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Gay Asian Americans Are Seen as More American Than Asian Americans Who Are Presumed Straight

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Abstract

Four studies investigate whether gay Asian Americans are stereotyped as more American than Asian Americans who are presumed straight. Gay Asian American men (Study 1) and women (Study 2) were rated as more American than their counterparts whose sexual orientation was unspecified. However, sexual orientation did not influence judgments of Whites' American identity. The relationship between Asian Americans' sexual orientation and perceptions of their American identity was mediated by a belief that American culture is relatively more accepting of gay people than Asian culture (Studies 3 and 4). Manipulating how accepting of gay people a target's country of origin is relative to the United States altered ratings of American identity for gay but not straight targets (Study 4). Using an intersectional approach, these studies demonstrate that sexual orientation information comes together with race to influence who is likely to be perceived as American.

Keywords

race, sexual orientation, intersectionality, foreign stereotypes, acceptance

Despite the political creed that "we are all Americans," American identity is not afforded equally to all groups. For example, Asian Americans and other people of color are perceived as less American than White Americans (Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Devos & Banaji, 2005; Zou & Cheryan, 2017), often facing prejudice and discrimination based on the denial of their American identity (Handron, Kirby, Wang, Matskewich, & Cheryan, 2017; Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2010).

In the current work, we examine how another stigmatized identity in our society (Hatzenbuehler, 2009)—being gay—intersects with race to influence judgments of who is American. We predict that perceptions of Asian Americans' American identity are influenced by sexual orientation, such that gay Asian Americans are stereotyped as less foreign than Asian Americans who are presumed straight. However, being gay may not have similar effects for Whites, who are already fully afforded their American identity (Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Devos & Banaji, 2005). Understanding the intersection of race and sexual orientation allows us to better identify which subgroups may be more likely to face prejudice resulting from assumptions that they are not American.

Race and American Identity

Americans implicitly and explicitly perceive Whites to be the most prototypically American racial group (Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Devos & Banaji, 2005; Zou & Cheryan, 2017). Other groups fall on a spectrum of perceived foreignness, such that Native Americans and African Americans are seen as less American than Whites but more American than Asian Americans, Latinos, and Arab Americans, who are relegated to a position of cultural foreignness (Zou & Cheryan, 2017). Historically, Asian Americans, Latinos, and Arab Americans have faced civic, economic, and social exclusion on the basis of their perceived foreignness (Ancheta, 2006; Ngai, 2004). In the modern-day political climate, they continue to be targeted by foreignness-based prejudice and discrimination in the United States (Handron et al., 2017; Mukherjee, Adams, & Molina, 2018; Panagopoulos, 2006; Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2010).

Stereotypes of foreignness can be moderated by showcasing individual traits and characteristics. For instance, Whites implicitly rate Latinos who engage in national service as more American than Latinos who engage in local service (Yogeeswaran, Dasgupta, & Gomez, 2012). Americans rate Asian Americans who are overweight as more American than thinner Asian Americans (Handron et al., 2017). U.S.-born Asian Americans report being stereotyped as foreign to a lesser extent

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than foreign-born Asian Americans (Wang, Minervino, & Cheryan, 2013). Being associated with stereotypically American (vs. stereotypically foreign) characteristics increases the extent to which members of stereotypically foreign groups are perceived as American.

Intersectionality and Sexual Orientation

The interaction of multiple social identities can meaningfully shape how individuals are perceived (Crenshaw, 1991; Galinsky, Hall, & Cuddy, 2013; Johnson, Freeman, & Pauker, 2012; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Specifically, judgments of people of color are modified by sexual orientation (Petsko & Bodenhausen, 2019). For example, Black men are negatively stereotyped as aggressive; in contrast, gay men are positively stereotyped as warm (Wilson, Remedios, & Rule, 2017). Black men who are gay can sometimes receive an evaluative benefit from positive gay stereotypes, such that they are liked more (Remedios, Chasteen, Rule, & Plaks, 2011) and perceived as better leaders (Wilson et al., 2017) than their straight counterparts. Although prejudice and discrimination toward LGBTQ individuals remains widespread (Herek, 2000), gay identity may also attenuate certain racial stereotypes (Petsko & Bodenhausen, 2019).

