

VU Research Portal

Stereotypes help people connect with others in the community: A situated functional analysis of the stereotype consistency bias in communication

Clark, A.E.; Kashima, Y.

published in

Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
2007

DOI (link to publisher)

[10.1037/0022-3514.93.6.1028](https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.6.1028)

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

Clark, A. E., & Kashima, Y. (2007). Stereotypes help people connect with others in the community: A situated functional analysis of the stereotype consistency bias in communication. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93, 1028-1039. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.6.1028>

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

Stereotypes Help People Connect With Others in the Community: A Situated Functional Analysis of the Stereotype Consistency Bias in Communication

Anna E. Clark
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Yoshihisa Kashima
University of Melbourne

Communicators tend to share more stereotype-consistent than stereotype-inconsistent information. The authors propose and test a situated functional model of this stereotype consistency bias: Stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information differentially serve 2 central functions of communication—*sharing information* and *regulating relationships*; depending on the communication context, information seen to serve these different functions better is more likely communicated. Results showed that stereotype-consistent information is perceived as more *socially connective* but less informative than inconsistent information, and when the stereotype is perceived to be highly shared in the community, more stereotype-consistent than inconsistent information is communicated due to its greater *social connectivity* function. These results highlight the need to examine communication as a dynamic and situated social activity.

Keywords: stereotype consistency bias, stereotype communication, informativeness, social connectivity, situated-functional model

The stereotype consistency bias is the tendency to communicate more stereotype-consistent information than stereotype-inconsistent information in a message, and it has been well established in the stereotype communication literature (see Kashima, Klein, & Clark, 2007, for a review). In dyadic conversation, communicators spend more time discussing stereotype-consistent information, expressing agreement with stereotype-consistent statements, and focusing questions and discussion on stereotype-consistent information (see Ruscher, 1998, for a review). When stereotype-relevant stories are passed along a chain of communicators, a stereotype consistency bias emerges in the communicated message as stereotype-consistent information is retained and inconsistent information left out (see Kashima, et al., 2007, for a review).

However, a central question remains: *Why* should stereotype-consistent information have this communicative advantage over stereotype-inconsistent information? The aim of this research was to test a *situated functional account* of the production of a stereotype consistency bias in particular contexts. In this view, communication is a socially situated activity (Smith & Semin, 2004) in which communicators construct and transmit a message to their

respective communication partner in order to perform a task in a particular context. What information is included in the message depends on the *functions* that the information serves. This functionalist principle suggests that the information that better serves a function in a given context is more likely communicated. Nonetheless, the situated nature of social communication dictates that what information best serves what function of communication will also depend on the *context* in which the communication takes place.

The situated functional analysis of stereotype communication presented here suggests that the context of the communication will influence how stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information are seen to fulfill the functions of communication. We first examine two central functions of communication, *information sharing* and *social connectivity*, and then consider how features of the social context in which the communication is situated may influence the relative communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information. The studies reported in the present article examine implications of the situated functional analysis for a central contextual factor on stereotype communication, *perceived community endorsement*, that is, whether the stereotype is perceived to be widely shared and endorsed in the community (Lyons & Kashima, 2003).

Informational and Relational Functions of Communication

Communication serves at least two central functions, *sharing novel information* and *the regulation of social relationships*. The first central function is that of information sharing. It is widely accepted that information is transmitted to inform people about things that they do not already know, thus adding to the existing common ground. In order to ensure that their message to a communication partner is optimally informative, communicators are likely to attend to the potentially novel features of the information

Anna E. Clark, Department of Social Psychology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands; Yoshihisa Kashima, Department of Psychology, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

We thank Gün Semin, Gerald Echterhoff, and Sander Koole for their insightful comments and Jen Whelan for her assistance in data coding.

The research was facilitated by Australian Research Council Grant DP0450518 awarded to Yoshihisa Kashima.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Anna E. Clark, Department of Social Psychology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, van der Boerhorstraat 1, 1081 BT, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. E-mail: ae.clark@psy.vu.nl

and preference the inclusion of this information in their message (e.g., Grice, 1975; Lyons & Kashima, 2003; Slugoski, Lalljee, Lamb, & Ginsburg, 1993). This would suggest that in stereotype-relevant communication, it is the stereotype-inconsistent information (information less consistent with the shared stereotype) that is more likely to be communicated—an explanation that is at odds with the widespread stereotype consistency bias in communication.

The second central function is the regulation of social relationships. Communication is integral to how we establish and maintain our relations with others (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Enfield, 2006; Hardin & Conley, 2001). Therefore, in constructing a message, communicators may select the information they regard as more likely to serve these *social connective* functions. We use the term *social connection* to refer to a perception of a bond or relationship between two people that either may last simply for the duration of the conversation or be part of a lasting interpersonal relationship. It is possible that stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information are perceived to contribute to social connectivity differently in different situations. In a related vein, gossiping is a type of communication that is thought to have important social regulatory functions (Baumeister, Zhang, & Vohs, 2004; Dunbar, 1996). In such communication, people are not only spending a pleasant time together and thus bolstering social connection but also conveying information about each other, about other members of the society, and about social norms, thus playing an important role in the regulation of social relationships. In everyday social conversation, when communicators share the same emotional reaction to hearing an emotionally arousing anecdote, this can contribute to the social bond between communicators and coordinate their action toward the target of the conversation (Peters & Kashima, in press). Other communication-related research has also shown that linguistic and paralinguistic features can be used to increase or decrease perceived social closeness or distance. For instance, the use of particular dialects, accents, and words allows speakers to make salient particular identity markers that can converge with, or diverge from, their audience (Giles & Coupland, 1991).

The extent to which information serves the two central communicative functions, social connectivity and informativeness, may influence what Schaller, Conway, and Tanchuk (2002) called the *communicability* of the information, namely, the perceived likelihood of an item of information being mentioned in communication. Schaller and colleagues have shown that stereotypic traits rated as more likely to be mentioned were also more likely to persist in stereotypes of those groups that feature prominently in social discourse. They suggested that inherent communicability may underlie biases in stereotype communication and affect the subsequent content of the stereotype: uncommunicable traits are selected out of the discourse and therefore from the stereotype content (Schaller et al., 2002; see also Heath, Bell, & Sternberg, 2001, for a similar point). It is also possible that the *stereotype consistency* of stereotype-relevant information could predict its perceived communicability and, in turn, its *actual communication* in a shared message.

