

JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS AUTHOR'S GENDER

CHANTELLE IVANSKI

A THESIS TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PSYCHOLOGY

YORK UNIVERSITY

TORONTO, ONTARIO

JUNE 2019

© Chantelle Ivanski, 2019

Abstract

Romance novels pose a fascinating conundrum. On the one hand, romance is the second-most popular genre of fiction, but on the other it is viewed almost universally as being of poor literary quality. It is possible that these negative evaluations stem from the association between romance and women, mirroring the bias against women authors for other genres. To explore this possibility, we examined how people evaluate books attributed to male and female authors, and whether any negative evaluations of romance novels are based on their association with women rather than their content, with two pre-registered studies. In Study 1, participants read identical passages attributed to either male or female authors and evaluated them along seven dimensions ($N = 167$). Study 2 extended this work using a similar design, adding attributions of genre: either romance or literary fiction ($N = 128$). Linear mixed-effects modeling was employed to analyze all results. Study 1 demonstrated a slight preference for books attributed to males over females, with more negative evaluations of passages attributed to female authors in general. In Study 2, however, there were no strong differences in how passages were evaluated, based on either the attributed genre or author gender. The effect of author gender in Study 1 suggests there is some bias against female authors, even when the actual text is held constant. However, Study 2 suggests there is something besides the label of ‘Romance’ that drives negative evaluations of romance novels.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank my Supervisor, Raymond Mar, whose encouragement, intellect, and guidance has been instrumental to the successful completion of this project. I cannot thank you enough for all your support. The skills I've learned in the short time I've been part of the lab are invaluable and I look forward to continuing to learn more in the future.

I would also like to thank my committee, Alexandra Rutherford, Ward Struthers, and Rob Cribbie for taking the time out of your busy schedules to help with my defense and providing thoughtful and engaging critiques. To Stacey Humphries for taking the time to look over all my R code and explaining the output so thoroughly, this never would have been completed without your guidance. To Karina van Dalen-Oskam for allowing me to jump on the study idea, this has been wonderful to work on and I greatly appreciate the opportunity. Further, to everyone in the Mar Lab, thank you for your invaluable feedback, with a special thank you to Joshua Quinlan who always answered my questions, no matter how many times I bugged him.

Additionally, to my friends, especially Ashly Powers, Stephanie Raposo, Jessica Padgett, and Marina Rain, who provided support both in my work and when a break was needed. Your intelligence and compassion have made me better and kept me sane over the last two years. To my family, particularly my parents and brothers who supported me throughout this project, being able to return home when in need of a break from city life has kept me grounded. Your unwavering confidence in me and your constant reminders of how proud you are of me (even when you "don't get it") has driven me forward. Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Eryc Nobre, whose support motivated me to continue when it was hard and whose impeccable popcorn making skills helped sustain so many of my study breaks. Thank you for believing in me and for pushing me forward, especially in the final months of this thesis.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables.....	vi
List of Figures.....	viii
Introduction.....	1
The Current Research.....	7
Study 1.....	8
Method.....	8
Results.....	16
Discussion.....	27
Study 2	29
Method.....	29
Results	35
Discussion	53
General Discussion	54
Limitations and future directions.....	56
Conclusion.....	57
References.....	58
Appendices.....	62
Appendix A. Pilot Study.....	62
Appendix B. Results of Alternate Exclusion Analyses for Study 1.....	63

Appendix C. Passages Used for Studies 1 and 2.....	70
Appendix D. Demographic Information for Studies 1 and 2.....	83
Appendix E. Results with Alternative Exclusion Criteria for Study 2.....	87

List of Tables

Table 1.	Study 1 Participant Demographic Information (Appendix D).....	83
Table 2.	Study 1 Descriptive Statistics for Model 1.....	17
Table 3.	Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables.....	18
Table 4.	Study 1 Descriptive Statistics for Model 2.....	21
Table 5.	Study 1 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables.....	22
Table 6.	Study 2 Participant Demographic Information (Appendix D).....	85
Table 7.	Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 1.....	36
Table 8.	Study 2 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables.....	37
Table 9.	Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 2.....	39
Table 10.	Study 2 Results of Model 2.....	40
Table 11.	Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 3.....	43
Table 12.	Study 2 Results of Model 3 for Different Variables	44
Table 13.	Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 4.....	47
Table 14.	Study 2 Results of Model 4 for Different Variables	49
Table 1a.	Study 1 Descriptive Statistics for Model 1 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria.....	64
Table 2a.	Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Alternative Exclusion Criteria.....	65
Table 3a.	Study 1 Descriptive Statistics for Model 2 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria.....	67
Table 4a.	Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Alternative Exclusion Criteria.....	68
Table 1b.	Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 1 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria.....	87
Table 2b.	Study 2 Results of Model 1 for Alternative Exclusion Criteria.....	88
Table 3b.	Study 2 Descriptive statistics for Model 2 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria.....	91

Table 4b.	Study 2 Results of Model 2 for Alternative Exclusion Criteria.....	92
Table 5b.	Study 2 Descriptive statistics for Model 3 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria.....	95
Table 6b.	Study 2 Results of Model 3 for Alternative Exclusion Criteria.....	97

List of Figures

Figure 1	Study 1 Design	13
Figure 2.	Liking Passage based on Author and Participant Gender.....	24
Figure 3.	Thought Characters were Realistic based on Author and Participant Gender.....	25
Figure 4.	Want to Read More by Author based on Author and Participant Gender.....	26
Figure 5.	Total Score based on Author and Participant Gender.....	27
Figure 6.	Study 2 Design	31

Judging a book by its author's gender

Writing by females is often evaluated as worse than that of males, a phenomenon that has been studied in both academia and the workplace (Gallivan, 1991; Lebuda & Karwowski, 2013; Moore & Trahan, 1998). One related domain is literature, with female authors of fiction also perceiving themselves to be underrepresented and undervalued. Although there is much research examining how we rate authors in professional fields based on their gender, little work looks at whether a bias exists in the realm of fiction. For example, romance novels, a genre largely perceived as being by and for women, is almost universally viewed as being of poor quality. What is not known, however, is whether there is something about romance that makes it worse than other genres, or if it is the romance genre's connection with femininity that drives this negative evaluation. In order to investigate this possibility, we first need to determine whether people regard fiction written by women as worse than works written by men. The goal of the current research, therefore, was to examine whether female authors of fiction are rated more negatively than their male counterparts.

Judging Writing based on Gender

Research on evaluations of writing by males and females started with a seminal study by Goldberg (1968). In this study, female participants first rated occupations as being more male, female, or neutral. Careers in law and city planning were seen as more masculine, those in education and nutrition more feminine, and careers in linguistics and art history were seen as gender neutral. Next, a second set of female participants rated articles from each of these fields. Although all participants read the same works, they were told the articles were written by either a male or a female. In contrast to expectations, it was found that male authors were rated as more

competent and having written more valuable articles than female authors across all six fields (Goldberg, 1968).

Attempts to replicate what has been dubbed ‘The Goldberg Effect’ (i.e., women judging women authors more negatively than men) have been plentiful, with some using just female participants, as in the original study, and some including male participants. However, the results of these studies have been mixed. Some have found the same bias towards rating male authors as superior (e.g., Gallivan, 1991; Lebeda & Karwowski, 2013; Moore & Trahan, 1998; Paludi & Bauer, 1983), others only find more negative evaluations of females for articles about stereotypically male subjects (e.g., Haemmerlie & Montgomery, 1991; Mischel, 1974), and some find no bias based on gender at all (e.g., Levenson, Burford, Bonno, & Daiv, 1975; Pirri, Eaton, & Durkin, 1995; Zhang et al., 2009). These mixed results have led some researchers to examine possible moderators of the effect, incorporating other aspects of the author such as status (Peck, 1978). In this study, articles written by high status females were rated as better than those by lower status females, but pieces by lower status males were still rated higher than those by lower status females (Peck, 1978). These results are consistent with a bias against female authors, particularly low status ones. Another moderator that has been examined is the attractiveness of the author (Kaplan, 1978). This research found that males rate essays as being better when the female author was attractive compared to when she was unattractive, but no difference in ratings by attractiveness was seen by female raters. For this study then, we observe a bias against female authors, but only for male raters. In an attempt to investigate whether an overall “Goldberg effect” exists, a meta-analysis on these studies was conducted (J. Swim, Borgida, Maruyama, & Myers, 1989). Based on 123 studies from 106 articles, this meta-analysis ultimately found no statistically significant difference between ratings of male and female authors (Swim et al.,

1989). One finding of this meta-analysis was that effects are more likely to appear when little information about the author is presented aside from their gender. Likely as a result of the many null findings, research in this area peaked in the 1970s, but subsequently began to decline and is no longer commonplace (Pirri et al., 1995).

One largely unexplored facet of this topic is the evaluation of artistic or creative products. Almost all research in this area has looked at professional or academic writing. Very little work has examined if any bias exists with respect to the arts, although there are some exceptions. For example, a study examining ratings of New Age music found that male composers were rated more positively than female composers (Colley, North, & Hargreaves, 2003). In another study on different ratings of artistic ability, female painters with common names (e.g., Anna) were rated lower on painting ability than males, anonymous artists, and females with unique names (e.g., Lea) (Lebuda & Karwowski, 2013). This bias against females with common names also extended to musical compositions (Lebuda & Karwowski, 2013). However, the same does not appear to be true of poetry: female poets with common and unique names are rated similarly to males (Lebuda & Karwowski, 2013). To our knowledge, only one study exists examining whether male or female authors of narrative fiction are evaluated differently (Ciechanowicz, 1983). In this study, 450 participants read one of three texts. The first was an article written as a journalistic, politically persuasive, piece and the second was written so as to draw attention to the author's personal opinion. The third text, and the one of primary interest for our purposes, was a fictional narrative that told the story of a man trying to regain the love of his wife. Participants were told the text they were reading was written by either a male, a female, or were asked to guess the author's gender. Participants reading the narrative rated the female author more positively on all dimensions (i.e., more intelligent, credible, nice, and sophisticated) than the

male author. When they were not told the gender of the author, however, participants tended to guess that it was written by a male, though this did not affect how they rated the article (Ciechanowicz, 1983).

Although there is a paucity of research on how fiction authors are evaluated based on their gender, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence of a bias in favor of males. One reason to believe that female fiction authors might be evaluated more negatively is the long history of women writing under male pseudonyms, or using gender-ambiguous names, in order to avoid a perceived prejudice against women in publishing. Many examples abound, with Joanna Rowling writing the Harry Potter series as J.K. Rowling, Louisa May Alcott writing *Little Women* under the name A.M. Barnard, Mary Anne Evans writing *Middlemarch* using the pseudonym George Elliot, Karen Blixen becoming Isak Dinesen when writing *Out of Africa*, and the Brontë sisters writing under the names of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell (Armitage, 2018). As this short list demonstrates, there is an established history of female authors who have felt the need to use male names in order to be taken seriously, from early times to the present day. One parallel might be how ethnic minorities tend to ‘whiten’ their resumes, in an effort to improve their job prospects (Kang, DeCelles, Tilcsik, & Jun, 2016). In one study it was found that over 20% of participants engaged in race concealment, with the most common form being changing their name to be more ‘white’ sounding (Kang et al., 2016); whitening one’s resume also increased the chances of getting an interview. All of this is in concord with anecdotal evidence on gender bias in publishing, with one female author claiming that she was eight times more likely to be published when using a male pseudonym (Denham, 2015). There is also objective evidence that female authors are the subject of a negative bias. For example, books written by female authors are sold for an average of \$17.92 less than books authored by males (Weinberg & Kapelner, 2018). Most

of this negative bias, however, seems to stem from publishers. What about bias on the part of readers and critics? One area in which there appears to be a clear negative bias, by readers, is the realm of romance novels.

Negative Assessments of Romance Novels

Romance novels initially grew in popularity in 1970. In this year, the publisher Harlequin began circulating romance novels in America (Brackett, 2000). Since then, romance has grown to be the second-most commonly-read fiction genre (the first being mystery/thriller/crime) (Statistitca, 2015). Romance novels are generally divided into two main categories: “Strong Romance” and “Soft Romance.” Strong Romance novels are centered around a confident, capable, female protagonist. These books tend to show the protagonist as the central focus on the book’s cover, with her male love interest somewhere in the background (Owen, 1997). Soft Romance novels are what are more commonly thought of as the typical Harlequin romance. They are short, simple to read, and tend to have a picture of a couple in some sort of embrace on the cover (Owen, 1997). According to the Romance Writers of America association, for both types, in order to be considered a romance novel two criteria must be met: (1) There must be a ‘central love story’ (i.e., the main plot of the book should be a relationship between two people), and (2) the ending must be optimistic and satisfying to the reader (i.e., a happy ending) (Romance Writers of America, n.d.).

Readers of romance novels are 82% female and mostly between the ages of 25 and 34 years-old (Romance Writers of America, n.d.). With respect to the authors, one estimate found that 99% of romance authors are female (Lois & Gregson, 2015). However, this estimate may be inflated. In contrast to common practice for other genres, some male authors of romance write under female pseudonyms (Bookish, 2014). When male authors are open about their authorship,

they are likely to experience stigma for writing romance, though a different kind of stigma than what is experienced by female writers. Female writers tend to be either shamed or gawked at for openly discussing sexuality. In contrast, males are not criticized for depicting sexuality but are instead scrutinized for entering into a feminine sphere (Lois & Gregson, 2015). Thus, even though male authors face judgement for writing romance, the criticism they are subjected to is based on their proximity to women: for being feminine.

Despite the popularity of romance novels, there is widespread shame associated with reading books from this genre. Romance novels are often referred to as being “smutty” or “trashy,” and are often described as “porn for women” (Lois & Gregson, 2015). One romance publisher actually provides a free dust jacket to help readers hide the fact that they are reading a romance novel while in public (Brackett, 2000). There is also evidence to suggest that the increasing availability of e-readers has led to an increase in the sale of romance novels (Akbar, 2012). Today, about 50% of all romance novels sold are for e-readers, compared to 20% for general fiction (Akbar, 2012). Presumably, e-readers help readers conceal the fact that they are reading a romance novel, which explains this growth and the disparity from other genres. Readers of romance also appear to be aware of this stigma and tend to engage in distancing behaviours between themselves and the books (Brackett, 2000). Romance readers themselves criticize the genre for being simple and lacking in quality and even mock other romance readers for ‘believing’ the books. In one study of romance readers, all of the participants said some version of “I’m not like most romance readers” (Brackett, 2000).

This highlights an interesting contradiction. Despite being the second-most commonly-read book genre, there seems to be an almost universal condemnation for romance novels, even among those who read them. Female authors of these books are scrutinized for being too sexual

and the few male authors criticized for being too feminine. Further, readers and non-readers alike describe the novels as being of poor quality. Given that romance novels are widely viewed as being by women and for women, it raises the question of whether romance novels are so disliked because they actually are of lower quality than other books, or because of their relation to femininity.

The Current Research

The goal of the current research was to first investigate whether female authors of fiction are evaluated more negatively than male authors. The next logical step was to then investigate if the negative evaluations of romance novels could be attributed, in part or in whole, to their association with women authors. Thus, two studies were conducted. In Study 1, participants read four passages, two supposedly written by male authors and two by female authors; in truth, the actual content of the passages were identical across author gender. The author names used in both Studies 1 and 2 were pre-tested in a pilot study to ensure that the names being used did not have any strong associations with other relevant constructs ($N = 165$; Appendix A). Participants then evaluated the passages' quality and their enjoyment of the passages. Given the mixed results for this topic, combined with the intriguing anecdotal evidence, this study was exploratory in nature. In the absence of a strong directional prediction, the goal of this study was to help uncover whether any prejudice exists against female authors of fiction, by women, men, or both.

In Study 2, participants read four passages purported to be from either romance novels or works of literary fiction. Once again, two of the excerpts were ostensibly written by males and two written by females, with the passages held constant across participants and author gender manipulated in a random fashion. Literary fiction was chosen as a comparison group because it is a genre that tends to be both held in high esteem and male-dominated. As an example of this

dominance, of the 114 Nobel Prizes in Literature that have been awarded since 1901, only 14 have been awarded to women (Nobel Media, 2018). For this study, there were two possible patterns of results that we hypothesized might occur. First, excerpts by male authors might be rated higher in quality for the literary fiction condition compared to those by female authors, with no difference in quality ratings predicted for the romance genre. In this case, excerpts from romance novels would be expected to be viewed less positively overall than those for literary fiction. This pattern of results would suggest that although women are rated more negatively in general, romance novels are viewed as intrinsically bad, but not because they are written by women. The second possible pattern of results was that male authors would be viewed more positively than female authors for both literary fiction and for romance. This would suggest that it is not romance novels that are being judged to be of low quality, specifically, but rather it is writing by women that is viewed more negatively. All methods, hypotheses, and proposed statistical analyses for both studies were preregistered on aspredicted.org, prior to the data being analyzed and have been posted at https://osf.io/vj2pb/?view_only=48d1d518b9994510ab0db0c475d91e73.