Identifying a Mechanism: Cultural Stereotypes About Sexual Orientation

Being gay may increase perceptions of Asian Americans' American identity. The United States may be assumed to have a greater proportion of gay people than Asian countries because American culture is stereotyped as relatively more accepting of being gay. American culture is perceived to value freedom and self-expression (Bellah, Sullivan, Madsen, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985), with Americans themselves being stereotyped as diverse and individualistic (e.g., Madon et al., 2001). As such, the United States may be perceived as a nation where LGBTQ individuals are more able to express their identities relative to other countries. Indeed, cross-national surveys show that Americans tend to have a more positive attitude toward LGBTQ individuals relative to many non-Western nations, including South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009; Smith, Son, & Kim, 2014). The United States has also implemented more LGBTQ civil rights and antidiscrimination legislation than these Asian countries (Felter & Renwick, 2017). Such governmental action may in turn increase perceptions of positive social norms toward LGBTQ individuals (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Altogether, American culture may be perceived as relatively more accepting of gay people, while other cultures, including Asian cultures, may be perceived as less tolerant. These contrasting cultural stereotypes may influence judgments of individuals who possess both Asian and American identities (i.e., Asian Americans; Cheryan & Tsai, 2006).

When stereotypes about two cultures contrast, the extent to which someone fits the stereotypes of one culture while deviating from stereotypes of the other may be used as a signifier of their national identity. For example, people in Asian countries are stereotyped as thin, while people in the United States are stereotyped as overweight. When shown pictures of thin or overweight Asian Americans, participants perceived overweight Asian Americans, who fit the American weight stereotype and violated the Asian weight stereotype, to be more American than thin Asian Americans (Handron et al., 2017). Similarly, we propose that gay Asian Americans will be conferred a greater American identity because American culture is stereotyped as relatively more accepting of gay people compared to Asian culture.

Study 1

Study 1 investigated whether gay Asian American men are perceived as more American than Asian American men whose sexual orientation is unspecified. Sexual orientation was unspecified in the comparison condition as an initial investigation of the effect of giving perceivers information about targets' gay identity compared to no sexual orientation information. Subsequent studies more directly assessed perceptions of gay versus straight targets. Sample sizes, procedures, hypotheses, and analyses were preregistered prior to beginning data collection (https://osf.io/g5prh/). Materials, data, and codebooks for all studies are available (https://osf.io/nt9mf/).

Method

Participants

Participants ($N = 345$; 209 women, 128 men, 4 nonbinary, 4 unidentified; 125 White, 126 Asian/Asian American, 48 more than one race, 16 Black/African American, 14 Latinx/Hispanic American, 7 Middle Eastern/Middle Eastern American, 2 Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, 2 other, 5 unidentified) were recruited in public places on campus.

Materials and Procedures

Participants were randomly assigned[1] to read a description of a person named John, described either as "an Asian American man" or "a gay Asian American man." They were then asked to rate how American they considered him on nine questions: "How likely is it that this person has a foreign accent? (reverse-scored)," "How likely is it that this person was born outside of the United States? (reverse-scored)," "How American is this person?," "How fluently do you think this person speaks English?," "To what extent do you believe this person identifies as American?," "How likely is it that this person's native language is English?," "How much does this person speak English at home?," "How integrated is this person in American culture?," and "How likely is it this person participates in American cultural events?" ($\alpha = .81$; adapted from Handron et al., 2017). Questions were asked on scales from 1 (*not [much] at all [likely/American/integrated]*) to 7 (*very [likely/American/fluently/much/integrated]*). As a manipulation check, participants reported the race and sexual orientation of the person they read

about with two multiple-choice questions. Participants provided demographic information at the end of all studies.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation Check

The majority of participants (311/345) accurately reported targets' sexual orientation. There were more errors in the unspecified condition (19 errors/171 total) than in the gay condition (8 errors/167 total), and most of the errors were to indicate that someone with an unspecified sexual orientation was straight (16/19 errors). Excluding the 34 participants who did not get sexual orientation correct (27) or left it blank (7) generated similar results.

Perceptions of American Identity

Consistent with the hypothesis, a gay Asian American man was perceived as significantly more American ($M = 5.40$, $SD = 0.74$) than an Asian American man whose sexual orientation was unspecified ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 0.76$), $t(342.95) = 2.37$, $p = .02$, $d = .26$ (degrees of freedom corrected for unequal variances).