Communication Context: The Role of Shared Knowledge

Communication is a socially situated activity (Smith & Semin, 2004), and thus the way in which information serves communicative functions is also likely to depend on the *context* of the

communication. One critical aspect of the communication context, and one that has received particular attention in stereotype communication research, is the shared knowledge or common ground that communicators perceive to share with a communication partner (Clark, 1996; see Lyons & Kashima, 2003, for research on stereotype communication specifically). Perceived common ground is an emergent feature of any communication context: When faced with constructing a message for a particular communication partner, communicators will use whatever cues at their disposal (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age) to make assumptions about their likely common ground and carefully scaffold each new contribution onto existing knowledge (e.g., Clark & Wilkes-Gibbs, 1986; for reviews, see Kashima et al., 2007; Krauss & Fussell, 1996). In stereotype communication research specifically, Lyons and Kashima (2003) have shown that the stereotype-relevant information perceived to be *shared* and likely *endorsed* by a specific communication partner both play an important role in the emergence of the stereotype consistency bias. In research using artificial stereotypes about a fictitious group, Lyons and Kashima (2003) directly examined the effects of both the perception that others in a community *share the cultural knowledge* of any given stereotype (perceived sharedness) and the perception of whether they endorse this content (perceived endorsement). They found that when communicators believed the communication partner to have some knowledge of the stereotype (partial shared knowledge), stereotype consistency biases emerged across the communication chain, but no such bias was observed when the audience was believed to know the identical stereotype (complete knowledge). In a next study, partial knowledge of the stereotype was held constant, and the endorsement of the stereotype by a communication partner was manipulated. A stereotype consistency bias emerged when communicators were led to believe the majority of the community endorsed the stereotype, but a reverse stereotype-inconsistent bias emerged when community endorsement was low. Thus, both perceptions of stereotype sharedness and endorsement appear important factors driving the stereotype consistency bias.¹

Functions of Communication and Communicability of Stereotype-Consistent and Inconsistent Information

Perceived stereotype sharedness and endorsement may play critical roles in determining whether stereotype-consistent or inconsistent information is more likely seen to serve the informational and relational functions of communication. We first consider the implications of a stereotype as shared knowledge. Because stereotypes are generally shared and assumed to be shared in the

¹ Although at first glance this may seem consistent with the finding in small-group discussion research that shared information is communicated more than unshared information (see Tindale & Kameda, 2000, for a review), there is an important difference. In the stereotype communication research, what is shared or unshared are the stereotypes, and what is communicated is not the stereotypes per se but rather stereotype-consistent or inconsistent information about a member of the stereotyped group. In the small-group discussion research, information that is actually shared or unshared among group members is the very information to be communicated. Because of this, members of a small discussion group have no information about the distribution of the information beforehand, and thus the effect of its perceived sharedness cannot be investigated.

community, stereotype-inconsistent information (as information more inconsistent with the shared knowledge) should be more informative than stereotype-consistent information (information more consistent with the shared knowledge). This would suggest that inconsistent information is communicated more than consistent information for its greater informativeness, although it has also been argued that stereotype-consistent information may be more informative than inconsistent information. Ruscher (1998) argued that although a group stereotype may be shared, any specific instance of how an individual fits a stereotype is new information, and therefore the new stereotype-consistent information may be seen to be informative in this sense.

Stereotype sharedness is also likely to have implications for the social connectivity function. As stereotypes are widely shared, stereotype-consistent information may be communicated more because information more consistent with the shared stereotype is more likely to contribute to a sense of social connection (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Communicating stereotype-consistent information may convey a message of similarity, liking, and a general motive to get along, in that it implies the existence of common ground. In their theory of politeness, Brown and Levinson argued that communicating shared knowledge provides a way for communicators to convey commonalities between them: In making statements referring to shared knowledge, communicators claim their common ground, thus showing a commonality of knowledge, attitudes, interests, goals, and in-group membership. Therefore, stereotype-consistent information may be used to serve social connective functions when the stereotype is assumed to be shared in the community. However, it could also be argued that relationships are enhanced when communication partners create interest by communicating more unshared (more stereotype-inconsistent) information, and thus an argument could also be made for unshared information (information inconsistent with the shared information) contributing to closer social relations. Thus, there is some debate as to whether stereotype-consistent or inconsistent information would be perceived to best serve the informativeness and social connectivity function.

The above discussion suggests the potential for a general tension between the informativeness and social connectivity functions in relation to the communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information: stereotype-inconsistent information may be more informative, but consistent information is more socially connective. As such, communicators are faced with a dilemma or trade-off between fulfilling the two functions (Kashima et al., 2007). The perceived endorsement of the stereotypes adds further complexity. If the commonly held stereotype is widely endorsed, then the stereotype-consistent information may be strengthened in its perceived potential to serve the social connectivity function. In addition, the stereotype-inconsistent information, although informative as argued earlier, may be seen to be more antagonistic. However, if the commonly held stereotype is widely *dis*endorsed, then stereotype-consistent information that is consistent with this unpopular stereotype is unlikely to serve the social connective function. In this case, the mentioning of stereotype-consistent information may provoke controversy or disagreement, which has the potential to disrupt and endanger the flow of smooth conversation and, therefore, may not contribute to social connectivity. In contrast, when the community is seen to *dis*endorse the stereotypes, the stereotype-inconsistent information may be seen to serve a social connective function better.

The Present Research

The present research aimed to test the situated functional analysis of stereotype communication by examining the role of the informational and relational functions of stereotype-related information in contexts in which a shared stereotype was either widely endorsed or *dis*endorsed by the general community. In Study 1, we examined stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information in terms of their perceived communicative functions—to be informative and to establish a social connection—and tested the hypotheses that information seen to better serve these functions is seen to be more communicable. In Study 2, we extended the model tested in Study 1 in two ways. We examined the actual communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information and whether the stereotype consistency of the information predicted its actual communication via informativeness, social connectivity, and communicability. In addition, we examined the communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information in contexts of high- and low-perceived stereotype endorsement, hypothesizing that a stereotype consistency bias would be stronger when the stereotypes are seen to be endorsed by the community than when they are not and that perceived endorsement would influence the way stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information is perceived to fulfill communicative functions.

Study 1

Study 1 sought evidence for the informativeness and social connectivity functions of information in communication and whether stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information differentially served these functions. We examined the hypothesis that the stereotype consistency of the information would predict communicability, via the informativeness and social connectivity functions. In this study, we examined communication of information more stereotype consistent or inconsistent with the male gender stereotype, a stereotype widely shared in the participant community.

Method

Participants. Forty undergraduate psychology students, aged between 18 and 25 years ($M = 19$) from the University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, participated in return for course credit. All participants had lived in Melbourne and spoke English for at least 10 years.

Stimulus materials. The stimulus material was a 632-word story about a young man on a weekend car trip. Thirty-two stereotype-relevant clauses described the personality characteristics and behaviors of this target, and 17 additional clauses provided the general storyline, which did not include any stereotype-relevant information.² Of the 32 stereotype-relevant clauses, half were consistent and half inconsistent with the male stereotype. The gender stereotype of young men provided the main stereotype for the target character. The male target was further described via one

² The stereotype-consistent and inconsistent clauses were balanced across the central elements of story structure (setting, theme, episodes, and resolution), as studies have found the story structure to influence memory for the story information (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Thorndyke, 1977; see also Rumelhart, 1977, for details of story structure).

of two occupations, a footballer and a writer, which also carry occupational stereotypes. The occupational stereotypes of footballers and writers represented opposite male occupational stereotypes (characteristics stereotypical of one were counterstereotypical of the other) and had an opposite relationship to the central male stereotype: Stereotype-consistent information for the footballer was highly consistent with the male stereotype, whereas stereotype-consistent information for the writer was highly *inconsistent* with the male stereotype. Results of four pilot studies confirmed that 16 of the stereotype-relevant clauses were highly consistent with the footballer and male stereotype, and 16 were highly consistent with the writer stereotype, but highly inconsistent with the male stereotype. As the footballer and writer stereotype were stereotype opposites, each clause could be examined as both stereotype consistent and inconsistent, depending on whether the target was labeled as a footballer or writer. In this study, the stereotype consistency of the target information with the male stereotype was examined. The occupation of the character, footballer or writer, was manipulated as a between-participants factor and is controlled for in the analysis.