Study 1 Method

Participants

A power analysis suggested that a minimum of 272 participants would be needed to have a power of 95%, based on a Cohen's $d = .20$ and an α of .05 (G*Power, Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). Therefore, in order to account for attrition, we recruited 427 undergraduate students registered in a first-year psychology course, 230 of which completed the study in lab and 197 of whom completed the study online. Participants were compensated with course credit through the York University Research Participant Pool.

Prior to data collection we preregistered our exclusion criteria, stating that individuals would be excluded if they were under 16; failed 2 or more of the 8 comprehension questions, or both questions for one single passage; if they reported that they had read the passage previously; and if they guessed the true purpose of the study. Upon analyzing the results, it became apparent that the exclusion criteria regarding the comprehension items were too strict. Specifically, excluding participants who failed to answer two or more questions correctly resulted in a greatly reduced sample size of $N=167$. In addition to lowering our power, this reduction possibly includes participants who were responding conscientiously. That is, given the high number of people who did not meet this exclusion criterion, it is possible that the questions were simply too difficult. Thus, these data were reanalyzed with this exclusion criterion changed to be the removal of participants who scored one standard deviation below the mean for the comprehension questions. This change resulted in the removal of participants who answered less than 5 of the 8 comprehension questions correctly. All other exclusion criteria were left unchanged, and this resulted in a sample size of 290 participants. In order to maintain transparency, results based on the altered exclusion criteria appear in Appendix B. However, the main body of this paper will report results based on the original exclusion criteria ($N = 167$). A majority of participants in this study were female (70.06%), with an age range of 17–31 ($M = 19.55$, $SD = 2.14$). For more detailed demographic information, see Appendix D.

Measures

Survey Advertisement. Potential participants saw a study posting that described the study as follows: “During this study you will be asked to read a series of short, randomly selected, book passages. Following each passage, you’ll be asked comprehension questions and

then be asked to rate the passage on a series of evaluation questions.” Thus, the true nature of the study was hidden so that participants would remain blind to the research question.

Author names. Participants were shown 4 passages, each associated with an author name (2 male and 2 female), based on 12 possible names. These names were used as a prime to communicate the gender of the author. The first names for these authors were pretested in a pilot study prior to data collection, to ensure that they were not strongly associated with constructs relevant to the evaluations (e.g., intelligence). Last names were the same for both male and female authors and were selected at random from the most common surnames in the United States. Names were presented with a short biography that was matched for both female and male authors, preceding the presentation of the passages.

Passages and comprehension questions. Participants read and evaluated 4 of 12 possible passages (Appendix C). Passages were excerpted and adapted from real works of fiction and ranged in length from 240–347 words. Each passage was presented with a fake title for a book that it was ostensibly taken from, and one of the author names and biographies. We slightly modified each passage to include a grammatical error, to avoid floor effects when asking participants about any potential errors in the writing during the post-passage evaluation. After reading the passages, participants were asked two comprehension questions, with the author’s name and title presented once again. The presentation of the comprehension questions with this information served to both reinforce the gender of the author and also acted as an attention check allowing us to remove participants who may not have been paying attention and may therefore have missed the gender prime.

Evaluations. As our key dependent measure, we asked participants to evaluate the passages using 6 questions, with responses provided on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from

Strongly Disagree to *Strongly Agree*. The evaluation items were as follows: “I found this passage enjoyable to read,” “I would be interested in reading more by this author,” “I thought this passage was well-written,” “I noticed grammatical errors in this passage,” “I thought the characters were realistic,” and “I thought that emotion was conveyed in this passage.”

The author names were to be presented again with these questions, however, due to a computer error, this did not happen as often as it should have. To ensure this did not impact the results of the study the number of presentations was examined, and it was found that male names were re-presented 47.1% of the time whereas female names were re-presented 45.2% of the time. Thus, we feel confident in moving forward with the knowledge that this error did not result in a meaningful difference in the presentation of author genders that may have impacted the results.

Demographics. Participants were also asked a series of demographic questions in order to better understand the sample, including gender, age, and so forth. Results for a subset of these demographic questions can be seen in Table 1 (Appendix D).

Demand Characteristics. In order to determine whether any participant inferred the true purpose of the study and altered their behaviour as a result, we asked them to complete a funnel debriefing. Participants were asked what they thought the purpose of the study was and if there was anything about the study they found confusing or strange. Any participant who guessed the true purpose of the study was removed.

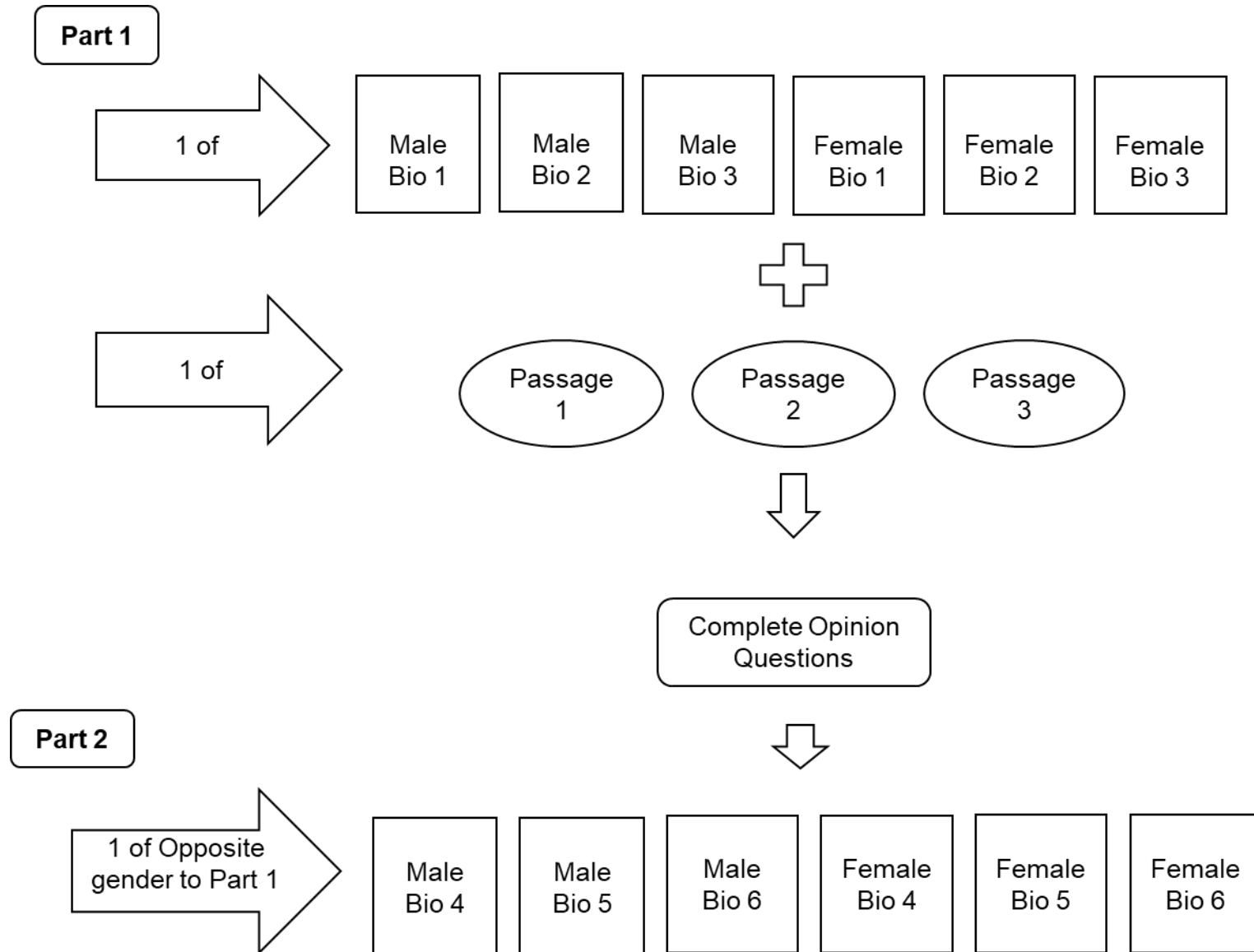
Procedure

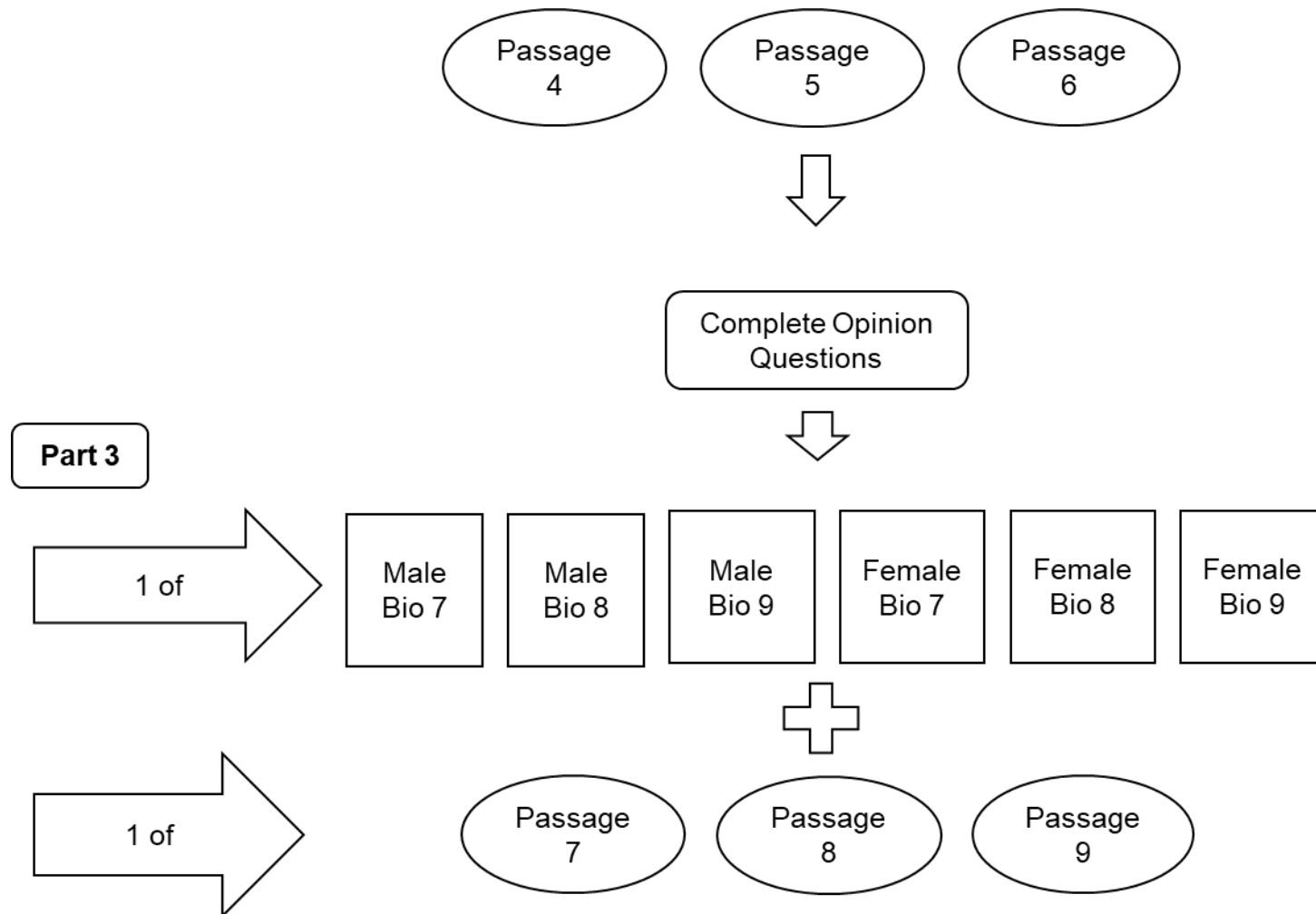
The study was originally planned to be conducted entirely in-lab, however, due to time constraints data collection was split between online and in-lab. The procedure for both was the same, with the location (i.e., at home or in-lab) being the only difference. The study began with participants being told that they were going to be shown a series of passages from books and

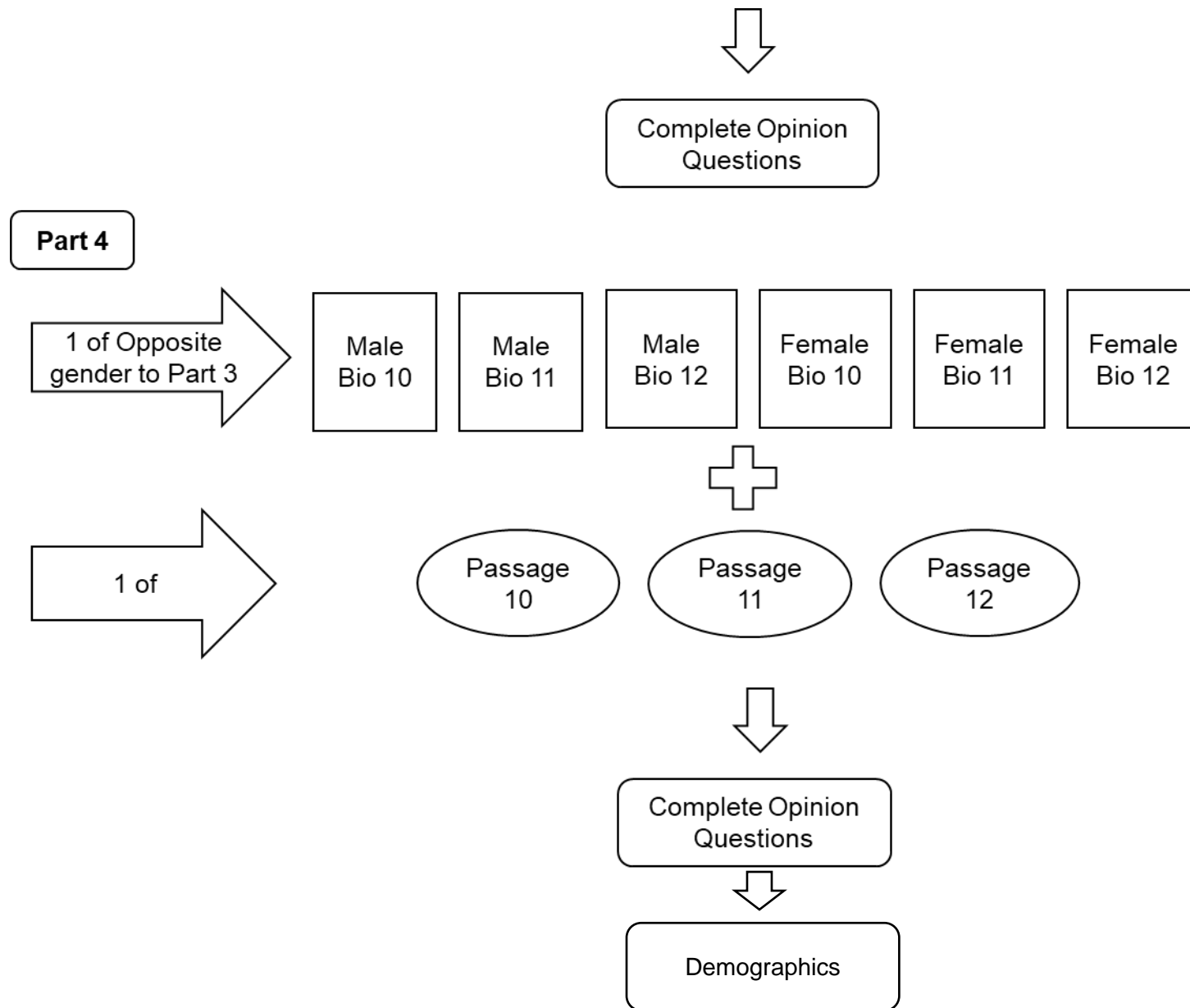
asked questions about these passages in order to better understand people's preferences in reading fiction. Next, they were shown a book title with one of the author names and biographies discussed above. Following this, participants were shown the first randomly selected passage. The passages were presented with male and female author names appearing with equal frequency, both within participants (2 male authors, and 2 female authors), and across participants (each passage was associated with both a male and female author with equivalent frequency). After reading the passage participants were asked two comprehension questions. They then completed the evaluation questions described above. Next, participants were shown a second title and an author's name associated with the gender not presented first, along with a biography, followed by a second passage. They then completed two comprehension question once again, as well as the evaluation questions. This process repeated twice more such that each participant saw 4 authors (2 male and 2 female) associated with 4 passages (see Figure 1).

After evaluating the 4 passages participants completed the demographic questions followed by the funnelled debriefing. Finally, participants were given the debriefing form explaining the purpose of the study and asked to give post-debriefing for their data to be used consent (all supplemental materials for this study can be found at https://osf.io/vj2pb/?view_only=48d1d518b9994510ab0db0c475d91e73). The entire study took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Figure 1. Study 1 Design







Study 1 Results

Evaluations of the passages were analyzed using linear mixed-effects (LME) modelling with the LME4 package (Bates, Maechler, Bolker, & Walker, 2015) in R (R Core Team, 2014). LME models, broadly, are a type of mixed effect model that tries to estimate the error variance for each different level of a study design. In traditional models participants are treated as a random factor, however, we tend to ignore that the stimuli used are also random. This inflates the likelihood of a Type 1 error (i.e., making it more likely to find a statistically significant effect even when there is not one). LME modelling aims to correct this by separating errors into residual errors and ‘random effects.’ The inclusion of random effects allows for the dependencies of the data to be taken, thus reducing the likelihood of a Type 1 error. In the current research, the passages used as well as the participants themselves were considered to be random effects in all models. Each type of evaluation question (e.g., “I thought this passage was well-written.”) was analyzed individually, averaged across passages. In addition, a total evaluation score was created, aggregating all of the evaluation items. For our models, we first estimated a model with author gender (male vs. female) as the within-subjects design effect (Model 1). Next, a similar model was estimated but with participant gender now included as an additional fixed-effect along with author gender (male vs. female) (Model 2). In these models, the fixed effects were allowed to interact.

