Gendered Racial Boundary Maintenance:

Social Penalties for White Women in Interracial Relationships

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Abstract

Throughout American history, formal laws and social norms have discouraged interracial romantic relationships. Interracial relationships blur the boundaries between racial groups, challenging the essentialized racial categories that define *Whiteness* as an exclusive, high status identity. Whites, who are the most resistant to interracial marriage of any racial group, have used their dominant position in American society to enforce norms against interracial relationships. Despite the importance of racial homogamy to White identity and status, we argue that gender roles make violating norms against intimate intergroup contact more costly for women than men, leading to Whites' greater resistance to interracial relationships involving White women. In a representative American sample using a natural quasi-experiment, as well as three follow-up lab experiments, we find that White women face differential social penalties for intimate intergroup contact— being perceived as gender deviant and low status within the group. By contrast, having a racial out-group partner did not influence status perceptions of men or Black women. Status perceptions of both individuals in the couple predicted attitudes towards the couple as a unit, leading to greater prejudice towards interracial relationships involving White women than White men. This research demonstrates the existence of a gendered double standard for intimate intergroup contact among Whites, revealing that gender norms play a critical role in the maintenance of American racial boundaries.

Keywords: Intergroup contact, gender, race, norms, backlash, intersectionality

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Though the Supreme Court formally legalized interracial marriage in 1967, interracial marriages, particularly between Whites and non-Whites, are still rare in the United States. According to the most recent Census data, over 95% of married Whites have a same-race spouse, while less than 1% have a Black spouse (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Individuals in interracial relationships have faced stigma and outright violence from White society throughout U.S. history, and still face social and economic repercussions including heightened visibility, public stigma, housing discrimination, workplace harassment, and hostile customer service (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2006; Dalmage, 2000; Lessig, 1995; McNamara et al., 1999; Perry & Sutton, 2008; Rosenblatt et al., 1995). Though Whites' shared norms against interracial relationships play a critical role in the maintenance of American racial boundaries, these norms do not apply uniformly to all members of the group. In this paper, we argue that gender norms serve an important function in Whites' maintenance of racial boundaries, by influencing norms against intergroup contact. Because of the differential gender norm expectations placed on men and women, particularly in sexual contexts, violating in-group norms against intergroup relations is more costly for White women than White men. This demonstrates that gender norms are an integral part of the maintenance of American racial boundaries.

Interracial relationships violate Whites' collective norms for appropriate intergroup contact, and those involved often face social and economic discrimination. Interracial relationships represent a fundamental blurring of social, economic, and reproductive racial boundaries, implicitly threatening essentialist racial categories (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2006; Dalmage, 2000; Lessig, 1995; McNamara et al., 1999; Perry & Sutton, 2008; Rosenblatt et al.,

1995). As the dominant group in the American racial hierarchy, the blurring of racial boundaries poses a threat to White identity and status (Frankenberg, 1993; Knowles & Peng, 2005; Mandalaywala et al., 2018). Interracial romance is both cause and consequence of increased social integration, reduced intergroup prejudice, and greater economic equality (Banerjee et al., 2013; Frankenberg, 1993; Fu, 2008; Golebiowska, 2007; Graf et al., 2014; Lessig, 1995; Paolini et al., 2018; Skinner & Hudac, 2017; Tropp & Page-Gould, 2014; Yancey, 2007). As a result, Whites are the most resistant to interracial marriage of any racial group (Castano et al., 2002; Ho et al., 2011, 2013; Lessig, 1995; Lewis et al., 2011; Yzerbyt et al., 2000). Whites' collective norms against intergroup contact are a powerful means of discouraging close interracial relationships, as such norms not only discourage intergroup contact, but also increase intergroup anxiety, dehumanization, and prejudice; and impede the ability of intergroup contact that does occur to foster positive outcomes (Christ et al., 2014; Gómez et al., 2011; Paterson et al., 2015; Stathi et al., 2017; Tezanos-Pinto et al., 2010; Tropp & Page-Gould, 2014; Turner et al., 2008).

Surprisingly, there has been little research on how gender influences the maintenance of racial boundaries through interracial contact norms. While the importance of in-group contact norms to intergroup relations is clear, the literature has implicitly assumed that these norms are applied consistently throughout the group. The present research challenges this assumption. Extensive evidence suggests women face greater social and sexual restrictions than men (Bareket et al., 2018; Bordini & Sperb, 2013; Crawford & Popp, 2003; Glick & Fiske, 2018; Infanger et al., 2016; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Smith et al., 2008). As such, we predicted that women experience greater social penalties for violating norms against intimate interracial relations. We focus on interracial contact norms among White Americans, as their position at the top of the American racial hierarchy gives Whites the collective motivation and means to enforce racial

boundaries. Limited existing evidence suggests there is a gendered disparity in Whites' attitudes towards interracial couples as a unit, or *dyadic prejudice* (Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001). For example, historical records suggest that romantic relations between White women and non-White men have faced greater stigma and even violent backlash among Whites, compared to relationships between White men and non-White women (Davis, 2011; Ferber, 1999; Irby, 2014; Kaba, 2011; Kendi, 2016; Romano, 2009). At the same time, hypersexual stereotypes about African Americans have long been used to justify White men's sexual exploitation of Black women, and violence towards Black men accused of involvement with White women (Babbitt, 2013; Davis, 2011; Harris-Perry, 2011). More recent research suggests that White women in interracial relationships perceive greater resistance to their relationship from family members than do White men (Miller et al., 2004).

These historical roots bear contemporary fruit, as we find evidence of a gendered asymmetry in Whites' tolerance for racial boundary-crossing. In a nationally representative poll, we find that Whites having more female (vs. male) children express greater opposition to family members marrying a someone from another race. In three follow-up experiments, we show that White women face greater individual penalties for engaging in interracial relations, compared to White men. Specifically, we find White women are evaluated as lower status and more gender deviant when they date outside the group. Men's status perceptions, by contrast, depended solely on his own race, such that Black men were evaluated as lower status than White men. Status perceptions of both targets were associated with attitudes towards the couple as a whole. Together, low status perceptions the White woman with a Black male partner, and of the Black man with any partner, drove greater prejudice towards the White female-Black male couple than any other pair. As a result, we suggest that norms against intergroup contact are not gender-

neutral; rather, White women face greater expectations to maintain racial boundaries, and suffer social penalties when they do not.

Interracial Relationships and the Maintenance of Racial Boundaries

Norms against interracial contact both reflect and maintain racial group boundaries between Whites and non-Whites. The racial categories we use today are the collective adjudication of centuries of legal decisions regulating racial classification and segregation (Lopez, 1997). Legal distinctions such as the *one drop rule*, which defined individuals with any traceable amount of non-White lineage as non-White, helped construct a shared essentialist understanding of race as an immutable, categorical distinction between *Whites* and non-White *Others*[1] (Bobo, 1983; Lessig, 1995; Lopez, 1997; McRae, 2018). In this ideology, Whites and non-Whites represent separate natural kinds, whose profound, innate differences are based in immutable biological categories (Lessig, 1995; Lopez, 1997).

Social segregation in education, housing, and public transit is crucial to this understanding of race. Integrated schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods give people the opportunity to share social interactions and joint tasks with people from other races. This facilitates the formation of close ties with racial out-group members, which blurs the psychological lines between groups (Banerjee et al., 2013; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006a; Tropp & Page-Gould, 2014). Opposition to interracial contact, particularly opposition to interracial marriage, is positively associated with race essentialism— the belief that race is a fundamental, fixed property based in inherent biological differences (Golebiowska, 2007; Pauker et al., 2016; Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). This is likely because interracial relationships challenge essentialized racial categories. Interracial couples are a literal representation of reproductive, social, and economic intermixing between groups. As a result, the existence of interracial

couples may threaten individuals invested in a categorical racial identity.

The construction of *Whiteness* as a relational category -- defined by its distinction from racial and ethnic *Others* -- makes racial boundaries an essential component of White identity (Dyer, 1988; Hartigan, 1997; Lessig, 1995; Lopez, 1997). Strict racial boundaries preserve the exclusivity that defines *Whiteness*— privileges of space, access, and status are only privileges if they are not afforded to everyone (Ellemers et al., 1988; Harris, 2003; Knowles & Peng, 2005; Tajfel & Turner, 2001). Maintaining racial boundaries also serves White's hierarchical group interests, by essentializing differences in group outcomes, and consolidating wealth and social ties among fellow Whites (Banerjee et al., 2013; Davis, 2011; Fang et al., 1998; Ferber, 1999; Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). Categorical racial boundaries justify racial inequality as a naturally occurring outcome, obfuscating the many social processes that help maintain White supremacy (Jost et al., 2004; Sidanius & Pratto, 2001; Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Boundary crossing via interracial relationships also directly threatens White supremacy by forging leveling socioeconomic ties between high-status Whites and lower-status non-Whites. The tradition of passing of money and other resources down family lines via inheritance means that interracial relations directly benefit lower-status racial minorities by giving them greater access to resources (Banerjee et al., 2013). This facilitates the rise of multiracial individuals within the social hierarchy, threatening the stability of the existing order where Whites sit alone at the top.

Norms against intergroup contact are a powerful means of discouraging close interracial relationships, and thus maintaining racial boundaries. In addition to racial prejudice and anxiety, norms against intergroup contact decrease individual's willingness to engage in intergroup contact, and the likelihood that intergroup contact, when it does occur, will result in positive outcomes (Christ et al., 2014; Paterson et al., 2015; Stathi et al., 2017; Tezanos-Pinto et al.,

2010; Tropp & Page-Gould, 2014; Turner et al., 2008). As the dominant group in the American racial hierarchy, Whites have the most to gain from norms against interracial relations. As a group, Whites have used their powerful position to enforce these norms throughout U.S. history (Bobo, 1983; Harris, 2003; Lessig, 1995; Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001; Lopez, 1997). As such, we focus our empirical study on how gender norms influence Whites' intergroup contact norms, as these norms directly contribute to racial prejudice and stratification in American society.

Gender & Norm Enforcement

Gender prescribes different behavior for men and women, demanding that men take on agentic roles and women serve in communal and subservient roles (Glick & Fiske, 2018). Evolutionary theories attribute gender role differentiation to the different reproductive pressures faced by men and women, while social role theories emphasize the role of cultural adaptation and social norms (Miller et al., 2004). In reality, gender roles are multiply determined by interacting social and biological forces, and advocating for one force over the other surely misrepresents the interdependent coevolution of human genes and culture (Golebiowska, 2007; Pauker et al., 2016; Skinner & Hudac, 2017; Tropp & Page-Gould, 2014). Empirically, we focus on the normative enforcement of gender roles through social penalties, as this means of enforcing gender norms is often observed in modern organizations and social contexts (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Rosette et al., 2016; Rudman et al., 2012; Toosi et al., 2019). Social norms surrounding intergroup contact are also an important predictor of individual's attitudes and behavior in intergroup contexts (Christ et al., 2014; Tropp & Page-Gould, 2014).

Normative expectations play a key role in maintaining behavioral differences between men and women, encouraging gender-divergent behavior by rewarding conformity to gender

norms and punishing gender deviance. Women who violate gender norms often face social and economic backlash for their behavior (Madeline E. Heilman, 2012; Infanger et al., 2016; Rosette et al., 2016). In business, politics, religion, and beyond, women who behave in ways that violate gendered expectations face social and economic penalties such as negative evaluations, status loss, and sabotage (Ferguson, 2018; M. E. Heilman et al., 1995; Madeline E. Heilman, 2012; Madeline E. Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Livingston et al., 2012; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rosette et al., 2016; Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Women are particularly likely to experience gender backlash in domains where gender roles are highly salient, such as in the domain of sexual behavior. Women are often categorized into positive and negative subtypes (e.g. "saints" vs. "sluts") based on whether they are perceived to fulfill or transgress gendered sexual norms (Bareket et al., 2018; Glick & Fiske, 2018). Many studies have demonstrated this "sexual double standard"—the disparate penalties faced by women who engage in deviant sexual behavior (see Bordini & Sperb, 2013 for a review). For women, engaging in sexual behavior seen as counter-normative, such as having many sexual partners, can lead to negative evaluations, low status perceptions, and punishment (Kreager & Staff, 2009; McMahon & Kahn, 2016; Muggleton et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2008). In America and around the world, women have faced incarceration, sterilization, violence, and even death for perceived sexual promiscuity (Chesler, 2010; Lammasniemi, 2017; Mayeda & Vijaykumar, 2016; Sangster, 1996; Stern, 2018). By contrast, men's promiscuity typically does not result in social or physical punishment, and can even bolster status perceptions (Kreager & Staff, 2009; Marks et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2008). In the United States, cultural changes around normative sexuality have reduced gender backlash for now-common sexual behavior, such as premarital (but monogamous, heterosexual) sex. However, for *deviant* sexual behavior, or

behavior perceived to be counter-normative, women still experience greater social penalties than men (Bordini & Sperb, 2013).[2]

Gendered Norms for Intergroup Contact

Despite the importance of racial boundaries to White identity and status, we argue that behavioral expectations for maintaining these boundaries fall more heavily on White women than White men. Among White Americans, intimate interracial relations are still an uncommon and deviant behavior. White women who engage in intimate interracial relations violate both intergroup contact norms and gender norms. Though White men also violate racial boundaries when engaging in interracial relations, this behavior is licensed rather than restricted by male gender norm expectations. As one White viewer commented after seeing one of the first interracial kisses on American television between Captain Kirk, a White man, and Lieutenant Uhura, a Black woman: “I'm against the mixing of the races. But anytime a red-blooded boy like Captain Kirk gets a beautiful dame in his arms like Lt. Uhura, he ain't going to fight it” (Farivar, 2018). While Whites may disapprove of *all* intimate interracial relations, White women face greater social costs for this violation.

In this paper, we demonstrate that the maintenance of racial boundaries in America is a gendered social process, as White women, but not White men, face status penalties for interracial relationships. We focus on status perceptions of the male and female targets in the couple, as a reflection of their general social standing within the group. Previous research shows that individuals who fulfill positive in-group norms tend to be conferred higher status, while those that violate in-group norms suffer status penalties (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; van Kleef et al., 2015). As such, we predicted that White women experience greater status loss for interracial relations, compared to White men who engage in the same intergroup behavior. We expected this

would lead to more negative attitudes towards interracial couples including a White woman than those including a White man (i.e. *dyadic prejudice*; Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001). For White women, violating in-group sexual norms comes at the cost of in-group status, leading to greater hostility towards interracial couples involving White women.

Current Research

To investigate these claims, we conducted four studies. In Study 1, we analyze a representative archival dataset of White Americans, and observe that having more female (vs. male) children is associated with greater opposition to family members marrying someone from another racial group. This study represents a natural experiment and a first test of whether Whites' attitudes towards interracial relationships depend on the gender of the individuals involved. In three subsequent studies, we examine Whites' intergroup contact norms using an experimental paradigm, manipulating the race and gender make-up of a target couple. These studies provide evidence of a gendered asymmetry in how Whites perceive other Whites who violate norms against interracial relationships. White women who engage in interracial relations are viewed as low status and gender deviant, leading to greater prejudice towards interracial relationships involving White women. Across all three experimental studies, we do not observe such social penalties against White men for the same behavior. Based on these findings, we suggest that Whites' collective norms for intergroup contact are inherently gendered: White women face stronger expectations that their behavior will maintain boundaries between racial groups, and experience social penalties when they do not.