Procedure. Participants were told that the study was investigating the way in which people tell stories in everyday situations. Participants read either the footballer (50%) or writer version of the story twice and then completed a 5-min distractor task in which they drew a floor plan of their own home. Participants were then told that they would not actually communicate the story to another person, but they were asked to imagine that they were to tell the story to a fellow student and indicate the likelihood of mentioning each clause/question in their retelling of the story to a fellow student at the same university. This communicability measure was based on Schaller et al. (2002) and read "How likely is it that you would mention this statement in telling this story to another student?" Eight further questions, designed to measure the social connectivity and informativeness functions, followed. Participants responded to each question by providing a rating for each of the 32 stereotype-relevant clauses in turn. The four measures designed to tap the social connectivity of information were: To what extent would communicating this statement "help to establish some kind of connection or social bond with the person you are talking to?" (Social Bond); "seem a 'friendly' thing to say in telling this story?" (Friendliness); "make you appear likable to another student?" (Likable); and "How interesting or entertaining do you think this statement is to another student?" (Interesting/entertaining). The four items designed to measure informativeness were: How likely is it that another student would find this statement "informative in thinking about the character" (Informative); "relevant in thinking about the character?" (Relevance); "How likely is it that they would ask for further explanation or justification of this statement?" (Explanation/Justification) and "How likely is it that another student would find this statement surprising or unexpected?" (Surprising/Unexpected). All items were rated on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all likely to mention, friendly, etc.*) to 7 (*very likely to mention, friendly, etc.*). Participants rated the 32 clauses for each question in the order of appearance in the story.

Results

Responses to each of the nine questions for the 32 clauses were averaged across participants. All analyses were performed using

the average ratings for each of the 32 clauses, thus treating the clause as the primary unit of analysis. Initial analyses revealed that neither participant gender nor the character occupation (footballer vs. writer) influenced the ratings of the stereotype content in a systematic way. The type of clause (personality trait vs. behavior) and valence of the clause were also found to have no significant effect on the ratings of any of the nine items.

Principal-components analyses. Principal-components analyses were performed on the eight dimensions designed to tap the social connectivity and informativeness functions. Two clear factors emerged (eigenvalues were 3.76 and 2.41, with all others less than 1.0). Two components were extracted followed by the oblimin rotation, $r(64) = .14$. Loadings indicated two clear factors. The four social connectivity dimensions (social bond, friendly, likable, and interesting/entertaining) loaded onto Factor 1, and the remaining four informativeness dimensions (surprising/unexpected, further explanation/justification, informative, and relevant) loaded onto Factor 2. The two components accounted for 77% of the variance (see Table 1). The four items comprising Factor 1 indicate a consideration of the way in which communication contributes to a *social relationship* with a communication partner, namely, to form a bond or connection with the other person and to be friendly, likable, interesting, and entertaining. The second factor clearly represented the *informational contribution* of the message, indicating information that is informative, relevant, and comprised a novelty aspect of being perhaps surprising, unexpected, and requiring some further explanation. Composite measures of social connectivity and informativeness were computed by averaging the mean ratings for the items, with loadings on Factors 1 and 2 greater than .65, with Cronbach's α being .82 and .87, respectively. The correlation between social connectivity and informativeness was negative, $r(64) = -.32, p < .01$.

Regression analyses. A series of regression analyses were conducted to examine the effects of stereotype consistency on communication functions and communicability. To index stereotype consistency, we used the ratings of typicality of the clauses for a young man (male stereotype) obtained in the pilot testing of the stimulus material. The between-subjects factor of the character occupation (footballer or writer) and the interaction of occupation and stereotype consistency (Occupation \times Stereotype Consistency) were included in all the following analyses by entering them

Table 1
Factor Loadings for Social Connectivity and Informativeness in Study 1

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2
Social connectivity		
Social bond	-.91	.13
Friendly	-.70	-.32
Likable	-.88	-.18
Interesting/entertaining	-.78	.29
Informativeness		
Explanation/justification	.29	.77
Surprising/unexpected	.50	.66
Informative	-.16	.91
Relevant	.21	.95

Note. $N = 64$. The factor loadings in bold indicate items that were averaged to compute informativeness or social connectivity.

as predictors in later steps of a hierarchical regression procedure. Occupation was effect coded (footballer = 1 and writer = -1), and the other variables were all centered. These effects were not significant in any of the analyses. The data consisted of the average ratings of the 32 clauses for each character occupation condition, thus making the total of 64 cases.

The proposed model was that male stereotype consistency would predict communicability via informativeness and social connectivity. To test this model, three conditions were assessed: (a) that stereotype consistency predicted communicability; (b) that stereotype consistency predicted the potential mediators, social connectivity and informativeness; and (c) that when communicability is regressed on stereotype consistency and the proposed mediators simultaneously, the influence of stereotype consistency is nonsignificant (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

In the first regression analyses, only the first step was significant, indicating that stereotype consistency was the only significant predictor of communicability. Neither occupation nor the interaction between occupation and stereotype consistency were significant. A simple regression of stereotype consistency onto communicability confirmed this ($\beta = .46$, $t(62) = 4.10$, $p < .001$). To test the second condition, the same hierarchical regression analyses were then performed with social connectivity or informativeness as the criterion. In both, stereotype consistency was the only significant predictor. Again, a simple regression analysis showed this for social connectivity ($\beta = .69$, $t(62) = 7.41$, $p < .001$), and informativeness ($\beta = -.41$, $t(62) = -3.57$, $p < .01$). More stereotype-consistent information was perceived as more socially connective and less informative.

To examine the full model, a hierarchical regression analysis was performed with social connectivity and informativeness entered at Step 1, stereotype consistency at Step 2, and character occupation and its interaction term at Steps 3 and 4, respectively. Step 1 was significant, Step 2 increased R^2 significantly, but Steps 3 and 4 did not. A simultaneous regression analysis was performed with the Step 1 and Step 2 predictors (i.e., social connectivity, informativeness, and stereotype consistency). All three positively predicted communicability: stereotype consistency ($\beta = .40$), $t(60) = 2.83$, $p < .01$; social connectivity ($\beta = .34$), $t(60) = 2.44$, $p < .05$; and informativeness ($\beta = .41$), $t(60) = 3.78$, $p < .001$. More stereotype-consistent, more socially connective, and more informative information was perceived to be more communicable. Further Sobel tests (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) showed that an indirect effect of male stereotype consistency was significant through social connectivity as a mediator ($Z = 3.70$, $p < .001$), but it was not significant through informativeness ($Z = -1.02$, $p > .1$), thus indicating that social connectivity partially mediated the effect of stereotype consistency.

Discussion

Informativeness and social connectivity are perceived as distinct communicative functions, and stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information are perceived as differentially informative, socially connective, and communicable. Specifically, more male stereotype-consistent information is perceived to be more socially connective, less informative, and more communicable. The present results suggest three general pathways to communicability: Stereotype-consistent information is more communicable, consis-

tent information is perceived as more socially connective and also more communicable, and stereotype-inconsistent information tends to be perceived as more informative, whereby informative information is also more communicable. Given that communicability is directly predicted by informativeness and social connectivity, this would suggest that messages highly consistent with the shared male stereotype are communicable because they are socially connective.