Models that included only author gender (excluding participant gender) were all statistically non-significant. That is, there were no differences in how much participants liked a passage ($p = .157$), whether participants thought the passages were well-written ($p = .869$), thought the characters were realistic ($p = .986$), thought the passages showed emotion ($p = .886$), wanted to read more by the author ($p = .531$), or in total ratings of passages ($p = .282$) based on

author gender. However, one effect neared threshold for statistical significance: Author gender influenced whether participants noticed grammatical errors in the passage ($p = .068$). In our data, participants were slightly more likely to report noticing grammatical errors when the author was portrayed as male relative to female. This effect, however, was very small with a mean difference of only 0.11 between the two groups. Descriptive statistics for these models and the results of the LME models can be seen in Tables 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 2.
Study 1 Descriptive statistics for Model 1

		Mean	95% Confidence Interval
Liking	Male Author	3.15	[2.94, 3.36]
	Female Author	3.05	[2.84, 3.26]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.41	[3.24, 3.58]
	Female Author	3.30	[3.13, 3.47]
Well-written	Male Author	3.52	[3.35, 3.69]
	Female Author	3.51	[3.35, 3.68]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.65	[3.49, 3.80]
	Female Author	3.65	[3.49, 3.80]
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.45	[3.25, 3.66]
	Female Author	3.46	[3.26, 3.66]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	3.03	[2.83, 3.23]
	Female Author	2.99	[2.79, 3.18]
Total Score	Male Author	20.21	[19.38, 21.05]
	Female Author	19.94	[19.11, 20.77]

Table 3.
Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Liking				Noticed Errors			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.100	0.071	-1.417	.157	-0.116	0.063	-1.83	.068 [^]

Note. * $p < .05$, [^] $p < .1$

Table 3.
Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Well-written				Realistic Characters			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.009	0.057	-0.165	.869	-0.001	0.057	-0.018	.986

Note. * $p < .05$, [^] $p < .1$

Table 3.
Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.009	0.065	0.144	.886	-0.043	0.070	-0.627	.531

Note. * $p < .05$, [^] $p < .1$

Table 3.

Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

		Passage Showed Emotion			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author		-0.276	0.256	-1.076	.282
Gender					

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Descriptive statistics for models that included participant gender and author gender can be seen in Table 4, and the LME model results in Table 5. For these models, there was a very small main effect of author gender such that participants reported liking the passage more when they were written by a male author compared to when they were written by a female author ($p = .033$). There was no main effect of participant gender ($p = .949$) and no statistically significant interaction between author gender and participant gender for this evaluation of liking ($p = .102$) (Figure 2).

Table 4.
Study 1 Descriptive statistics for Model 2

		Male Participants		Female Participants	
		Mean	95% Confidence Interval	Mean	95% Confidence Interval
Liking	Male Author	3.14	[2.86, 3.43]	3.15	[2.92, 3.38]
	Female Author	2.86	[2.58, 3.14]	3.12	[2.90, 3.35]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.50	[3.25, 3.75]	3.38	[3.19, 3.56]
	Female Author	3.45	[3.21, 3.69]	3.23	[3.05, 3.42]
Well-written	Male Author	3.59	[3.37, 3.82]	3.49	[3.31, 3.67]
	Female Author	3.52	[3.29, 3.74]	3.51	[3.33, 3.69]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.71	[3.49, 3.92]	3.62	[3.45, 3.79]
	Female Author	3.53	[3.32, 3.74]	3.69	[3.52, 3.86]
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.48	[3.22, 3.75]	3.44	[3.23, 3.66]
	Female Author	3.40	[3.14, 3.66]	3.49	[3.28, 3.71]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	2.97	[2.69, 3.24]	3.06	[2.84, 3.27]
	Female Author	2.73	[2.46, 3.00]	3.09	[2.88, 3.31]
Total Score	Male Author	20.40	[19.30, 21.50]	20.13	[19.25, 21.02]
	Female Author	19.48	[18.40, 20.57]	20.13	[19.24, 21.01]

Table 5.
Study 1 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

		Liking				Noticed Errors			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	-0.278	0.130	-2.143	.033*	-0.048	0.117	-0.412	.681
	Participant Gender	0.009	0.009	0.064	.949	-0.122	0.129	-0.948	.344
	A. Gender X P. Gender	0.253	0.154	1.636	.102	-0.097	0.139	-0.699	.485

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 5.
Study 1 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

		Well-written				Realistic Characters			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	-0.077	0.105	-0.731	.465	-0.175	0.104	-1.686	.092^
	Participant Gender	-0.106	0.114	-0.929	.354	-0.084	0.104	-0.811	.418
	A. Gender X P. Gender	0.096	0.125	0.762	.446	0.245	0.124	1.995	.047*

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 5.
Study 1 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

		Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	-0.088	0.119	-0.738	.461	-0.236	0.128	-1.843	.066^
	Participant Gender	-0.042	0.122	-0.342	.733	0.087	0.139	0.627	.531
	A. Gender X P. Gender	0.138	0.142	0.972	.332	0.274	0.152	1.794	.074^

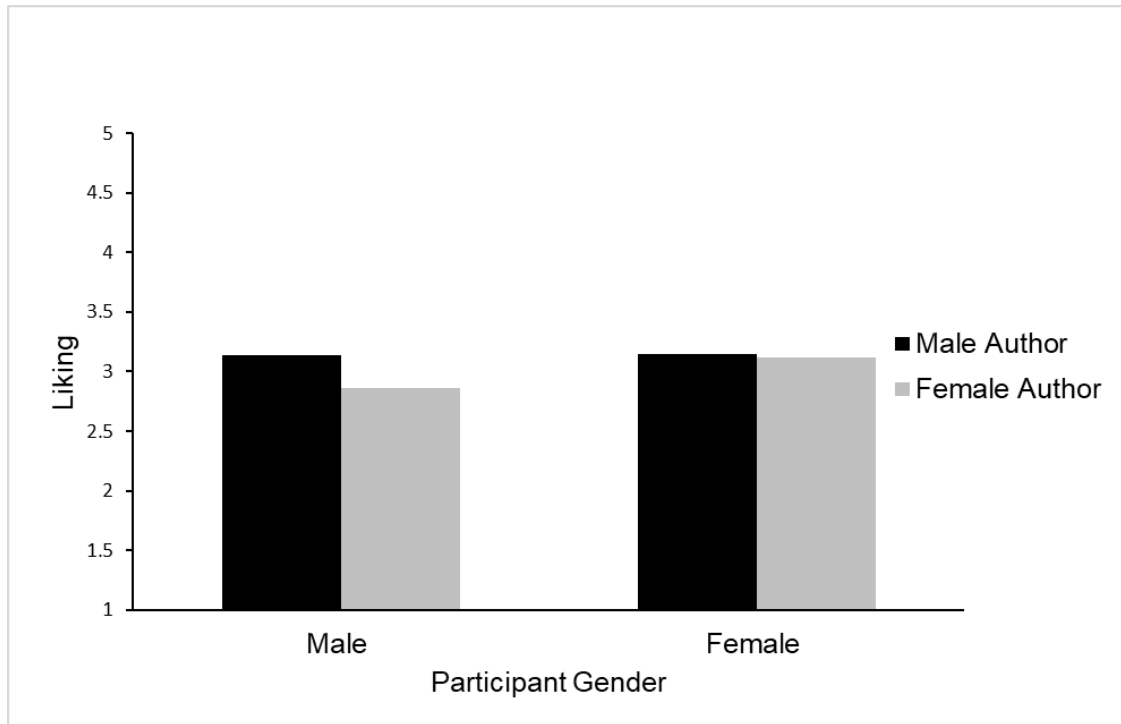
Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 5.
Study 1 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

		Total			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	-0.916	0.471	-1.946	.052^
	Participant Gender	-0.266	0.512	-0.520	.603
	A. Gender X P. Gender	0.908	0.561	1.620	.106

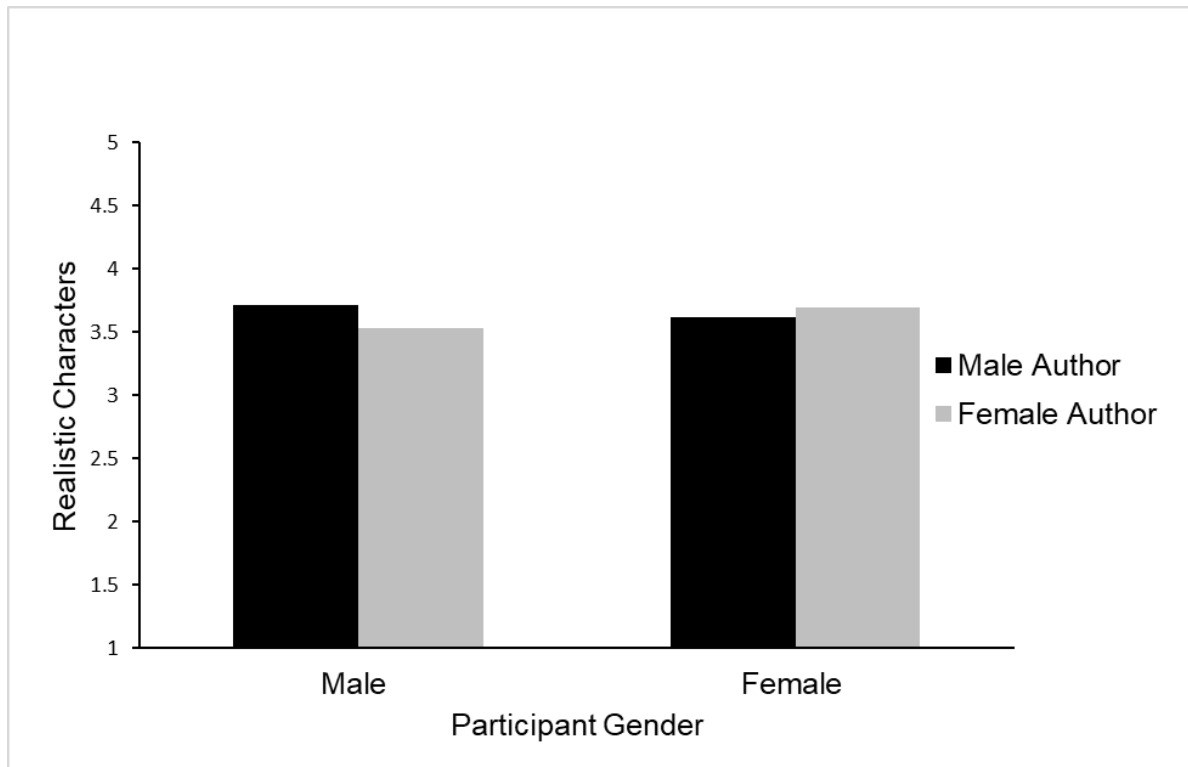
Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Figure 2. Liking based on Author and Participant Gender



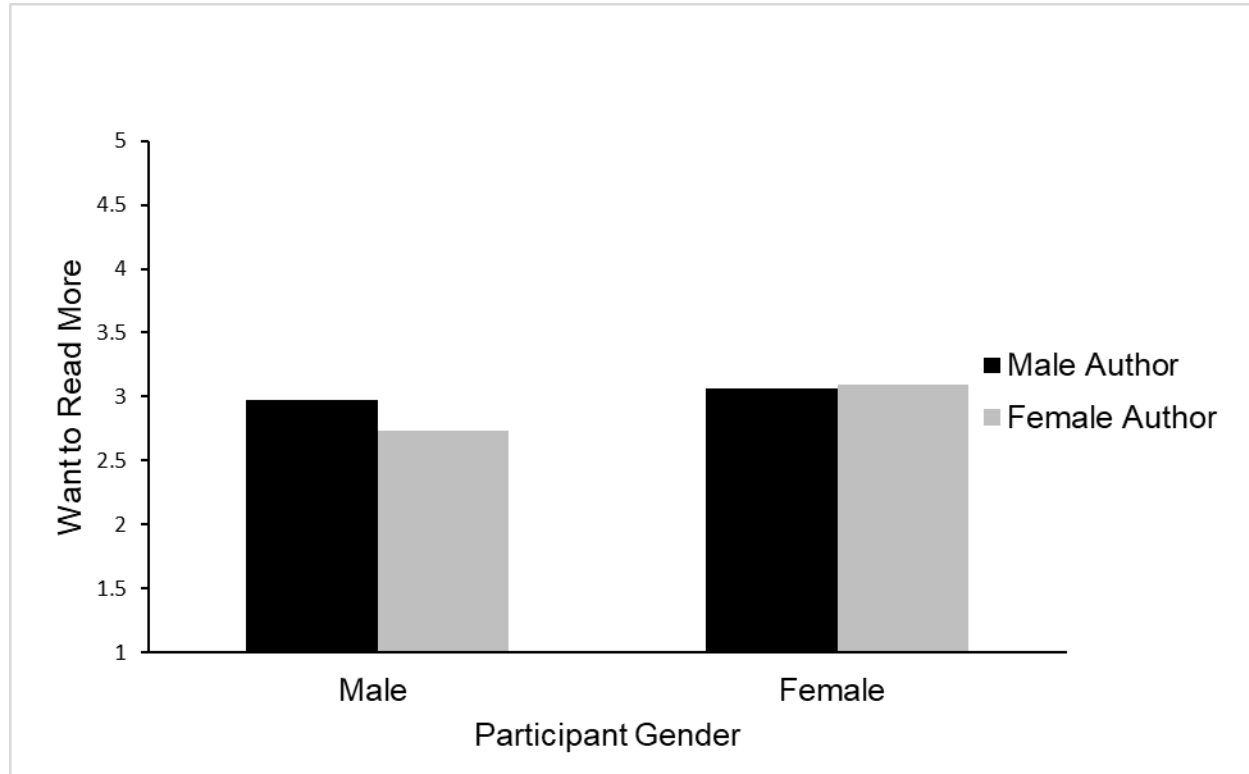
With respect to the other evaluation items, we found an interaction effect for whether participants thought the characters were realistic, between author gender and participant gender ($p = .047$). It was found that male participants thought the characters were more realistic when written by a male author and female participants thought the characters were more realistic when written by a female author (Figure 3). Importantly, however, the effect sizes in these groups are small, with mean differences of less than 0.5 between them.

Figure 3. Thought Characters were Realistic based on Author and Participant Gender



Additionally, there was a marginally statistically significant interaction for whether participants would want to read more by this author, between author gender and participant gender ($p = .066$). Again, however, these effects were quite small (see Table 4). These results suggest that male participants were more likely to report wanting to read more by the author if the author was also male and female participants also showed more interest in female authors (Figure 4).

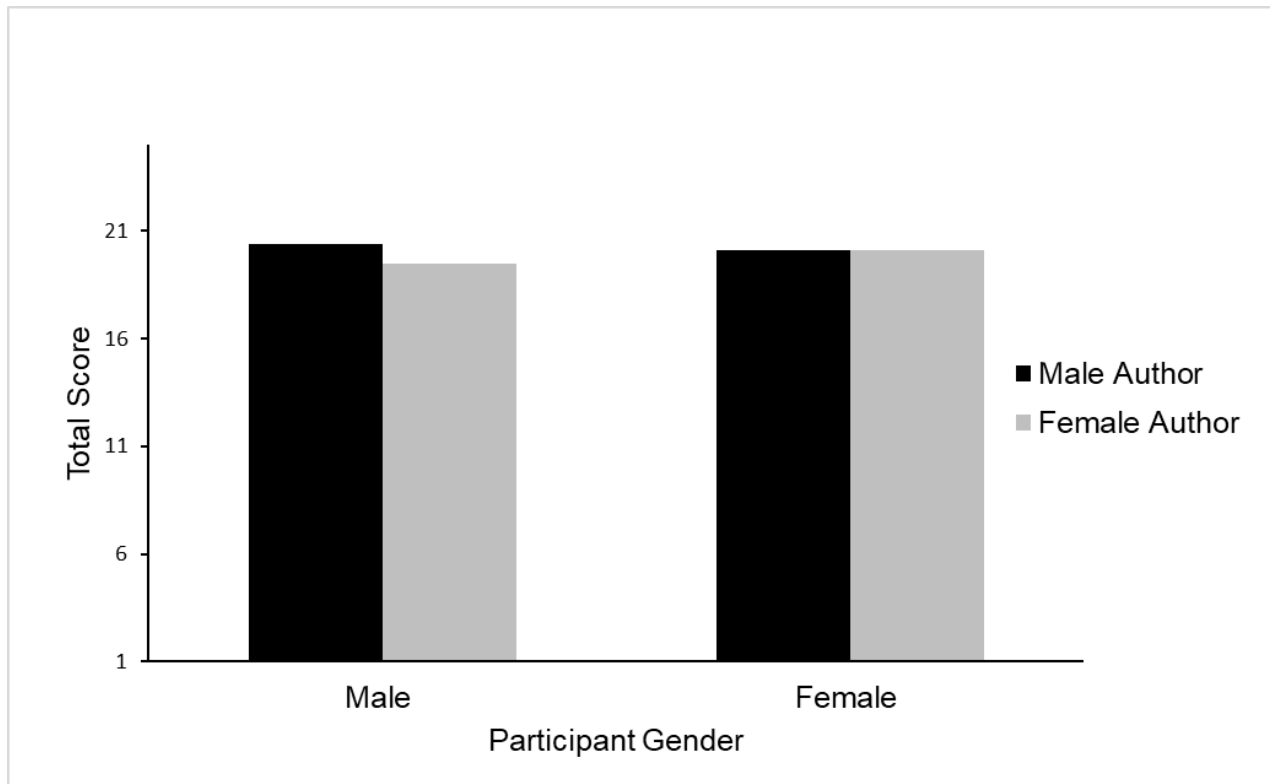
Figure 4. Want to Read More by Author based on Author and Participant Gender



Lastly, we also observed a marginally statistically significant main effect of author gender for the total aggregated evaluation score ($p = .052$), though the mean differences between the male and female authors were quite small (see Table 4). In general, participants rated the passages more positively, across all our evaluation dimensions, when it was written by a male author compared to a female author (Figure 5).