Study 1

In Study 1, we sought initial evidence for gendered interracial contact norms in patterns of prejudice towards interracial marriage. If Whites are less tolerant of intergroup relations

involving White women than White men, we should expect to see a gendered asymmetry in their acceptance of interracial relationships involving their own family members. Specifically, we predicted that Whites express greater opposition to interracial relationships among family members when more of those family members are women. We test this gendered asymmetry using demographic and attitude data from the General Social Survey (GSS).

The GSS is a nationally representative poll that measures American's beliefs about a variety of social issues, including interracial relations (Smith, Davern, Freese, & Hout, 1972-2018). Like many other surveys assessing attitudes towards interracial marriage, the GSS did not differentiate between gender x race combinations in its questions. However, one question did ask how participants would feel if a *close relative* married a member of a specific race (White, Asian, Hispanic, or Black). Because this question asks about participant's feelings specifically concerning their own family members, we used the survey's household demographic information to calculate the gender composition of participants' family—the targets of the interracial marriage questions.

In this analysis we focus on White Americans with children, as the gender of one's children is generally a variable exogenous to the individual. This study took advantage of the fact that the sex of an individual's children is selected at random by biological processes, resulting in a natural quasi-experiment (Glynn & Sen, 2015; Oswald & Powdthavee, 2010; Washington, 2008). How does the gender of an individual's children influence their opposition to familial interracial marriage? This research design implies that, conditional on a participant in the sample deciding to have a child, nature randomly assigns them to have either a male child or a female child. By comparing participants who have been randomly assigned a greater proportion of girls (vs. boys) while controlling for the total number of children, we can estimate the comparative

effect of having more female children on participant's acceptance of familial interracial marriage.

Given the random assignment of child birth sex, this research design precludes the possibility of a variety of reverse correlation and selection effects (Washington, 2008). In addition, we manage the potential influence of endogenous family birth-stopping rules by repeating our analyses focusing on participants with only one child. If opinions on interracial marriage are associated with the desire to have a certain gender composition of children, this could create a spurious reverse correlation where interracial marriage attitudes influence the gender composition of people's children (Oswald & Powdthavee, 2010). We rule out this possibility by repeating our analyses on the subset of participants with one child, as the choice to have the first child cannot be influenced by the gender of previous (non-existent) children.

In Study 1, we predicted that Whites' gendered expectations for appropriate intergroup relations would show up in their willingness to accept family members marrying a spouse of another race. Specifically, we expected participants with more daughters would express greater opposition to a family member marrying outside the group. This produced the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis: Whites who have a greater proportion of female children will be more opposed to a family member marrying a spouse from another racial group.

While we did not have a specific prediction with respect to our non-White participants, we also explored our variables of interest among non-Whites in the GSS sample. We replicate all analyses performed on the White sample for exploratory purposes. While we do observe some evidence for out-group exclusion in marriage preferences, we do not observe our focal effect: a

positive association between proportion of female children and opposition to out-group marriage. Interested readers may view these analyses in the online supplement.

Participants and Procedure

The interview-based GSS Survey asks for participants' opinions and behaviors on a variety of topics (e.g. politics, religion, race relations, personal values), as well as demographic information for the participant and their household. Our sample consisted of White participants in households with children, who reported being either (1) the head of the household or (2) spouse to the head of household[3] (3275 men and 4907 women) from the 1990 and 1996-2018 GSS surveys. During these years, the survey included the following questions about interracial marriage: "How [would you feel] about having a close relative or family member marry a [White/Asian/Hispanic/Black] person?" on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly favor* to 5 = *strongly oppose*). Data for participants who answered "Don't know", or "Not applicable" was recoded as missing ("NA"). Average age of participants was 42.3 years (*SD* = 11.8).

Measures

Proportion of Children. Using the survey's demographic data, we calculated the total number of male and female children in each participant's household. Our primary independent variable was the proportion of respondent's children that were female, calculated by dividing the number of female children reported by the total number of children reported.

Opposition to Out-group Spouse. Participants answered "How [would you feel] about having a close relative or family member marry a [White/Asian/Hispanic/Black] person?" on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly favor* to 5 = *strongly oppose*). The pattern of correlations between these four variables (see Table 1) suggests that participant's responses to out-group marriage was distinct from their response to marriage within their racial group. To confirm this,

we conducted a principal component analysis with promax rotation, as the four items were correlated. Eigenvalues indicated that a two-factor solution accounted for more than 91% of the variance in marriage acceptance ratings. The first factor represented marriage to a Black, Hispanic, or Asian spouse, accounting for 65% of the variance; and the second factor representing marriage to a White person, accounting for 25% of the variance. We computed a composite measure of Opposition of Out-group Spouse by averaging participants' ratings for each of the three racial out-groups (i.e. Asian, Hispanic, and Black spouses, $\alpha = .93$). Results were similar when each racial out-group was considered separately (see SOM).

Control Variables. We include total number of children, opposition to in-group (White) spouse, year of survey administration, and political ideology as control variables. Including number of children in the model manages potential effects of cohort-size, as parenting additional children could also impact participants' attitudes.[4] Opposition to marriage to a White person (i.e. an in-group member) is included as a control variable to ensure our results reflect out-group exclusion, rather than merely a general opposition to female children getting married. Political ideology was included as a robustness check, because previous research has found having more female children is associated with political liberalization (Oswald & Powdthavee, 2010; Washington, 2008). Political ideology was measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *extremely liberal* to 5 = *extremely conservative;* answers of "Not applicable", "Don't know", or "No answer" were recoded as missing). We also include participant gender in our analysis, to investigate whether our focal hypothesis holds for Whites in general, or if White men and White women show differential responses.

Results

Analysis Strategy. We used the 'survey' package in R to analyze the data using inverse-probability weighting and design-based standard errors (Lumley & Scott, 2017). This approach accounts for the GSS sampling design during analysis, correcting for potential heteroscedasticity in the data and allowing us to make valid inferences about the population.

Whites with Children. To test our hypothesis that having more female children predicts greater opposition to familial interracial marriage, we regressed opposition to familial interracial marriage on proportion of female children, participant gender, and their interaction, controlling for total number of children, survey year, opposition to same-race marriage, and participant political ideology. We did not observe a significant interaction by gender (b = -.05, SE = .10, t(2951) = -.62, p = .536) so for the remaining analyses we omit the interaction term from the model. There was a significant main effect for participant gender, b = .14, SE = .04, t(2951) = 3.65, p < .001, as White men expressed more opposition to out-marriage than White women. Consistent with our hypothesis, proportion of female children was significantly related to opposition to family members marrying out, b = .14, SE = .05, t(2951) = 2.96, p = .003. We also observe significant main effects for all control variables except the total number of children; see Table 2 for full model. Overall, these results suggest that both White men and White women with more female children express greater opposition to those family members marrying a racial-outgroup member.

Whites with One Child. To test the robustness of the relationship between having female children and opposition to familial interracial marriage, we repeat the above analyses focusing on Whites with only one child. We regressed opposition to familial interracial marriage on proportion of female children (here either 1 or 0), participant gender, and their interaction, controlling for survey year, opposition to same-race marriage, and participant political ideology.

We did not observe a significant interaction by gender (β = -.05, *SE* = .12, *t*(1320) = -.47, *p* = .641) so for the remaining analyses we omit this interaction term from the model. There was a significant main effect for participant gender, β = .12, *SE* = .06, *t*(1320) = 2.01, *p* = .046, as White men expressed more opposition to out-marriage than White women. We again find support for our hypothesis, as having a single female (vs. male) child was associated with greater opposition to family members marrying out, β = .15, *SE* = .06, *t*(1320) = 2.67, *p* = .008. We also observe significant main effects for all control variables; see Table 3 for full model. Overall, these results suggest that for White single-child parents, having a female (vs. male) child is associated with greater opposition to family members marrying interracially.

Table 1.

Study 1: Design-Corrected Means & Correlations

	M	SE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Marry White	2.05	.023	--								
2. Marry Black	2.86	.024	.15***	--							
3. Marry Asian	2.72	.021	.27***	.84***	--						
4. Marry Hispanic	2.70	.022	.24***	.79***	.85***	--					
5. Marry Other	2.76	.021	.21***	.95***	.95***	.93***	--				
6. Survey Year	2010	.129	.15***	-.31***	-.27*	-.25***	-.30***	--			
7. Political Ideology	4.32	.031	-.10***	.11***	.05**	.07**	.09***	.01	--		
8. P(Female Children)	0.47	.009	-.01	.03	.04*	.04*	.03	-.01	.00	--	
9. Total Kids	1.87	.023	.02	-.04*	-.04*	-.02	-.04*	.00	.05**	.02	--

Note: 'Opposition to Familial Interracial Marriage' and 'Marry White' measured on a scale from 1 = *strongly favor* – 5 = *strongly oppose*. Political ideology measured on a scale from 1 = *extremely liberal* – 5 = *extremely conservative.* Participant gender coded as male = 0, female = 1. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001

Table 2.

Study 1: Whites with Children
Survey-Weighted Linear Regression Results
with Robust Standard Errors

	Opposition of Familial Interracial Marriage	
	β	*b*
P(Female Children)	.139**	.057**
	(.047)	(.019)
Total children	-.035†	-.036†
	(.021)	(.022)
Marry White	.249***	.243***
	(.021)	(.021)
Year	-.031***	-.181***
	(.004)	(.021)
Political Ideology	.082***	.113***
	(.015)	(.021)
Participant Gender	.143***	.143***
	(.039)	(.039)
Constant	65.062***	2.781***
	(7.351)	(.020)
Observations	2,952	2,952
R_2	0.102	0.102
Adjusted R_2	-5.495	-5.495

Note: 'Opposition to Familial Interracial Marriage' and 'Marry White' measured on a scale from 1 = *strongly favor* – 5 = *strongly oppose*. Political ideology measured on a scale from 1 = *extremely liberal* – 5 = *extremely conservative.* Participant gender coded as male = 0, female = 1.
† p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001

Table 3.

Study 1: Whites with One Child
Survey-Weighted Linear Regression Results with Robust Standard Errors

	Opposition of Familial Interracial Marriage	
	β	*b*
P(Female Children)	.155**	.155**
	(.058)	(.058)
Marry White	.210***	.204***
	(.030)	(.029)
Year	-.033***	-.195***
	(.005)	(.031)
Political Ideology	.093***	.127***
	(.022)	(.030)
Participant Gender	.118*	.118*
	(.059)	(.059)
Constant	68.225***	2.821***
	(10.524)	(.028)
Observations	1,321	1,321
R_2	0.091	0.091
Adjusted R_2	-4.38	-4.38

Note: 'Opposition to Familial Interracial Marriage' and 'Marry White' measured on a scale from 1 = *strongly favor* – 5 = *strongly oppose*. Political ideology measured on a scale from 1 = *extremely liberal* – 5 = *extremely conservative.* Participant gender coded as male = 0, female = 1.
† p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001

Discussion

Study 1 presents a first test of our proposition using a representative national public opinion survey. We hypothesized that, if Whites' norms for intimate interracial contact are gender-dependent, then Whites with a greater number of female children would be more opposed to people in their family marrying a spouse from another race. As predicted, having a greater proportion of female children was associated with greater opposition to family members marrying interracially. In addition, we find that for Whites with one child, having a female child (vs. male child) was associated with greater opposition to familial interracial marriage, evidence that this effect is not an artifact of birth stopping rules. These results suggest that Whites are more opposed to family members marrying individuals from another racial group when those family members are female.

In documenting this pattern in a representative public opinion survey, this study speaks to the generalizability of this pattern among Whites in the United States. White's group norms reside at both an individual and group level, constructed through the collective perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of group members over time (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Lapinski & Rimal, 2005; Lee & Hicken, 2016; Valian, 1999). As such, though here the focal effect size fell below Cohen's threshold for small (Cohen, 1992), the full effect of gendered intergroup contact norms is more appropriately understood as cumulative across time, individuals, and interactions (Funder & Ozer, 2019).

While the use of birth sex as a predictor variable in Study 1 acts as a natural quasi-experiment, this method still lacks the empirical control available in the lab. For instance, while this method precludes reverse causality because participants presumably cannot control the birth sex of family members, we have little information about why our participants demonstrated this

pattern of results. To address these issues, in Studies 2a, 2b, and 3 we conduct true experiments. In these studies, we focus more directly on how engaging in interracial relationships influences perceptions of the *individuals* in the relationship, as well as prejudice towards the relationship as a whole.

Studies 2a and 2b

In Studies 2a and 2b, we examine how target gender influences White's perceptions of individuals who date outside the group, and the consequences for prejudice towards interracial relationships. We exposed White men and women to an experimentally manipulated image of a couple in a 2 (Male race: White vs. Black) x 2 (Female race: White vs. Black) x 2 (Target gender (within): Male vs. Female) mixed design. Participants were asked their opinion of the couple, as well as the social status of both the male and female targets in the couple. In Study 2a we focus on White male participants, as White men were the primary purveyors of violence towards interracial couples in American history, and still express greater opposition to interracial relationships in contemporary surveys (Davis, 2011; Djamba & Kimuna, 2014; Lessig, 1995). In Study 2b, we extend these results by documenting similar effects among both White men and White women, supporting our normative theoretical framework.

Consistent with previous work on racial boundary maintenance, we expected participants to express more negative evaluations of interracial vs. same-race couples. However, we also expected that when comparing the two interracial couples, the pair with a *female* White partner would be evaluated more negatively than the pair with a *male* White partner.

Hypothesis 1: Evaluations of interracial couples will be more negative than evaluations of same-race couples.

Hypothesis 2: Comparing within the two interracial couples, the White female-Black male couple will be evaluated more negatively than the Black male-White female couple.

Studies 2a and 2b also explored evaluations of the individual targets in the couple. In-group norm violators, particularly women violating gender norms, often suffer social penalties for their deviant behavior (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Livingston et al., 2012; van Kleef et al., 2015; Xiao et al., 2020). Similarly, we expected the White female target in our study would be evaluated as lower status when she violated in-group norms by having an out-group (vs. in-group partner). Because gendered sexual norms do not proscribe sexual deviance for men, we expected male targets would face a smaller penalty, if any.

Hypothesis 3: Evaluations of the White female targets' status will vary based on male target race, such that a White female target with an out-group (Black) male partner will be evaluated as lower status than the same target paired with an in-group (White) male.