Study 2

Study 1 showed that male stereotype-consistent information is more communicable, more socially connective, and less informative in communication contexts, in which both informativeness and social connectivity also partially mediate the relationship between male stereotype consistency and communicability. However, a number of issues remain unanswered. Although Study 1 examined whether the male stereotype consistency of the information predicted its perceived informativeness, social connectivity, and communicability, whether communicability predicts the actual communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information, mediated by social connectivity and informativeness, is yet to be tested. In addition, Study 2 sought to examine whether the context of the communication, namely, the level of perceived stereotype endorsement influenced communication via its influence on how the stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information are perceived to serve the informativeness and social connectivity functions. Perceived endorsement was manipulated with regard to the stereotypes associated with the occupation of the character (footballers or writers). The serial reproduction paradigm (based on Bartlett, 1932; see also Kashima, 2000, and McIntyre, Lyons, Clark, & Kashima, 2004) was also used, allowing us to examine both the actual communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information in a single dyadic interaction and the persistence of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information over a number of messages along a chain.

In Study 2, the model examined in Study 1 was extended in two ways: The proposed model was tested under conditions of high- and low-perceived endorsement, by including this factor in the proposed path model, and a measure of actual communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information was included in addition to communicability; the hypothesis was that communicability will directly predict communication. Perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotype was manipulated. Participants were told that the occupational stereotype of footballers or writers (depending on the condition) was endorsed by a majority or only a minority of the local community (see Lyons & Kashima, 2003).

Following Lyons and Kashima (2003), we expected that both the consistency of information with the shared male stereotype and the level of perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotype (footballer or writer) to influence stereotype communication: Information more consistent with the male stereotype will be communicated more than information inconsistent with the male stereotype, and the stereotype consistency bias will be stronger when the perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotype is perceived to be high rather than low.

Method

Participants. Eighty (24 men and 56 women) undergraduate psychology students participated as part of their course requirements and were grouped in same-gender serial reproduction chains. There were five chains in each perceived endorsement condition, in which one or two of these were all male chains.

Experimental design. Perceived endorsement (high vs. low) and character occupation (footballer or writer) were two between-subjects variables. The serial reproduction paradigm was used, with 4 participants in each chain. Position in the chain (1–4) and the stereotype consistency of the information (consistent vs. inconsistent) were both within-subjects factors, forming a four-way mixed factorial design with five four-person chains in each cell.

Materials and procedure. As in Study 1, participants were told that they would read a short story and then communicate it to a fellow student at the university who would read it later on. As a cover story for the perceived endorsement manipulation, participants were told that they would not actually meet their communication partner but would be given some preliminary results from a bogus university-wide study recently conducted on campus. These alleged results, given in a small booklet, provided general demographics (gender, age, and university course) and the results of a section entitled “Beliefs About Social Categories.” Results for one occupational stereotype were always included together with three other social categories, said to be randomly chosen from the original list. The manipulation of high- and low-perceived endorsement was achieved by telling participants approximately 85% or 25% of the students rated traits that are stereotypical of footballers or writers as highly stereotypical (high- vs. low-perceived endorsement; e.g., Lyons & Kashima, 2003; Stangor, Sechrist, & Jost, 2001).

Participants then read the story through twice, followed by a 5-min distractor task in which they drew a floor plan of their own home. Participants were then asked to “tell the story to another student in your own words.” Once a communication was written, participants completed a series of questions that included a check on the perceived endorsement manipulation (participants were asked to rate how average Melbourne University students endorsed stereotypical traits as typical of footballers or writers on 7-point scales (1 = *very atypical*, 7 = *very typical*)) and four of the original communicability-related items from Study 1: likelihood of mentioning, social connection, surprising/unexpected, and further explanation/justification. As information generally drops out across the communication chain, it was possible that participants at Positions 2–4 in the chain would rate stereotype-consistent and inconsistent items that they had not read in their story. It was explained to participants that this may occur but to rate the item in terms of how it would “fit” with the story they had told their communication partner. Thus, we reasoned that communicators would rate possible unseen items in a way that would be consistent with, and thus reflect, their version of the story.

Results

Manipulation check. The manipulation check showed that participants in the high-perceived endorsement condition believed their fellow Melbourne University students to share the stereotype of footballers or writers marginally more strongly ($M = 5.76$) than did participants in the low-endorsement condition ($M = 5.47$), $F(1,$

62) = 3.71, $p = .059$, $\eta^2 = .057$. The main effect of character occupation was also significant in this analysis, $F(1, 62) = 27.49$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .31$, indicating that the perceived endorsement of the footballer stereotype was generally higher ($M = 6.01$) than the perceived endorsement of the writer stereotype ($M = 5.22$).

Coding the reproduction data. Each reproduction was coded according to whether the 32 stereotype-relevant clauses (16 footballer stereotype consistent and 16 writer stereotype consistent) were present or not according to their gist; the reproduction did not have to present the original clause verbatim. The footballer stereotype-consistent clauses were also consistent for the male stereotype and writer stereotype-consistent clauses were inconsistent for the male stereotype. Thirty-five percent of the stories, from all four experimental conditions, were coded by a second coder blind to the aims of the experiment, and an interrater reliability of $\kappa = .76$ ($p < .001$) was obtained. Disagreements were resolved by discussion.

Communication of stereotype-relevant information. In order to first examine whether the perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotype influenced the reproduction of the information consistent or inconsistent with the occupational stereotype, a four-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on the number of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent clauses reproduced in each retelling with perceived endorsement (high vs. low) and occupation of the character (footballer vs. writer) as between-subjects factors, and position (1–4) and stereotype consistency (consistent vs. inconsistent) as within-subjects factors. An ANOVA, with participant gender as a between-subjects factor, was first performed; however, no effects for gender were found, and it was dropped from the reported analysis.

The only significant main effect was for position, $F(3, 14) = 42.97$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .90$, indicating that the amount of stereotype content reproduced decreased across the chain ($M = 7.93, 4.95, 3.85, 3.03$, for Positions 1–4, respectively). Results showed a predicted interaction effect between perceived endorsement and occupational stereotype consistency, $F(1, 16) = 4.33$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .21$. A greater amount of stereotype-consistent information was reproduced when perceived endorsement was higher (stereotype consistent $M_{\text{high}} = 6.55$, $M_{\text{low}} = 4.35$), $t(18) = 1.93$, $p = .07$. In contrast, a similar amount of stereotype-inconsistent information was reproduced in both high- and low-perceived endorsement conditions (stereotype-inconsistent $M_{\text{high}} = 4.25$, $M_{\text{low}} = 4.60$), $t(18) = -0.32$, $p = .75$. These findings suggest that high-perceived endorsement encourages the reproduction of stereotype-consistent information, whereas low-perceived endorsement seems to suppress this effect, showing that this stereotype consistency bias exists regardless of position in the chain.

The interaction effect between occupation and occupational stereotype consistency was also significant, $F(1, 16) = 12.59$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .44$. A greater proportion of stereotype-consistent information was reproduced than inconsistent information ($M_{\text{consistent}} = 6.45$, $M_{\text{inconsistent}} = 3.25$), $t(9) = 3.81$, $p < .01$, when the main character was a footballer but not when he was a writer ($M_{\text{consistent}} = 4.45$, $M_{\text{inconsistent}} = 5.60$), $t(9) = -1.15$, $p = .28$. This shows that whereas a clear stereotype consistency bias emerged for the male stereotype-consistent footballer (i.e., more footballer stereotype-consistent information was reproduced than writer stereotype-consistent information), this effect was reduced in the case of the male stereotype-inconsistent writer character.