We did not observe any main effects or interactions for the rest of our variables, including whether participants noticed errors ($p = .485$), thought the passages were well-written ($p = .446$), and thought that the passages showed emotion ($p = .332$).

Figure 5. Total Score based on Author and Participant Gender



Study 1 Discussion

Our results from Study 1 demonstrate that there was little difference in how people evaluate books written by male or female authors. There were marginally statistically significant main effects showing that people report liking books better when they are written by male authors rather than female authors, regardless of their own gender. This was observed both for the individual item on liking and for the aggregate evaluation averaging across all the evaluation dimensions. However, these effects were small and did not extend to other more specific items. Though there is evidence that publishers charge more for books written by male authors (Weinberg & Kapelner, 2018) or choose to publish more works with male (or gender-neutral) names (Denham, 2015) the current research suggests this bias towards male authors is not mirrored on the part of the reader.

We also found a small interaction for whether participants thought the characters were realistic. It was found that male participants thought characters were slightly more realistic when written by male authors, with female participants thinking the same for female authors. This might be explained by one's own experiences and expectations. That is, male readers may feel that male authors are more accurate when writing about male characters, and the portrayal of female characters might be more in line with male perceptions. In comparison, female readers may feel that female authors are able to better portray the experience of being female, as well as more accurately represent their experience of males. It is important to emphasize, however, that the passages were the same across conditions and so the way the characters were described did not change with the author's gender, suggesting that this is more a function of how people expect authors to write, rather than reflecting any real differences. A similar mechanism might underlie the marginally statistically significant interaction suggesting that females want to read more by female authors, with the same holding for males and male authors. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the effects were small for all cases.

Finally, there are some potential explanations for the lack of differences observed for the other evaluation criteria, namely noticing errors, evaluating the quality of the writing, and the amount of emotion shown in the passages. First, the differences we did observe, though small, tended to be for broader evaluations, such as whether participants liked the passage. In contrast, the evaluations that failed to differ based on author gender tended to be more fine-grained evaluations of specific aspects of the content. This suggests that although people may realize on some level that there is no difference in how the text is written, they are still moved to some extent by emotional factors to base their evaluations partially on the author's gender. Second, the lack of differences might have been due to participants finding some of these more technical

questions to be confusing. In support of this possibility, when asked whether there was anything about the study that they found confusing, a fair number of participants responded with some version of “why was there a question about noticing errors? Wouldn’t editors have removed these before publishing?” Thus, it is possible that this confusion could have introduced more measurement error into these scores. In Study 2, we further explored how author gender influences reader evaluations by including an additional variable of book genre: Whether the excerpt represented romance or literary fiction.

Study 2

Study 2 built on Study 1, moving to an examination of whether the negative evaluations of romance novels are due to the genre itself or the gender of the author. Participants evaluated passages supposedly taken from either romance novels or works of literary fiction, that were ostensibly written by either a male or female author. In this study, there were two competing hypotheses tested: (1) that male authors would be rated higher than female authors, regardless of the genre, suggesting that the negative evaluation of romance novels results from their association with women; or (2) that romance would be rated lower than literary fiction regardless of author gender, suggesting that romance novels are seen as intrinsically of poor quality, regardless of author gender. This study mirrored closely the design of Study 1, with the inclusion of a genre label for the excerpt.

Study 2 Method

Participants

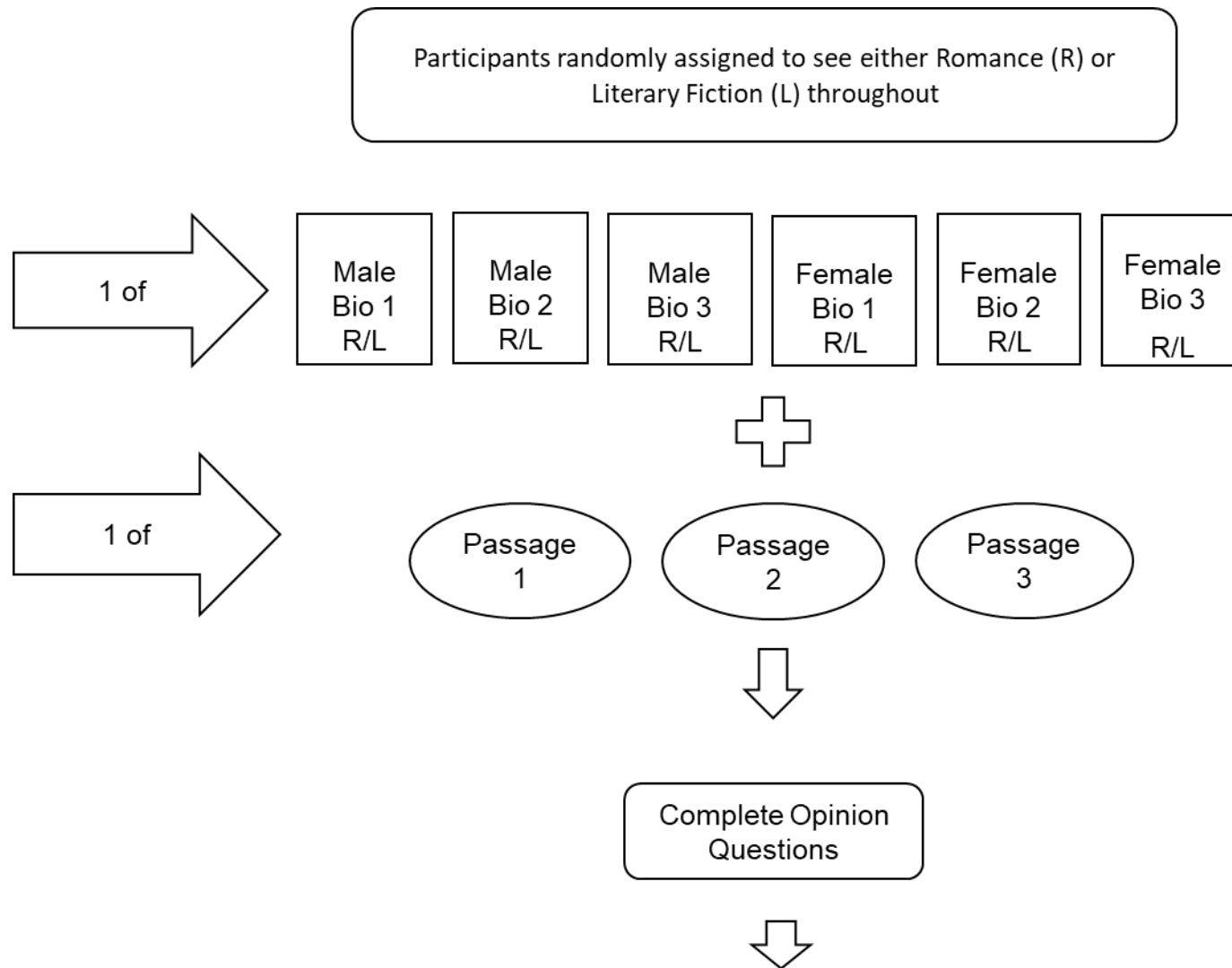
A power analysis suggested that a minimum of 210 participants would be needed to have a power of 95%, based a Cohen’s f of .25 and an α of .05, for this design (G*Power, Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). To account for attrition, we recruited 330 undergraduate

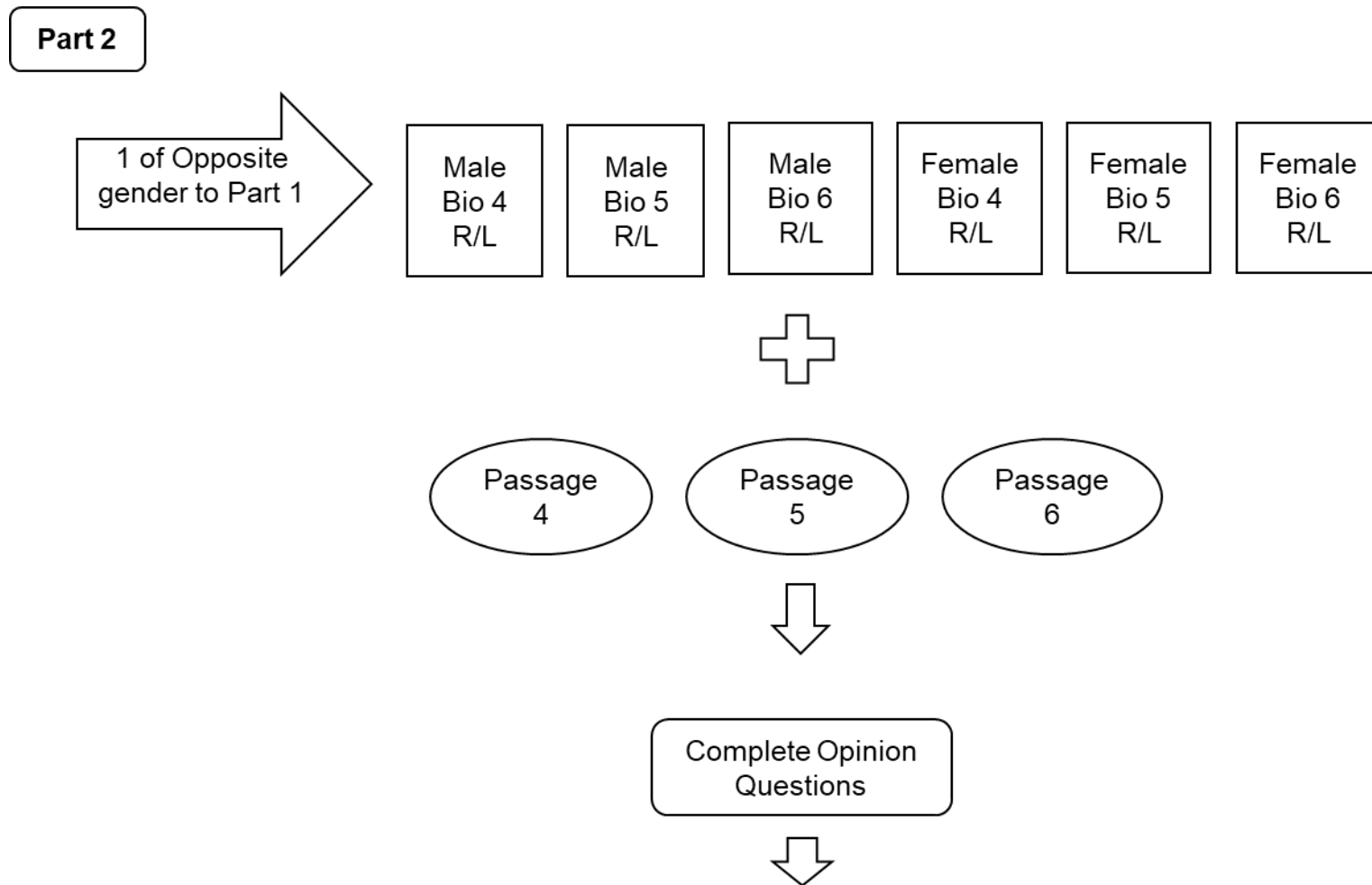
students registered in a first-year psychology course. A total of 163 participants completed the study online and 167 completed it in person, and all participants were compensated with course credit. The same data exclusions as in Study 1 were preregistered for Study 2. As a result, the same issues around the strictness of the exclusion criteria for the comprehension items were an issue in Study 2. Following the original exclusion criteria resulted in a greatly reduced sample of 128 participants. Thus, an identical procedure as for Study 1 was followed, such that alternative criteria were adopted excluding participants who scored one standard deviation below the mean or less (corresponding to answering less than four questions correctly). Here we report the results using the original exclusion criteria; the results from the analyses using this alternative exclusion criteria can be found in Appendix E, for complete transparency. Participants for the original exclusion criteria were mostly female (68.75%, $n = 88$), with an age range of 18-56 ($M = 19.94$, $SD = 4.18$) (for more detailed information of the participants in Study 2 see Appendix D).

