

ALL IN A SMILING FACE: THE ATTENTIONAL BENEFITS OF DYNAMIC ATTENTION TRAINING FOR LOW SELF-ESTEEM INDIVIDUALS



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OBJECTIVES

A specific visual search attentional training task has been shown to reduce attentional bias to rejection information (Dandeneau, & Baldwin, 2004; Dandeneau, & Baldwin, 2009; Dandeneau, Baldwin, Baccus, Sakellaropoulo, & Pruessner, 2007). Here we examined a new, dynamic (video-based) version of this task that we expect will work as well or better than the original, static photo-based version. More specifically, we hypothesized that the video-matrix, relative to a control group, would show less rejection bias, more acceptance bias, and less rejection orientation.

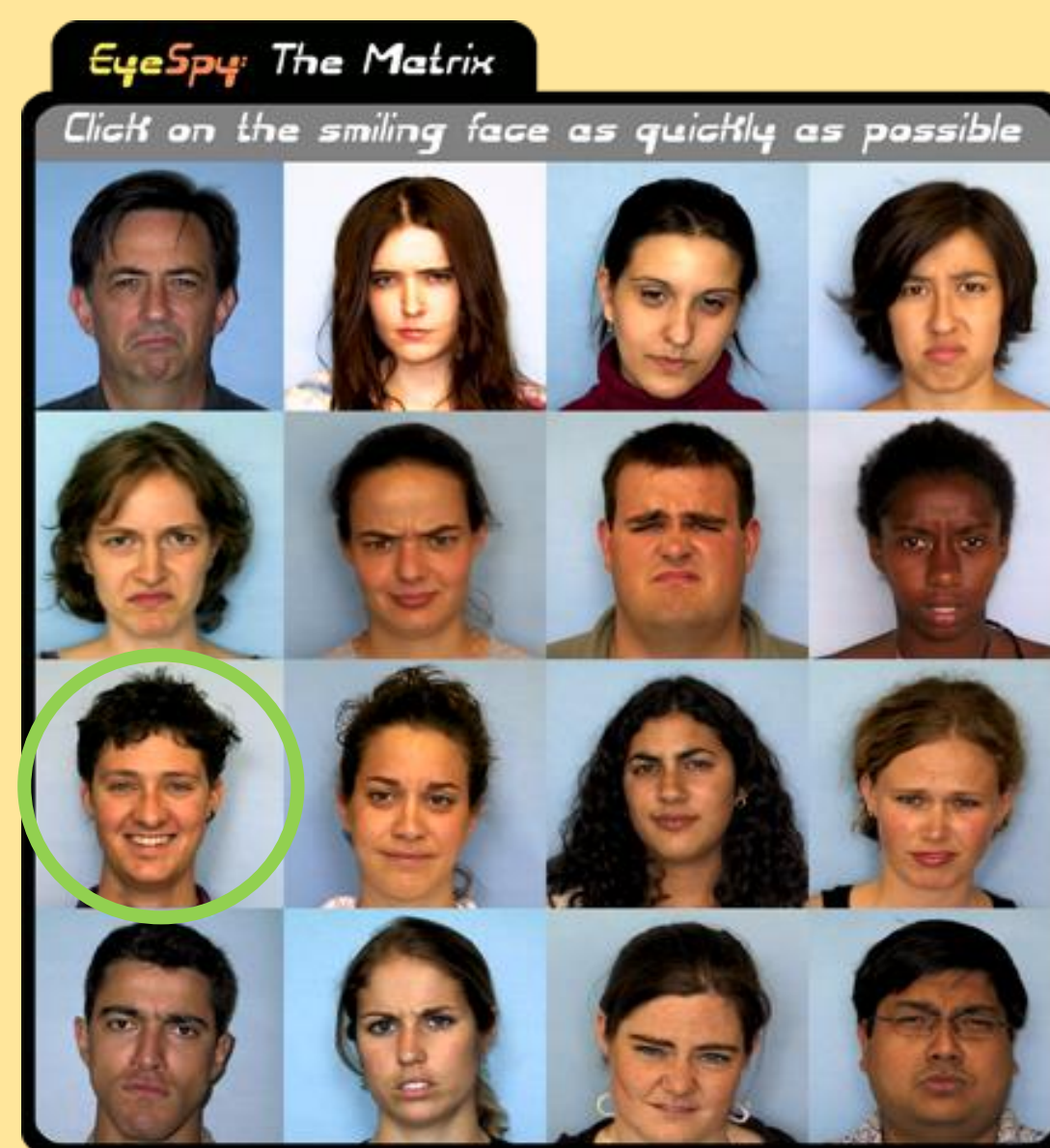
Research Question: Can dynamic (i.e., video-based) attention training change attentional biases relating to rejection and acceptance?