Table 2
Correlations Between Variables in the Full Regression Model in Study 2

Variable	Perceived endorsement	Character occupation	Stereotype consistency	1	2	3	4
1. Informativeness	.01	.08	-.66***	—			
2. Social connectivity	.31***	-.28**	.55***	-.35***	—		
3. Communicability	-.01	-.16	.39***	-.19*	.51***	—	
4. Actual communication	.10	-.01	.24**	-.24**	.25**	.49**	—

Note. $N = 128$.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Predicting the stereotype consistency bias. In order to shed further light on the joint effects of the occupation (footballer or writer) and perceived endorsement, we created a single-item measure of the stereotype consistency bias (number of stereotype-consistent items minus the number of inconsistent items, where stereotype consistency was determined relative to the occupational stereotype) and examined whether the experimentally manipulated factors of perceived endorsement (effect coded as low endorsement = -1 and high endorsement = 1) and occupation (effect coded as writer = -1 and footballer = 1) would predict the stereotype consistency bias using a hierarchical procedure. Although this study used the serial reproduction design, position did not interact with any other manipulated factor. The stereotype consistency bias was computed as an average index of bias across the communication chain. The additive regression model with the two main effects was significant ($R^2 = .51$), $F(2, 17) = 8.98$, $p < .01$, with both perceived endorsement and occupation being significant predictors of the stereotype consistency bias ($\beta = .36$), $t(17) = 2.14$, $p < .05$, and ($\beta = .62$), $t(17) = 3.66$, $p < .01$, respectively. The interaction effect was not significant. This suggests that a stereotype consistency bias increases additively when communicators perceive their communication partners as endorsing the occupational stereotype and when they are talking about the young man as a footballer (more stereotypically male occupation) rather than as a writer (more counterstereotypically male occupation).

Communicative functions, communicability, and actual communication. As in Study 1, the data consisted of the average ratings of the 32 stereotype-relevant clauses for each of the four communicability-related questions. Given that the experimental design in this study also included the two between-subjects variables (perceived endorsement of occupational stereotype, high vs. low; and occupation, footballer or writer), each at two levels, the entire data set comprised four times the 32 clauses. Therefore, the total sample size was the average ratings on 128 clauses.

Communicability was again measured by the item "likelihood of mentioning," social connectivity by the "social connection" item, and informativeness by two items, "surprising unexpected" and "further explanation/justification." These items correlated at $r(128) = .75$ ($p < .001$) and were collapsed into a single item for informativeness (Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$). Male stereotype consistency was calculated in the same way as for Study 1, that is, the average male stereotypicality ratings of the 32 clauses. As a measure of actual communication, the persistence of the stereotype information across the chain was used by computing the average number of times a given clause was reproduced across the chains (the range of possible values was 0–4).

Correlations. Correlations between the variables to be analyzed were then computed (see Table 2). Perceived endorsement (high = 1, low = -1) positively and occupation (footballer = 1, writer = -1) negatively correlated with social connectivity. Correlations between the other variables, stereotype consistency, social connectivity, informativeness, communicability, and actual communication were also significant.³

Regression analyses. A series of multiple regression analyses were then performed to test an extended model that modified the model we tested in Study 1 by including a measure of actual communication as the outcome variable and the two experimentally manipulated factors, perceived endorsement and occupation. In the regression analyses to follow, effect-coded variables were used for perceived endorsement (PE; high = 1, low = -1) and character occupation (footballer = 1, writer = -1). Male stereotype consistency, communicability, social connectivity, and informativeness were all centered in order to reduce correlations between relevant interaction terms, as described below. A diagram summarizing the regression results is reported in Figure 1.

To test the proposed conceptual model, three conditions were assessed: that male stereotype consistency predicted actual communication; that when communication is regressed on stereotype consistency and the set of proposed mediators simultaneously, the influence of stereotype consistency is nonsignificant; and that stereotype consistency predicted the potential mediators, communicability, social connectivity, and informativeness (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In order to explore whether the manipulated variables, perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotype (PE), and character occupation had any moderating effect on the postulated mediation process, the following moderator variables were included in later steps in all regression analyses: main effects of PE and occupation, the two-way interactions of PE \times occupation, Stereotype Consistency \times PE, and Stereotype Consistency \times occupation, and a three-way effect of PE \times Occupation \times Stereotype Consistency.

Condition 1 for actual communication was examined by regressing actual communication on male stereotype consistency at Step 1 and the moderator variables in later steps. The amount of

³ Correlations between all main variables and both clause type (trait vs. behavior description) and valence were also examined. The only significant correlation involving clause type and valence was between valence and informativeness, $r(128) = -.23$, $p < .01$, indicating that negative information was perceived as somewhat more informative. As these magnitudes were small, and clause valence was balanced throughout the story stimulus, the effect of clause type and valence were not further investigated.

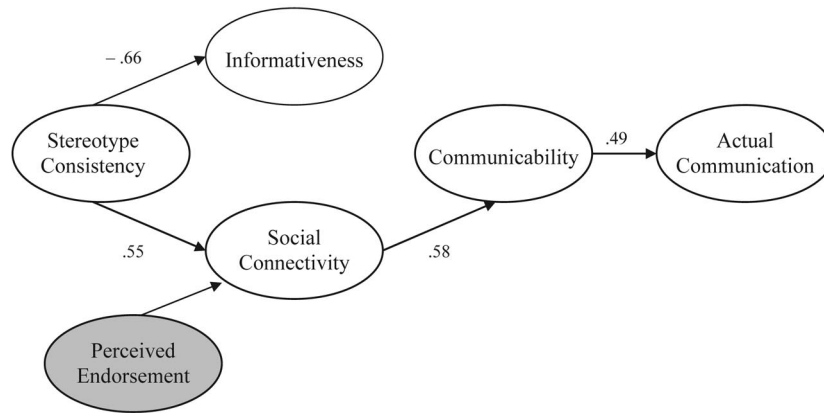


Figure 1. Path model showing the influence of perceived endorsement and male stereotype consistency on communication of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information via social connectivity and communicability as full mediators of this effect in Study 2. All paths are significant at $p < .001$.

variance explained by the first step was significant, but later steps did not increase predictability. Male stereotype consistency was the only significant predictor of communication ($\beta = .24$), $t(126) = 2.81, p < .01$. Variance inflation factor values of 1 for all factors confirmed that there was no problem due to multicollinearity. To test Condition 2, communication was regressed onto communicability at Step 1, social connectivity and informativeness at Step 2, stereotype consistency at Step 3, and the moderator variables at later steps. The variance explained in the first step was significant, but later steps did not significantly increase R^2 , indicating that the effect of male stereotype consistency, social connectivity, and informativeness on communication was fully mediated by communicability. When communicability was entered as a single predictor of communication, the simple regression analysis confirmed these results: ($\beta = .49$), $t(126) = 6.36, p < .001$.

Clearly, only communicability had a direct effect on actual communication. Thus, we tested Condition 3 for communicability, by examining whether male stereotype consistency significantly predicted communicability by entering male stereotype consistency at Step 1 and the moderator variables at later steps. Male stereotype consistency was the only significant predictor ($\beta = .39$), $t(126) = 4.72, p < .001$, and later steps did not contribute to prediction.