Our in-group norms framework makes no direct prediction about gender backlash against Black female targets for intimate interracial contact. As racial out-group members, Black targets should not be beholden to in-group norms, particularly in intergroup contexts such as the present research paradigm (Branscombe et al., 1993; Marques et al., 1988; Marques & Paez, 1994). Recent intersectional research also suggests that, as racial out-group members, Black women likely do not face the same gender expectations and backlash as White women (Galinsky et al., 2013; Toosi et al., 2019; Xiao et al., 2020). Based on this research, we did not expect to observe the same effects for perceptions of the Black female target.

Participants

Study 2a. We recruited 602 White American men for an online study via Mechanical Turk. Participants who failed the attention check or did not identify as a White male were

excluded (*N* = 39), leaving a final sample of 563. Participants' average age was 37.84 years old (*SD* = 12.25).

Study 2b. We recruited 1588 White American men and women via Mechanical Turk. Participants who did not self-identify as White were excluded (*N* = 48), as well as suspected bots (i.e. fake participants)[5], leaving a final sample of 1510 White participants (604 men, 896 women, 10 data missing). Average age of participants was 39.91 years old (*SD* = 12.89).

Statistical Power. In all of our experimental studies, we wanted to ensure enough statistical power to test all hypotheses; however, given the lack of previous research on this question, we did not know a priori what the effect size was. As such, we follow Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn's (2013) suggestion that studies with this common issue include at least 50 participants per cell. We go well beyond Simmons et al.'s recommendations: for the two between-subjects manipulations, we average 227 participants per cell.

Procedure

Participants viewed a photograph of a man and a woman holding hands; the race and gender of each target were the focal manipulations. We manipulated the racial composition of the target couple in a 2 (Male race: White vs. Black) x 2 (Female race: White vs. Black) between-subjects design. Target gender was manipulated within subjects, as participants were asked to evaluate both the man and the woman in the couple.[6]

After signing a consent form, participants were directed to the photograph, and were asked to evaluate the status and physical attractiveness of each individual in the couple, as well as the couple as a whole on likability and compatibility. Finally, participants filled out basic demographics, were debriefed, and credited payment (see SOM for full study materials).

Manipulation and Measures

Target Race and Gender. Using Photoshop, we altered the skin tone of the individuals shown, but no other aspect of the image. Four different images were created, varying the gender and racial makeup of the couple: Black male-White female, White male-Black female, White male-White female, and Black male-Black female (see Appendix A in SOM). Only the targets' hands, arms, and a bit of clothing from either individual was visible—enough information to deduce gender and race but no individualizing characteristics (e.g. facial features or tattoos). Pretest data confirmed that the gender of each target was clear from the photograph (see SOM).

Couple Attitudes. While viewing the photograph of the couple, participants answered: "How compatible is the couple in the above photograph?" and "How much would you like or dislike the couple in the above photograph?" on 1 to 7 Likert scales (1 = *dislike a great deal* or *not at all compatible* to 7 = *like a great deal* or *extremely compatible*). Compatibility was included as an indirect measure of dyadic discrimination. Prejudicial beliefs that interracial couples are less compatible than same-race couples are common, and associated with decreased positive and increased negative affect towards those couples (Bizman, 1987; A. L. Garcia et al., 2012; Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001). Consistent with this previous work, we find that couple liking was strongly positively correlated with compatibility (R_{2a} = .61, R_{2b} = .66, both $p < .001$). These two measures were averaged to form a general measure of attitude valence for all subsequent analyses.

Target Status. While viewing the couple, participants were asked to indicate, "the amount of social status the man (woman) in the photograph has in society. By social status, we mean respect and social standing." Participants answered using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*).

Target Attractiveness. Because physical attractiveness is associated with several of our focal variables, it was included as a control variable. Attractiveness influences positive perceptions of both romantic couples and individual targets, and this effect can depend on perceiver race, target race, and/or target gender (Agthe, Strobel, Spörrle, Pfundmair, & Maner, 2016; Bar-Tal & Saxe, 1976; Heilman & Saruwatari, 1979; Lucker, Beane, & Helmreigh, 1980; Sigall & Landy, 1973; Wade, 1991). Participants rated each target as "physically attractive" on a 7-point Likert scale (1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*).

Study 2a Results

Couple Attitudes. To test Hypothesis 1, we regressed attitude towards the couple on female target race, male target race, and their interaction term. Overall, there was a significant main effect for the race of the female target, such that couples were evaluated more favorably when the female target was Black than White, $b = -.10$, $SE = .04$, $t(557) = -2.37$, $p = .018$. There was no significant effect of male target race ($p = .37$). Critically, there was also a significant interaction between male and female target race, $b = .19$, $SE = .04$, $t(557) = 4.49$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 1). To further examine this interaction, we tested the simple effect of male target race at each level of female target race. Participants held more negative attitudes toward the target couple when the White female target was with a Black partner than a White partner, $b = .23$, $SE = .06$, $t(557) = 3.10$, $p < .001$. Participants also evaluated the couple more negatively when the Black female target was with a White partner than a Black partner, $b = -.16$, $SE = .06$, $t(557) = -2.57$, $p = .010$. These comparisons are consistent with Hypothesis 1, as participants evaluated interracial couples more negatively than same-race couples. To directly test Hypothesis 2, we used planned contrasts to test the differences in couple perception ratings between the two interracial couples (WMBF = 1, BMWF = -1). Consistent with our predictions, the Black male-

White female couple was evaluated more negatively than the White male-Black female couple, b = .14, SE = .06, t(557) = 2.72, p = .024; this held even when controlling for the attractiveness of both targets (see SOM).

Target Status. Since we used a within-subjects manipulation of target gender, we used linear mixed effect models using the 'lmerTest' package in R (Kuznetsova, Brockhoff, & Christensen, 2017) with random effects for participant. We regressed target status on target gender, female target race, male target race, and their interaction terms. There was a significant main effect for male target race, such that targets were evaluated as higher status when the male target was White (vs. Black, b = .14, SE = .04, t(557.72) = 3.56, p < .001). There was no significant main effect for female target race or target gender (female race: b = .04, SE = .04, t(557.72) = 1.10, p = .27; target gender: b = .02, SE = .02, t(555.81) = 1.10, p = .27).

As predicted, these effects were qualified by a significant male race x female race x target gender interaction, (b = .07, SE = .02, t(555.81) = 3.66, p < .001, see Figure 2). We next used dummy coding to better understand the interactive effects of partner race, target race, and target gender on status perceptions. Focusing on perceptions of the *male* target, we find that the White male target was perceived as higher status than the Black male target, b = .14, SE = .04, t(557.72) = 3.56, p < .001. We find no main effect of partner race, and no interaction between male target race and female partner race for perceptions of male targets (b = -.00, SE = .04, t(792.10) = -.03, p = .980; b = -.00, SE = .04, t(792.10) = -.02, p = .986; respectively). This suggests status perceptions of male targets were unaffected by the race of their female partner.

On the other hand, for perceptions of the *female* target, we observe a significant interaction between the race of the female target and the race of her male partner, b = .14, SE = .04, t(794.84) = 3.11, p = .002. To test Hypothesis 3, which predicted a status penalty for the

White female target specifically, we used dummy coding to examine the effect of partner race on evaluations of the White vs. Black female target. Specifically, the White woman was perceived as lower status when she had an out-group (Black) partner, compared to an in-group (White) partner; $b = .29$, $SE = .06$, $t(793.84) = 4.62$, $p < .001$. Male partner race had no effect on status perceptions of the Black female target: $b = -.002$, $SE = .05$, $t(858.63) = -.05$, $p = .961$). These effects were robust to controlling for target attractiveness (see Table 5). Together, these results suggest the White woman was the only individual target whose status was affected by the race of her partner.

Mediation Analysis. Finally, we used moderated mediation to test whether participant's status perceptions of the targets drove attitudes towards the couples as a whole. Using PROCESS Model 8 with 5,000 bootstraps (Hayes 2018), we conducted a moderated mediation analysis with male target race (White=0, Black=1) as the predictor, female target race as the moderator (White=0, Black=1), perceptions of the male and female target's status as parallel mediators, and couple evaluation as the outcome variable; see Figure 3.

Male target status. There was a significant indirect effect of male target race on couple evaluations via male target status perceptions, in both the White and Black female target conditions (indirect effect collapsed across female race= -.06 [-.12, -.02]). The index of moderated mediation was not significant: -.009, 95% CI [-.08, .10], showing that the male target's race influenced couple attitudes via perceptions of his status, regardless of the race of his partner. Specifically, this model suggests the Black male target was perceived as lower status regardless of his partner's race, which in turn led to negative perceptions of couples that included a Black male partner.

Female target status. On the other hand, we do observe evidence of a moderated mediation for status perceptions of the female target, Index of moderated mediation = .14, 95%CI [.04, .28]. There was a significant indirect effect of male target race on couple evaluations via perceptions of the female target's status in the White female target condition, -.15; 95% CI: [-.26, -.07]. This indirect effect was not significant for Black female targets, -.01; 95% CI: [-.07, .06]. Female target status mediated the relationship between male target race and couple attitudes in the White female target condition, but not in the Black female target condition. This shows that participant's negative attitudes towards the White female-Black male couple were driven in part by low status perceptions of the White female target in this condition.

Table 4.

Study 2a Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Attitude Towards Couple	561	4.78	1.04	--				
2. Female Target Status	558	4.09	1.05	0.42***	--			
3. Male Target Status	561	4.06	1.05	0.41***	0.64***	--		
4. Female Target Attractiveness	559	4.53	1.26	0.48***	0.52***	0.42***	--	
5. Male Target Attractiveness	559	4.27	1.22	0.45***	0.43***	0.49***	0.62***	--

Note: Target attractiveness measured on a scale from 1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*. Target social status was measured such that 1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*.
†, *, **, *** indicates significance at the $p < .10$, $p < .05$ $p < 01$, and $p < .001$ level, respectively.

Table 5.

Study 2a Target Status Perceptions

	Dependent Variable: Target Status					
	Model 1			**Model 2**		
Predictors	*b*	*SE*	*β*	*b*	*Se*	*β*
(Intercept)	4.46 ***	0.09	0.37	2.78 ***	0.14	0.18
Male Target Race	-0.58 ***	0.12	-0.55	-0.39 ***	0.11	-0.37
Female Target Race	-0.45 ***	0.12	-0.43	-0.25 *	0.11	-0.24
Target Gender	-0.28 ***	0.07	-0.27	-0.14	0.07	-0.13
Male Race*Female Race	0.54 **	0.17	0.52	0.39 *	0.15	0.37
Male Race*Target Gender	0.32 **	0.11	0.31	0.26 *	0.11	0.25
Female Race*Target Gender	0.45 ***	0.10	0.43	0.37 ***	0.10	0.35
Male Race*Female Race*Target Gender	-0.55 ***	0.15	-0.52	-0.51 ***	0.15	-0.49
Target Attractiveness				0.34 ***	0.02	0.40
Random Effects						
σ_2	0.39			0.39		
τ_{00}	0.68 PID			0.43 PID		
ICC	0.64			0.52		
N	561 PID			559 PID		
Observations	1119			1115		
Marginal R_2 / Conditional R_2	0.031 / 0.648			0.200 / 0.619		

** p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001*

Note: Model 1 reports the results of our linear mixed effect model from Study 2a; model 2 shows the model's robustness to target attractiveness. Male and female race are coded such that 0 = White, Black = 1. Target gender is coded such that 0 = *Male*, 1 = *Female.* Target attractiveness measured on a scale from 1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*. Target social status was measured such that 1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*.

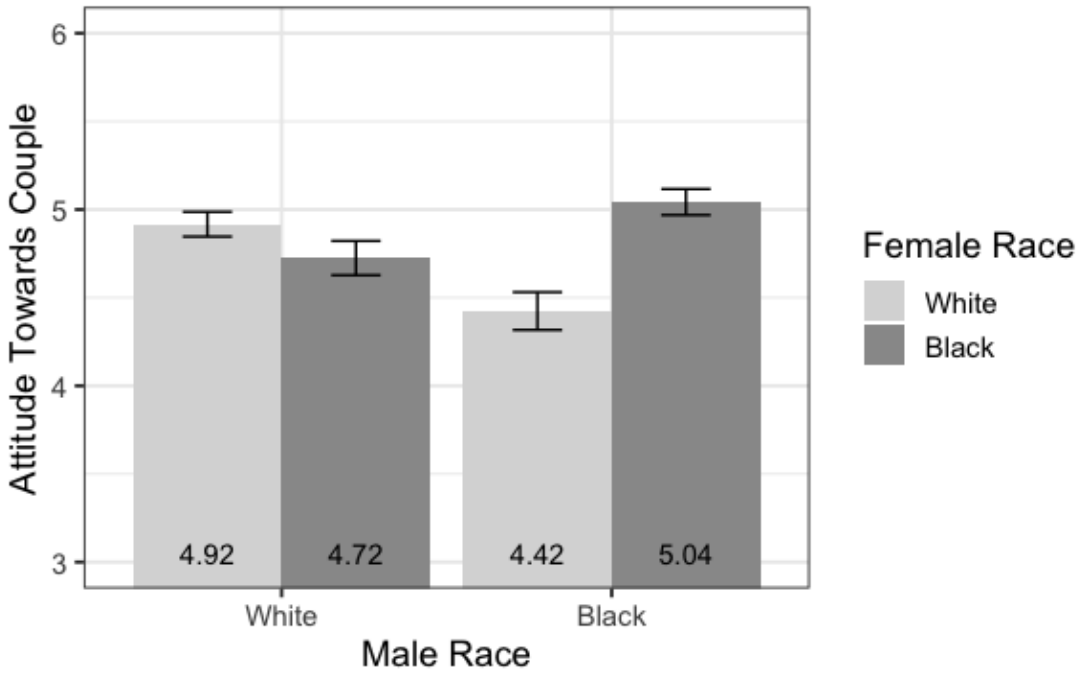


Figure 1. Study 2a couple attitudes by male and female target race. Number labels represent cell means. Error bars represent standard errors. Higher values represent more positive attitudes.