METHODS

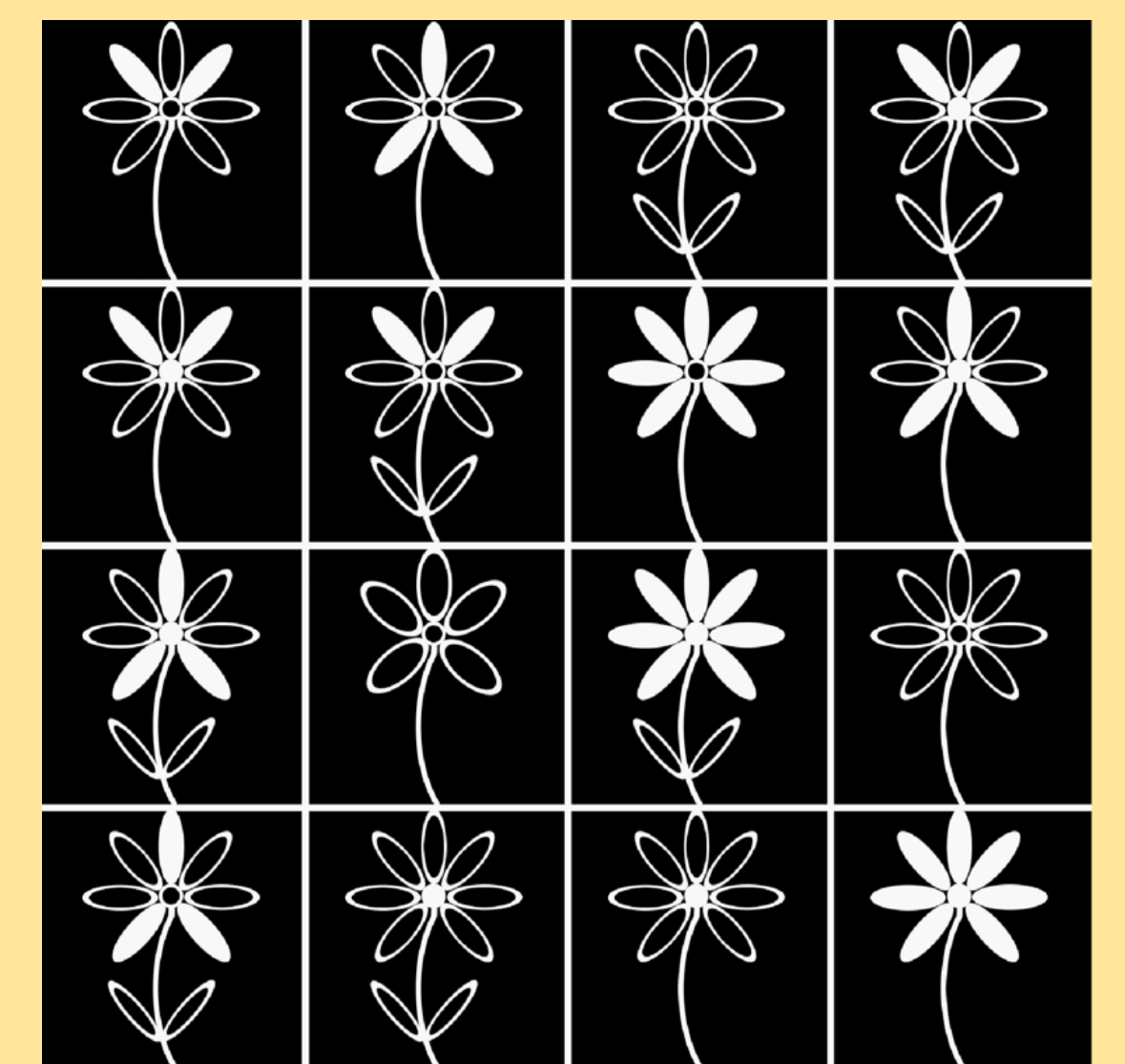
Procedure

192 Turk Prime participants either quickly and repeatedly identified a person smiling among a grid of videos of people frowning (experimental group) or identified a five-petaled flower among a grid of videos of seven-petaled flowers (control group). Participants then performed a visual probe task to measure attentional bias to rejection and acceptance, before completing measures of trait and situational self-esteem and mood.