As an exploratory analysis, we compared the responses of Asian American and non-Asian American participants and found no significant interaction of participants' race and target's sexual orientation on perceptions of American identity, $F(1, 336) = 1.28$, $p = .26$.

Study 2

Study 2 investigated whether sexual orientation information affects perceptions of Whites in addition to Asian Americans. We also examined perceptions of both women and men and used a series of different names instead of relying on one. Finally, we took an initial look at mechanism by examining whether gay Asian Americans would be perceived as relatively more accepted within American versus Asian culture compared to Asian Americans whose sexual orientation was unspecified. Sample sizes, procedures, hypotheses, and analyses were preregistered prior to beginning data collection (https://osf.io/xhz4q/).

Method

Participants

Students in the psychology subject pool ($N = 991$; 595 women, 393 men, 2 nonbinary, 1 who uses another term; 606 Asian/Asian American, 200 White, 97 more than one race, 44 Latino/Hispanic American, 22 Middle Eastern/Middle Eastern American, 15 Black/African American, 3 Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, 2 Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1 other, 1 unidentified; 811 straight, 44 bisexual, 30 gay/lesbian, 6 other, 5 more than one sexual orientation, 95 unidentified) were brought into lab ($N = 612$) or participated online ($N = 379$).

Design

2 (target sexual orientation: gay, unspecified; between) × 2 (target race: Asian American, White American; within) × 2 (target gender: women, men; between).

Materials and Procedures

Participants were randomly assigned to read a description of a target as follows: "<Name> is a gay Asian American <gender>," "<Name> is an Asian American <gender>," "<Name> is a gay White American <gender>," or "<Name> is a White American <gender>." Gender was stated as either "woman" or "man" and also represented by name. Six names were selected by finding the three most popular girls (Jennifer, Ashley, and Jessica) and boys (Matt, Chris, and Michael) names given to newborns in the United States in the mid-1980s (Social Security Administration, 2018). Participants rated the target's American identity using the same questions from Study 1[2] ($\alpha = .88$).

To assess mechanism, participants completed two questions asking, "How much would this person be accepted within American culture?" and "How much would this person be accepted within Asian culture?," on scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).[3] As manipulation checks, participants recalled the race, gender, and sexual orientation of the person they read about with multiple-choice questions.

Results

Manipulation Check

The majority of participants in both the gay (462/494) and unspecified conditions (415/497) accurately reported sexual orientation. Participants also generally perceived Jessica, Jennifer, and Ashley as female (477/507) and Michael, Chris, and Matt as male (474/484). Finally, most participants accurately reported race in both the Asian American (489/497) and White (455/494) conditions. Excluding the 177 participants who did not get all manipulation check questions correct or left at least one question blank generated similar results.

Perceptions of American Identity

A 2 (sexual orientation: gay, unspecified; between) × 2 (gender: women, men; between) × 2 (race: Asian American, White; between) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on perceptions of American identity revealed a significant main effect of race, $F(1, 983) = 147.46$, $p < .001$, $d = .78$, a nonsignificant main effect of sexual orientation, $F(1, 983) = 3.04$, $p = .08$, and a significant interaction of race and sexual orientation, $F(1, 983) = 6.46$, $p = .01$. The three-way interaction of sexual orientation, race, and gender was not significant, $F(1, 983) = 2.49$, $p = .11$. No other effects were significant, Fs < 1.97, ps > .16.

We ran the predicted 2 (race: Asian American, White; between) × 2 (sexual orientation: gay, unspecified; between)

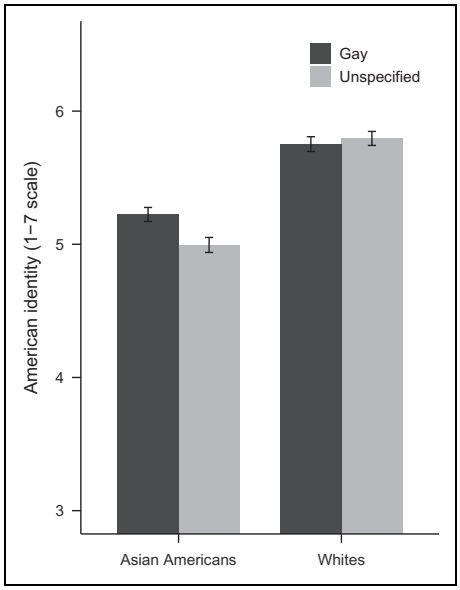

Figure 1. Gay Asian Americans are seen as more American than Asian Americans whose sexual orientation is unspecified in Study 2. The same is not true for Whites. Error bars represent standard error.