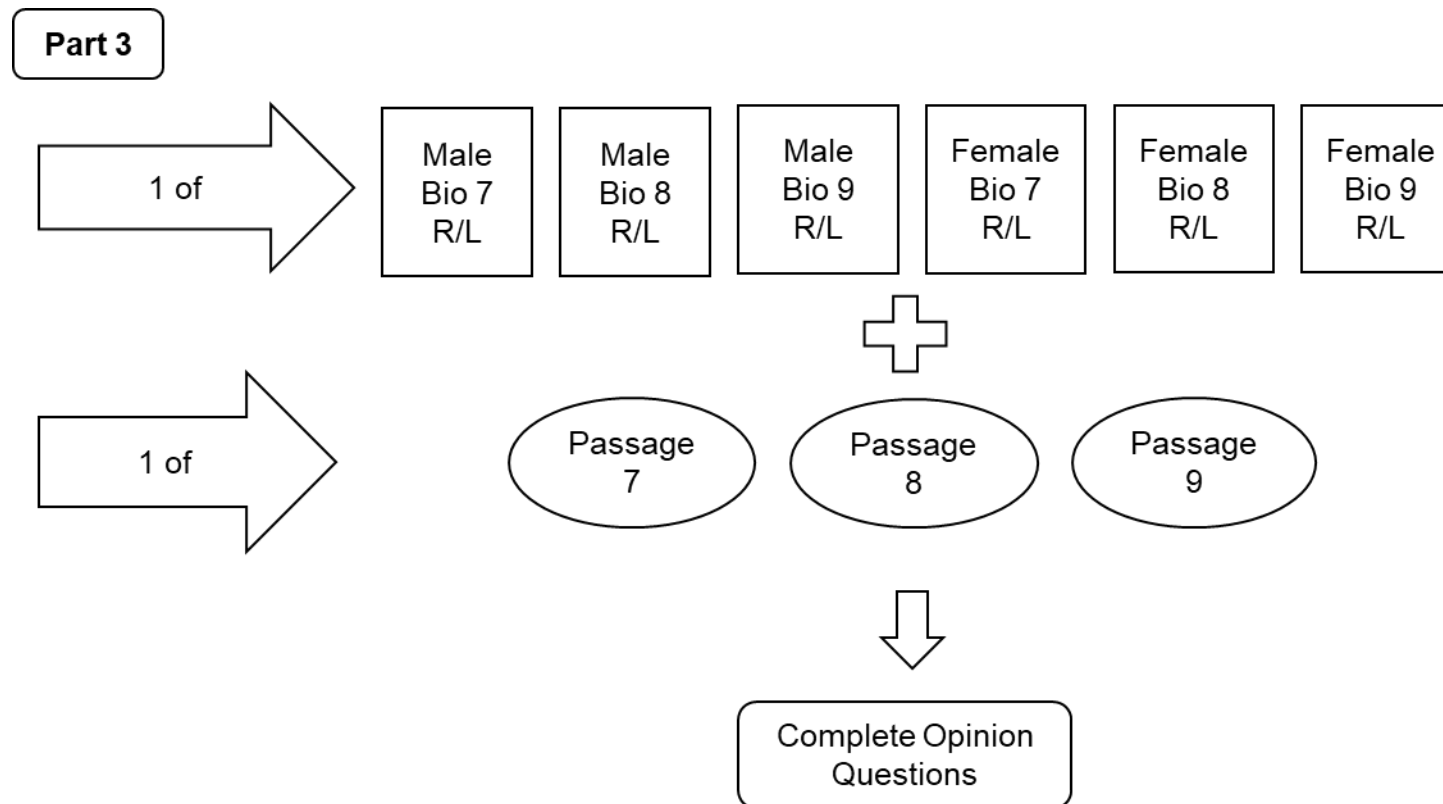
Measures

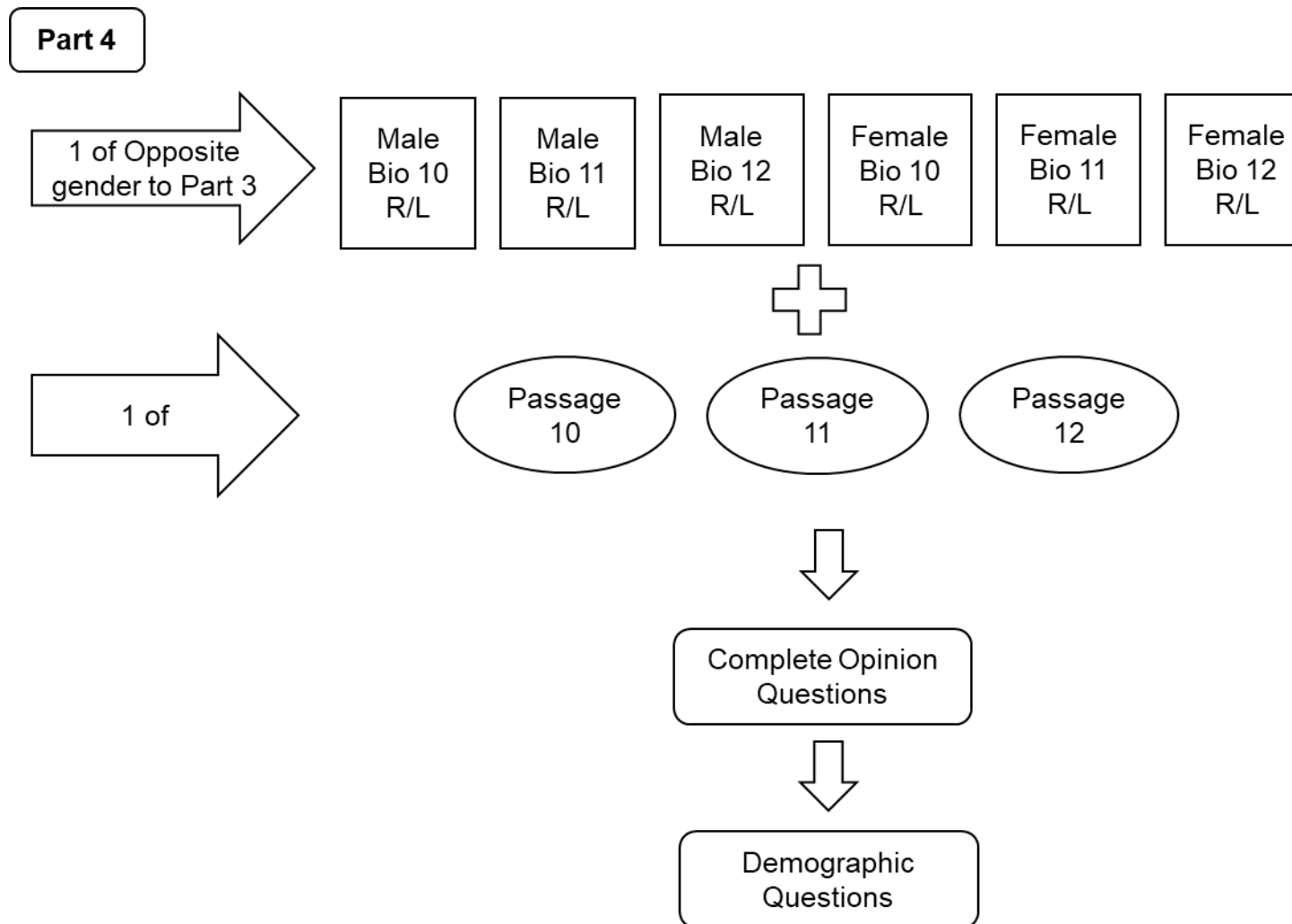
The same measures were used in Study 2 as in Study 1, with the addition of genre information for each passage. Specifically, the biography presented with each author was edited to include whether the author writes romance or literary fiction. Study 2 was a split-plot design in that all participants saw two passages by male authors and two passages by female authors; however, each participant saw only one genre (Figure 6). Otherwise, the procedure for Study 2 mirrored that for Study 1. As with Study 1, all associated materials for Study 2 can be found at https://osf.io/vj2pb/?view_only=48d1d518b9994510ab0db0c475d91e73.

Figure 6. Study 2 Design









Note: This is a split-plot design. At the beginning of the study participants were told that every passage they would see came from either romance or literary fiction novels. This was then reinforced with the author biographies. Further, every participant saw 2 male *and* 2 female author names.

Study 2 Results

The analyses for Study 2 mirrored those performed for Study 1, with evaluations analyzed separately and as an aggregate, using LME models. First, in order to further examine the results of Study 1, we recreated the models using just author gender and participant gender as fixed effects (Model 1). Analyses were then done with book genre (romance vs. literary fiction) as a between-subjects fixed effects variable (Model 2). Following this, additional models were evaluated with author gender (male vs. female) as a within-subjects fixed effects variable, along with book genre (Model 3). Next, a third set of analyses were done which included participant gender (male vs. female) as a between-subjects fixed effects variable, in addition to genre and author gender (Model 4). In all analyses, the fixed effects were allowed to interact, and participant id and the passages were set as the random effects.

In the first models recreating the results of Study 1, ratings approached statistical significance based on author gender for liking ($p = .078$) and realistic characters ($p = .064$). Participants reported liking the passages more and thinking the characters were somewhat more realistic when the author was female. Additionally, ratings of wanting to read more by participant gender also approached statistical significance ($p = .081$) such that female participants reported wanting to read more by the authors, regardless of their gender, more often than male participants. Though the results all approached statistical significance the effects were small. This can be seen in the descriptive statistics described in Table 7. There were no statistically significant effects of author gender and participants' gender on whether participants noticed errors ($p = .322$), thought the passages were well written ($p = .489$), thought the passages showed emotion ($p = .916$), and the total score ($p = .311$). Descriptive statistics for the author

gender by participant gender models can all be seen in Table 7 and results of the LME model can be seen in Table 8.

Table 7.
Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 1

		Male Participants		Female Participants	
		Mean	95% Confidence Interval	Mean	95% Confidence Interval
Liking	Male Author	3.01	[2.75, 3.27]	3.22	[3.02, 3.42]
	Female Author	3.26	[3.00, 3.52]	3.29	[3.09, 3.49]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.55	[3.29, 3.81]	3.40	[3.20, 3.59]
	Female Author	3.44	[3.44, 3.96]	3.39	[3.20, 3.59]
Well Written	Male Author	3.55	[3.32, 3.77]	3.56	[3.38, 3.71]
	Female Author	3.66	[3.43, 3.88]	3.55	[3.38, 3.71]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.57	[3.38, 3.77]	3.73	[3.58, 3.87]
	Female Author	3.77	[3.57, 3.96]	3.75	[3.61, 3.90]
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.40	[3.11, 3.70]	3.45	[3.21, 3.70]
	Female Author	3.48	[3.19, 3.78]	3.52	[3.27, 3.76]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	2.81	[2.54, 3.08]	3.05	[2.84, 3.26]
	Female Author	2.92	[2.66, 3.19]	3.10	[2.89, 3.31]
Total Score	Male Author	19.90	[18.86, 20.94]	20.39	[19.61, 21.18]
	Female Author	20.79	[19.76, 21.83]	20.60	[19.81, 21.38]

Table 8.
Study 2 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Liking				Noticed Errors			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Gender	0.252	0.142	1.766	.078 [^]	0.152	0.133	1.143	.254
P. Gender	0.206	0.138	1.497	.135	-0.150	0.146	-1.028	.305
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.177	0.172	-1.029	.304	-0.159	0.161	-0.991	.322

Note. * $p < .05$, [^] $p < .1$

Table 8.
Study 2 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Well Written				Realistic Characters			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Gender	0.106	0.130	0.817	.414	0.196	0.106	1.857	.064 [^]
P. Gender	-0.001	0.127	-0.005	.996	0.156	0.111	1.402	.162
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.109	0.157	-0.693	.489	-0.169	0.128	-1.323	.187

Note. * $p < .05$, [^] $p < .1$

Table 8.

Study 2 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Gender	0.080	0.133	0.602	.548	0.114	0.144	0.792	.429
P. Gender	0.049	0.121	0.375	.708	0.241	0.138	1.749	.081^
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.017	0.161	-0.105	.916	-0.067	0.173	-0.387	.699

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 8.

Study 2 Results of Model 1 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Total			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Gender	0.893	0.563	1.586	.114
P. Gender	0.494	0.564	0.875	.382
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.689	0.679	-1.014	.311

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

In the models examining only book genre, there was a marginally statistically significant effect of whether the passage showed emotion ($p = .077$), with a small effect demonstrated by a mean difference of only 0.17, in which participants thought the passages showed slightly more emotion when they were identified as literary fiction rather than romance. All other evaluations did not differ by genre, namely liking ($p = .182$), errors noticed ($p = .861$), quality of writing ($p = .621$), realistic characters ($p = .599$), and whether participants wanted to read more by the author ($p = .621$). The total evaluation, aggregating across all evaluation items, also did not differ by genre ($p = .315$). Descriptive statistics for the genre-only models can be seen in Table 9 and results of the LME model can be seen in Table 10.

Table 9.
Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 2

		Mean	95% CI
Liking	Romance	3.15	[2.96, 3.34]
	Literary Fiction	3.29	[3.09, 3.49]
Noticed Errors	Romance	3.48	[3.29, 3.66]
	Literary Fiction	3.46	[3.26, 3.65]
Well-written	Romance	3.54	[3.39, 3.69]
	Literary Fiction	3.59	[3.43, 3.75]
Realistic characters	Romance	3.70	[3.56, 3.83]
	Literary Fiction	3.74	[3.60, 3.89]
Passage showed emotion	Romance	3.39	[3.16, 3.63]
	Literary Fiction	3.56	[3.32, 3.81]
Want to read more by author	Romance	3.70	[3.56, 3.83]
	Literary Fiction	3.74	[3.60, 3.89]
Total Score	Romance	20.25	[19.52, 20.99]
	Literary Fiction	20.68	[19.90, 21.45]

Table 10.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

	Liking				Noticed Errors			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.134	0.100	1.342	0.182	-0.020	0.115	-0.75	.861

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 10.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

	Well Written				Realistic Characters			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.046	0.093	0.495	.621	0.045	0.085	0.527	.599

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 10.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.170	0.096	1.782	.077^	0.050	0.101	0.527	.621

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 10.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for Different Variables

	Total			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.421	0.418	1.008	.315

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

When models included both author gender and book genre as fixed effects, there was a marginally statistically significant interaction pertaining to wanting to read more by the same author ($p = .076$). Participants reported that they wanted to read more by the author if the passage was identified as from a romance novel written by a male author, or a literary fiction novel written by a female author, relative to other combinations. These effects were also small, however, as demonstrated by the only slight difference in means between the groups (Table 11). We observed no other differences for liking ($p = .125$), noticing errors ($p = .590$), the quality of the writing ($p = .109$), realistic characters ($p = .203$), emotion showed in the passage ($p = .989$), or the total score ($p = .128$). Descriptive statistics for the genre and author gender models can be seen in Table 11 and results of the LME can be seen in Table 12.

Table 11.
Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 3

		Romance		Literary Fiction	
		Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI
Liking	Male Author	3.15	[2.93, 3.68]	3.15	[2.94, 3.64]
	Female Author	3.16	[2.93, 3.69]	3.42	[3.19, 3.73]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.47	[3.40, 3.76]	3.41	[3.32, 3.70]
	Female Author	3.48	[3.33, 3.68]	3.50	[3.45, 3.86]
Well-written	Male Author	3.58	[3.37, 3.82]	3.51	[3.31, 3.67]
	Female Author	3.50	[3.29, 3.74]	3.67	[3.33, 3.69]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.69	[3.54, 3.85]	3.66	[3.49, 3.83]
	Female Author	3.70	[3.55, 3.86]	3.82	[3.66, 3.99]
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.36	[3.10, 3.62]	3.53	[3.26, 3.79]
	Female Author	3.43	[3.17, 3.68]	3.60	[3.33, 3.87]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	3.02	[2.79, 3.25]	2.93	[2.69, 3.17]
	Female Author	2.95	[2.72, 3.18]	3.15	[2.91, 3.39]
Total Score	Male Author	20.26	[19.14, 21.12]	20.21	[19.31, 21.11]
	Female Author	20.24	[19.39, 21.09]	21.15	[20.25, 22.05]

Table 12.
Study 2 Results of Model 3 for Different Variables

		Liking				Noticed Errors			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	0.017	0.109	0.153	.879	0.006	0.102	0.059	.953
	Genre	0.126	0.128	0.098	.922	-0.060	0.137	-0.436	.663
	A. Gender X Genre	0.246	0.160	1.539	.125	0.081	0.150	0.540	.590

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 12.
Study 2 Results of Model 3 for Different Variables

		Well-written				Realistic Characters			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	-0.076	0.099	-0.771	.441	0.011	0.081	0.131	.896
	Genre	-0.071	0.118	-0.599	.550	-0.031	0.103	-0.295	.768
	A. Gender X Genre	0.235	0.146	1.608	.109	0.152	0.119	1.274	.203

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 12.

Study 2 Results of Model 3 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.068	0.102	0.668	.505	-0.064	0.109	-0.589	.556
Genre	0.170	0.121	1.398	.163	-0.094	0.129	-0.709	.479
A. Gender X Genre	0.002	0.150	0.014	.989	0.256	0.161	1.778	.076^

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 12.

Study 2 Results of Model 3 for Different Variables

Fixed Effects	Total			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.024	0.433	-0.056	.955
Genre	-0.057	0.523	-0.108	.914
A. Gender X Genre	0.964	0.632	1.525	.128

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Finally, when book genre, author gender, and participant gender were all included as fixed effects, we observed no statistically significant effects for any of our variables. This includes whether participants liked the passages ($p = .731$), noticed errors ($p = .798$), thought they were well-written ($p = .558$), thought the characters were realistic ($p = .326$), thought the passages contained emotion ($p = .348$), wanted to read more by the author ($p = .377$), or the total score aggregating across all evaluations ($p = .993$). Descriptive statistics and results of the LME models appear in Table 13 and Table 14 respectively.

Table 13.
Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 4

		Romance				Literary Fiction			
		Male Participants		Female Participants		Male Participants		Female Participants	
		Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI
Liking	Male Author	3.01	[2.66, 3.37]	3.20	[2.95, 3.44]	3.00	[2.67, 3.34]	3.24	[2.98, 3.51]
	Female Author	3.10	[2.75, 3.45]	3.19	[2.94, 3.43]	3.41	[3.07, 3.74]	3.43	[3.16, 3.70]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.58	[3.21, 3.94]	3.43	[3.19, 3.68]	3.52	[3.17, 3.87]	3.35	[3.08, 3.62]
	Female Author	3.66	[3.30, 4.03]	3.41	[3.17, 3.65]	3.73	[3.39, 4.08]	3.37	[3.09, 3.64]
Well-written	Male Author	3.63	[3.32, 3.95]	3.56	[3.36, 3.77]	3.47	[3.17, 3.77]	3.53	[3.30, 3.76]
	Female Author	3.56	[3.24, 3.87]	3.49	[3.28, 3.67]	3.75	[3.45, 4.04]	3.63	[3.40, 3.86]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.68	[3.41, 3.96]	3.70	[3.52, 3.87]	3.47	[3.21, 3.73]	3.77	[3.57, 3.97]
	Female Author	3.72	[3.44, 3.99]	3.70	[3.52, 3.87]	3.81	[3.55, 4.07]	3.83	[3.63, 4.03]

Table 13.
Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 4

		Romance				Literary Fiction			
		Male Participants		Female Participants		Male Participants		Female Participants	
		Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.34	[2.97, 3.71]	3.36	[3.09, 3.64]	3.46	[3.10, 3.81]	3.57	[3.27, 3.86]
	Female Author	3.53	[3.16, 3.90]	3.39	[3.11, 3.66]	3.44	[3.09, 3.80]	3.69	[3.39, 3.98]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	2.83	[2.47, 3.19]	3.09	[2.84, 3.34]	2.79	[2.44, 3.13]	3.00	[2.73, 3.28]
	Female Author	2.91	[2.55, 3.27]	2.97	[2.72, 3.22]	2.94	[2.59, 3.28]	3.27	[2.99, 3.54]
Total Score	Male Author	20.08	[18.66, 21.50]	20.33	[19.38, 21.29]	19.73	[18.37, 21.09]	20.47	[19.41, 21.54]
	Female Author	20.49	[19.07, 21.91]	20.14	[19.19, 21.10]	21.06	[19.71, 22.42]	21.20	[20.13, 22.26]

Table 14.
Study 2 Results of Model 4 for Different variables

Fixed Effects	Liking				Noticed Errors			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.086	0.207	0.417	.677	0.087	0.194	0.448	.654
Participant Gender	0.183	0.194	0.941	.347	-0.141	0.208	-0.681	.496
Genre	-0.009	0.229	-0.038	.970	-0.052	0.244	-0.213	.832
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.097	0.243	-0.401	.689	-0.112	0.228	-0.493	.622
A. Gender X Genre	0.316	0.286	1.105	.270	0.124	0.268	0.462	.644
P. Gender X Genre	0.056	0.277	0.201	.689	-0.031	0.296	-0.106	.916
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	-0.119	0.345	-0.344	.731	-0.083	0.324	-0.256	.798

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 14.
Study 2 Results of Model 4 for Different variables

Fixed Effects	Well-written				Realistic Characters			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.079	0.189	-0.419	.676	0.033	0.154	0.212	.832
Participant Gender	-0.073	0.180	-0.407	.685	0.011	0.157	0.069	.945
Genre	-0.164	0.211	-0.775	.439	-0.217	0.185	-1.174	.241
A. Gender X P. Gender	0.003	0.222	0.015	.988	-0.031	0.180	-0.173	.863
A. Gender X Genre	0.354	0.261	1.356	.176	0.313	0.213	1.471	.142
P. Gender X Genre	0.136	0.256	0.530	.597	0.290	0.224	1.229	.795
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	-0.185	0.315	-0.587	.558	-0.252	0.256	-0.983	.326

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 14.