Video Matrix Group (n = 96)



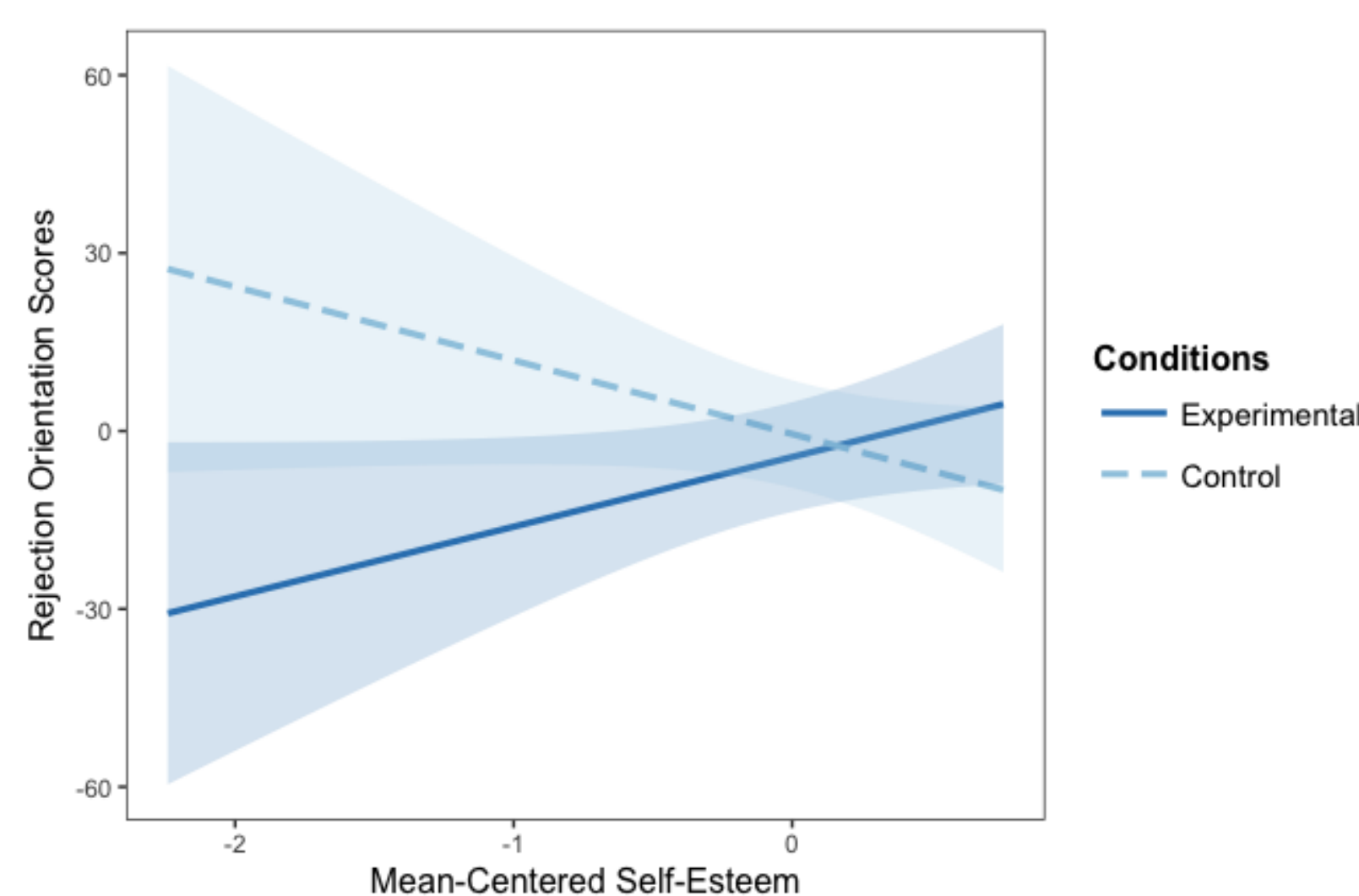
Control Group (n = 96)



