of ratings of physical
FIGURE 1. Plots of variables as functions of body mass index. Each point represents the 50 ratings made by participants. Regression lines (solid lines) and their 95% confidence levels (dotted lines) are superimposed.
attractiveness, which would appear to support the physical attractiveness stereotype. That is, women who are considered to be physically attractive are also considered to be teased less and less lonely than unattractive women. In contrast, for the descriptor lazy, there is clear pattern of stigmatization with increasing body weight. That is, women are considered lazier with increasing BMI.

**STUDY 2: MALE BODY SIZE**

Most previous studies that have examined weight-based stigmatization have generally not been extended to men. This fact is important because studies have shown that the characteristics associated with an attractive male body may be different from those associated with a female body, with overall body weight measured by BMI playing a less important role than body shape measured by the waist-to-chest ratio (WCR; Maisey et al., 1999; Swami & Tovée, 2005b). Therefore, in Study 2, we asked participants to rate a series of images of the male body, following the procedure in Study 1. On the basis of studies of the physical attractiveness of men (Maisey et al.; Swami & Tovée, 2005b), we predicted that participants would rate stimulus men with high WCRs and BMIs deviating from 21–22 kg/m$^2$ as lonelier, lazier, and teased more often than men with low WCRs or BMIs around 21–22 kg/m$^2$.

**Method**

**Participants**

Participants were 80 British university undergraduates (40 men, 40 women). To prevent sampling biases, we invited only participants who had not taken part in Study 1 to participate. Moreover, we invited only participants of European Caucasian descent to take part in the study to minimize the potential confound of ethnicity. The mean age of the male participants was 25.75 years (SD = 8.22 years), and for the female participants it was 21.75 years (SD = 5.34 years). We recruited all participants opportunistically through advertisements on campus notice boards that invited participation in a study about the attitudes people hold about male bodies. Participants took part on a voluntary basis and were not remunerated for their time. They were also naive to the aims of the study until we debriefed them at the end of the experiment.

**Materials**

We asked participants to rate grayscale images of 50 real men in front view. As in Study 1, researchers have used these images previously in studies of physical attractiveness (Maisey et al., 1999; Swami & Tovée, 2005b). The men in the photographs were captured in a set pose, at a standard distance, and were wearing...
tight grey leotards and leggings. Also, their faces were obscured. We presented the images in grayscale so that ethnicity or skin tone would not be a factor in participants’ ratings. To ensure there was an equal range or variation of BMI and WCR in the image set, these characteristics were first measured from a sample of 214 British men (Maisey et al.). We then chose the 50 images representing a range of standard deviation 1.7 on either side of the mean of the distribution of BMI and WCR in the sample for the final image set. The men in the final set varied in WCR from 0.69 to 0.89, and in BMI from 18.94 kg/m² to 28.07 kg/m². The rest of the materials and the procedure were identical to that in Study 1.

Results

Sex Differences

To explore whether there were differences between the ratings of male and female participants, we carried out Spearman rank correlations ($r_s$). There were high correlations between male and female ratings for each descriptor (gets teased, $r_s = .90$, $p < .001$; lonely, $r_s = .95$, $p < .001$; lazy, $r_s = .92$, $p < .001$). Using Winer’s (1970) intraclass reliability, we found a high degree of agreement among the observers’ ratings for each variable (gets teased, male = 0.95, female = 0.96; lonely, male = 0.97, female = 0.97; lazy, male = 0.96, female = 0.94). This finding suggests that the reliability was very high and consistent across both gender groups. Amalgamating the male and female observers did not significantly change the intraclass reliability measures (gets teased = 0.95; lonely = 0.97; lazy = 0.95). Therefore, the results of the male and female observers were amalgamated for further analyses.

Multiple Regression Results

As in Study 1, we used a multiple polynomial regression to model the contributions of BMI and WCR to participants’ ratings (cf. Maisey et al., 1999). The model, run separately for the different descriptors, was as follows:

$$y = a + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + b_3 x_3 + e,$$

where $y$ is the attractiveness rating; $a$ is the intercept; $x_1$ is the BMI; $x_2$ is the BMI²; $x_3$ is the WCR; and $e$ is random error.