ANOVA on American identity (see Figure 1). There was a significant main effect of race, $F(1, 987) = 149.65$, $p < .001$, $d = .78$, a nonsignificant main effect of sexual orientation, $F(1, 987) = 2.95$, $p = .09$, and a significant interaction of race and sexual orientation, $F(1, 987) = 6.25$, $p = .01$. Gay Asian American targets were significantly more likely to be seen as American ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 0.82$) than Asian American targets whose sexual orientation was unspecified ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 0.89$), $F(1, 987) = 8.93$, $p = .003$, $d = .27$. In contrast, for White targets, there was no significant difference in ratings of American identity for gay targets ($M = 5.75$, $SD = 0.87$) and targets whose sexual orientation was unspecified ($M = 5.79$, $SD = 0.82$), $F(1, 987) = 0.30$, $p = .58$.[4]

Ratings of Acceptance Within American and Asian Culture (Not Preregistered)

We next investigated whether gay Asian Americans were perceived to be more accepted in American than Asian culture compared to Asian American targets whose sexual orientation was unspecified. A 2 (sexual orientation: gay, unspecified; between) × 2 (culture: American, Asian; within) × 2 (gender: women, men; between) mixed-model ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of sexual orientation, $F(1, 303) = 8.72$, $p = .003$, $d = .24$, a significant main effect of culture, $F(1, 303) = 80.78$, $p < .001$, $d_{av} = .63$, and a significant two-way interaction of sexual orientation and culture, $F(1, 303) = 46.96$, $p < .001$. No other effects were significant, Fs < 2.10, ps > .15. Breaking down the two-way interaction of sexual orientation and culture revealed that gay Asian American targets were perceived as more accepted in American ($M = 5.34$, $SD = 1.21$) than Asian culture ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.44$), $F(1, 303) = 122.62$, $p < .001$, $d_{av} = 1.14$. This cultural difference was not statistically significant for Asian American targets whose sexual orientation was not specified (American culture: $M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.17$; Asian culture: $M = 4.81$, $SD = 1.33$), $F(1, 303) = 2.33$, $p = .13$, $d_{av} = .16$.

We conducted a mediation analysis using the R psych package version 1.7.8 (Revelle, 2018) with 10,000 bootstrap resamples on the subsample that was assigned to the Asian American condition and completed both mediator questions ($N = 306$). We examined whether the greater perceived acceptance of gay Asian Americans in American versus Asian culture mediated the relationship between Asian Americans' sexual orientation and perceived American identity. Gay Asian Americans (coded as 0) were rated as not statistically significantly more American than Asian Americans whose sexual orientation was unspecified (coded as 1) among this sample, $b = -0.20$, $SE = .10$, $p = .05$. Gay Asian Americans were rated as significantly more accepted in American versus Asian culture (calculated using a difference score) than Asian Americans whose sexual orientation was unspecified, $b = -1.31$, $SE = .19$, $p < .001$. Perceived acceptance in American versus Asian culture significantly predicted judgments of American identity upon controlling for sexual orientation, $b = 0.19$, $SE = .03$, $p < .001$. The relationship between sexual orientation and perceived American identity was attenuated upon controlling for perceived acceptance in American versus Asian culture, $b = 0.06$, $SE = .10$, $p = .58$. Greater perceived acceptance of gay Asian Americans in American versus Asian culture mediated the relationship between sexual orientation and perceived American identity, $b = -0.25$, $SE = .05$, 95% CI [−0.37, −0.15].

Discussion

Gay Asian Americans were again perceived as significantly more American than Asian Americans for whom sexual orientation was not specified. Our results extended to Asian American women across a series of different names. Being gay did not have the same effects for White targets, who were perceived as highly American regardless of sexual orientation.