Study 2 Results of Model 4 for Different variables

Fixed Effects	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.191	0.194	0.981	.327	0.077	0.208	0.368	.713
Participant Gender	0.027	0.184	0.144	.885	0.256	0.195	1.311	.191
Genre	0.121	0.217	0.557	.578	-0.044	0.230	-0.193	.847
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.167	0.228	-0.735	.463	-0.194	0.244	-0.794	.427
A. Gender X Genre	-0.208	0.269	-0.774	.440	0.073	0.288	0.254	.799
P. Gender X Genre	0.081	0.263	0.308	.759	-0.040	0.278	-0.144	.886
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	0.304	0.324	0.940	.348	0.307	0.437	0.885	.377

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 14.

Study 2 Results of Model 4 for Different variables

	Total			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.411	0.723	0.502	.616
Participant Gender	0.254	0.798	0.318	.750
Genre	-0.352	0.939	-0.735	.708
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.601	0.960	-0.626	.532
A. Gender X Genre	0.925	1.134	0.817	.414
P. Gender X Genre	0.492	1.136	0.433	.665
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	-0.012	1.365	-0.008	.993

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Study 2 Discussion

In this study, there were two competing hypotheses that were tested. First, that male authors would be rated higher than female authors regardless of genre and, second, that romance novels would be rated lower than literary fiction regardless of author gender. Overall neither of these hypotheses were supported. The fact that participants thought passages conveyed more emotion when attributed to literary fiction could suggest that people attributed more quality to literary fiction over romance, however, this difference was small and failed to pass the threshold for statistical significance. The finding that participants wanted to read more romance if it was attributed to male authors, and more literary fiction if attributed to female authors, was particularly surprising. Traditionally, romance novels are written by female authors (Lois & Gregson, 2015) and literary fiction by male authors (Nobel Media, 2018). Therefore, the finding that people are more interested in reading books by authors not typically published in that genre suggests an interest in hearing novel voices for a genre. However, this effect was also quite small and not statistically significant. Overall, data from this study suggests that people do not differ in their evaluations of male and female authors for romance and literary fiction novels.

The lack of differences in evaluation based on genre observed here is interesting given the seemingly universal low regard for romance novels. If people judge excerpts attributed to romance as equivalent to those attributed to literary fiction, then perhaps these prejudices are not strong enough to shape evaluations of actual text when it is in front of someone. This would mean that it is the actual subject matter or content that people find objectionable. As evidence in support of this possibility, during debriefing multiple participants mentioned that they did not think the passages were particularly romantic given that they were from romance novels. This demonstrates that the actual content (held constant across genres) may drive most of these

evaluations. In truth, one of the passages was actually taken from a romance novel. In addition, we purposefully chose passages that suggested a lead up to a romantic interaction, although none included a scene that was explicitly sexual or romantically-charged. Thus, participant judgments seem to have been based primarily on the actual content of the passage, rather than the genre to which they were attributed. It may be that romance novels are inherently of lower quality than other genres and, had more passage from romance novels been included, those would have been rated lower regardless of what genre they were purported to be from. Overall, the results from this study were not as we predicted, but they do offer some interesting insight into how people evaluate romance novels.

General Discussion

The results from Study 1 showed little difference in preferences for male or female authors. Though there was a small effect suggesting that participants liked passages better when they were written by male authors, and that male participants thought characters written by male authors were more realistic whereas female participants thought that characters written by female authors were more realistic. Additionally, there was some support for the idea that male participants wanted to read more by male authors, whereas female participants wanted to read more by female authors. However, these effects were all quite small and only the evaluations of liking and thinking the characters were realistic passed the threshold for statistical significance. Further, in Study 2 neither of our hypotheses were supported; overall, few differences were observed based on author gender and genre, and when observed these effects tended to be weak in magnitude. There was limited support for the idea that participants would want to read more from romance novels written by male authors, and more from literary fiction novels written by

female authors, however. This suggests that perhaps people may be interested in hearing from non-stereotypical authors in the works they read.

These results are similar to those reported in the meta-analysis that found no differences in ratings of the writing quality based on author gender, within academia and professional works (Swim et al., 1989). This same analysis suggested that effects were more likely to appear when little other information besides the gender was presented (Swim et al., 1989). It is therefore possible that we failed to observe many differences due, at least in part, to the use of author biographies accompanying our author names. We chose to include a biography to further enforce the gender of the author, through the use of gendered pronouns, however, this extra information could have resulted in participants using details besides the author's gender to evaluate the passages (e.g., their education). That is, given that the extra information was matched across genders, if participants used these details to evaluate the passages it could in part explain why the ratings of the passages did not differ across genders.

The effect of author gender in Study 1 suggests that there is very little bias against female authors by the general public. These results pose an interesting question: If people do not differentiate in their preference for male or female authors why do publishers show bias towards male authors (Denham, 2015)? And, why are books written by women sold for less than those written by men (Weinberg & Kapelner, 2018)? More research will need to be done in order to understand why authors feel there is such discrepancy in publishing between male and female authors.

The similar evaluations for romance and literary fiction in the current research suggests that there is something besides the label of 'romance' that drives negative judgements of books from this genre (Brackett, 2000). Perhaps there is something about the way romance novels are

actually written that make them objectively worse than other forms of fiction, despite their popularity. One parallel could be the phenomenon of reality TV. In a 2017 US study of television genres, reality TV was rated the lowest and described as “fake,” “trashy,” and “meaningless,” by viewers (Watson, 2019). Yet, over 20% of the 50 most-watched television shows of the 2018-2019 season were reality shows (Schneider, 2019). Shows like “Keeping Up with the Kardashians,” “Real Housewives,” and “90 Day Fiancé” were continuously among the top 10 most-watched shows on Sunday nights, over a six-week period. The same research suggests that it is the reality TV shows that are directly marketed to women that are viewed the least favourably (Shevenock, 2018). For example, “The Bachelor” is directly marketed to female viewers and has a favourability rating of minus 39 points, yet it was also the number 1 rated show for women aged 18–49 from NBC’s Bravo network. This again raises the question of why media that is targeted to women is so popular while simultaneously being viewed so negatively. The current research suggests that it is something inherent about romance novels that make it worse than other genres. The question then becomes, why are media directly targeted to women of lower quality than media targeted to men? This is something that can, and should, be explored in future studies.

Limitations and Future Directions

A major limitation of the current research was the small sample size analyzed. It is not clear whether the participants who were removed due to the preregistered exclusion criteria were less conscientious or if the comprehension questions were too difficult. It may be that the comprehension questions worked as intended and those who met the preregistered exclusion criteria were also more likely to have encoded the gender of the author. In comparison, those who got the questions wrong could have been paying less attention in general, thus missing the

gender prime. In order to explore this further, a replication study could be conducted with a far larger sample size, allowing for a sufficiently large sample after applying the original exclusion criteria.

One other issue is that not using more “romantic” passages might have resulted in participants not believing that the passages were from actual romance novels. If that is the case, then this may have skewed how the passages were evaluated. A future study could use passages that are more explicitly romantic or from excerpts from actual romance novels.

Two other avenues to extend this research would be (1) to do a text-based analysis of romance novels, and (2) to conduct a study sending manuscripts to publishers under male and female names to examine the difference in likelihood of publishing. In the first, by doing an analysis of the text within romance novels and comparing them to the make up of more respected genres we would be able to see at a more real-world level if there are actual differences between romance and other book genres that make them of lower quality (e.g., sentence structure, simplicity of writing, themes, etc.). In the later, by actually sending out manuscripts we could start to lend credence to the anecdotal evidence that women are less likely to be published than men.

Conclusion

Overall, results of the current research suggest that bias against female authors by the general public is not common. Further, there is little evidence that people are biased against romance novels as a result of their association with female authors. Though the results of these studies were largely statistically non-significant, they are an important first step in beginning to understand the negative evaluations of female-centered media, such as romance novels, in general.

References

- Akbar, A. (2012, May 14). How e-readers took the embarrassment out of erotic fiction. *Independent*. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/how-e-readers-took-the-embarrassment-out-of-erotic-fiction-7743289.html>
- Armitage, H. (2018). 12 women writers who wrote under male pseudonyms. Retrieved from <https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/usa/articles/12-female-writers-who-wrote-under-male-pseudonyms/>
- Bates, D., Maechler, M., Bolker, B., & Walker, S. (2015). Fitting Linear Mixed-Effects Models Using LME4. *Journal of Statistical Software*, 67(1), 1-48. doi:10.18637/jss.v067.i01.
- Bookish. (2014). Fox in the hen house? Romance authors you didn't know are men. Retrieved from <https://www.bookish.com/articles/fox-in-the-hen-house-romance-authors-you-didnt-know-are-men/>
- Brackett, K. P. (2000). Facework strategies among romance fiction readers. *The Social Science Journal*, 37(3), 347-360.
- Ciechanowicz, A. (1983). Effect of author's and subject's gender on perception of author and text. *Polish Psychological Bulletin*, 14(2), 107-114.
- Colley, A., North, A., & Hargreaves, D. J. (2003). Gender bias in the evaluation of New Age music. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 44(2), 125-131.
- Denham, J. (2015, August 6). Writing under a male name makes you eight times more likely to get published, one female author finds. *Independent*. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/writing-under-a-male-name-makes-you-eight-times-more-likely-to-get-published-one-female-author-finds->

10443351.html

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A.-G., & Buchner, A. (2007). G*Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, 39(2), 175–191.

Gallivan, J. (1991). Gender bias in students' ratings of essays. *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality*, 6(1), 119–124.

Goldberg, P. (1968). Are women prejudiced against women? *Trans-Action*, 5(28), 28–30.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03180445>

Haemmerlie, F. M., & Montgomery, R. L. (1991). Goldberg revisited: Pro-female evaluation bias and changed attitudes toward women by engineering students. *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality*, 6(2), 179–194.

Kang, S. K., DeCelles, K. A., Tilcsik, A., & Jun, S. (2016). Whitened resumes: Race and self-presentation in the labor market. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 61(3), 469–502.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839216639577>

Kaplan, R. M. (1978). Is beauty talent? Sex interaction in the attractiveness halo effect. *Sex Roles*, 4(2), 195–204.

Lebuda, I., & Karwowski, M. (2013). Tell me your name and I'll tell you how creative your work is : Author's name and gender as factors influencing assessment of products' creativity in four different domains. *Creativity Research Journal*, 25(1), 137–142.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2013.752297>

Levenson, H., Burford, B., Bonno, B., & Daiv, L. (1975). Are women still prejudiced against women? A replication and extension of Goldberg's study. *The Journal of Psychology*, 89, 67–71.

Lois, J., & Gregson, J. (2015). Sneers and leers: Romance writers and gendered sexual stigma.

Gender & Society, 29(4), 459–483. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243215584603>

Mischel, H. (1974). Sex bias in the evaluation of professional achievements. *Journal of*

Educational Psychology, 66(2), 157–166.

Moore, M., & Trahan, R. (1998). Evaluating an excerpt about gender: Does sex of an author

matter? *Psychological Reports*, 82, 247–253.

Nobel Media. (2018). All Nobel Prizes in literature. Retrieved from

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/lists/all-nobel-prizes-in-literature/>

O’Keeffe, K. (2015). Here’s exactly how much movies about women make at the box office

versus movies about men. Mic. Retrieved from [https://mic.com/articles/127095/here-s-](https://mic.com/articles/127095/here-s-exactly-how-much-movies-about-women-make-at-the-box-office-versus-movies-about-men#.Rf86PPsE9)

[exactly-how-much-movies-about-women-make-at-the-box-office-versus-movies-about-](https://mic.com/articles/127095/here-s-exactly-how-much-movies-about-women-make-at-the-box-office-versus-movies-about-men#.Rf86PPsE9)

[men#.Rf86PPsE9](https://mic.com/articles/127095/here-s-exactly-how-much-movies-about-women-make-at-the-box-office-versus-movies-about-men#.Rf86PPsE9)

Owen, M. (1997). Re-inventing romance: Reading popular romantic fiction. *Women’s Studies*

International Forum, 20(4), 537–546.

Paludi, M. A., & Bauer, W. D. (1983). Goldberg revisited : What ’ s in an author’s name. *Sex*

Roles, 9(3), 387–390.

Peck, T. (1978). When women evaluate women, nothing succeeds like success: The differential

effects of status upon evaluations of male and female professional ability. *Sex Roles*, 4(2),

205–213.

Pirri, C., Eaton, E., & Durkin, K. (1995). Australian professional women’s evaluations of male

and female written products. *Sex Roles*, 32(9), 691–697.

R Core Team (2017). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for

Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. URL <https://www.R-project.org/>.

- Romance Writers of America. (n.d.). About the romance genre. Retrieved October 31, 2018, from <https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=578>
- Schneider, M. (2019). 100 most-watched TV shows of 2018-19: Winners and losers. Retrieved from <https://variety.com/2019/tv/news/most-watched-tv-shows-highest-rated-2018-2019-season-game-of-thrones-1203222287/>
- Shevenock, S. (2018). Reality is America's least favorite TV genre - Yet people are still watching. Retrieved from <https://morningconsult.com/2018/11/27/reality-is-americas-least-favorite-tv-genre-yet-people-are-still-watching/>
- Statista. (2015). What types of books have you read in the past year? Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/201404/types-of-books-that-american-adults-read/>
- Swim, J., Borgida, E., Maruyama, G., & Myers, D. G. (1989). Joan McKay versus John McKay: Do gender stereotypes bias evaluations? *Psychological Bulletin*, 105(3), 409–429.
- Swim, J. K., & Chen, L. L. (1997). Overt, covert, and subtle sexism. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21, 103–118.
- Watson, A. (2019). Genre breakdown of the top 250 TV programs in the United States in 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/201565/most-popular-genres-in-us-primetime-tv/>
- Weinberg, D. B., & Kapelner, A. (2018). Comparing gender discrimination and inequality in indie and traditional publishing, 1–20.
- Zhang, J., Hennessy, D. A., Luo, J., Song, Y., Ren, K., Zhang, Q., ... Yao, P. (2009). Are women in china sexist toward other women? A study of Chinese college students. *Psychological Record*, 105(1), 267–274. <https://doi.org/10.2466/PRO.105.1.267-274>

Appendix A

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in the fall of 2019 to select names that would be used to prime the gender of the author. This was done in order to ensure that the names being used would prime the desired gender and would not create potential confounds with the variables of interest. To this end, 40 names (20 male and 20 female) were selected based on the similarity of the names (e.g., Norman and Norma) and their popularity in a given time frame (e.g., Norman and Norma were both popular names in the 1920s). This information was gathered using the Name Voyager application through babynamewizard.com. Participants consisted of $N = 223$ undergraduate students recruited from the participant pool at York University. Each participant was presented with all 40 names in a randomized order and asked to answer a series of seven questions about each name. Specifically, each participant was asked: “What gender do you think this person is,” “How old do you think this person is likely to be,” “What do you think this person’s annual income is likely to be,” “What racial or cultural group do you think this person is from,” “How much education do you think this person likely has,” and “how creative do you think this person is likely to be.” Participants who failed to answer more than 10 questions were removed for inattentive responding. As a result, the final analysis consisted of $N = 165$ participants.

Descriptive analyses were run on all the names to ensure that there were no inconsistencies in how people viewed them. The results were then examined to ensure that the assumed gender matched participants' views. Next, names that had similar demographic information were then paired together and the 12 that were best matching were chosen to be used in the main study and were given a randomly chosen last name from the 100 most common surnames in America from the 1990 census. Each name was then assigned to a biography and presented to the participants in the study proper.

Appendix B

Results of Alternate Exclusion Analyses for Study 1

The altered exclusion criteria for Study 1 meant the removal of participants who scored one standard deviation below the mean for the comprehension questions (i.e., those who answered less than 5 questions correctly), if they were under 16, if they reported that they had read the passages previously, and if they guessed the true purpose of the study. Based on these criteria the final sample consisted of 290 participants of which the majority were female (67.93%) with ages ranging from 17–52 ($M = 19.93$, $SD = 3.6$).