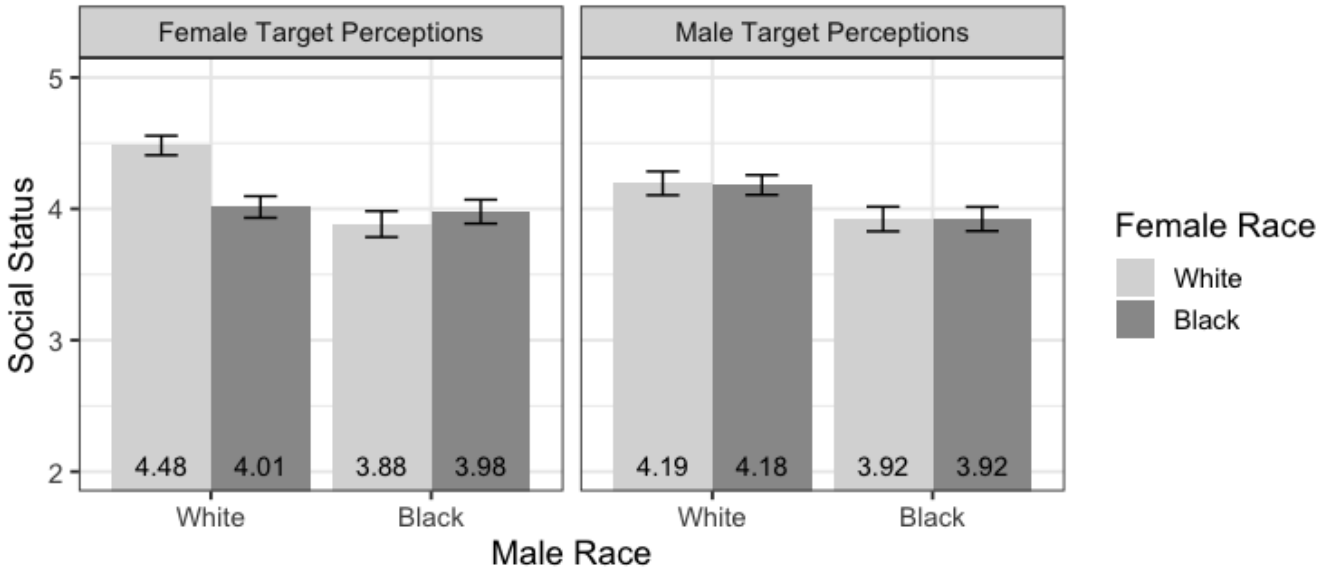
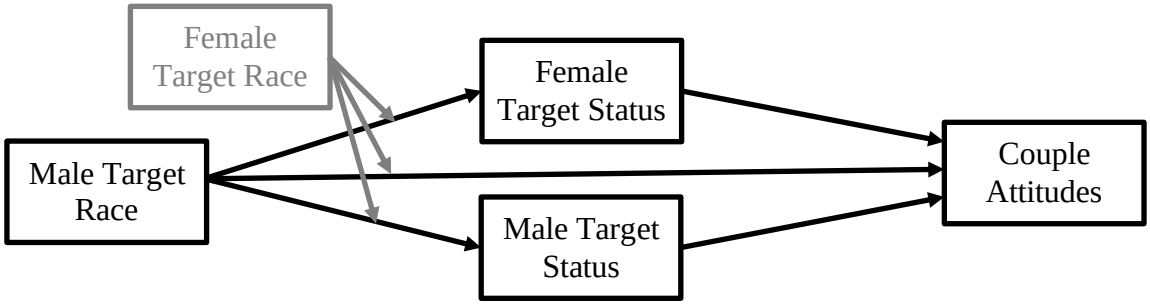
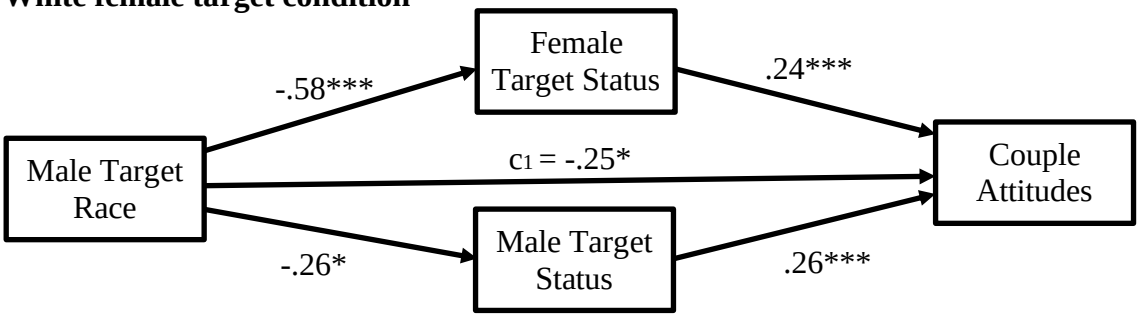


Figure 2. Study 2a perceptions of target status by target gender, male race, and female race. Number labels represent cell means. Target social status was measured such that 1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*. Error bars represent standard errors.

A. Theoretical model

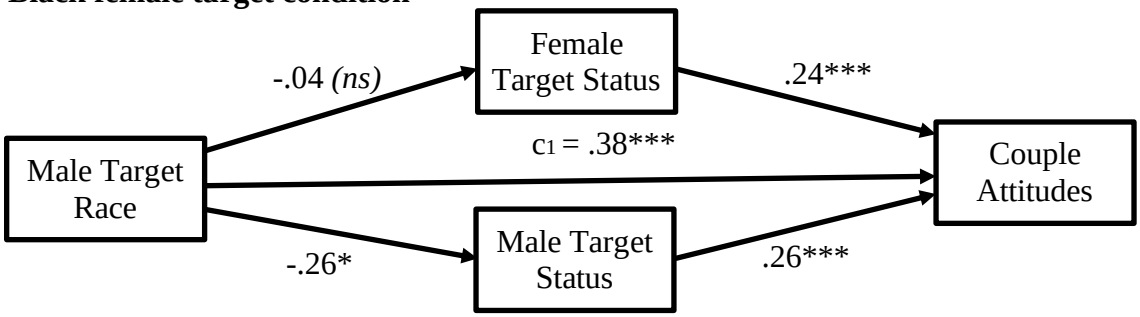


B. White female target condition



Indirect effect through male target status: = -.06, 95%CI [-.14,-.001]
Indirect effect through female target status: = -.15, 95%CI [-.26, -.07]

C. Black female target condition



Indirect effect through male target status: = -.06, 95%CI [-.13, -.005]
Indirect effect through female target status: = -.01, 95%CI [-.07, .06]

Figure 3. Moderated mediation model from Study 2a. Figure 6A presents the path model in the White female target condition; 6B shows the model in the Black female target condition. Male and female race are coded such that 0 = White, Black = 1. Index of moderated mediation for male target status: -.0001, 95%CI [-.08, .10]. Index of moderated mediation for female target status: .14, 95%CI [.04, .28].
*=p<.05, **=p<.01, ***=p<.001

Study 2b Results

Couple Attitudes. We regressed attitude towards the couple on participant gender, female target race, male target race, and their interaction terms. There was a significant main effect of participant gender such that female participants evaluated couples more positively than male participants, b = -.14, SE = .03, t(1487) = -4.85, p < .001; a trending effect of female target race such that couples with a Black (vs. White) female target were evaluated more positively, b = -.06, SE = .03, t(1487) = -1.95, p = .051; and no significant main effect of male target race, p =.76. The three-way interaction with participant gender was not significant, so we collapsed across gender for all further analyses, b = -.01, SE = .03, t(1487) = -.30, p = .765.

Replicating Study 2a, there was a significant interaction between male and female target race, b = .11, SE = .03, t(1491) = 3.75, p < .001, see Figure 4. To further examine this interaction, we tested the simple main effect of male target race at each level of female target race. Replicating Study 2a, these analyses revealed that participants held more negative attitudes toward the target couple when the White female was with a Black partner vs. a White partner, b = .10, SE = .04, t(1491) = 2.62, p = .008, and when the Black female was with a White partner vs. a Black partner, b = -.11, SE = .04, t(1491) = -2.69, p = .007. These comparisons suggested that, in general, participants evaluated interracial couples more negatively than same-race couples.

To directly test Hypothesis 2, we used planned contrasts to test the differences in couple perception ratings between the two interracial couples (WMBF = 1, BMWF = -1). Though the Black male-White female couple was viewed more negatively than the White male-Black female couple as predicted, this difference failed to reach significance, b = .06, SE = .04, t(1491) = 1.51, p = .132. However, when we controlled for female target attractiveness, the Black male-

White female couple was evaluated significantly more negatively than the White male-Black female couple, $b = .10$, $SE = .03$, $t(1489) = 2.90$, $p = .004$; the effect was robust to controlling for male target attractiveness (see SOM).

Target Status. For target status, we again ran linear mixed effect models using the 'lmerTest' package in R (Kuznetsova, Brockhoff, & Christensen, 2017) with a random effect of participant. We regressed target status on participant gender, target gender (the only within-subject variable), female target race, male target race, and their interaction terms. Participant gender did not interact with any of the other variables, and the full 4-way interaction was not significant ($b = -.01$, $SE = .01$, $t(1483.03) = -.76$, $p = .445$), so we collapse across participant gender for all subsequent analyses. There were significant main effects for both male and female target race, such that both targets were evaluated as higher status when they were White (vs. Black; $b = .11$, $SE = .03$, $t(1504.77) = 4.37$, $p < .001$ for male target; $b = .07$, $SE = .03$, $t(1488.87) = 2.58$, $p = .010$ for female target). There was no significant main effect for target gender ($b = -.02$, $SE = .01$, $t(1487.93) = -1.23$, $p = .22$).

As predicted, we observed a significant male target race x female target race x target gender interaction, ($b = .03$, $SE = .01$, $t(1487.93) = 2.29$, $p = .022$). We next used dummy coding to unpack the interactive effects of race and gender on status perceptions (see Figure 5). Focusing on perceptions of the *male* target, we again find that the White male target was perceived as higher status than the Black male target, $b = .16$, $SE = .03$, $t(2223.41) = 5.50$, $p < .001$. We also find no main effect of partner race, $b = .03$, $SE = .03$, $t(2204.28) = 1.21$, $p = .23$, and no interaction between target race and partner race for perceptions of male targets, $b = .03$, $SE = .03$, $t(2224.41) = 1.01$, $p = .310$. This suggests status perceptions of male targets were unaffected by the race of their female partner. On the other hand, for perceptions of *female*

targets, we observe a significant interaction between the race of the female target and the race of her male partner, $b = .09$, $SE = .03$, $t(2224.37) = 3.09$, $p = .002$. To test Hypothesis 3, which predicted a status penalty for the White female target specifically, we used dummy coding to examine the effect of partner race on evaluations of the White vs. Black female target. Consistent with predictions, the White woman was perceived as lower status when she had an out-group (Black) partner, compared to an in-group (White) partner; $b = .15$, $SE = .04$, $t(2204.90) = 3.80$, $p < .001$. Male partner race had no effect on status perceptions of the Black female target: $b = -.02$, $SE = .04$, $t(2243.86) = -.56$, $p = .573$). These effects were robust to controlling for target attractiveness (see Table 7). Consistent with Study 2a, these results show the White woman was the only target whose status was affected by the race of her partner.

Mediation Analysis. Finally, we used moderated mediation to test whether participant's status perceptions of the male and female targets drove attitudes towards the couples. Using the same model as Study 2a (PROCESS Model 8 with 5,000 bootstraps; Hayes 2018), we conducted a moderated mediation analysis with male target race (White=0, Black=1) as the predictor, perceptions of the male and female target's status as parallel mediators, female target race as the moderator (White=0, Black=1), and couple evaluation as the outcome variable; see Figure 6 for theoretical model and results.

Male target status. There was a significant indirect effect of male target race on couple evaluations via male target status perceptions, in both the White and Black female target conditions (indirect effect collapsed across female race = -.08, 95%CI [-.11, -.04]). The index of moderated mediation was not significant: -.009, 95% CI [-.08, .10], showing that the male target's race influenced couple attitudes via perceptions of his status, regardless of the race of his

partner. As in Study 2a, this model suggests that Black male targets were perceived as lower status, which in turn led to negative perceptions of couples involving a Black male partner.

Female target status. On the other hand, we do observe evidence of a moderated mediation for status perceptions of the female target, Index of moderated mediation = .09, 95% CI [.03, .16]. There was a significant indirect effect of male target race on couple evaluations via perceptions of the female target's status in the White female target condition, -.08; 95% CI: [-.13, -.04]. This indirect effect was not significant for Black female targets, .01; 95% CI: [-.03, .06]. Female target status mediated the relationship between male target race and couple attitudes in the White female target condition, but not in the Black female target condition.

Table 6.

Study 2b Descriptive Statistics							
Variable	**M**	**SD**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. Couple Attitudes	5.12	1.10	--				
2. Female Target Status	4.30	1.10	0.40***	--			
3. Male Target Status	4.33	1.11	0.39***	0.59***	--		
4. Female Target Attractiveness	4.82	1.25	0.53***	0.45***	0.40***	--	
5. Male Target Attractiveness	4.65	1.21	0.49***	0.35***	0.40***	0.71***	--

Note: Target attractiveness measured on a scale from 1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*. Target social status was measured such that 1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*.
†, *, **, *** indicates significance at the $p < .10$, $p < .05$ $p < 01$, and $p < .001$ level, respectively.

Table 7.

Study 2b Target Status Perceptions

	Dependent Variable: Target Status					
	Model 1			**Model 2**		
Predictors	*b*	*SE*	*β*	*b*	*SE*	*β*
(Intercept)	4.54 ***	0.06	0.21	2.92 ***	0.10	0.13
Male Target Race	-0.30 ***	0.08	-0.28	-0.27 ***	0.07	-0.25
Female Target Race	-0.37 ***	0.08	-0.33	-0.28 ***	0.07	-0.25
Target Gender	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.07	0.05	0.06
Male Race*Female Race	0.35 **	0.11	0.32	0.33 **	0.10	0.30
Male Race*Target Gender	-0.06	0.07	-0.06	-0.04	0.07	-0.04
Female Race*Target Gender	0.24 ***	0.07	0.22	0.18 *	0.07	0.16
Male Race*Female Race*Target Gender	-0.24 *	0.10	-0.21	-0.22 *	0.10	-0.20
Target Attractiveness				0.33 ***	0.02	0.36
Random Effects						
σ_2	0.49			0.49		
τ_{00}	0.71 PID			0.51 PID		
ICC	0.59			0.51		
N	1494 PID			1494 PID		
Observations	2985			2982		
Marginal R_2 / Conditional R_2	0.020 / 0.601			0.155 / 0.585		

** p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001*

Note: Model 1 reports the results of our linear mixed effect model from Study 2b; model 2 shows the model's robustness to target attractiveness. Male and female race are coded such that 0 = White, Black = 1. Target gender is coded such that 0 = *Male*, 1 = *Female.* Target attractiveness measured on a scale from 1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*. Target social status was measured such that 1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*.

†, *, **, *** indicates significance at the p < .10, p < .05 p < 01, and p < .001 level, respectively.