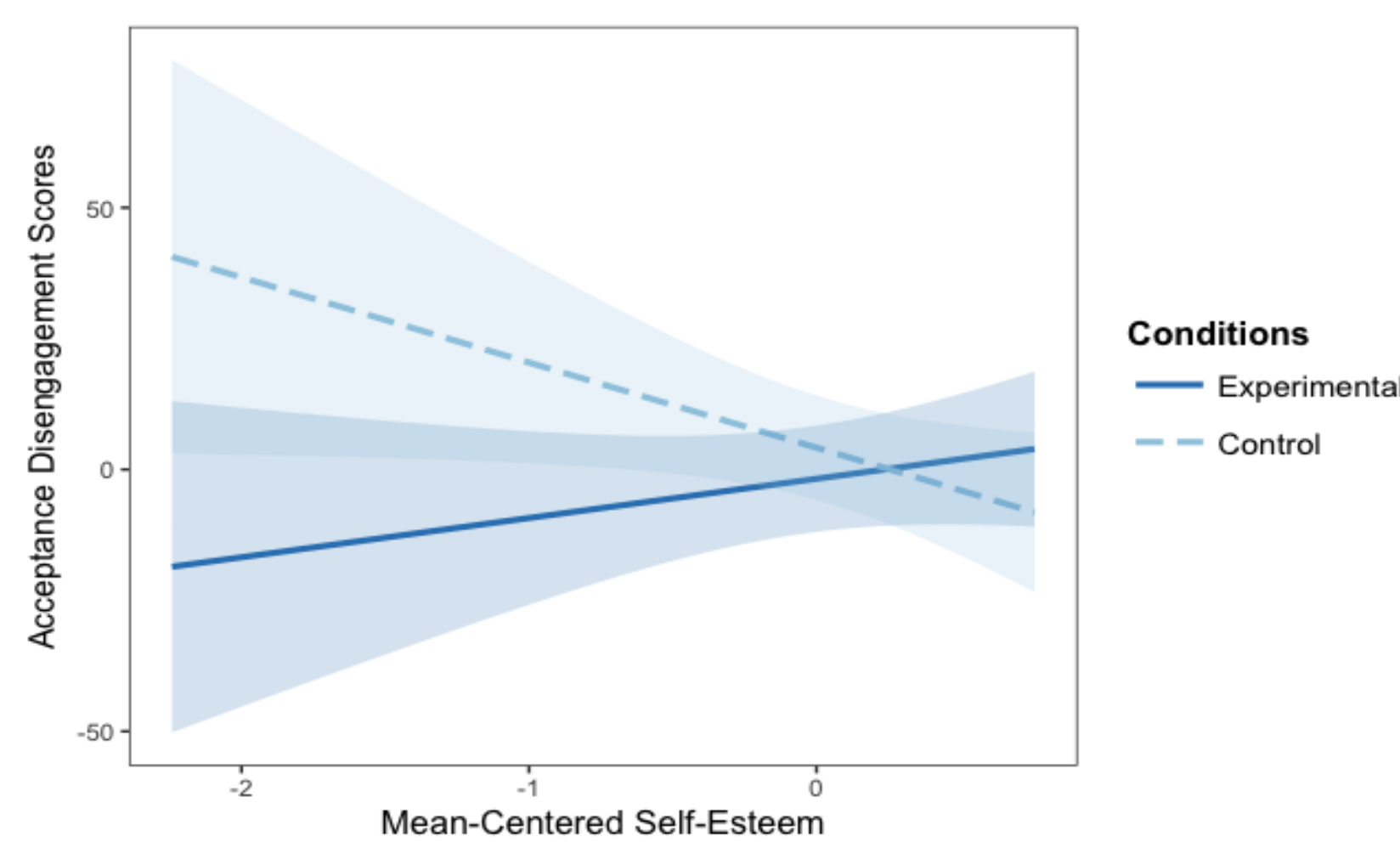
RESULTS

INTERACTION PLOTS

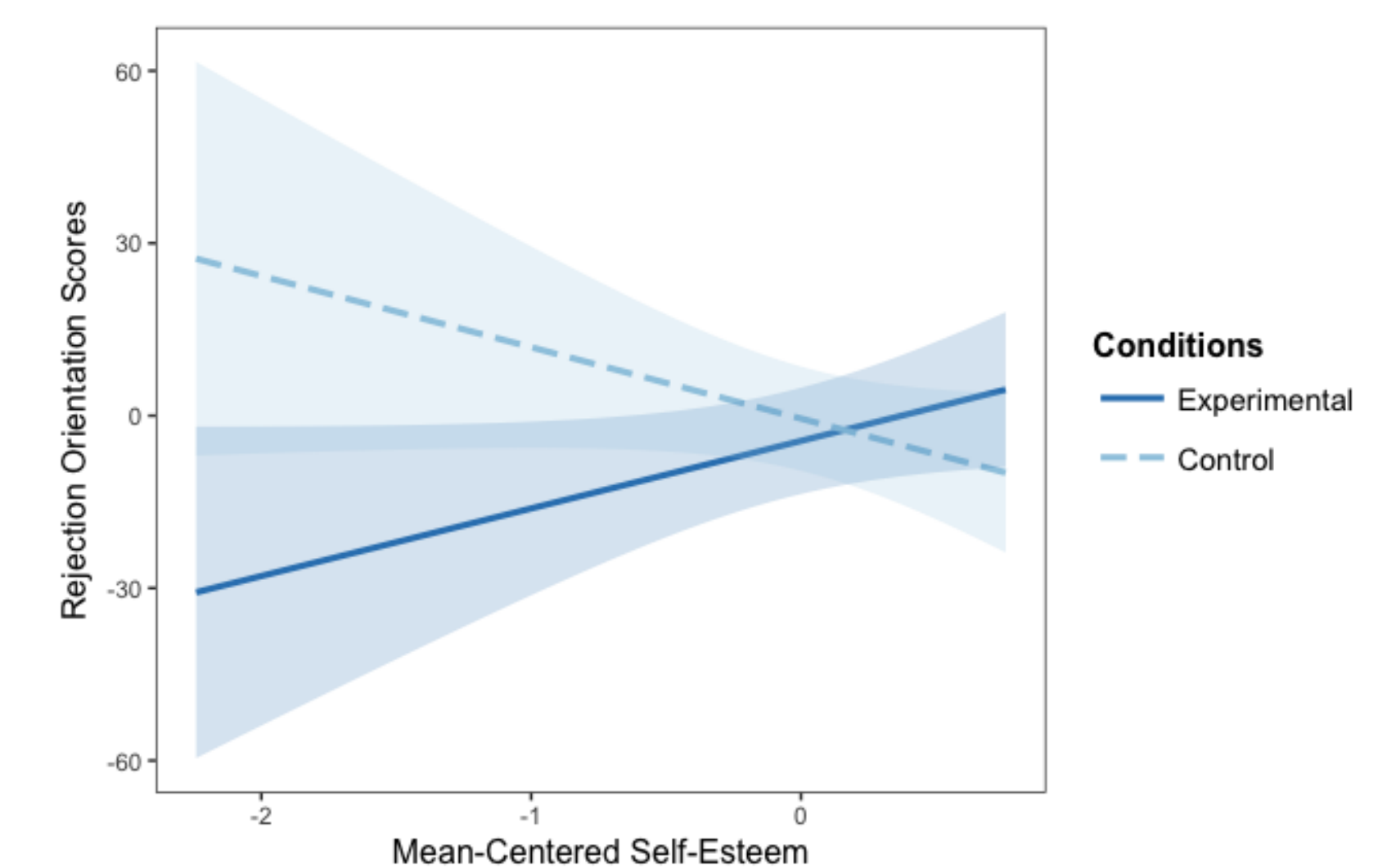
Rejection Bias



Acceptance Bias

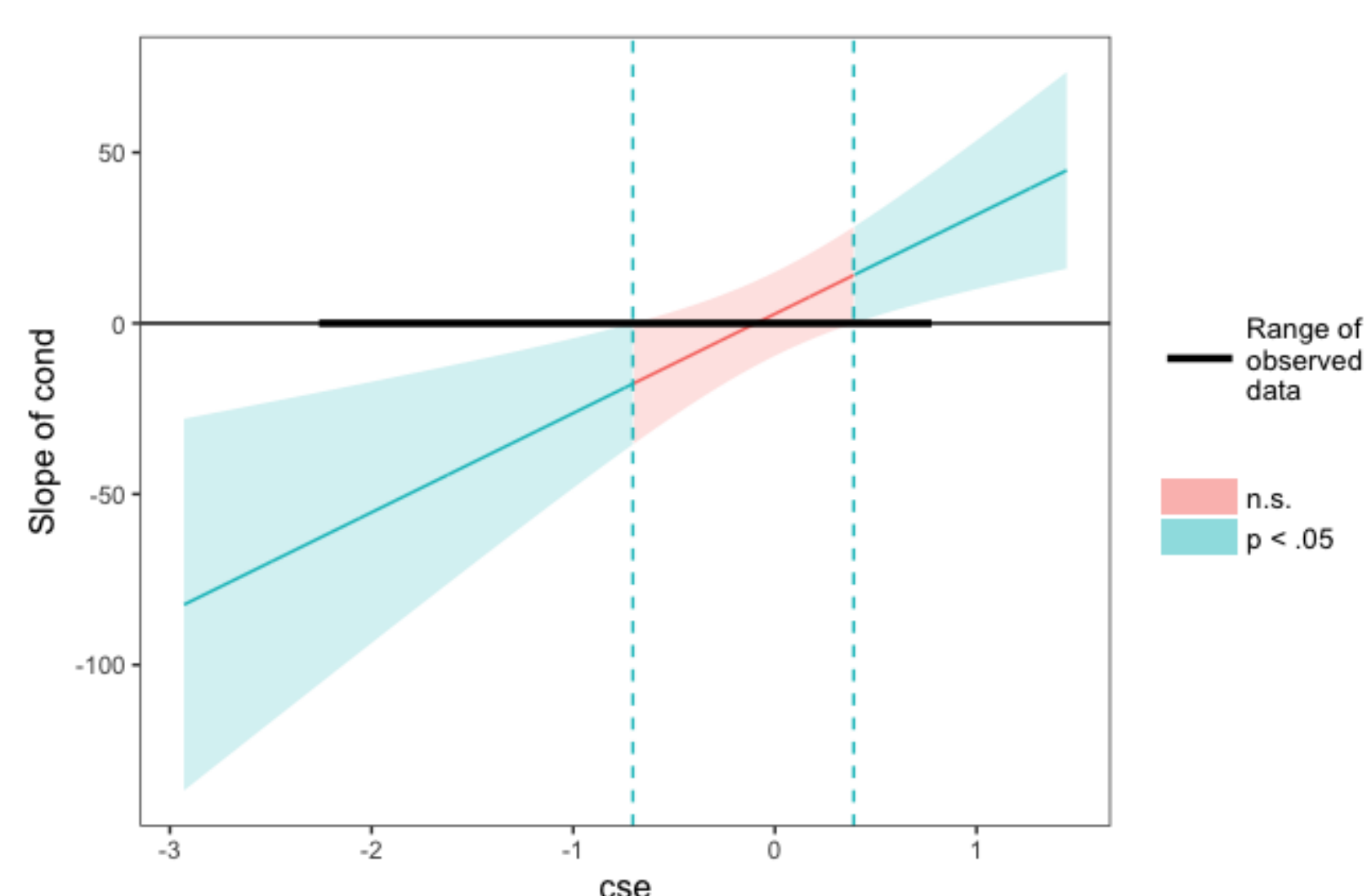


Rejection Orientation

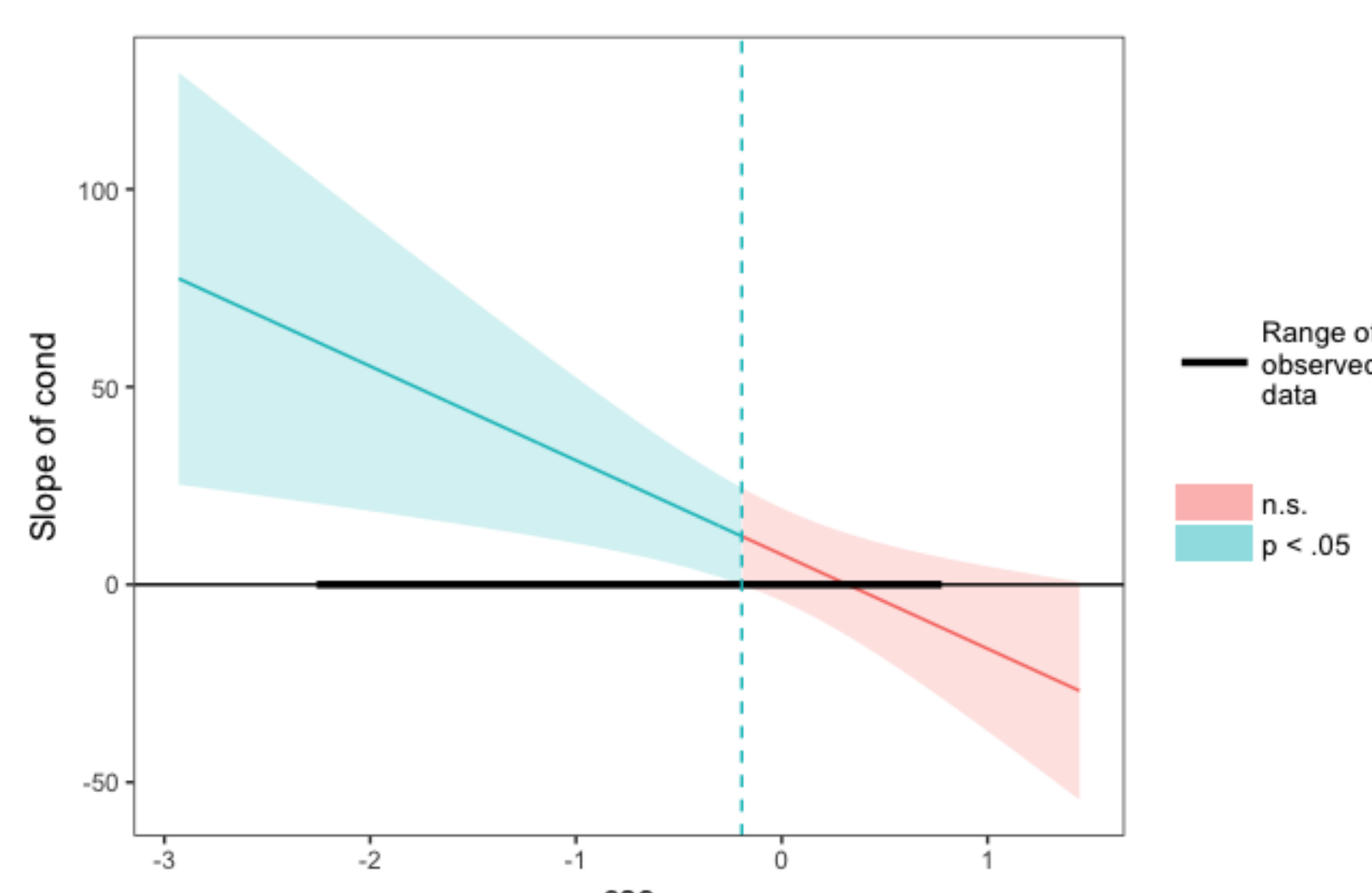


JOHNSON-NEYMAN PLOTS

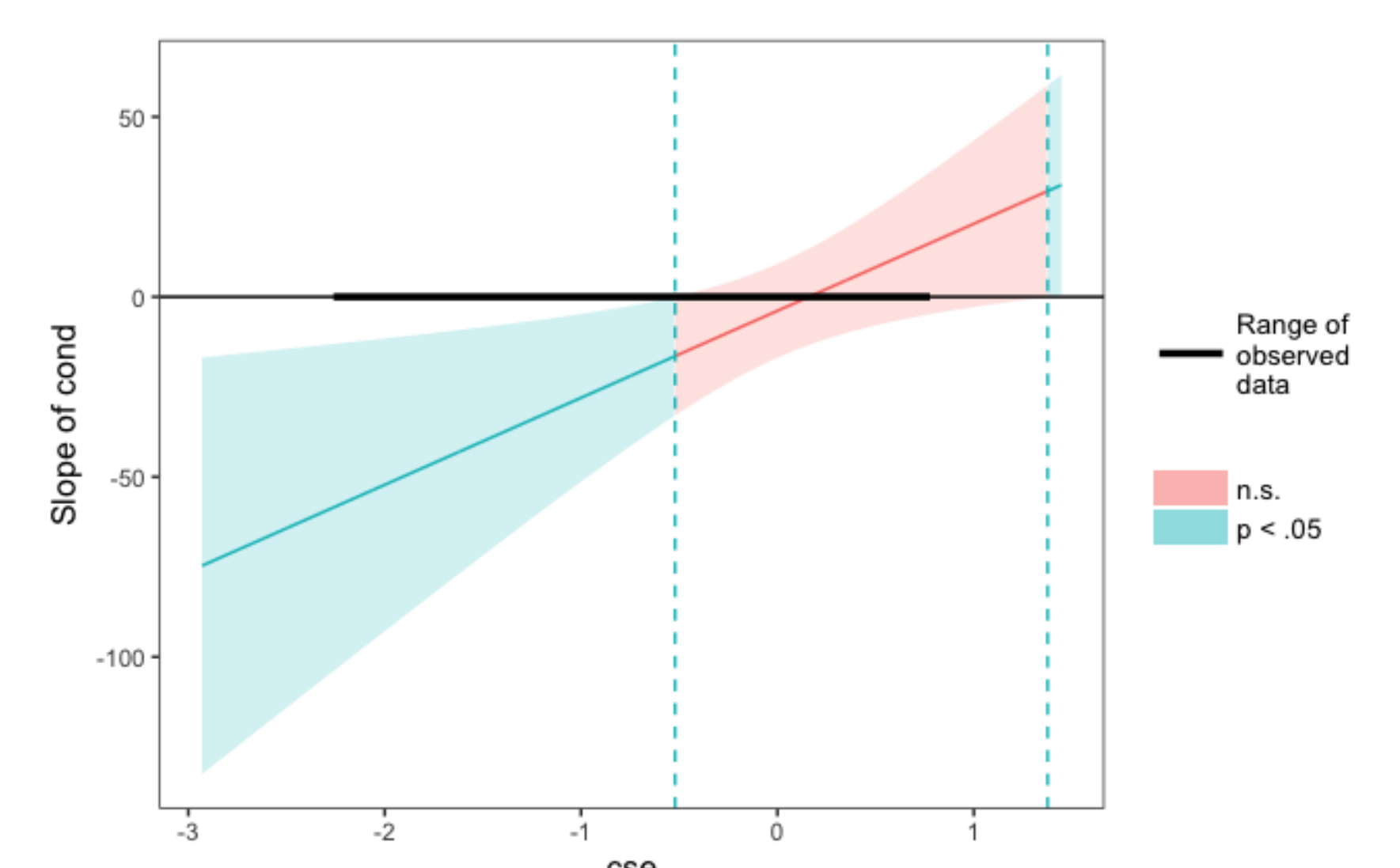
Rejection Bias



Acceptance Bias



Rejection Orientation



DISCUSSION