For models that included author gender only (Model 1), there were no differences observed for how much participants liked the passages, whether they noticed any errors, wanted to read more by the author, thought the passage was well-written, judged the characters as realistic, and thought the passage showed emotion. There were also no differences observed for the total score, aggregating across all evaluation items (Tables 1a and 2a).

Table 1a.
Descriptive Statistics for Model 1 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria

		Mean	95% Confidence Interval
Liking	Male Author	3.15	[2.96, 3.34]
	Female Author	3.08	[2.90, 3.27]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.36	[3.22, 3.50]
	Female Author	3.32	[3.18, 3.46]
Well-written	Male Author	3.44	[3.29, 3.60]
	Female Author	3.32	[3.32, 3.63]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.62	[3.48, 3.76]
	Female Author	3.64	[3.50, 3.77]
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.46	[3.29, 3.64]
	Female Author	3.48	[3.31, 3.65]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	3.05	[2.87, 3.22]
	Female Author	3.01	[2.84, 3.19]
Total Score	Male Author	20.08	[19.34, 20.81]
	Female Author	20.01	[19.28, 20.75]

Table 2a.

Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria

	Liking				Noticed Errors			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author	-0.063	0.054	-1.173	.241	-0.038	0.049	-0.777	.437
Gender								

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 2a.

Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria

	Well-written				Realistic Characters			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author	0.033	0.045	0.727	.467	0.013	0.044	0.298	.766
Gender								

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 2a.

Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria

	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author	0.019	0.050	0.380	.704	-0.030	0.053	-0.568	.570
Gender								

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 2a.

Study 1 Results of Model 1 for Alternate Exclusion Criteria

	Total			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author	-0.065	0.202	-0.321	.748
Gender				

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

When participant gender was included (Model 2), there were also no differences observed for any of the variables (Tables 3a and 4a). Thus, for this sample, participants did not evaluate passages any differently when it was attributed to a male or female author, based on their own gender, or any interaction between the two variables.

Table 3a.
Descriptive Statistics for Model 2 for alternate exclusion criteria

		Male Participants		Female Participants	
		Mean	95% Confidence Interval	Mean	95% Confidence Interval
Liking	Male Author	3.16	[2.93, 3.39]	3.15	[2.95, 3.35]
	Female Author	3.03	[2.80, 3.26]	3.11	[2.92, 3.31]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.36	[3.17, 3.55]	3.36	[3.21, 3.51]
	Female Author	3.42	[3.23, 3.61]	3.28	[3.13, 3.43]
Well Written	Male Author	3.51	[3.32, 3.70]	3.42	[3.25, 3.58]
	Female Author	3.54	[3.35, 3.73]	3.45	[3.28, 3.61]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.64	[3.46, 3.82]	3.61	[3.47, 3.76]
	Female Author	3.63	[3.45, 3.80]	3.64	[3.49, 3.79]
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.50	[3.29, 3.71]	3.45	[3.27, 3.63]
	Female Author	3.52	[3.31, 3.73]	3.47	[3.29, 3.65]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	3.01	[2.79, 3.24]	3.07	[2.88, 3.26]
	Female Author	2.95	[2.72, 3.17]	3.05	[2.86, 3.24]
Total Score	Male Author	20.19	[19.28, 21.09]	20.05	[19.27, 20.83]
	Female Author	20.09	[19.19, 20.99]	19.99	[19.22, 20.77]

Table 4a.

Study 1 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Liking				Noticed Errors			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.134	0.096	-1.402	.161	0.058	0.087	0.658	.511
Participant Gender	-0.014	0.100	-0.134	.894	-0.001	0.098	-0.011	.991
A. Gender X P. Gender	0.101	0.116	0.867	.386	-0.140	0.106	-1.321	.187

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 4a.

Study 1 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Well Written				Realistic Characters			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.034	0.081	0.416	.678	-0.013	0.078	-0.165	.869
Participant Gender	-0.092	0.086	-1.070	.285	-0.026	0.080	-0.321	.748
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.004	0.098	-0.038	.969	0.038	0.094	0.406	.685

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 4a.

Study 1 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.021	0.088	0.237	.813	-0.064	0.095	-0.672	.502
Participant Gender	-0.048	0.092	-0.518	.604	0.057	0.104	0.544	.587
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.005	0.107	-0.004	.996	0.045	0.115	0.392	.695

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 4a.

Study 1 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Total			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.098	0.359	-0.273	.785
Participant Gender	-0.134	0.395	-0.340	.734
A. Gender X P. Gender	0.041	0.435	0.095	.924

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Appendix C

Passages Used in Studies 1 and 2

Shoot the Moon by Billie Letts

His early morning flight from Los Angeles had been delayed for nearly two hours because of fog. Plenty of time for him to back out, just let it all go. Once he even grabbed his bag and left the terminal, but he changed his mind. Again.

After boarding, he found himself seated next to an elderly woman who was weeping quietly. She was still crying when, twenty minutes later, she offered a whispered apology, but he pretended sleep. Whatever her problem was, he didn't want to hear it. He had no interest in hearing people whine.

When she left her seat to go to the lavatory, he slipped from the first-class cabin and found an empty row near the back of the plane.

For a while he tried to read but gave it up when he felt a headache coming on. He hadn't slept at all the night before, hadn't even gone to bed. Instead, he'd spent the hours sitting on his balcony, trying to persuade himself not to make this trip.

Then, just before five that morning, he'd phoned to make his flight reservation, left a vague message on his receptionist's answering machine and pulled a suitcase from his closet.

Now, with his stomach churning from too much airport coffee, his knees wedged against the seat in front of him, his body heavy with fatigue, he decided that when the plane landed, he'd give this up. Take the next available flight back to L.A.

But he didn't.

Accidental Woman by Barbara Delinsky

Within seconds of coming awake, Micah Smith felt a chill at the back of his neck that had nothing to do with the cold air seeping in through the window cracked open by his side of the bed. It was barely dawn. He didn't have to glance past Heather's body toward the nightstand clock to know that, but could see it in the purpling that preceded daylight when February snows covered the forest floor.

The purpling seemed deeper this morning, but that wasn't what caused his alarm. Nor was it any sound from the girls' room that caused him to hold his breath. They would sleep for another hour, he knew, and if not sleep, then stay in bed until they heard Heather or him up and about.

No. What held him totally still, eyes on that inch of open window, was the sound that came from beyond. Even in winter, the woods were filled with live things, but what he heard now was neither deer, nor owl, nor snowshoe rabbit. It was a car, moving very slowly down the snow-cruised drive toward the small house that Micah had built for his family.

Get out of bed, cried a silent voice, but he remained inert. Barely breathing, he listened. Not one car. Two. They inched their way closer, then stopped. Their engines went still.

Do something, cried that silent voice, more urgent now, and he thought of the rifle that was mounted high above the front door, out of reach of the girls. But he couldn't move -- couldn't move -- other than to turn his head toward Heather. She continued to sleep, oblivious to what he heard, unaware of the thoughts that held him there against her warmth.

As he watched the swirl of her long dark hair touched by a generous dusting of silver, he heard the stealthy click of car doors -- one, then a second. He imagined that there might be even more doors opening silently, carefully guided by hands trained in covert operations.

The Perfect Lover by Stephanie Laurens

Late July, 1835.

Near Glossup Hall, by Ashmore, Dorset.

"Hell and the devil!" Simon Cynster reined in his bays, his eyes narrowing on the ridge high above Ashmore village. The village proper lay just behind him; he was headed for Glossup Hall, a mile farther along the leafy country lane.

At the rear of the village cottages, the land rose steeply; a woman was following the path winding up the berm of what Simon knew to be ancient earthworks. The views from the top reached as far as the Solent, and on clear days even to the Isle of Wight.

It was hardly a surprise to see someone heading up there.

"No surprise she hasn't anyone with her, either." Irritation mounting, he watched the dark-haired, willowy, ineffably graceful figure steadily ascend the rise, a long-legged figure that inevitably drew the eye of any man with blood in his veins. He'd recognized her instantly -- Portia Ashford, his sister Amelia's sister-in-law.

Portia must be attending the Glossup Hall house party; the Hall was the only major house near enough from which to walk.

A sense of being imposed upon burgeoned and grew.

"Damn!" He'd yielded to the entreaties of his longtime friend James Glossup and agreed to stop by on his way to Somerset to support James through the trials of the house party. But if Portia was going to be present, he'd have trials enough of his own.

She reached the crest of the earthworks and paused, one slender hand rising to hold back the fall of her jet-black hair; lifting her face to the breeze, she stared into the distance, then,

letting her hand fall, gracefully walked on, following the path to the lookout, gradually descending until she disappeared from sight.

She's no business of mine.

The words echoed in his head; God knew she'd stated the sentiment often enough, in various phrasings, most far more emphatic. Portia was not his sister, not his cousin; indeed, she shared no blood at all.

Jaw firming, he looked to his horses, took up the slack in the reins --

And inwardly cursed.

Landline by Rainbow Rowell

Neal had both hands on the counter, clenching the muscles in his forearms. Like he was retroactively bracing himself for bad news. His head was hanging down, and his hair fell away from his forehead.

"This might be our shot," Georgie said. "Our own show."

Neal nodded without lifting his head. "Right," he said. His voice was soft and flat.

Georgie waited.

Sometimes she lost her place when she was arguing with Neal. The argument would shift into something else—into somewhere more dangerous—and Georgie wouldn't even realize it. Sometimes Neal would end the conversation or abandon it while she was still making her point, and she'd just go on arguing long after he'd checked out.

Georgie wasn't sure whether this even qualified as an argument. Yet.

So she waited.

"What does 'right' mean?" she finally asked.

He pushed off the counter, all bare arms and square shoulders. "It means that you're right. Obviously." He started clearing the stove. "You have to go to this meeting. It's important."

He said it almost lightly. Maybe everything was going to be fine, after all. Maybe he'd even be excited for her. Eventually.

"So," she said, testing the air between them. "We'll see about visiting your mom next month?"

Neal opened the dishwasher and started gathering up dishes. "No."

She watched him load the dishwasher. "This summer, then?"

His head jerked slightly, like something had brushed his ear. Neal had lovely ears. A little too big, and they poked out at the top like wings. Georgie liked to hold his head by his ears. When he'd let her.

"No," he said again, standing up straight and wiping his palms on his pajama pants. "We've already got plane tickets."

"Neal, I'm serious. I can't miss this meeting."

"I know," he said, turning toward her. His jaw was set. Permanently.

"I don't understand," Georgie said.

"You can't miss this meeting," he said. "And we already have plane tickets. You'll be working all week anyway. So you stay here, focus on your show—and we'll go see my mom."

Girls in white dresses by Jennifer Close

Isabella's sister, Molly, was married with ten bridesmaids in matching tea-length, blue floral Laura Ashley dresses. It was, Isabella believed, the most beautiful wedding anyone would ever have. She was twelve.

"More beautiful than Princess Diana," her mother told Molly that morning as she helped her get dressed.

"I need more bobby pins," her sister replied.

"Isabella," Molly said. "If you keep touching your hair, you're going to ruin it." Isabella put her hand in her lap and watched Molly fluff her own crispy hair. Molly stared at herself in the mirror until her face got white. "I feel funny," she said. "A little sick."

The Mack family had been getting ready for this wedding for over a year. It was all they talked about, all they thought about. It was getting tiresome. Isabella's parents wanted everything to be perfect. They'd had the trim on the house repainted and the garden redone. "What's the point?" Isabella asked. "No one's going to see the house." Her parents just shook their heads at her and Molly rolled her eyes.

Isabella's mother and father went on a diet. They walked every morning and ate fish for dinner. When Isabella's dad ordered a steak or put butter on his bread, her mom would shake her head and say, "Oh, Frank."

Isabella's mother hung the wedding picture in the front hall. It was the first thing people saw when they walked into the Mack house. If you looked at it quickly, it was just a blur of blue dresses and big hair. As the years went by, it began to look like something you would see in a magazine, in an article titled "Fashion Mistakes of the Early '90s." Even the faces in the picture seemed to change. The bridesmaids began to look embarrassed to be caught in such blue dresses. But there was nothing they could do about it. They were trapped there, framed for the whole world to see.

A Year In Provence by Peter Mayle

The year began with lunch. We have always found that New Year's Eve, with its eleventh-hour excesses and doomed resolutions, is a dismal occasion for all the forced jollity and midnight toasts and kisses. And so, when we heard that over in the village of Lacoste, a few miles away, the proprietor of Le Simiane was offering a six-course lunch with pink champagne to his amiable clientele, it seemed like a much more cheerful way to start the next twelve months.

By 12:30 the little stone-walled restaurant was full. There were some serious stomachs to be seen—entire families with the embonpoint that comes from spending two or three diligent hours every day at the table, eyes down and conversation postponed in the observance of France's favorite ritual. The proprietor of the restaurant, a man who had somehow perfected the art of hovering despite his considerable size, was dressed for the day in a velvet smoking jacket and bow tie. His mustache, sleek with pomade, quivered with enthusiasm as he rhapsodized over the menu: foie gras, lobster mousse, beef en croûte, salads dressed in virgin oil, hand-picked cheeses, desserts of a miraculous lightness, digestifs. It was a gastronomic aria which he performed at each table, kissing the tips of his fingers so often that he must have blistered his lips.

The final "bon appétit" died away and a companionable near-silence descended on the restaurant as the food received its due attention. While we ate, my wife and I thought of previous New Year's Days, most of them spent under impenetrable cloud in England. It was hard to associate the sunshine and dense blue sky outside with the first of January but, as everyone kept telling us, it was quite normal. After all, we were in Provence.

How to Be Good by Nick Hornby

I am in a car park in Leeds when I tell my husband I don't want to be married to him anymore. David isn't even in the car park with me. He's at home, looking after the kids, and I have only called him to remind him that he should write a note for Molly's class teacher. The other bit just sort of . . . slips out. This is a mistake, obviously. Even though I am, apparently, and to my immense surprise, the kind of person who tells her husband that she doesn't want to be married to him anymore, I really didn't think that I was the kind of person to say so in a car park, on a mobile phone. That particular self-assessment will now have to be revised, clearly. I can describe myself as the kind of person who doesn't forget names, for example, because I have remembered names thousands of times and forgotten them only once or twice. But for the majority of people, marriage-ending conversations happen only once, if at all. If you choose to conduct yours on a mobile phone, in a Leeds car park, then you cannot really claim that it is unrepresentative, in the same way that Lee Harvey Oswald couldn't really claim that shooting presidents wasn't like him at all. Sometimes we have to be judged by our one-offs.

Two Guys from Verona by James Kaplan

Poor Joel.

Will was staring at his best friend, who sat behind the wheel of his '69 Impala, low in the tattered, foam-hemorrhaging bench seat, arm thrown over the windowsill, still in his jeans and white, shortsleeved, V-necked Sub Shop shirt: he'd come straight from work. The moment before, Joel had turned to Will and asked, casually: "So—you going to the reunion?"

A simple-enough-seeming question. Yet Will couldn't help wondering—with scorn, with triumph, and even with a measure of sympathy—how had Joel come to this?

Sympathy was what Will ostensibly offered Joel on their drives, sympathy for the life that had gone so wrong, for all his friend could have been. Imagine—as Will sometimes liked to, imagining being one of his few legitimate hobbies anymore, though not one he'd have admitted to freely—what Joel could have been! If. If his father hadn't gone, then his brother; if whatever had happened the year after high school hadn't happened. The break. They called it. Such bad luck. Looks, brains, musical talent, athletic skill: Joel had had big possibilities. Broken.

Will, on the other hand, had had all these things in moderation, just a little bit of each, had capitalized on them ... and went to work for your father, the familiar voice in his head, the carping one, said. All right, so he'd gone to work for his father. He could've blown it. Some would've. He hadn't.

All He Ever Wanted by Anita Shreve

If the fact of the fire did not immediately penetrate my consciousness, the heat of the blast did and soon propelled me from my seat. All around me, there was a confusion of upended tables, overturned chairs, bodies pitched toward the door of the dining room, and the sounds of broken glass and crockery. Fortunately, the windows toward the street, large windows through which a body might pass, had been thrown open by an enterprising diner. I remember that I rolled sideways through one of these window frames and fell onto the snow and was immediately aware that I should move aside to allow others to land as I had — and it was in that moment that my altruism was finally triggered. I rose to my feet and began to assist those who had sustained cuts and bruises and broken bones, or who had been mildly crushed in the chaos. The blaze lit up the escaped diners with a light greater than any other that could be produced in the night, so that I was able to see clearly the dazed expressions of those near to me. Many

people were coughing, and some were crying, and all looked as though they had been struck by a blow to the head. A few men attempted heroics and tried to go back into the hotel to save those who remained behind, and I think one student did actually rescue an elderly woman who had succumbed to paralysis beside the buffet table; but generally there was no thought of reentering the burning building once one had escaped. Indeed, so great was the heat that we in the crowd had to move farther and farther across the street until we all stood in the college quadrangle, surrounded by bare oaks and elms and stately sycamores.

The Fall by Simon Mawer

The radio was on, and the story was big enough to make the national news on a day when the news wasn't special, the murders a mere one or two, the rapes only half a dozen and date rapes at that, the peace negotiations stalled, the elections indecisive, misery and poverty quotidian. Noted climber killed in fall, said a disembodied and indifferent voice from the radio, and I knew at once who it was even before I heard the name. Curious, that. I knew it would be him.