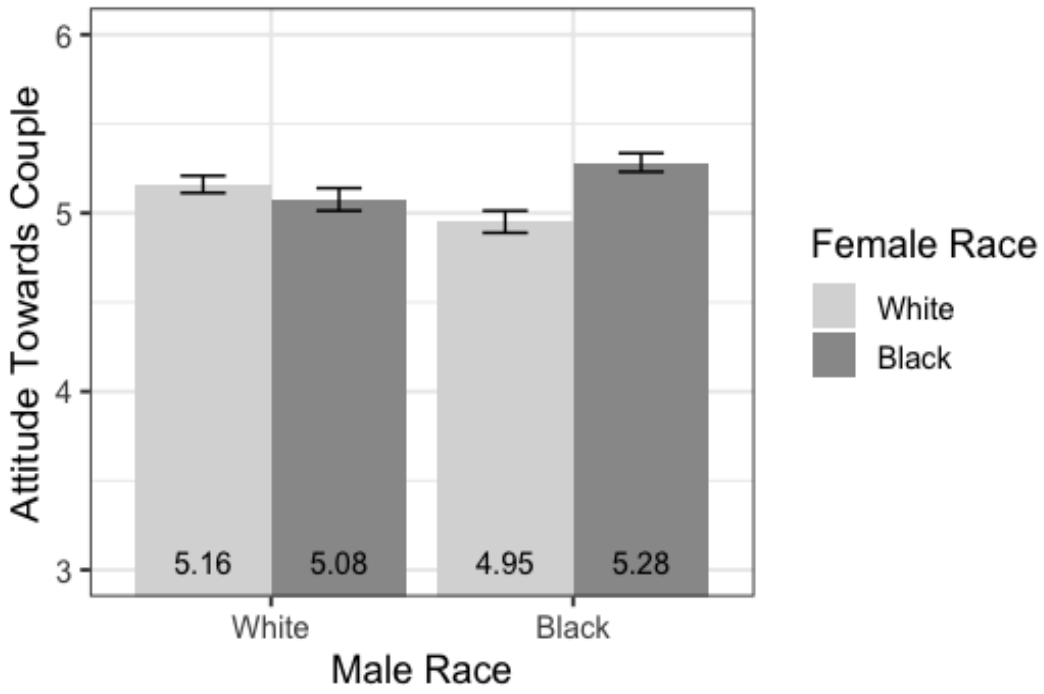


Figure 4. Study 2b couple attitudes by male and female target race. Number labels represent cell means. Error bars represent standard errors. Higher values represent more positive attitudes.

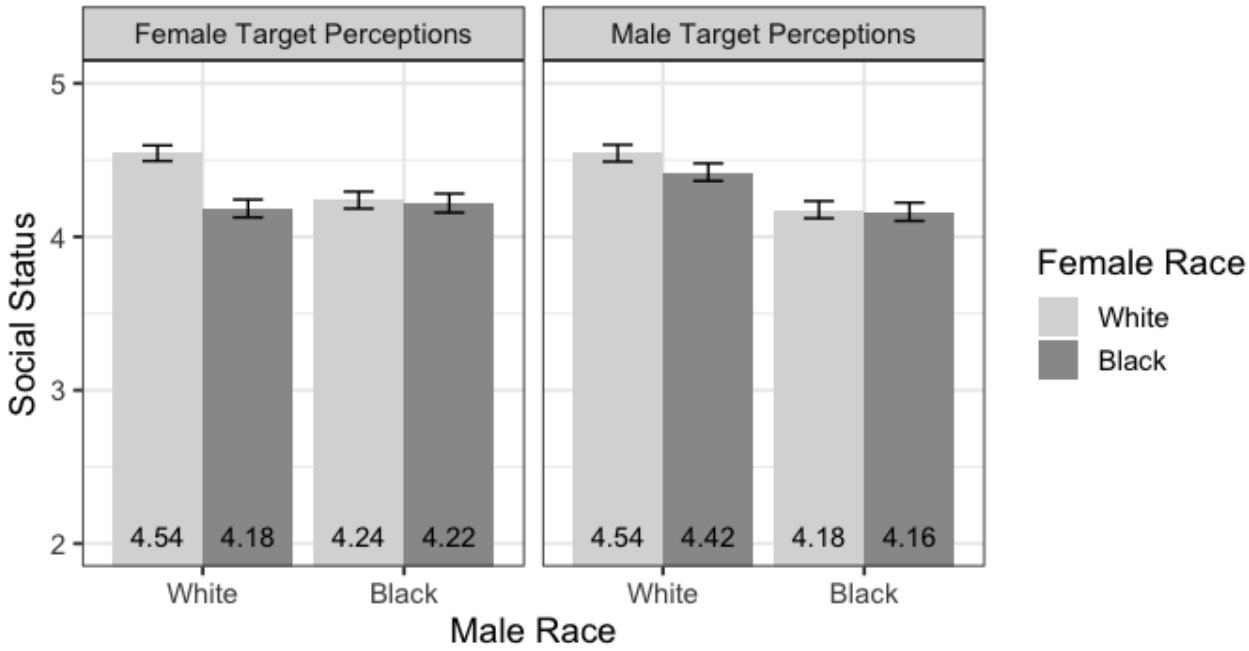
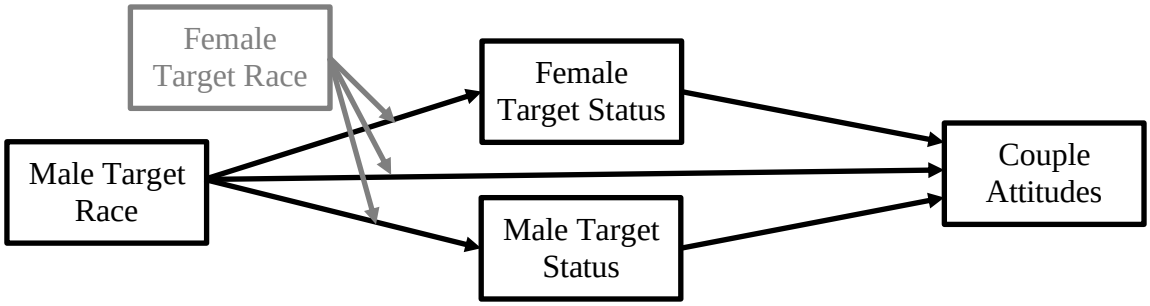
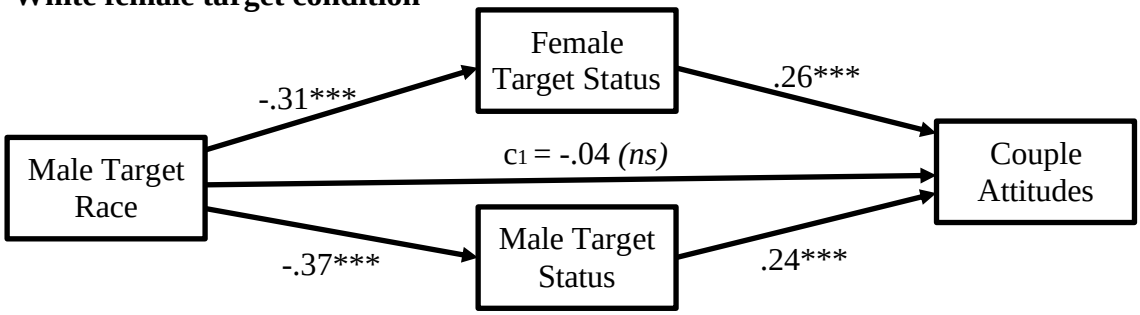


Figure 5. Study 2b perceptions of target status by target gender, male race, and female race. Target social status was measured such that 1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*. Number labels represent cell means. Error bars represent standard errors.

A. Theoretical model

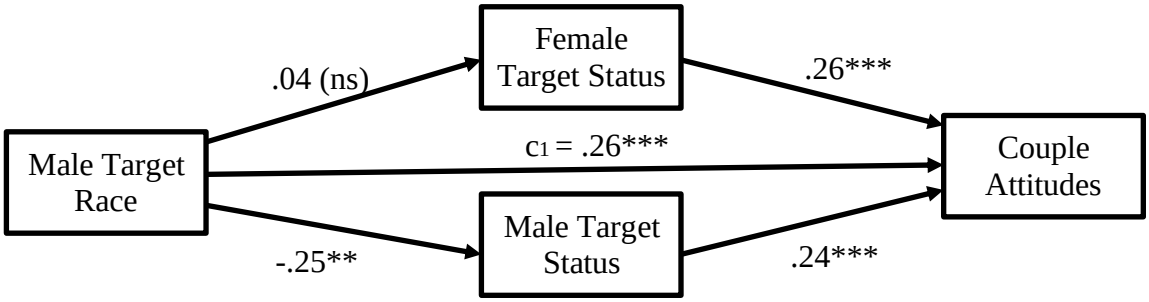


B. White female target condition



Indirect effect through male target status: = -.09 [-.14, -.05]
Indirect effect through female target status: = -.08 [-.13, -.04]

C. Black female target condition



Indirect effect through male target status: = -.06 [-.10, -.02]
Indirect effect through female target status: = .01 [-.03, .06]

Figure 6. Moderated mediation model from Study 2b. Figure 6A presents the path model in the White female target condition; 6B shows the model in the Black female target condition. Male and female race are coded such that 0 = White, Black = 1. Index of moderated mediation for male target status: .03 [-.03, .089]. Index of moderated mediation for female target status: 09 [.03, .16]. *=p<.05, **=p<.01, ***=p<.001

Discussion

Studies 2a and 2b demonstrate that Whites perceive White women (but not White men) who engage in intimate interracial contact as lower status, resulting in greater prejudice against interracial couples involving White women than White men. In both studies, the White female target was viewed as lower status when her partner was a racial out-group member (i.e. a Black male). Having a Black partner did not alter evaluations of the White male target. Our model results suggest that status perceptions of both partners in the relationship influenced attitudes towards the couple as a whole, such that couples involving higher status individuals, whether men or women, were evaluated more positively. However, the relationship between target behavior and target status perceptions differed for male vs. female targets. Status perceptions of male targets were based on his race alone, and not the race of his partner. Black men were perceived as lower status than White men, which in turn led to more negative perceptions of couples involving Black men. By contrast, we observe a significant moderated mediation for status perceptions of female targets. These results show that male partner race drove negative couple attitudes via status perceptions of the White female target, but did not influence couple attitudes via status perceptions of the Black female target. These results suggest that White men and women perceive White women who date outside the group to be lower status than those that stay within race. Together, negative status perceptions of both the White woman and Black man in this couple led to more negative attitudes towards the WMBF interracial couple among Whites.

In Study 2b, we observed this pattern among both White men and White women, consistent with our in-group norm framework. Theories of mate competition would predict White men (vs. White women) to be more opposed to White women dating outside the group.

For White men, viewing a White woman in an interracial relationships may signal increased mate competition between themselves and out-group men (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Wade, 1991); this would not be true for White women observers. However, in 2b we do not see evidence of a moderation by gender. Rather, men and women both expressed social penalties towards White women in interracial relationships. Importantly, this does not preclude mate competition as part of White men's underlying motivation to maintain these gendered norms. However, it does suggest that shared normative expectations about what White women should and should not do, and the social penalties for violating these expectations, are commonly held by both White men and women. This is consistent with our in-group norm framework.

Our results in Studies 2a and 2b are consistent with Social Dominance Theory (SDT), which argues that race is a status hierarchy primarily between men, with women impacted indirectly through their relationships with men (Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). In line with this theoretical framework, the perceived social status of male targets was influenced by their own racial categorization, and not that of their partner. Specifically, the White male target was perceived as higher status than the Black male target, consistent with the existing American racial hierarchy (Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). By contrast, status perceptions of female targets depended on the interaction between their own race and their partner's race. The White female target was only viewed as high status when she had a White partner, showing that this target's high social status was dependent upon her association with the White male target. At the same time, the Black female target was not perceived as higher or lower status based on the race of her partner. This suggests that while the White female target received a status boost through her association with the White male target, the Black female target did not receive a status boost at

all. These results are consistent with SDT, as men's racial status was self-determined while women's racial status was mutually self- and partner- determined. However, these results also suggest that the status privileges of Whiteness are more readily denied to deviant White women, than they are given to Black women associated with White men.

These results significantly advance our understanding of prejudice towards interracial couples today. Consistent with previous work on dyadic prejudice towards interracial couples, we observe strong associations between liking towards target couples, and perceptions that these couples were compatible. In both Studies 2a and 2b, participants expressed more negative attitudes towards the two interracial couples than the two same-race couples, presenting rare experimental evidence of prejudice towards interracial relationships. We also see evidence of racial bias towards both targets, as both male and female targets were perceived to be lower status if they were Black (vs. White), which in turn predicted negative evaluations. This suggests that despite intergenerational improvements in racial tolerance (Pew Research Center, 2012), Black targets and interracial relationships still face stigma among White perceivers in contemporary America.

As predicted, we observed stronger prejudice against the White female-Black male interracial couple, as this pairing was rated more negatively of the two interracial relationships. In Study 2a the difference in couple attitudes between the two interracial couples held with and without controlling for target attractiveness; in Study 2b, however, this difference failed to reach significance until we controlled for the attractiveness of the female target. Individual target attractiveness is known to influence dyadic perceptions of romantic couples, including interracial couples (S. D. Garcia & Khersonsky, 1997); some research even suggests that White men are more accepting of interracial couples involving White women they perceive to be physically

unattractive (Wade, 1991). This may help explain why in Study 2b we observe attitude differences between our interracial couples only after controlling for female target attractiveness. The minimal nature of our race manipulation allows participants to make their own assumptions about the attractiveness of the woman in the couple. As a result, participants' motivated or prejudicial assumptions about the attractiveness of the female target may have obscured this effect in Study 2b. Across studies, participants expressed greater dyadic prejudice toward the White female-Black male couple than any other race/gender combination.

Studies 2a and 2b build on the family-member data from Study 1, by showing these patterns of prejudice exist among Whites generally, reflecting broadly held norms among Whites in America. Participants expressed social penalties and prejudice towards novel targets, whose genes, lives, and survival they have no genetic interest in. The observation of this pattern among participants who are genetic strangers to the target suggests sociocultural processes, such as collective group norms, likely undergird participant perceptions (Miller et al., 2004). Our participants, having no direct relationship with the targets other than shared racial group membership, still responded negatively to interracial relationships. This suggests attitudes towards interracial relationships reflect broader group identity concerns, consistent with previous research on racial boundary maintenance (Fang et al., 1998; Gómez et al., 2011; Lamont & Molnár, 2002; Pettigrew, 20060530; Skinner & Hudac, 2017).

Though the results of Studies 2a and 2b are consistent with previous gender backlash work, thus far we have yet to directly test our proposed mechanism: gender norm violation. We do so in Study 3 using a measure of feminine *proscriptions*, or attributes viewed as undesirable and deviant in women. We predicted that violating in-group norms against intimate interracial relations is also perceived as a violation of gender norms that prohibit female sexual agency. As

such, we expected that White women who engage in such relations would be perceived as more gender deviant, leading to lower status evaluations.

Study 3

Study 3 utilized the same experimental design and procedure as Studies 2a and 2b: a 2 (Male race: White vs. Black) x 2 (Female race: White vs. Black) x 2 (Target gender (within): Male vs. Female) mixed design. We expected to replicate our results from Studies 2a and 2b, predicting that status perceptions of the male target would vary based on his race alone.

Hypothesis 1: Evaluations of the male targets' status will vary based on his race, regardless of partner race, such that White male targets are viewed as higher status than Black male targets.

For the female target, we also predicted a replication of Studies 2a and 2b, such that the White female target would be perceived as lower status when she was with a Black partner than a White partner.

