Sex Differences in Mood Effects on Stigma in Mental Illness
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Abstract
In Study 1, it was found that men induced into a positive mood held higher stigma scores than all other conditions. However, that study was confounded in that valence and arousal were included in a single measure. This study was conducted as a conceptual replication of the first study. The International Affective Picture System (IAPS) was utilized in this study in order to provide a measure that parsed apart valence and arousal.

Methods
Two hundred fifty-three undergraduate students participated in an online study. Fourteen participants were eliminated for not completing the survey. Participants were asked to complete an overall question from Mayer and Gaschke’s (1988) Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS) as a pre-manipulation measure and view 10 pictures each displayed for 5 seconds from the International Affective Picture System (IAPS). Participants then completed the overall BMIS question again as a post-manipulation measure. Once participants completed the BMIS question, they completed Day, Edgren, and Eshleman’s 2007 Mental Illness Stigma Scale (Day MISS, four personality scales, and a demographics questionnaire). The personality scales were not analyzed and simply served as a means to prevent participants from discovering the true nature of the study and answering in a biased manner. Once all scales were completed, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results
A 2 (Sex) x 3 (Arousal) x 3 (Valence) Analysis of Variance was run on stigma scores in order to test for a significant interaction. Results indicated that there was a significant interaction between arousal and sex, such that males in the low arousal condition had higher stigma scores than all other conditions, F(2, 231) = 3.189, p = .043.

Discussion
This research confirmed that the arousal levels of the stimuli led to an effect on participants’ stigma scores. Future research should aim to sample a more demographically diverse population from multiple locations or institutions. Future research may also benefit by examining how religious affiliation and experience with mental illness affects stigma scores.

References

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