The foregoing analysis showed that communicability fully mediated the effect of male stereotype consistency on communication. We then tested the mediation model for communicability, which postulates that the effect of male stereotype consistency is mediated by informativeness and social connectivity functions. Communicability was regressed onto social connectivity and informativeness at Step 1, stereotype consistency at Step 2, and the moderator variables at later steps. Steps 1 and 2 added significantly to the prediction. At Step 2, social connectivity and stereotype consistency positively predicted communicability: social connectivity ($\beta = .42$), $t(124) = 4.63, p < .001$; stereotype consistency ($\beta = .23$), $t(124) = 1.99, p = .05$, respectively; informativeness was not a significant predictor: informativeness ($\beta = .10$), $t(124) = 1.02, ns$. As in Study 1, a Sobel test showed that there was a significant indirect effect of stereotype consistency on communicability, via social connectivity ($Z = 4.88, p < .001$).

Apparently, social connectivity may partially mediate the effect of stereotype consistency on communicability. To test this, social connectivity was regressed onto male stereotype consistency at Step 1 and the moderator variables at later steps. The results showed that a three-way effect of stereotype consistency, PE, and occupation was significant as well as other lower effects. The regression results for PE and occupation and all interaction effects involving these variables at the final step were as follows: stereotype consistency ($\beta = .55$), $t(120) = 8.97, p < .001$; PE ($\beta = .31$), $t(120) = 5.10, p < .001$; occupation ($\beta = -.78$), $t(120) = -4.53, p < .001$; PE \times Occupation ($\beta = -.02$), $t(120) = -0.35 ns$; Occupation \times Stereotype Consistency ($\beta = -.23$), $t(120) = -3.68, p < .001$; PE \times Stereotype Consistency ($\beta = -.02$), $t(120) = -0.77 ns$, and PE \times Occupation \times Stereotype Consistency ($\beta = .17$), $t(120) = 2.86, p < .01$.

In order to interpret the three-way interaction effect, the regression equation was plotted for each of the four experimental conditions (see Figure 2). Overall, the more consistent information is with the male stereotype, the more socially connective it is seen to be, and information is generally seen to be more socially connective when the community endorsed the occupational stereotype. However, there is a clear interaction between all three factors: male stereotype consistency, perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotype, and the occupation. When the character is the footballer, low-perceived endorsement of the footballer stereotype suppresses the perceived social connectivity of the information that is highly male stereotypical. Given that more male stereotypical information is in fact consistent with footballer stereotypes, this finding indicates that when the community is seen to disendorse the footballer stereotypes, footballer information is seen not to be so socially connective. Likewise, when the character is a writer, low-perceived endorsement of the writer stereotype results in a lower social connectivity of less male stereotype-consistent information. Again, less male stereotype-consistent information is in fact consistent with the writer stereotypes. Therefore, those who thought their community did not endorse the writer stereotype saw the writer stereotype-consistent information to be not socially connective.

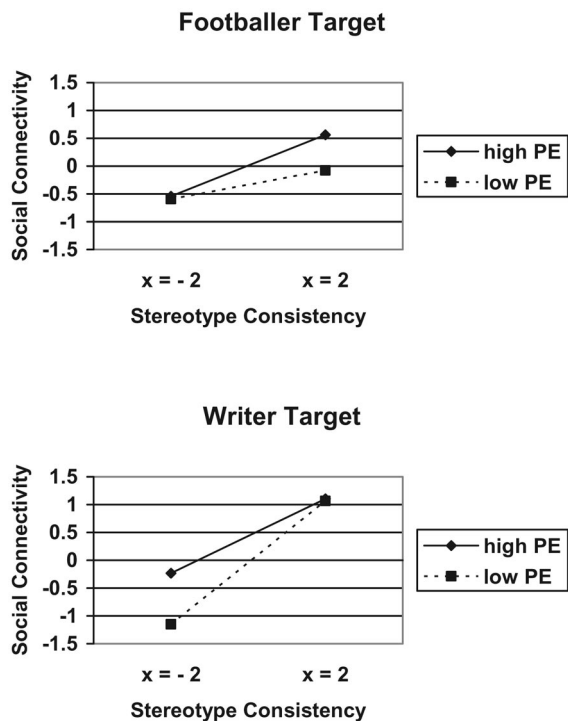


Figure 2. Regression lines showing the influence of male stereotype consistency on social connectivity as moderated by perceived endorsement (PE) in the footballer and writer character occupation conditions in Study 2.

For the sake of completeness, informativeness was regressed onto stereotype consistency at Step 1, PE and occupation at Step 2, two-way effects at Step 3, and a three-way effect at Step 4. The first and third steps significantly added to prediction. Male stereotype consistency and two interaction terms (Stereotype Consistency \times Occupation and PE \times Occupation) were all significant predictors of informativeness. The regression results for PE and occupation and all interaction effects involving these variables at Step 3 were as follows: stereotype consistency ($\beta = -.66$), $t(121) = -10.16$, $p < .001$; PE ($\beta = .01$), $t(121) = .07$, *ns*; occupation ($\beta = .08$), $t(121) = 1.29$, *ns*; PE \times Occupation ($\beta = -.14$), $t(121) = -2.18$, $p < .05$; Occupation \times Male Stereotype Consistency ($\beta = -.17$), $t(121) = -2.64$, $p < .01$; PE \times Male Stereotype Consistency ($\beta = -.02$), $t(121) = -0.37$ *ns*. The effects of these variables on informativeness are not examined further, as informativeness did not predict communicability or communication.

Discussion

As expected, we found that male stereotype consistency influences the actual communication, and this relationship is mediated by perceived communicability. Actual communication was indexed in this experiment as persistence across multiple communicators in the serial reproduction paradigm, suggesting that this is a phenomenon not only of one-off, dyadic communication but also of communication across a number of people in the community. More important, as in Study 1, social connectivity was found to

partially mediate the relationship between male stereotype consistency and communicability. Thus, the results suggest that communicators construct increasingly stereotypical messages because the more male stereotype-consistent information is perceived as more socially connective. The fact that stereotype-consistent information is seen to contribute to a social bond between communicators may explain, at least to some extent, why communication contributes to stereotype maintenance over time.

This study provided no support for informativeness as a determinant of communicability or actual communication. This is somewhat different from Study 1, in which informativeness was found to positively predict communicability. This may be due to the fact that Study 1 participants did not engage in actual communication. However, it is important to note that both studies showed that information more consistent with the shared male stereotype was perceived as less informative, and clearly less informative information is more likely to be communicated. Clearly, a stereotype consistency bias cannot be explained in terms of the informativeness of stereotype-consistent information.

Perhaps most importantly, this study examined the social connectivity, informativeness, communicability, and communication of stereotype information under conditions of high- and low-community endorsement of the two occupational stereotypes of footballers and writers. Results showed that the stereotype consistency bias was stronger for the footballer than for the writer; however, for both occupational stereotypes, when communicators thought their community did not endorse the stereotypes, no stereotype consistency bias was observed, whereas significantly more stereotype-consistent than inconsistent information was communicated when the community was seen to endorse the stereotypes. Results of the regression analyses indicated that perceived endorsement affected communication due to its social connective function: Social connectivity ratings were higher when perceived endorsement was higher. It is interesting to note that the perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotype influenced communication in addition to consistency of the information with the male stereotype. The effect of manipulated perceived endorsement on communication was mediated by social connective function of the information. It is noteworthy that the three-way interaction effect of male stereotype consistency, perceived endorsement of the occupational stereotypes, and the character's occupation on social connectivity showed an expected pattern: Low endorsement suppressed the connectivity of footballer information for the footballer character and that of writer information for the writer character. This provides support for the proposed combined influence of context, namely, the perceived stereotype endorsement and the present focus on communicative functions. Communicators' perceptions of stereotype endorsement affect the communication of stereotype-relevant information via their perceptions about the social connectivity of the stereotype-consistent information.