Hypothesis 2: Evaluations of the White female targets' status will vary based on male target race, such that a White female target with an out-group (Black) male partner will be evaluated as lower status than the same target paired with an in-group (White) male; no such relationship is expected for Black female targets.

In Study 3, we directly test our theoretical claim that the unique penalties faced by White women in interracial relationships reflect backlash for violating gender norms. In support, we predicted that the White female target would be perceived as more gender deviant when she was with a Black partner than a White partner. In turn, we expected gender deviance would drive lower status evaluations of this target.

Hypothesis 3: Evaluations of the White female targets' gender deviance will vary based on male target race, such that a White female target with an out-group (Black) male partner will be evaluated as more gender deviant than the same target paired with an in-group (White) male; no such relationship is expected for Black female targets.

Hypothesis 4: For White female targets, the relationship between partner race and status perceptions will be mediated by perceptions of gender deviance; no such relationship is expected for Black female targets.

In addition, we test for a moderation by participant gender for each dependent variable, to test the consistency of our results for White men and women. Based on our previous findings in Study 1 and Study 2b, we did not expect any gender moderation.

Participants & Procedure

Participants were recruited from the general MTurk population as part of a larger, unrelated study. To filter out potential bots and farmers[7], participants who failed an initial single item English proficiency test were filtered out of the survey. Remaining participants viewed one of the four photographs used in Studies 2a and 2b. Participants were asked to evaluate the social status and physical attractiveness of the individual male and female targets, as well as the gender deviance of the female target. Participants who did not self-identify as White were excluded during analysis, leaving a final sample of 532 White Americans (260 men, 270 women, 2 "other"). Participant average age was 39.62 (*SD* = 12.73).

Manipulation and Measures

Target Race and Gender. We manipulated the racial composition of a target couple in a 2 (Male race: White vs. Black) x 2 (Female race: White vs. Black) between-subjects design using

the same materials as Studies 2a and 2b. Target gender was manipulated within subjects, as participants were asked to evaluate both the man and the woman in the couple.

Target Status. To assess the status perceptions, participants evaluated the extent to which each target was "respected" and "admired" on a 7-point Likert scale (*strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*); these two items were averaged to form a social status index ($R = .81$, $p < .001$).

Female Gender Deviance. Gender deviance of the female target was assessed using a series of feminine proscriptions identified as subjectively negative traits that are particularly undesirable in women (i.e. what women should *not* be; Prentice & Caranza, 2002). Participants rated the extent to which each item— rebellious, stubborn, controlling, cynical, promiscuous, and arrogant— described the woman in the photo using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *an extreme amount*). Ratings were averaged across all adjectives ($\alpha = .87$).

Target Attractiveness. Participants evaluated the extent to which each target was "physically attractive" on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all* to 7 = *very much*).

Results

Target Status. For perceptions of target status, we ran linear mixed effects models using the 'lmerTest' package in R (Kuznetsova, Brockhoff, & Christensen, 2017) with a random effect of participant. We regressed target status on target gender (within), female target race, male target race, participant gender, and their interaction terms. There was a significant main effect of target gender, such that female targets were viewed as higher status than male targets, $b = .34$, $SE = .03$, $t(522.70) = 9.94$, $p < .001$. We do not observe significant main effects for male target race or female target race on target status perceptions, $b = .09$, $SE = .06$, $t(520.73) = 1.59$, $p = .112$; $b = .04$, $SE = .06$, $t(534.21) = .66$, $p = .509$; respectively. As predicted, these main effects were

qualified several significant interactions (see Table 9 for full results). We observe a significant 4-way interaction between male target race, female target race, target gender, and participant gender, b = .07, SE = .03, t(522.70) = 2.09, p = .037, suggesting that unlike in previous studies, our results varied between male and female participants. Controlling for target attractiveness reduced the four-way interaction between participant gender, target gender, male target race, and female target race to non-significance (see Table 9). However, our focal interaction between target gender, male race, and female race remained significant. We next used dummy coding to unpack the interactive effects of male race, female race, and participant gender on status perceptions of male vs. female targets. Please see Figure 7 for a visual comparison.

Male Target Perceptions. Focusing on perceptions of the *male* target, do not observe an interaction between male race, female race, and participant gender, b = -.01, SE = .07, t(832.76) = -.14, p = .890, suggesting that men and women responded similarly to male targets. As such, we collapse across participant gender when presenting the results for male target status perceptions.

For both male and female participants, we observe no significant main effects for male target race (b = .07, SE = .07, t(832.76) = 1.01, p = .314), or female partner race (b = .02, SE = .07, t(848.03) = .23, p = .818) on male target status perceptions. There was also no interaction between male and female target race, b = .01, SE = .07, t(858.03) = .08, p = .935. These results partially supported Hypothesis 1: as predicted, we did not observe any main or interactive effects of female partner race on status perceptions of male targets. At the same time, we did not observe status differences between White and Black male targets, as found in previous studies.

Female Target Perceptions. For perceptions of the *female* target, we observe a trending interaction between male target race, female target race, and participant gender on target status

perceptions; b = .13, SE = .07, t(832.76) = 1.95, p = .051. To better understand any potential gender differences between our male and female participants, we used dummy coding to examine the interaction between male and female target race on female target status separately for male and female participants.

To test Hypothesis 2 among male participants, which predicted a status penalty for the White female target specifically, we used dummy coding to examine the effect of partner race on evaluations of the White vs. Black female target. Among male participants, we observe a significant interaction between male and female target race on status perceptions of the female target, b = .33, SE = .10, t(841.30) = 3.419, p < .001. Further analysis with dummy coding revealed that men perceived the White female target as lower status when paired with an Black male partner, b = .60, SE = .14, t(833.63) = 4.37, p < .00, supporting Hypothesis 2. There was no difference in status perceptions of the Black female target based on partner race, b = -.06, SE = .14, t(849.09) = -.45, p = .656.

Among female participants, we did not observe a significant interaction between male and female target race on status perceptions of the female target, b = .07, SE = .09, t(839.43) = .70, p = .485. White female participants did not perceive status differences for either the White or Black female target based on the race of her male partner, b = .03, SE = .13, t(845.58) = .25, p = .800; b = -.10, SE = .14, t(833.63) = -.73, p = .468; respectively. This suggests that Hypothesis 2 was not supported among female participants.

Female Gender Deviance. To test Hypothesis 3, which predicted that the White female target would be perceived as more gender deviant when she was paired with a Black (vs. White) partner, we regressed female target gender deviance on female target race, male target race, participant gender, and their interaction terms. We do not observe a significant three-way

interaction between male target race, female target race, and participant gender, though this interaction was trending (b = -.06, SE = .03, t(522) = -1.89, p = .060). Because of this trending interaction, we replicate the results and plots below in the online supplement, split by participant gender. This analysis revealed that male and female participants showed a similar pattern of results, but stronger results among men compared to women; as such, we collapse across participant gender for the results reported below.

There were no significant main effects for male or female target race (b = -.04, SE = .03, t(528) = -1.16, p = .247; b = -.04, SE = .03, t(528) = -1.36, p = .18; respectively, see Table 10). There was, however, a significant interaction between male and female target race, b = -.11, SE = .03, t(490) = -3.31, p < .001, which was robust to controlling for the attractiveness of both targets (see Table 10). As predicted, the White female target was viewed as more gender deviant when paired with a Black partner than a White partner, b = -.14, SE = .05, t(528) = -3.18, p = .002 (see Figure 7). Although the Black female target was perceived to be more gender deviant when paired with a White vs. Black male partner, this difference was not statistically significant, b = .07, SE = .05, t(528) = 1.52, p = .130.

Mediation Analysis. Finally, we used moderated mediation to test our prediction that gender deviance from feminine norms was driving the status penalty faced by our White female target (Hypothesis 4). Because we observe a significant gender moderation for target status perceptions, we use Model 12 from Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro with 5,000 bootstrap resamples, as this model allows us to include participant gender as a potential moderator in the model; see Figure 9. In this analysis, we include male target race (White=0, Black=1) as the predictor, female target race (White=0, Black=1) as the W moderator, participant gender (Male = 0, Female = 1) as the Z moderator, perceptions of the female target's fit to feminine proscriptions

as the mediator (M), and status perceptions of the female target as the outcome variable. While we do not observe a significant moderated mediation by participant gender (Index of moderated mediation: -.34, 95% CI[-.75, .01], we still report our results split by gender, as the moderated mediation approached statistical significance, and also has theoretical significance. The moderated mediation model collapsed by participant gender (PROCESS Model 8), which is significant, is available in the online supplement (Index of moderated mediation = .30, 95% CI [.11, .51).

There was a significant indirect effect of male target race on female target status via fit to feminine proscriptions among male participants in the White female target condition, -.25, 95% CI [-.47, -.06]. We also observe a negative indirect effect among female participants, though this effect was right on the line of statistical significance, -.16 95% CI [-.34, .00], supporting Hypothesis 4 among both male and female Whites. For Black female targets, we observe gender divergence: among male participants, there was a significant indirect effect of male partner race on status perceptions through fit to feminine proscriptions (.24, 95%CI [.04, .47]); female participants did not show a significant indirect effect (-.01 95% CI [-.18, .16]). In sum, among both male and female participants, the status penalty faced by the White female target in an interracial relationship was driven by perceptions that she violated feminine gender norms.

Table 8.

Study 3 Descriptive Statistics							
Variable	**M**	**SD**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. Female Target Status	5.53	1.92	--				
2. Male Target Status	4.85	1.07	0.58***	--			
3. Female Target Attractiveness	5.56	2.00	0.51***	0.42***	--		
4. Male Target Attractiveness	4.84	1.11	0.41***	0.47***	0.61***	--	
5. Female Target Gender Deviance	1.94	0.77	-0.28***	-0.29***	-0.30***	-0.26***	--

Note: Target attractiveness measured on a scale from 1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*. Target status perceptions were measured such that 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. Female gender deviance measured on a scale from 1 = *not at all* – 5 = *an extreme amount.*
†, *, **, *** indicates significance at the $p < .10$, $p < .05$ $p < 01$, and $p < .001$ level, respectively

Table 9.

Study 3 Target Status Perceptions

	Dependent Variable: Target Status					
	Model 1			**Model 2**		
Predictors	*b*	*SE*	*β*	*b*	*SE*	*β*
(Intercept)	4.85 ***	0.19	-0.21	2.77 ***	0.21	-0.12
Male target race	-0.15	0.27	-0.09	0.00	0.24	0.00
Female target race	-0.04	0.28	-0.02	-0.01	0.24	-0.01
Target gender	1.19 ***	0.19	0.75	0.69 ***	0.19	0.44
Participant Gender	0.18	0.27	0.11	0.16	0.23	0.10
Male target race*Female target race	-0.02	0.39	-0.01	-0.10	0.34	-0.06
Male target race*Target gender	-1.05 ***	0.27	-0.66	-0.75 **	0.27	-0.47
Female target race*Target gender	-0.62 *	0.28	-0.39	-0.32	0.27	-0.20
Male target race*Participant gender	-0.00	0.38	-0.00	-0.21	0.33	-0.13
Female target race*Participant gender	-0.00	0.39	-0.00	-0.10	0.34	-0.06
Target gender*Participant gender	-0.46	0.27	-0.29	-0.36	0.26	-0.23
Male target race*Female target race* Target gender	1.34 ***	0.39	0.84	0.91 *	0.38	0.57
Male target race*Female target race* Participant gender	0.07	0.54	0.05	0.20	0.47	0.13
Male target race*Target gender* Participant gender	1.13 **	0.38	0.71	0.94 *	0.37	0.59
Female target race*Target gender* Participant gender	0.28	0.39	0.18	0.08	0.38	0.05
Male target race*Female target race* Target gender*Participant gender	-1.13 *	0.54	-0.71	-0.76	0.52	-0.48
Target attractiveness				0.43 ***	0.03	0.45

Random Effects

σ^2	1.20	1.13
τ_{00}	1.21 $_{PID}$	0.70 $_{PID}$
ICC	0.50	0.38
N	529 $_{PID}$	529 $_{PID}$
Observations	1060	1060
Marginal R^2 / Conditional R^2	0.068 / 0.535	0.261 / 0.544

** p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001*

Note: Model 1 reports the results of our linear mixed effect model from Study 3; model 2 shows the model's robustness to target attractiveness. Male and female race are coded such that 0 = White, Black = 1; Participant and target gender are coded such that Male = 0, Female = 1. Target attractiveness measured on a scale from 1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*. Target status perceptions were measured such that 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. Female gender deviance measured on a scale from 1 = *not at all* – 5 = *an extreme amount.*

Table 10.

Study 3 Female Target Gender Deviance

	Dependent variable:	
	Female Target Gender Deviance	
	Model 1	Model 2
Male target race	0.296***	0.248***
	(0.093)	(0.089)
Female target race	0.309***	0.286***
	(0.095)	(0.091)
Female target attractiveness		-0.082***
		(0.020)
Male target attractiveness		-0.089**
		(0.036)
Male race x Female race	-0.439***	-0.399***
	(0.133)	(0.127)
Constant	1.749***	2.665***
	(0.066)	(0.152)
Observations	532	532
R_2	0.026	0.121
Adjusted R_2	0.020	0.112

Note: Model 1 reports the results of our multiple regression model from Study 3; model 2 shows the model's robustness to target attractiveness. Male and female race are coded such that 0 = White, Black = 1. Target attractiveness measured on a scale from 1= *not at all* – 7 = *very much*. Target status perceptions were measured such that 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. †, *, **, *** indicates significance at the $p < .10$, $p < .05$ $p < 01$, and $p < .001$ level, respectively.