In the context of retraining participants' attentional vigilance for rejecting and accepting information, this study has four main conclusions: first, the user experience of the dynamic version of the visual search paradigm (i.e., the Video Matrix task) may help maintain participants' interest while engaging similar levels of effort, concentration, and being equally difficult to a control task; second, that the Video Matrix task replicated past results using static images; third, that the Video Matrix task increased attentional bias for the goal-directed target, i.e., *acceptance* faces; fourth, that the training effect may have especially influenced *less orientation toward rejection* and *less disengagement from acceptance*; and fifth, that the Video Matrix task positively influenced participants' situational level of self-esteem.

REFERENCES

- Dandeneau, S., & Baldwin, M. W. (2004). The Inhibition of Socially Rejecting Information Among People with High Versus Low Self-Esteem: The Role of Attentional Bias and the Effects of Bias Reduction Training. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 23*(4), 584–603.
 Dandeneau, S., & Baldwin, M. W. (2009). The buffering effects of rejection-inhibiting attentional training on social and performance threat among adult students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 34*(1), 42–50.
 Dandeneau, S., Baldwin, M. W., Baccus, J. R., Sakellaropoulo, M., & Pruessner, J. C. (2007). Cutting stress off at the pass: reducing vigilance and responsiveness to social threat by manipulating attention. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 93*(4), 651–666.