General Discussion

The present results provide support for our situated functional analysis of stereotype communication. Results support the two functions of communication, informativeness and social connectivity, and show that the stereotype consistency of the information predicts the extent to which it is perceived to be informative and socially connective. Stereotype-consistent information is per-

ceived as more socially connective and less informative than inconsistent information, whereas perceptions of stereotype-inconsistent information show the opposite pattern. Specifically, the social connectivity function was shown to mediate the relationship between stereotype consistency and communication, suggesting that stereotype-consistent information is preferred over inconsistent information for inclusion in a message because it is seen as more likely to serve the social connectivity function of communication. Although stereotype-inconsistent information was perceived as more informative than consistent information, the informativeness function did not predict stereotype communication. The present results indicate that it is the social connectivity function that underlies the stereotype consistency bias.

The present results also support the situated aspect of the proposed model: The context of the communication influences communication in interaction with the functions of communication. In line with Lyons and Kashima (2003), we found that the stereotype consistency bias emerged in situations when communicators perceived the stereotype as likely to be endorsed by a communication partner. The novel finding here is that this influence of perceived endorsement is evident via the social connectivity function, suggesting that a high-community endorsement of the relevant stereotype is seen to enable stereotype-consistent information to form the social connection between the communicator and the audience. Therefore there is a clear *interrelationship* between the functional and situated aspects of the nature of communication that combine in a dynamic way to influence the types of information communicators include in a message. This situated functionalist framework appears to be a fruitful approach to understanding the maintenance of stereotypes in communication.

The social connectivity function of communication has been highlighted in the present research. Maintaining and enhancing social relations is an important function of everyday communication and one that appears highly relevant for the communication of stereotypes. The communication of shared information has been argued to provide a way of communicating commonality and similarity with a communication partner (e.g., Brown & Levinson, 1987), and, indeed, in the present research, communicators have perceived information more consistent with the shared stereotype to lead to a greater sense of social bonding and connection with a communication partner. The social connectivity function of communication may be underpinned by a more general or basic human need—the need for social belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Stevens & Fiske, 1995). In light of the present findings, greater attention to the social relational aspects of the communication may be warranted in future investigations.

The present research may also help clarify the link between stereotype maintenance in communication and social influence. Our results, in line with Lyons and Kashima (2003), show that the stereotype consistency bias emerges when communicators perceive others in the community to endorse the stereotype. What the situated functional approach to communication taken here adds is that the type of social influence due to perceived endorsement is closer to a normative than an informational one, given the role of social connectivity. Furthermore, the research here shows that the social connectivity function mediates, at least partially, between stereotype consistency and communication even in the absence of the perceived endorsement manipulation. Thus, the present focus

on the functions of communication can shed some light on how social influence processes work in stereotype communication.

The situated nature of communication, specifically the knowledge and beliefs a communicator assumed to share with their communication partner, was found to influence how information is perceived to serve functions of communication. Although this is a critical property of the relationship between communicators, other situational features in any given context may also interact with the functions of communication to influence communication. The existing relationship between communicators (e.g., friends, enemies, or no existing relationship in the case of strangers) and the group membership of the communicators (shared or not shared) are two possible examples. Recent research has shown that the perceived closeness between newly acquainted dyads (e.g., Ruscher, Cralley, & O'Farrell, 2005) and the respective group memberships of communication partners and the stereotyped target (e.g., Freytag, in press; Kurz & Lyons, 2007; Kwok, Wright, & Kashima, in press) influence the relative amounts of stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information communicated. For example, with regard to the potential intergroup context, Kurz and McCaw showed that stereotype consistency biases emerged when communicators talked about an out-group target to a fellow in-group member but not when both the target and the receiver were members of the same out-group or when communicators talked to a fellow in-group member about an in-group target. These findings suggest that the specific nature of the intergroup context, defined by all relations in the triad between communicator, target, and receiver, plays a role in the emergence of stereotype biases.

In light of this discussion, the nature of the intergroup relations between the communicator, recipient, and target requires further attention in the present research, where the target (male) was an in-group member for male participants and an out-group member for female participants. Although we included participant gender as a factor in all analyses (recall each chain consisted of the same-gender participants), it showed no systematic effects in either study. A possible explanation may be that the intergroup context was not salient enough in this research. Two aspects of the present experiments suggest this. First, the communicators did not know the gender (i.e., group membership) of their communication partner, and, therefore, they could not make a strategic decision as to the content of their communication. Second, the gender stereotype was further contextualized by the occupational stereotype, which was at the foreground of the communication. This may have reduced the salience of the gender-based intergroup context. In future research, it would be intriguing to examine further how various aspects of the communicator–communication partner relationship would influence stereotype communication, focusing specifically on the role of communicative functions, that is, how such contextual factors may influence how different types of information are perceived to fulfill various communicative functions in different contexts.

The nature of the communication task and of the particular stereotypes are other examples of situational factors that may influence the communication of stereotype-relevant information. These features were fixed in the present research and, therefore, may also provide boundary conditions on the findings. In this research, the communicators' task was to "retell the story," which may have different implications for the perceived relationship between stereotype information and communicative functions than

telling a joke or giving an accurate account of the event, for example. The specific stereotypes examined here may also constrain the generalizability of the present findings. The stereotypes of men, footballers and writers, are potentially less socially sensitive relative to other social stereotypes, a property that may also influence the way stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information are perceived to serve the different communicative functions. Attention to the role of different communication tasks and different stereotypes and how these situated factors interact with the functions of communication again suggest avenues for future research.

Situated factors may influence not only the way stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information are perceived to serve communicative functions but also whether particular functions are more or less *emphasized* in any given situation. It could be argued that the stereotype consistency function may be more important or emphasized in new relationships, whereas informativeness is more emphasized when social relationships are well established. However, the opposite could also be argued: that social connectivity is important in the maintenance and enhancement of existing relationships. Again, future investigation of how contextual features influence the role of different functions of communication, and how stereotype-relevant information is perceived to serve these functions, would be of benefit.

The present approach to stereotype maintenance in communication has viewed stereotype-consistent and inconsistent information as communicative tools, which, depending on the conversational context, afford differently to how their inclusion in a message may serve the functions of informativeness and social connectivity. This is a notable shift from a view of stereotype-relevant content as included in a message simply for its static property as being stereotype consistent or inconsistent and, in contrast, presents an analysis of stereotype communication as more closely aligned with socially situated cognition (see Smith & Semin, 2004), which, itself, has a long history in social psychology (e.g., Mead, 1934; Vygotsky, 1978). In line with this perspective, this research draws attention to the need to take into account the function of the activity (e.g., communication) in its social context in order to understand how different types of stereotype-relevant information may be used in any given interaction.