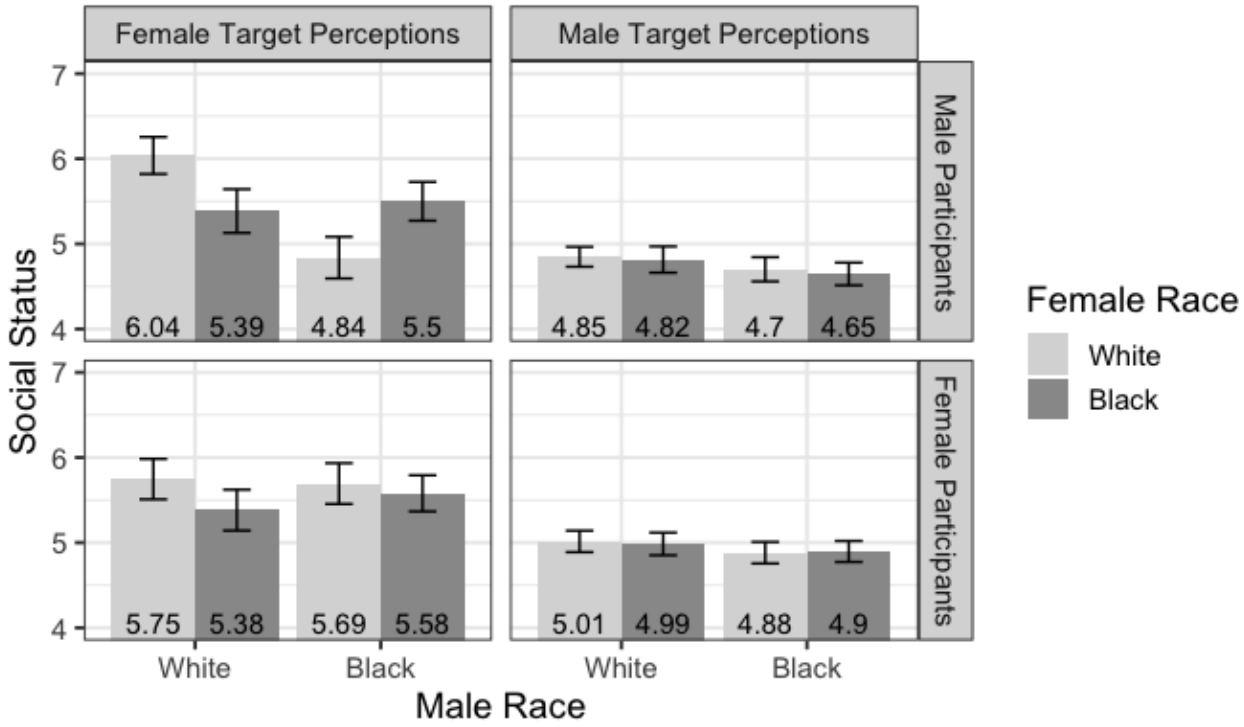


Figure 7. Study 3 perceptions of target status by male target race, female target race, target gender, and participant gender. Target social status was measured such that 1 = *very little status* to 7 = *a great deal of status*. Number labels represent cell means. Error bars represent standard errors.

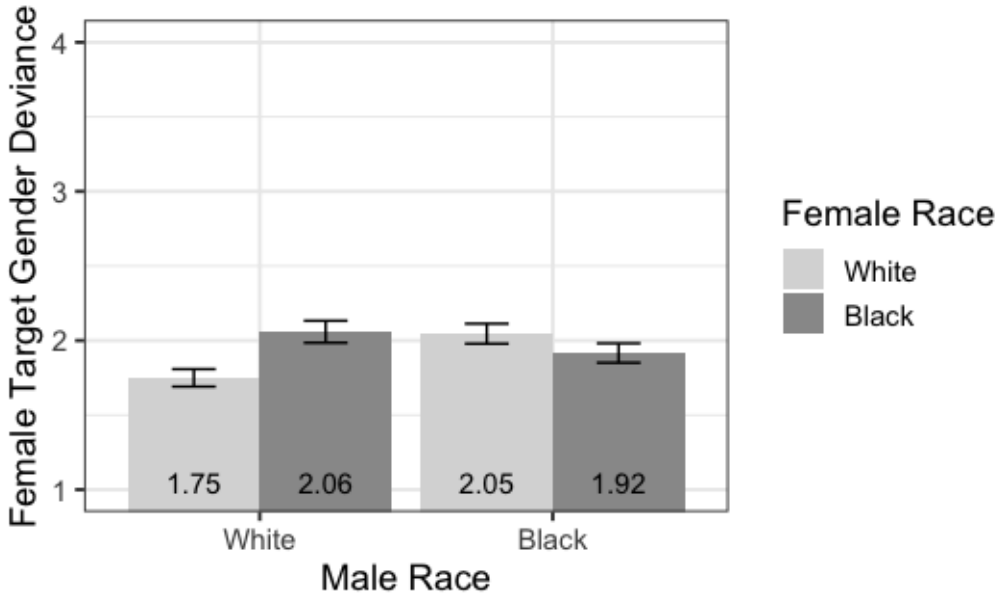
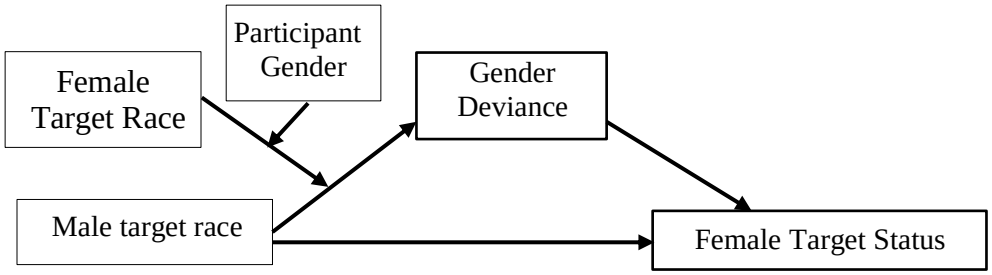


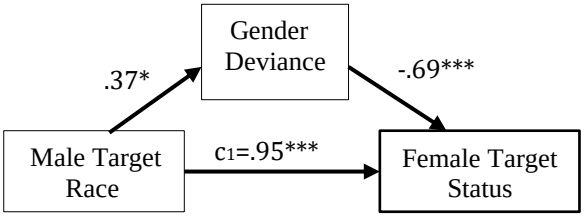
Figure 8. Study 3 perceptions of the female target's gender deviance by male and female target race. Gender deviance measured from 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *an extreme amount*. Error bars represent standard errors.

A. Theoretical Model (Process Model 12)



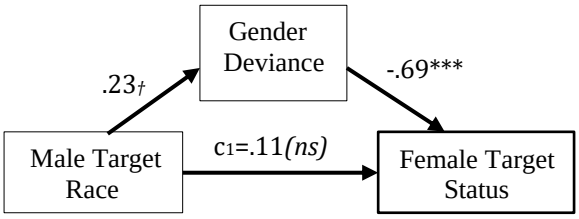
B. Study 3 White female target condition

Male Participants



Conditional indirect effect = -.25, 95%CI[-.47, -.06]

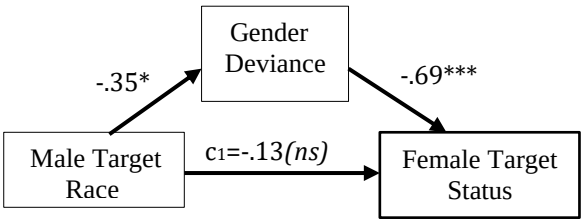
Female Participants



Conditional indirect effect = -.16, 95%CI[-.34, -.00]

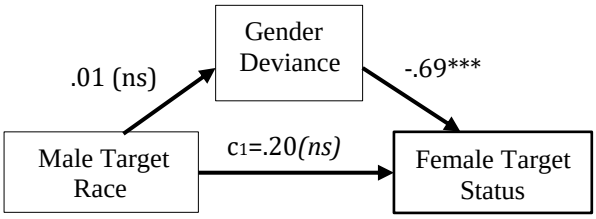
C. Study 3 Black female target condition

Male Participants



Conditional indirect effect = .24, 95%CI[.04, .47]

Female Participants



Conditional indirect effect = -.01, 95%CI[-.18,.16]

Figure 9. Moderated mediation model testing the indirect effects of male target race on perceptions of female target status via feminine proscriptions in Study 3. Index of moderated mediation: -.34, 95% CI[-.75, .01]. (A) Shows the full theoretical model, (B) shows the mediation pathway in the White female target condition, and (C) in the Black female target condition, both split by participant gender. Target race is coded White = 0, Black = 11; participant gender is coded Male = 0, Female = 1. †=p<.1, *=p<.05, **=p<.01, ***=p<.001

Discussion

In Study 3, we replicate our previous findings on status perceptions, finding Whites' evaluations of male targets were unaffected by the racial identity of his female partner. Consistent with predictions, White male participants again perceived White female targets as lower status when paired with a Black (vs. White) male partner; White male, Black male, and Black female targets did not face this penalty. We did not observe this pattern of status perceptions among White female participants, as in the previous study. However, we do find that among both male and female participants, the status penalty faced by the White female target was driven by perceptions she violated gender norm expectations. Men and women both viewed the White woman as more gender deviant when she had a Black partner; this in turn drove their perceptions of this woman as low status. This suggests that Whites share a common understanding of interracial relationships as a gender deviant act for White women.

In Study 3, White female participants did not express direct status penalties towards any targets in our study, though they did perceive the White female target in an interracial relationship as more gender deviant, which had an indirect negative impact on status perceptions. While we only observe this gender difference in Study 3, it suggests there may be differences in the degree to which White men vs. White women punish women who violate gendered norms against interracial relations. Previous research suggests that both men and women express gender backlash, as both hold gender norm expectations; however whether one gender does this more than the other is still under debate (Freedman et al., 2019; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). In the present study, we propose two possible reasons why White men might express greater penalties for White women in interracial relationships. First, women are in a unique position in that they are both enforcers of feminine gender norms, and subject to those norms themselves. Recent research suggests that engaging in social sanctioning is itself a

violation of feminine gender norms, which demand women be warm and kind; this may make women less willing to engage in social sanctioning compared to men (Freedman et al., 2019). Second, normative gender expectations restrict women's behavior and maintain gender inequality, ultimately serving men's hierarchical interests, to women's detriment. As such, we should expect that though men and women share normative expectations for women's appropriate behavior, men should be more motivated to maintain gender hierarchy through normative enforcement. As the primary beneficiaries of both race and gender hierarchy, White men may have greater motivations to sanction White women in interracial relationships, beyond the normative in-group expectations they share with White women. We return to this possibility in the discussion.

Though the Black female target was perceived as more gender deviant when paired with an out-group partner, this comparison did not reach significance. Null results should always be interpreted with caution, and particularly in this case, as Black women are commonly stereotyped to be dominant and hypersexual— gender deviant traits similar to our measure (Galinsky et al., 2013; Hall et al., 2019; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). These preexisting stereotypes may have limited our ability to pick up differences for this target. Future researchers should improve measure sensitivity by implementing a wider scale, particularly in the case of cross-race comparisons.

Though the Black female target did not suffer a status penalty for engaging in interracial relations, whether or not she was perceived as gender deviant has important mechanistic implications. If Black women are perceived as gender deviant for interracial relations, this would suggest that they are still evaluated based on gendered expectations, but that violating these expectations does not translate into social penalties. It is important to note that though the Black

female target was not penalized, this does not mean she was held in positive esteem. Rather, the Black female target was evaluated as low status, regardless of her actions. This finding is consistent with our in-group norm approach, as in-group members are more likely to be punished for norm-violating behavior and rewarded for norm-fulfilling behavior than out-group members, particularly in identity-relevant domains (Marques et al., 1988; Marques & Paez, 1994; Matthews & Dietz-Uhler, 1998). Among our White participants, the Black woman did not lose status privileges for engaging in interracial relations— as an out-group member, she was never afforded such privileges in the first place.

Overall, these results suggest that gender norms drive the differential status penalties faced by White women in interracial relationships. White women with non-White partners are perceived to be gender-norm violators, driving negative interpersonal perceptions of these women among both male and female participants. By contrast, having an out-group partner did not adversely impact perceptions of men.

General Discussion

Together, these four studies suggest that engaging in intimate interracial relations is a more deviant act for White women than White men, leading to lower status evaluations of White women and greater dyadic prejudice toward interracial couples that include White women. In one archival and three experimental studies, we show that Whites hold more negative attitudes towards interracial couples involving White women than White men. These attitude differences are driven in part by their perception of the White woman in the couple as gender deviant, and therefore low status. Whites showed these attitude differences for interracial relations involving both family members (Study 1) and unknown targets (Studies 2a, 2b, and 3), supporting a normative account of bias against interracial relations. By contrast, evolutionary explanations

such as inclusive fitness theory suggest that reactance to partner choice should depend on the genetic closeness of the target (Miller et al., 2004). Consistent with research showing men and women face different normative sexual expectations, we show Whites confer greater social penalties on White women than White men who violate in-group norms against intimate interracial relations (Bareket et al., 2018; M. Crawford & Popp, 2003a; Glick & Fiske, 2018; Infanger et al., 2016). Knowledge of this potential social penalty may hinder women's willingness to engage in intimate intergroup contact, as anticipation of social backlash deters violation of both gender norms and inter-group contact norms (Abrams et al., 2003; Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Bareket et al., 2018; Crawford & Popp, 2003b; Glick & Fiske, 2018; Infanger et al., 2016; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

These results contribute to the literatures on racial hierarchy and group boundary maintenance, which have given little consideration to the influence of gender on normative intergroup behavior. They serve as a reminder that group norms are not necessarily uniform; rather, people navigate normative expectations amid a matrix of intersecting social identities, here race and gender. Research on how gender structures an individual's engagement with racial hierarchy is in its infancy, particularly among dominant group members. Further investigation into how White men and White women differentially navigate racial identity and hierarchy is crucial to an intersectional understanding of racial power in America.

Gender in Intergroup Contexts

These results contribute to a growing body of work that suggests gender is an inherent component of intergroup contexts. Across societies, acts of intergroup violence and aggression are almost exclusively perpetrated on men by men (Navarrete et al., 2010; Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). Research from across the social sciences documents differences in the roles filled by men

and women during wartime: men as the group's aggressors or defenders, and women as caretakers of the home front (Goldstein, 2003; McDonald et al., 2012). Accounting for these gender differences, Social Dominance Theory (SDT) contends that dominance hierarchies serve the reproductive interests of dominant males, whose dominance over both women (potential mates) and other males (reproductive competitors) gives them a reproductive advantage. As a result, SDT contends that men are the primary agents, targets, and beneficiaries of intergroup division and conflict (Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). As a result, women and men likely face different pressures and biases in intergroup contexts, as observed in the present study. This is not to say that women are not impacted by intergroup discrimination, oppression, or privilege, but rather that these effects occur primarily through their associations with men.

Consistent with this framework, recent intersectional research suggests men and women have fundamentally different intergroup psychologies, with men's intergroup bias driven by aggression and women's driven by fear (Chen et al., 2019; Davenport, 2020; Franco et al., 2019; Ho et al., 2017; Vinluan & Remedios, 2019). These gendered patterns in intergroup psychology may reflect and inform people's normative expectations for intergroup behavior. When individuals observe gender differences in men and women's response to intergroup contexts, they likely form normative expectations for how men and women behave in such situations. Men may be expected to engage in active aggression towards out-group members, while women are expected to engage in fear-based avoidance of out-group members— an expectation spurned by being in an interracial relationship. These patterns are consistent with existing gender schemas of men as agentic and women as passive, making them all the more likely to be accepted and internalized (Darley & Gross, 1983; Nickerson, 1998). Our research demonstrates that Whites'

normative expectations for intergroup relations depend on the gender of the individuals involved, providing converging evidence of the importance of gender in intergroup contexts.