Figure 2 shows plots of ratings as a function of WCR, with all sets being significantly explained by WCR ($p < .001$). The total variance explained by this model for the relation between WCR and the three descriptors was 47.1% for gets teased, 49.1% for lonely, and 36.2% for lazy, suggesting that WCR is an important component of ratings for all descriptors. Figure 3 shows the corresponding relationship for ratings and BMI, with all sets also being significantly explained by BMI ($p < .05$). The total variance explained by the relation between BMI and
FIGURE 2. Plots of variables as functions of waist-to-chest. Each point represents the 50 ratings made by participants. Regression lines (solid lines) and their 95% confidence levels (dotted lines) are superimposed.
FIGURE 3. Plots of variables as functions of body mass index. Each point represents the 50 attractiveness judgments made by participants. Regression lines (solid lines) and their 95% confidence levels (dotted lines) are superimposed.
ratings was 30.8% for gets teased, 32.6% for lonely, and 50.9% for lazy. This finding suggests that BMI is another important component of ratings. Moreover, ratings of laziness were better predicted by BMI than WCR, suggesting that overall body weight may have been more important for participants when rating with this descriptor.

For all descriptors, participants judged men with higher WCRs more negatively (see Figure 2). That is, participants rated these men as lazier, lonelier, and more likely to be teased. This finding is consistent with the physical attractiveness stereotype insofar as previous studies have shown men with low WCRs to be considered physically attractive (Maisey et al., 1999; Swami & Tovée, 2005b). In addition, Figure 3 shows that participants judged overweight men more negatively (lazier, lonelier, and teased more often) than average-weight men. This finding is again consistent with findings from studies on physical attractiveness (Maisey et al.; Swami & Tovée, 2005b), which show that men with lower BMIs are judged to be more attractive than overweight men.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The two present studies show that observers make strong negative inferences about men and women on the basis of appearance. In Study 1, participants judged women with BMIs of about 19–20 kg/m\(^2\) to be teased less often and to be less lonely than women with BMIs either lower or higher than this range. However, the relationship between female BMI and judgments of laziness was different, with a general increase in perceived laziness with increasing BMI. We found similar results when we asked observers to judge images of men in Study 2. Men with low WCRs and BMIs of about 21–22 kg/m\(^2\) were considered to be less lazy, less lonely, and to get teased less often than men with high WCRs and BMIs either higher or lower than this range. In addition, BMI appeared to be the better predictor of ratings of laziness than the two other ratings and the ratings of physical attractiveness.

In general, the two present studies support the notion that what is perceived to be unattractive is stigmatized. Combined with previous studies on physical attractiveness, these results suggest that the stigmatization of male and female bodies involves a simple what-is-beautiful-is-good heuristic (Dion et al., 1972). More than 3 decades of research suggests that this heuristic is pervasive and permeates human cognition. Attractive individuals are considered to be more competent (Jackson, Hunter, & Hodge, 1995), especially socially competent (Eagly et al., 1991), and they are judged more positively on a range of descriptors (Langlois et al., 2000). However, in reality, the relation between attractiveness and competence seems to be small (Langlois et al.; Zebrowitz, Hall, Murphy, & Rhodes, 2002). To our knowledge, the present study is the first to describe the association between negative descriptors and actual body weight using photographs of real people.
The pattern linking the beautiful-is-good heuristic with body weight is not surprising. The human body is a visible construct, and the more the body weight deviates from the perceived societal ideals of attractiveness, the greater the degree of stigmatization. In short, stigmatization is based on cultural stereotypes of obesity and thinness and, in particular, on perceived notions of physical attractiveness. This helps explain why body shape and weight should be involved in male body stigmatization, as both characteristics are involved in ratings of male bodily attractiveness (Maisey et al., 1999; Swami & Tovée, 2005b). It may also explain why BMI is such a strong predictor of negative ratings of female bodies, as BMI is thought to be the most important characteristic when judging female physical attractiveness (Fan et al., 2004; Swami & Tovée, 2005a; Tovée et al., 2002, 1999, 1998).

It is also interesting that the association between laziness and female body weight does not show the same increase in negative stereotyping for emaciated and underweight individuals. This finding is in contrast to a recent study that showed evaluations of personal characteristics to be most negative for anorexic individuals when compared with a healthy individual, a person with asthma, and a person with schizophrenia (Stewart, Keel, & Schiavo, 2006). It is possible that, in the absence of comparatively overweight or obese bodies, underweight and emaciated individuals would also be negatively stereotyped. Alternatively, emaciated individuals may only be stigmatized when there is additional information about an illness or other biological factors in developing an illness such as anorexia nervosa (cf. Stewart et al.). Further research is needed to examine when and how the stereotyping of underweight and emaciated individuals occurs.