The present findings suggest that stereotypes will be maintained in communication to the extent that they form part of an existing common ground for the communicators because information consistent with what is generally shared is perceived to serve the social connectivity function of communication. In investigating why communicators show a preference for stereotype-consistent information in certain contexts, these results present a major challenge to conceptualizing how stereotype change may occur via the communication of stereotype-inconsistent information. The possibility that different communication contexts may place different relative emphases on the social connectivity and informativeness functions, however, may suggest potential avenues for stereotype change.

References

- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *51*, 1173–1182.
- Bartlett, F. C. (1932). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human need. *Psychological Bulletin*, *11*, 497–529.
- Baumeister, R. F., Zhang, L., & Vohs, K. D. (2004). Gossip as cultural learning. *Review of General Psychology*, *8*, 111–121.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language useage*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Clark, H. H. (1996). *Using language*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Clark, H. H., & Wilkes-Gibbs, D. (1986). Referring as a collaborative process. *Cognition*, *22*, 1–39.
- Dunbar, R. (1996). *Grooming, gossip, and the evolution of language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Enfield, N. J. (2006). Social consequences of common ground. In N. J. Enfield & S. C. Levinson (Eds.), *Roots of human sociality: Culture, cognition, and interaction* (pp. 399–430). Oxford, England: Berg Publishers.
- Freytag, P. (in press). On why you need to know who is talking to whom about which target group: Sender-receiver-constellations as a moderator of linguistic abstraction biases. In Y. Kashima, K. Fiedler, & P. Freytag (Eds.), *Stereotype dynamics: Language-based approaches to stereotype formation, maintenance, and transformation*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Giles, H., & Coupland, J. (1991). *Language: Contexts and consequences*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics: Speech acts*. New York: Academic Press.
- Hardin, C., & Conley, T. D. (2001). A relational approach to cognition: Shared experience and relationship affirmation in social cognition. In G. B. Moskowitz (Ed.), *Cognitive social psychology: The Princeton symposium on the legacy and future of social cognition* (pp. 3–17). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Heath, C., Bell, C., & Sternberg, E. (2001). Emotional selection in names: The case of urban legends. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *81*, 1028–1041.
- Kashima, Y. (2000). Maintaining cultural stereotypes in the serial reproduction of narratives. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *25*, 594–604.
- Kashima, Y., Klein, O., & Clark, A. E. (2007). Grounding: Sharing information in social interaction. In K. Fiedler (Ed.), *Social communication* (pp. 27–77). New York: Psychology Press.
- Krauss, R. M., & Fussell, S. R. (1996). Social psychological models of interpersonal communication. In E. T. Higgins & A. W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles* (pp. 655–701). New York: Guilford Press.
- Kurz, T., & Lyons, A. (2007). *Intergroup influences on the stereotype-consistency bias in communication: Does it matter who we are communicating about and to whom we are communicating?* Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Kwok, W. W., Wright, B., & Kashima, Y. (in press). Constructing intergroup relationships in social communication. *Japanese Psychological Research*.
- Lyons, A., & Kashima, Y. (2003). How are stereotypes maintained through communication? The influence of stereotype sharedness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *85*, 989–1005.
- Mandler, J. M., & Johnson, N. S. (1977). Remembrance of things parsed: Story structure and recall. *Cognitive Psychology*, *9*, 111–151.
- McIntyre, A., Lyons, A., Clark, A. E., & Kashima, Y. (2004). The microgenesis of culture: Serial reproduction as an experimental simulation of cultural dynamics. In M. Schaller & C. S. Crandall (Eds.), *The psychological foundations of culture* (pp. 227–258). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Peters, K., & Kashima, Y. (in press). From social talk to social action: Shaping the social triad with emotion sharing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.
- Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2004). SPSS and SAS procedures for estimating indirect effects in simple mediation models. *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, & Computers*, 36, 717–731.
- Rumelhart, D. E. (1977). Understanding and summarizing brief stories. In D. Laberge & S. J. Samuels (Eds.), *Basic processes in reading: Perception and communication* (pp. 265–303). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Ruscher, J. B. (1998). Prejudice and stereotyping in everyday communication. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 30, 241–307.
- Ruscher, J. B., Cralley, E. L., & O'Farrell, K. J. (2005). How newly acquainted dyads develop shared stereotypic impressions through conversation. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 8, 259–270.
- Schaller, M., Conway, L. G., & Tanchuk, T. L. (2002). Selective pressures on the once and future contents of ethnic stereotypes: Effects of the communicability of traits. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 861–877.
- Slugoski, B. R., Lalljee, M., Lamb, R., & Ginsburg, G. (1993). Attribution in conversational context: Effect of mutual knowledge on explanation-giving. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 23, 219–238.
- Smith, E. R., & Semin, G. R. (2004). Socially situated cognition: Cognition in its social context. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 36, 53–117.
- Stangor, C., Sechrist, G. B., & Jost, J. T. (2001). Changing racial beliefs by providing consensus information. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 486–496.
- Stevens, L. E., & Fiske, S. T. (1995). Motivation and cognition in social life: A social survival perspective. *Social Cognition*, 13, 189–214.
- Thorndyke, P. (1977). Cognitive structures in comprehension and memory of narrative discourse. *Cognitive Psychology*, 9, 77–110.
- Tindale, R. S., & Kameda, T. (2000). 'Social sharedness' as a unifying theme for information processing in groups. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 3, 123–140.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Received November 24, 2005

Revision received May 6, 2007

Accepted May 6, 2007 ■

New Editors Appointed, 2009–2014

The Publications and Communications Board of the American Psychological Association announces the appointment of six new editors for 6-year terms beginning in 2009. As of January 1, 2008, manuscripts should be directed as follows:

- *Journal of Applied Psychology* (<http://www.apa.org/journals/apl>), **Steve W. J. Kozlowski, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824.
- *Journal of Educational Psychology* (<http://www.apa.org/journals/edu>), **Arthur C. Graesser, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of Memphis, 202 Psychology Building, Memphis, TN 38152.
- *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Interpersonal Relations and Group Processes* (<http://www.apa.org/journals/psp>), **Jeffrey A. Simpson, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of Minnesota, 75 East River Road, N394 Elliott Hall, Minneapolis, MN 55455.
- *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* (<http://www.apa.org/journals/adb>), **Stephen A. Maisto, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244.
- *Behavioral Neuroscience* (<http://www.apa.org/journals/bne>), **Mark S. Blumberg, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of Iowa, E11 Seashore Hall, Iowa City, IA 52242.
- *Psychological Bulletin* (<http://www.apa.org/journals/bul>), **Stephen P. Hinshaw, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of California, Tolman Hall #1650, Berkeley, CA 94720. (Manuscripts will not be directed to Dr. Hinshaw until July 1, 2008, as Harris Cooper will continue as editor until June 30, 2008.)

Electronic manuscript submission: As of January 1, 2008, manuscripts should be submitted electronically via the journal's Manuscript Submission Portal (see the website listed above with each journal title).

Manuscript submission patterns make the precise date of completion of the 2008 volumes uncertain. Current editors, Sheldon Zedeck, PhD, Karen R. Harris, EdD, John F. Dovidio, PhD, Howard J. Shaffer, PhD, and John F. Disterhoft, PhD, will receive and consider manuscripts through December 31, 2007. Harris Cooper, PhD, will continue to receive manuscripts until June 30, 2008. Should 2008 volumes be completed before that date, manuscripts will be redirected to the new editors for consideration in 2009 volumes.