Though our primary focus in this paper was on target gender, we find limited evidence that perceiver gender also influences Whites' reactions to individuals in interracial relationships. Though White men and White women share gendered expectations for intergroup behavior, White men may be more motivated to punish women who violate these expectations. White men are the primary actors and beneficiaries of racial division, which serves their own reproductive interests by affording exclusive access to resources and mates (Davis, 2011; Kendi, 2016; Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). Accordingly, the norms and structures that maintain these divisions benefit White men directly, but not White women. For example, slave laws allowed White male slave owners to profit from the sexual abuse of Black women, as children born to slaves also became slaves— the property of the mother's owner. At the same time, White women who engaged in interracial relations were punished with forced servitude or banishment— losing the very legal privileges afforded by their *Whiteness*. Historically, gendered norms for interracial relations directly benefitted White men—licensing and financially incentivizing this behavior. As such, the direct material benefits of these norms are not the same for White men and White women. While Whites may share gendered norms for interracial relationships, as the primary beneficiaries of both racial and gender hierarchy, White men may have stronger motivations to defend and maintain these norms.

Together, these different streams of research show that men and women face different motivations, behavioral tendencies, and normative expectations in intergroup contexts—suggesting that gender is an important aspect of intergroup conflict.

Target Race & Gender Backlash

Given this paper's focus on intergroup contact norms among Whites, we made no specific predictions concerning status evaluations of Black targets. However, we observe a clear distinction in status perceptions of White vs. Black targets: participants consistently evaluated both Black targets as lower status, regardless of their partner's race. Though the Black female target was perceived as more gender deviant when in an interracial relationship, this difference did not reach significance. This begs the question, if gendered differences in sexual norms are driving these effects, why wouldn't Black women also experience this status penalty?

Research has just begun to consider the impact of a woman's race on gender backlash. Existing findings suggests that Women of Color and White women typically do not face the same degree of backlash for gender norm violations among White perceivers (Biernat & Fuegen, 2001; Toosi et al., 2019). For example, Black women who display agency or sexual promiscuity are met with less hostility than their White counterparts (Lopez, 1997; McMahon & Kahn, 2016; Xiao et al., 2020). Some have suggested that specific stereotypes about Black women as agentic and hypersexual might explain observed differences in gender backlash (i.e. Biernat & Fuegen, 2001; Galinsky et al., 2013; McMahon & Kahn, 2016). However, recent research suggests that White perceivers express greater gender backlash towards White women compared to women of color generally, not Black women specifically (Toosi et al., 2019; Xiao et al., 2020).

To reconcile these findings, recent work suggests that the racial group *match* between target and observer is a precondition for the expression of gender backlash. For example, sexist White and Asian observers tend to express greater backlash towards gender-norm violating women who come from the same racial group as they do (i.e. White female targets for White participants and Asian female targets for Asian participants; Xiao, Lowery, & Stillwell, 2020).

This work suggests that the racial group membership *match* between target and observer is a prerequisite to the expression of gender backlash. Race has socially and sexually segregated American society for generations. This means that the individuals we interact with in gendered roles—girlfriends, wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters—tend to be racial in-group members. As a result, we expect Americans are more likely to share normative expectations for men and women's behavior with others from their racial group. Our shared understandings of gender norms, and backlash for violating those norms, may be primarily enacted and constructed within racial groups (Xiao et al., 2020).

Given the heightened salience of race in this study, it is an ideal context to observe selective gender backlash towards racial in-group members. In this paradigm, the gender norms being violated preserve the boundaries of the White racial group. As such, we would only expect White women to be socially penalized for violating these norms, because as racial in-group members they are expected to follow the norms that maintain group boundaries and identity (van Kleef et al., 2015). We suspect that the lack of backlash against the Black female target reflects a lack of conferral of Whites' gender norm expectations to that target. However, this does not imply that Black women receive unconditional positive esteem from White observers. In our studies, Black women were viewed as low status, regardless of the race of their partner. In this respect, status perceptions of Black women more closely resembled perceptions of Black men than perceptions of White women. This suggests that while Black women may not experience the same degree of gender backlash among White observers, they still face racial bias, being evaluated more negatively as a result of their racial group membership.

Boundary Maintenance in Non-Dominant Groups

Though we have focused on norms and perceptions among Whites, an important next step is to examine how gender influences boundary maintenance and intergroup contact norms among non-Whites. All social groups are motivated to maintain a sense of group entitativity—the sense that a group of individuals form a bonded unit (M. T. Crawford & Salaman, 2012; Lickel et al., 2000; Yzerbyt et al., 2004). At the same time, the status difference between Whites and non-Whites likely leads to different group boundary maintenance processes in other racial groups. Non-dominant groups face more complex group pressures, as group entitativity, boundary maintenance, and status acquisition may encourage divergent motivations and behavior. As a result, it is inappropriate to generalize research on intergroup contact and boundary maintenance from majority-White samples to non-White populations. Below we elaborate on these potential group motivations for consideration in future research.

Group Entitativity. Whites and non-Whites may both be motivated to preserve racial group boundaries by discouraging intergroup contact and interracial romance. Group entitativity is a necessary precondition to identification with the group. Maintaining group boundaries is one way in which social groups maintain this shared sense of group entitativity (M. T. Crawford & Salaman, 2012; Lickel et al., 2000; Yzerbyt et al., 2004). Since norms against interracial contact reflect and maintain group boundaries, we might expect both White and non-White communities to hold norms against interracial relations (Bobo, 1983; Lessig, 1995; Lopez, 1997; McRae, 2018). For example, in caste-stratified India, spousal preferences are driven by within-caste (i.e. same-group) preference among members of castes at all levels of the social hierarchy, even members of the lowest status group (Banerjee et al., 2013). Similarly, we might expect that both Whites and non-Whites in American society (i.e. both high and low status groups) would favor marriage homophily as a means of maintaining a strong sense of group entitativity.

Group Boundaries. Though boundaries are important to all racial groups, interracial relationships may not threaten group boundaries for racial minorities. Even though Whites and racial minorities exist together in a social hierarchy, they do not necessarily share a common understanding of the bounds of group membership. Whites have used their power as the dominant group to enforce their *own* understanding of racial boundaries – a biological essentialist distinction between Whites and non-Whites. However, non-White racial groups may not share this understanding of racial boundaries—as evidenced by the many individuals of Asian, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and North African descent who disputed their legal classification as non-White in the 20th century (Lopez, 1997). Research on racial identity among Black, Asian, and biracial Americans suggests that for many racial minorities, their racial identity is based more in a shared experience of discrimination than in biological categories (Chen et al., 2019; Davenport, 2020; M. Franco et al., 2019; Ho et al., 2017; Vinluan & Remedios, 2019). Racial minority participants confer shared identity to a wider range of individuals compared to Whites, suggesting that minority groups are more tolerant of flexible racial boundaries (M. Franco et al., 2019; Ho et al., 2017).

Group Status Acquisition. Group boundary maintenance processes likely serve different functions among high status and low status groups. As the dominant group in the American racial hierarchy, maintaining strict boundaries promotes White's hierarchical interests, but not the interests of lower status racial groups. Rather, strict racial boundaries perpetuate the low status of non-Whites in American society (Davis, 2011; Fang et al., 1998; Williams & Eberhardt, 2008). Because non-White Americans occupy a lower position in the racial hierarchy, interracial relationships may involve building ties with higher status group members—not only dating *out*, but also dating *up* the racial hierarchy. As a result, intergroup contact norms within

low status groups face opposing motivations: though interracial relationships may threaten the sanctity of a categorical group identity, they also represent a potential path towards social and economic integration and equality. Perceptions of interracial relations may be more complex for non-White groups: are in-group members in interracial relationships abandoning or advancing the group?

Research using minimal groups suggests that low status groups do not share the protectionist approach to group boundaries adopted by high-status groups. Rather, low status minority groups are more favorable towards expanding group boundaries to include new members (Ellemers et al., 1988). For example, though hypodescent and the one-drop-rule[8] are racial classification schemas long used by Whites to *exclude* Blacks, the embrace of hypodescent in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements was *inclusive*, helping to unify, strengthen, and mobilize Black political power. Still today, White Americans respond to group threats by policing the group boundary, while Black Americans respond to groups threats by expanding the group boundary (Crawford & Salaman, 2012; Franco et al., 2019; Ho et al., 2013, 2017). Consistent with this view, non-Whites view interracial relations as less deviant than Whites, and may even view such relationships as a tool to rise up the racial hierarchy (Chen et al., 2019; Fang et al., 1998; Ferber, 1999; Ho et al., 2017; Pew Research Center, 2012). Together, this work suggests that racial boundary maintenance may be driven by different psychological processes among Whites and non-Whites. Research in this area is still new, and future work should explore the mutual influence of gender, group identity, and group status on norms in non-dominant groups.

Limitations

As with all research, these studies have important limitations. In Study 1, it is important to note that our use of child gender as a predictor variable does not perfectly eliminate selection effects. In this dataset, we examine individuals who report having children in their household, however, the data does not allow us to determine whether or not these children are biologically related to the participant or their spouse. Because of this, we are unable to distinguish between biological children, adopted children, and stepchildren in the participant's household. As such, we cannot say with certainty that child gender has been randomly assigned by nature. However, we also observe a similar effect among participants with only one child, and among all participants when we consider the gender of all family members in the household, not just children (see SOM). The robustness of this effect suggests that it is not merely an artifact of parental adoption or co-parenting preferences.

In this study, we were surprised to find that being paired with a White woman did not impact White observer's evaluations of Black men. Though we find evidence of racial bias in status perception of both Black targets, these low status perceptions occurred whether or not the target was in an interracial relationship. Historically, Black men bore the violent brunt of Whites' antagonism and paranoia about interracial sexuality; during Jim Crow, merely looking at a White woman could lead a Black man to be assaulted or lynched (Davis, 2011; Kendi, 2016). Stereotyping of Black men as hypermasculine and hypersexual justified this violence, and still persists today, influencing Black men's experiences in romantic relationships and the workplace (Galinsky et al., 2013). As such, we suspect that our results to not reflect a lack of backlash towards Black men for involvement with White women. Rather, backlash towards Black male-White female couples may manifest differently for each target in that couple. A White woman in an interracial relationship is an in-group member violating normative expectations; norm

violation tends to lead to social punishment (here lower status perceptions). By contrast, the Black man in this relationship is an out-group member violating the sanctity of the group. Perceived out-group encroachment is more likely to result in in envy, hostility, and violence towards members of that group (Cuddy et al., 2007). Indeed, for Black men in America, punishment for interracial relations has been far more physically violent than socially exclusionary (Davis, 2011; Perry & Sutton, 2008; Wells-Barnett & Douglass, 1892). It may be that the measures we used in this study— relatively benign social perceptions—are insufficient to capture attitudes and backlash towards Black men who date White women.

Finally, future research should further investigate whether Whites actively engage in gendered backlash against interracial relations. In the present study, our White participants reported their perceptions of how the individual targets in the interracial couple are viewed *in society*. This question taps their awareness of the social penalties targets face in the eyes of others, but not necessarily the participant's own endorsement of this social devaluation. Perceiving someone as lower status and purposefully diminishing their status are psychologically distinct processes, and may have different downstream behavioral consequences. We expect that racial identity is likely an important moderator variable, such that strongly identified Whites may be more likely to actively punish norm violators they perceive to threaten the group's boundaries.

Conclusion

Examining different dimensions of identity simultaneously is an essential next step in the study of intergroup and intragroup dynamics. Integrating research across domains, here racial norms and gender norms— gives us a glimpse into the interconnectedness of social hierarchies in American society. White women face greater expectations to maintain the sexual boundaries

between racial groups, acting as gatekeepers to Whites' sense of racial distinctiveness. At the same time, White men engage in interracial sexual contact without facing the same social penalties. By discouraging social and sexual race integration, Whites' gender norms contribute to the maintenance of the American racial hierarchy. Further research exploring group boundary maintenance through a gendered lens can deepen our understanding of how these intergroup processes actually play out in the context of gender relations.

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1 In this paper, we focus our experimental manipulations on interracial relations between White and Black Americans, as the history of American chattel slavery has made White-Black racial categorization a deeply salient distinction throughout the United States. However, Blacks/Africans are not the only ethnic group excluded from the category of *Whiteness*. In the late 19th and early 20th century, judges, lawyers, and politicians adjudicated the legal racial status of new immigrant groups, who did not readily fit into existing racial categories. This legal categorization synthesized individuals from east and south Asia, Mexico, and the Middle East into the existing White vs. non-White race ideology. Scientific and lay theories of race were adopted or ignored as necessary to justify the exclusion of these new groups from the legal privileges of *Whiteness* (Harris, 2003; Lopez, 1997). The primary question in these court proceedings was whether the individual could be considered White or not, demonstrating that the preservation of *Whiteness* and White identity depends on the exclusionary categorization of racial *Others*.

[2] This sexual double standard occurs most often for deviant and unusual forms of *heterosexual* behavior, such as having a large number of sexual partners, multiple simultaneous partners, or non-traditional partners (Bordini & Sperb, 2013; Jonason & Marks, 2009; Smith et al., 2008). Research in this domain has focused predominantly on heterosexual behavior, as we do in the present paper. This is an important limitation in scope. Historically, both gay men and lesbians have faced bigotry, despite differences in the nature of this prejudice (D'Emilio et al., 1997; Herek, 1988). For example, research shows that men face greater stigma than women for homosexual behavior, particularly among heterosexual male perceivers (Berrill, 1990; Elmslie & Tebaldi, 2007; Herek, 1988; Kite & Whitley, 1996).

An important limitation of many studies in this space, including the present one, is that without an *explicit* comparison across heterosexual and homosexual couples, target and partner gender will necessarily be confounded. In studies on heterosexual relationships, male (female) targets always have female (male) partners; for studies on homosexual relationships, it is the reverse. We recognize this limitation in the present paper, and encourage future research and theory to integrate queered perspectives on sexual power into backlash research (see Carr et al., 2017).

[3]Excluding participants who were not either (1) the head of household or (2) their spouse eliminated live-in associates who were not parents of the children in the household (for example, non-relatives, in-law relatives, and adult siblings, N = 1,719). Heads of household and their spouses represented the vast majority of the sample (87% of White participants).

4 For a more detailed discussion of variable construction when utilizing child gender to predict attitudes, see Washington (2008).

5 Following data collection, numerous reports from other researchers using Mechanical Turk suggested that bots had infiltrated the platform during the period of data collection, evading typical attention-check measures. Following the guidance of other researchers (Bai, 2018), participants with suspicious repeat IP addresses were excluded.

6 Study 2a also included a third experimental condition that we collapse across in the reported analyses; while we observe a significant interaction between this manipulation and our two independent variables, the interaction pattern was such that the focal effects were not changed; see online supplement for detailed analysis and study materials.

7 Numerous reports from other researchers using Mechanical Turk suggested that bots infiltrated the platform during the period of data collection, evading typical attention-check measures. Because we knew about this issue before data collection we added a screener question, per the guidance of researchers investigating these bots (Bai, 2018). Our screen was an English proficiency test because HITT Farmers are often actually located outside of the United States, and fail American linguistic and cultural test questions more often than the average MTurker (Turkprime, 2018).

[8] American social and legal principle used to classify individuals with any amount of non-White heritage as non-White, meaning that Black-White biracials were included as part of the movement.