The present results also showed no distinguishable sex differences in the negative stigmatization of the male and female bodies. Previous studies have provided some evidence that girls show a stronger overweight stigmatism than boys (Hill & Silver, 1995; Kraig & Keel, 2001; Sigelman, Miller, & Whitworth, 1986), a result that was also found with adult women (Harris, Harris, & Bockner 1982; Tiggeman & Rothblum, 1988). However, other researchers have found no sex differences (Brylinsky & Moore, 1994; LeBow, 1988), which is consistent with the present findings. It may be the case that when sex differences occur, they depend on the particular measure of stigmatism (Powlisha, Serbin, Doyle, & White, 1994) or the type of stimuli being used. Alternatively, with the increasing idealization of the male body seen in most socioeconomically developed settings, it may be that men and women hold the same stringent notions of what constitutes an attractive or unattractive male body.

One limitation to the present study is that the stimuli did not depict the facial characteristics of the men and women. In real-life situations, observers rarely see the human body in the absence of facial cues. In the present study, which concentrated on the physical cues available from the body, we obscured the faces to prevent them playing a role in the evaluations. However, future researchers may
want to examine the way in which facial cues also influence stigmatization of the whole body. An additional limitation is the evaluation of stereotyping of photographic images of men and women for whom no other information was available to the participants making ratings. Although this approach allows assessment of the independent contribution of bodily cues to social evaluations, it does not reflect how social evaluations naturally occur or how weight status may interact with other information to influence social evaluations. In addition, stigmatization may take a number of different forms—from explicit derogation to implicit attitudes—and responses to stigmatization experiences may also vary both across and within persons (Neumark-Sztainer, Story, & Faibisch, 1998).

An additional limitation is the fact that we did not collect information about participants’ own BMI, which would have been a useful control variable for the present analyses. Furthermore, the present study relied on a relatively small sample of university undergraduates, and it is unclear how well such results may generalize to other populations. Therefore, further research is required with larger sample sizes that are more representative of the general adult population and for whom physical demographics such as BMI are known and accounted for. Moreover, there is a need to examine stigmatization and stereotyping of certain body types in other socioeconomic settings, as this may have an effect on what is considered to be an attractive male body (cf. Swami & Tovée, 2005a). Overall, researchers should look at the way in which different cultures may or may not stigmatize individuals on the basis of their body shape or weight.

The aforementioned limitations notwithstanding, the present study suggests that the stigmatization of the female and male body can occur with minimal visual cues. The measures used in the present study are relative, thus these results could be interpreted both as evidence for an antifat bias and as support for a proslender or muscular bias. Because developed societies tend to derogate obese individuals and glorify slenderness and muscularity, both forces may be active. The implication here is that changes are needed in the way that society presents information and attitudes about both body types, and that this should begin with a broader definition of what is viewed as physically attractive (Swami, 2007).

**AUTHOR NOTES**

**Viren Swami** is a senior lecturer of psychology at the University of Westminster. The main focus of his research is on the psychology of interpersonal attraction, in particular across cultures. **Adrian Furnham** is a professor of psychology at University College London. He has published widely on organizational and applied psychology. In addition, he is a consultant on organizational behavior and management, writer, and broadcaster. **Reena Amin, Jahanara Chaudhri, Kiran Joshi, Shyma Jundi, Rebecca Miller, Julia Mirza-Begum, Fateha Nisha Begum, and Pinal Sheth** were psychology undergraduate students at University College London at the time this study was conducted. **Martin J. Tovée** is an associate professor in visual cognition at Newcastle University. His research explores human mate selection and the perception of physical attractiveness in an evolutionary psychology context.
REFERENCES


Dion, K. K., Berscheid, E., & Walster, E. (1972). What is beautiful is good, but... A meta-analytic review of research on the physical attractiveness stereotype. Psychological Bulletin, 110, 109–128.


*Received June 13, 2007*

*Accepted September 17, 2007*
The Journal of General Psychology publishes human and animal research reflecting various methodological approaches in all areas of experimental psychology. It covers traditional topics such as physiological and comparative psychology, sensation, perception, learning, and motivation, as well as more diverse topics such as cognition, memory, language, aging, and substance abuse, or mathematical, statistical, methodological, and other theoretical investigations. The journal especially features studies that establish functional relationships, involve a series of integrated experiments, or contribute to the development of new theoretical insights or practical applications.

The Journal of General Psychology practices blind review. Therefore, a manuscript should be submitted with the author names and affiliations removed. Please include this information in the cover letter.

Submit manuscripts electronically to http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/gen. The manuscript should be submitted as a double-spaced Microsoft Word file with minimal formatting and in 12-point Times or Times New Roman font. Please do not use word-processing styles, forced section breaks, or automatic footnotes. Include 3–4 keywords or phrases after the Abstract.

Include a submission letter with a statement that the manuscript is not under concurrent consideration elsewhere. Each manuscript is reviewed by three readers, a process that requires several weeks.