Jim Matthewson, who lived in North Wales, had spent a lifetime tackling the highest and hardest climbs in the world but died after falling from a local crag where he had first cut his teeth over thirty years ago. . .

I decelerated and pulled into the slow lane behind an articulated truck. like my driving? a sign on the tailgate asked; it gave a phone number, just in case you didn't. The next exit was for the A? and North Wales, and I let the car slow down and drift leftward down the slip road. The newsman was talking about helicopters and multiple fractures and dead on arrival. I hadn't really made a decision, no conscious decision anyway, but that was just like it had been with climbing -

movement being everything, movement being a kind of thought, body and mind fused into one, the mind reduced perhaps, but the body exalted surely. Nowadays in the ordinary round of life there was separation of mind and body: but in those days it had been different.

As I dialed home, the radio news had become a broken oil pipeline in West Africa. Villagers had sabotaged the thing in order to collect the crude oil that spilled out. The phone rang in the hallway of my house while West African villagers ranted on about the corruption of the government and the high prices they were forced to pay for what was flowing for free through the metal tube just outside their village. You had to see their point of view.

The Photograph by Penelope Lively

‘DON'T OPEN-DESTROY.’

He opens the envelope. Within are a photograph and a folded sheet of paper. He looks first at the photograph. A group of five people; grass beneath their feet, a backdrop of trees. Two members of the group, a man and a woman, have their backs to the photographer. Of the other three, Elaine can be identified at once, visible between the two whose faces cannot be seen. Near to her stand another man and woman, whom Glyn does not recognize.

One of the back-turned pair is Kath - he would know that outline anywhere, that stance. The someone else, the man, is at first a bit of a teaser. Familiar, surely - the rather long dark hair, the height, a good head taller than Kath. A slightly hunched way of standing.

Glyn brings the photo closer to his face for more minute inspection. And then he sees. He sees the hands. He sees that Kath and this someone, this man, have their hands closely entwined, locked together, pushed behind them so that as they stand side by side in this moment of private intimacy, this interlocking of hands would be invisible to the rest of the group.

Except to the photographer, who may or may not have been aware of what had been immortalized - the freeze-frame revelation.

And now Glyn recognizes the someone, the man. It is Nick.

He turns to the folded piece of paper that accompanied the photograph. He feels as though gripped by the onset of some incapacitating disease, but this paper requires attention.

Handwriting. A brief message. 'I can't resist sending you this. Negative destroyed, I'm told. Blessings, my love.'

Sea Glass by Anita Shreve

In April, the typewriter salesman returned to the bank. He came through the door so fast that Honora thought at first he might be a robber. The wings of his coat spread wide around his trousers as he made his way to her station. She resisted the urge to touch her hair, which she hadn't washed in days.

"Want to go for a ride?" he asked. "You bought the car." "It's a honey." "I can't." "When do you get off work?" "Four o'clock." "Banker's hours."

The clock on the wall said half past two. The sound of a woman's high heels could be heard on the marble floor. Sexton Beecher didn't turn around to look.

"I'll be outside at four," he said. "I'll give you a ride home."

I don't even know you, she might have said, except that Mrs. Yates was leaning in Honora's direction lest she miss a word. Honora was silent, which the man took for acquiescence. She noticed this time that his eyes weren't really gray, but green, and that perhaps they were set too close together. His forehead was awfully high, and when he smiled, his teeth were slightly crooked. And there was something cocky in his manner, but that might just be the

salesman in him, she thought. Honora laid these flaws aside as one might overlook a small stain on a beautifully embroidered tablecloth one wanted to buy, only later to discover, when it was on the table and all the guests were seated around it, that the stain had become a beacon, while the beautiful embroidery lay hidden in everybody's laps.

Appendix D

Demographic Information for Studies 1 and 2

Table 1.

Study 1 Participant Demographic Information

	Percentage (<i>n</i>)
<hr/>	
Gender	
Male	29.34% (49)
Female	70.06% (117)
Other ¹	0.60% (1)
Years fluent in English	
Less than 5	4.79% (8)
5-9 years	5.99% (10)
10-14 years	15.57% (26)
15-20 years	62.87% (105)
More than 20 years	10.18% (17)
Did not respond	0.60% (1)
How Often Read for pleasure	
Never	13.77% (23)
About one book per year	23.35% (39)
A couple of books per year	41.92% (70)
One book a month	10.78% (18)
A couple of books a month	7.78% (13)
A book a week	1.80% (3)
More than one book a week	0.60% (1)

Favourite Genre

Science Fiction	17.37% (29)
Romance	16.77% (28)
Adventure	7.78% (13)
Mystery	19.16% (32)
Self-Help	10.78% (18)
Horror	5.38% (9)
Literary Fiction	11.38% (19)
Fantasy	8.38% (14)
Other ²	3.00% (5)

Note. ¹nonbinary, ²non-fiction, comics, teen fiction, To Kill a Mockingbird

Table 6.
Study 2 Participant Demographic Information

	Percentage (n)
<hr/>	
Gender	
Male	31.25% (40)
Female	68.75% (88)
Years fluent in English	
Less than 5	5.47% (7)
5-9 years	4.69% (6)
10-14 years	43.75% (56)
15-20 years	41.41% (53)
More than 20 years	3.91% (5)
Did not respond	0.78% (1)
How Often Read for pleasure	
Never	13.28% (17)
About one book per year	28.91% (37)
A couple of books per year	34.38% (44)
One book a month	10.94% (14)
A couple of books a month	6.25% (8)
A book a week	3.13% (4)
More than one book a week	2.34% (3)
Did not respond	0.78% (1)
Favourite Genre	
Science Fiction	9.78% (12)

Romance	20.31% (26)
Adventure	7.81% (10)
Mystery	17.19% (22)
Self-Help	10.94% (14)
Horror	3.13% (4)
Literary Fiction	15.63% (20)
Fantasy	10.16% (13)
Other ¹	2.34% (3)

Note. ¹Shakespeare, Sport-related content, Comedy

Appendix E

Results with Alternative Exclusion Criteria for Study 2

The altered exclusion criteria for Study 2 mandated that participants be removed if they answered less than 5 comprehension questions correctly (performance 1 standard deviation below the mean), if they were under 16, if they had read the passages before, and if they guessed the true purpose of the study. This resulted in a final sample size of $N = 218$, with participants who were mostly female (68.95%) ranging in age from 18–57 ($M = 20.27$, $SD = 4.87$).

Models including only genre yielded no differences in whether participants liked the passages, noticed errors, thought the characters were realistic, thought the passages showed emotion, and would want to read more by the author, nor an aggregate of all these evaluations (Tables 1b and 2b).

Table 1b.
Study 2 Descriptive Statistics for Model 1 for alternate exclusion criteria

		Mean	95% CI
Liking	Romance	3.06	[2.87, 3.26]
	Literary Fiction	3.17	[2.97, 3.37]
Noticed Errors	Romance	3.44	[3.28, 3.60]
	Literary Fiction	3.48	[3.31, 3.64]
Well written	Romance	3.47	[3.17, 3.61]
	Literary Fiction	3.56	[3.40, 3.71]
Realistic characters	Romance	3.66	[3.54, 3.78]
	Literary Fiction	3.69	[3.57, 3.81]
Passage showed emotion	Romance	3.43	[3.24, 3.63]
	Literary Fiction	3.47	[3.27, 3.70]
Want to read more by author	Romance	2.91	[2.72, 3.11]
	Literary Fiction	2.95	[2.75, 3.15]
Total Score	Romance	19.99	[19.27, 20.71]
	Literary Fiction	20.32	[19.57, 21.06]

Table 2b.

Study 2 Results of Model 1 for alternative exclusion criteria

	Liking				Noticed Errors			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.108	0.080	1.346	.180	0.037	0.089	0.414	.679

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 2b.

Study 2 Results of Model 1 for alternative exclusion criteria

	Well Written				Realistic Characters			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.090	0.076	1.192	.235	0.030	0.069	0.430	.668

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 2b.

Study 2 Results of Model 1 for alternative exclusion criteria

	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.035	0.078	0.455	.650	3.037	0.084	0.436	.663

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 2b.

Study 2 Results of Model 1 for alternative exclusion criteria

	Total			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Genre	0.326	0.342	0.953	.342

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Models including genre and author gender uncovered an interaction for evaluations of how well the passages were written. Female authors were rated better when writing literary fiction and male authors were rated better when writing romance. There was also a marginally statistically significant interaction between author gender and book genre for liking. People tended to like passages better from literary fiction novels written by female participants and romance novels written by male participants. No other differences were observed for the evaluation variables (Tables 3b and 4b).

Table 3b.

Study 2 Descriptive statistics for Model 2 for alternate exclusion criteria

		Romance		Literary Fiction	
		Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI
Liking	Male Author	3.10	[2.88, 3.31]	3.10	[2.88, 3.32]
	Female Author	3.03	[2.82, 3.25]	3.25	[3.03, 3.47]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.46	[3.28, 3.63]	3.43	[3.25, 3.61]
	Female Author	3.42	[3.25, 3.60]	3.52	[3.34, 3.71]
Well Written	Male Author	3.52	[3.35, 3.68]	3.49	[3.31, 3.66]
	Female Author	3.41	[3.25, 3.58]	3.63	[3.45, 3.80]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.64	[3.50, 3.77]	3.67	[3.53, 3.81]
	Female Author	3.68	[3.55, 3.82]	3.71	[3.57, 3.85]
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.42	[3.21, 3.63]	3.46	[3.24, 3.67]
	Female Author	3.45	[3.24, 3.65]	3.83	[3.27, 3.70]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	2.93	[2.72, 3.14]	2.87	[2.65, 3.09]
	Female Author	2.90	[2.68, 3.11]	3.03	[2.81, 3.25]
Total Score	Male Author	20.08	[19.29, 20.86]	20.02	[19.19, 20.84]
	Female Author	19.90	[19.11, 20.69]	20.62	[20.79, 21.44]

Table 4b.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

		Liking				Noticed Errors			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	-0.062	0.087	-0.715	.475	-0.030	0.081	-0.374	.709
	Genre	0.001	0.102	0.007	.994	-0.025	0.107	-0.238	.812
	A. Gender X Genre	0.216	0.128	1.679	.094 [^]	0.125	0.120	1.046	.296

Note. * $p < .05$, [^] $p < .1$

Table 4b.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

		Well-written				Realistic Characters			
Fixed Effects		β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Author Gender	-0.102	0.078	-1.317	.188	0.046	0.068	0.676	.499
	Genre	-0.029	0.095	-0.310	.757	0.033	0.085	0.392	.696
	A. Gender X Genre	0.241	0.115	2.101	.036*	-0.007	0.100	-0.070	.944

Note. * $p < .05$, [^] $p < .1$

Table 4b.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.022	0.081	0.269	.788	-0.030	0.086	-0.353	.724
Genre	0.033	0.098	0.342	.732	-0.057	0.105	-0.537	.592
A. Gender X Genre	0.004	0.120	0.031	.975	0.188	0.127	1.478	.140

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 4b.

Study 2 Results of Model 2 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Total			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.173	0.343	-0.506	.613
Genre	-0.057	0.415	-0.135	.893
A. Gender X Genre	0.773	0.509	1.528	.127

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Finally, models including genre, author gender, and participant gender yielded no major differences, except for a marginally statistically significant main effect of participant gender, for how much emotion was portrayed in the passages. Regardless of genre, female participants tended to report that the passages had more emotion in them than male participants. (Tables 5b and 6b). Taken together, these results suggest that participants are interested in books that go against the stereotypical norm of what is written by male and female authors.

Table 5b.
Study 2 Descriptive statistics for Model 3 for alternate exclusion criteria

		Romance				Literary Fiction			
		Male Participants		Female Participants		Male Participants		Female Participants	
		Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI
Liking	Male Author	3.03	[2.73, 3.34]	3.12	[2.89, 3.35]	3.11	[2.81, 3.42]	3.09	[2.84, 3.33]
	Female Author	2.99	[2.68, 3.29]	3.05	[2.82, 3.28]	3.27	[2.96, 3.57]	3.24	[2.99, 3.48]
Noticed Errors	Male Author	3.47	[3.19, 3.76]	3.45	[3.25, 3.64]	3.61	[3.32, 3.90]	3.34	[3.13, 3.55]
	Female Author	3.54	[3.26, 3.83]	3.38	[3.18, 3.57]	3.63	[3.34, 3.91]	3.47	[3.26, 3.68]
Well Written	Male Author	3.44	[3.18, 3.70]	3.55	[3.36, 3.73]	3.55	[3.29, 3.82]	3.45	[3.25, 3.65]
	Female Author	3.41	[3.15, 3.67]	3.42	[3.23, 3.60]	3.73	[3.49, 3.99]	3.57	[3.37, 3.77]
Realistic Characters	Male Author	3.51	[3.29, 3.74]	3.69	[3.54, 3.84]	3.55	[3.33, 3.78]	3.73	[3.56, 3.90]
	Female Author	3.60	[3.38, 3.82]	3.72	[3.57, 3.87]	3.80	[3.57, 4.02]	3.67	[3.50, 3.83]

Table 5b.
Study 2 Descriptive statistics for Model 3 for alternate exclusion criteria

		Romance				Literary Fiction			
		Male Participants		Female Participants		Male Participants		Female Participants	
		Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI	Mean	95% CI
Passage showed emotion	Male Author	3.25	[2.96, 3.54]	3.49	[3.27, 3.72]	3.42	[3.12, 3.71]	3.48	[3.24, 3.71]
	Female Author	3.40	[3.11, 3.70]	3.46	[3.24, 3.69]	3.43	[3.13, 3.72]	3.51	[3.27, 3.75]
Want to read more by author	Male Author	2.75	[2.44, 3.05]	3.00	[2.77, 3.23]	2.80	[2.49, 3.11]	2.91	[2.66, 3.15]
	Female Author	2.83	[2.52, 3.14]	2.93	[2.69, 3.16]	2.83	[2.52, 3.14]	3.13	[2.88, 3.38]
Total Score	Male Author	19.46	[18.27, 20.65]	20.32	[19.45, 21.20]	20.06	[18.86, 21.27]	20.00	[19.06, 20.93]
	Female Author	19.77	[18.58, 20.96]	19.96	[19.08, 20.83]	20.68	[19.48, 21.88]	20.59	[19.65, 21.52]

Table 6b.
Study 2 Results of Model 3 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Liking				Noticed Errors			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.046	0.162	-0.281	.779	0.071	0.151	0.472	.637
Participant Gender	0.087	0.154	0.564	.573	-0.024	0.160	-0.151	.880
Genre	0.081	0.185	0.438	.661	0.139	0.192	0.724	.470
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.023	0.191	-0.122	.903	-0.142	0.179	-0.794	.427
A. Gender X Genre	0.200	0.230	0.867	.386	-0.057	0.215	-0.263	.793
P. Gender X Genre	-0.114	0.223	-0.514	.608	-0.246	0.231	-1.065	.287
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	0.022	0.277	0.078	.938	0.260	0.258	1.008	.314

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 6b.
Study 2 Results of Model 3 for alternative exclusion criteria

Fixed Effects	Well-written				Realistic Characters			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	-0.035	0.145	0.241	.810	0.838	0.125	0.668	.505
Participant Gender	0.102	0.142	0.718	.473	0.173	0.127	1.363	.174
Genre	0.111	0.171	0.647	.518	0.037	0.153	0.241	.810
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.094	0.171	-0.549	.583	-0.054	0.148	-0.363	.716
A. Gender X Genre	0.210	0.206	1.022	.307	0.163	0.179	0.917	.360
P. Gender X Genre	-0.202	0.206	-0.983	.326	0.005	0.184	0.025	.980
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	0.038	0.248	0.153	.878	-0.258	0.215	-1.201	.230

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 14.
Study 2 Results of Model 4 for Different variables

Fixed Effects	Passage Showed Emotion				Want to read more by author			
	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.155	0.151	1.024	.306	0.081	0.161	0.505	.614
Participant Gender	0.245	0.146	1.673	.095^	0.254	0.157	1.612	.108
Genre	0.169	0.176	0.958	.339	0.055	0.189	0.291	.771
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.186	0.178	-1.045	.296	-0.157	0.189	-0.826	.409
A. Gender X Genre	-0.146	0.215	-0.680	.497	-0.050	0.228	-0.219	.827
P. Gender X Genre	-0.187	0.212	-0.880	.379	-0.151	0.228	-0.661	.509
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	0.213	0.258	0.824	.410	0.348	0.274	1.270	.205

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$

Table 14.
Study 2 Results of Model 4 for Different variables

	Total			
Fixed Effects	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Author Gender	0.313	0.638	0.490	.624
Participant Gender	0.865	0.637	1.357	.176
Genre	0.604	0.767	0.788	.431
A. Gender X P. Gender	-0.682	0.754	-0.905	.366
A. Gender X Genre	0.304	0.907	0.335	.738
P. Gender X Genre	-0.933	0.923	-1.011	.313
A. Gender X P. Gender X Genre	0.657	1.904	0.603	.547

Note. * $p < .05$, ^ $p < .1$