Being a gay Asian American may signal greater American (vs. Asian) identity because of the perception that gay people are more accepted in American compared to Asian culture. Indeed, mediation analyses revealed that sexual orientation no longer predicted perceptions of American identity when controlling for the greater perceived acceptance of gay Asian American targets in American versus Asian culture. We investigated this mechanism further in the next studies.

Study 3

Study 3 asked more directly about whether gay people are perceived as more accepted in American than Asian culture compared to straight people. Sample sizes, procedures, hypotheses, and analyses were preregistered prior to beginning data collection (https://osf.io/krn4e/).

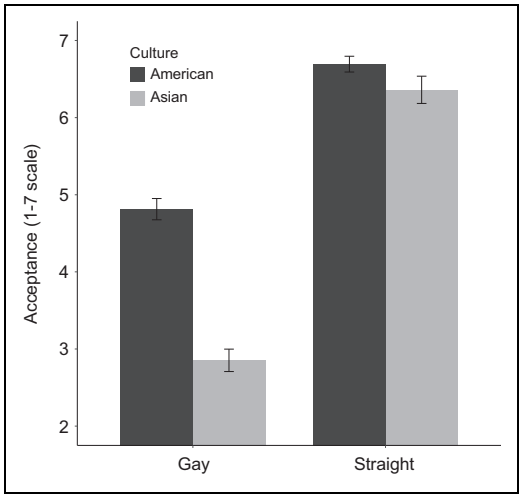

Figure 2. Gay people are perceived as significantly more accepted in American than Asian culture in Study 3. This difference is significantly smaller for straight people. Error bars represent standard error.

Method

Participants

Students from the psychology subject pool ($N = 75$; 46 women, 28 men, 1 more than one gender; 32 Asian/Asian American, 19 White, 8 Black/African American, 5 Latino/Hispanic American, 2 Middle Eastern/Middle Eastern American, 1 Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, 8 more than one race; 68 straight, 5 bisexual, 1 other, 1 more than one sexual orientation) completed the study online.

Design

2 (culture; American, Asian; within) × 2 (sexual orientation: gay, straight; within).

Materials and Procedures

Participants were asked four questions: "How likely is it a gay person would be accepted in American culture?," "How likely is it a straight person would be accepted in American culture?," "How likely is it a gay person would be accepted in Asian culture?," and "How likely is it a straight person would be accepted in Asian culture?" Culture order and sexual orientation order were counterbalanced. Answers were given on scales from 1 (*not at all likely*) to 7 (*very likely*).

Results and Discussion

A 2 (culture: American, Asian; within) × 2 (sexual orientation: gay, straight; within) repeated-measures ANOVA revealed a main effect of sexual orientation, $F(1, 74) = 87.51$, $p < .001$, a main effect of culture, $F(1, 74) = 327.46$, $p < .001$, and the predicted significant interaction, $F(1, 74) = 48.06$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 2).

Gay people were perceived as significantly more accepted in American culture ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 1.19$) than Asian culture ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.26$), $F(1, 74) = 141.31$, $p < .001$, $d_{av} = 1.60$. The difference for perceptions of straight people was smaller and not statistically significant ($M = 6.69$, $SD = 0.88$ vs. $M = 6.36$, $SD = 1.53$), $F(1, 74) = 3.66$, $p = .06$.

Study 4

To directly test the mechanism, Study 4 manipulated whether a person's potential country of origin is perceived as more or less accepting of gay people than the United States. We hypothesized that gay (but not straight) people would be perceived as more American if their potential country of origin was perceived as less accepting of gay people than the United States compared to if their potential country of origin was perceived as equally accepting of gay people as the United States. Sample sizes, procedures, hypotheses, and analyses were preregistered prior to beginning data collection (https://osf.io/93p7c/).

Method

Participants

Students ($N = 101$; 53 women, 45 men, 1 nonbinary, 1 more than one gender, 1 unidentified; 38 Asian/Asian American, 36 White, 13 more than one race, 5 Black/African American, 5 Latinx/Hispanic American, 3 Middle Eastern/Middle Eastern American, 1 unidentified; 76 straight/heterosexual, 8 asexual, 6 bisexual, 5 gay, 2 queer, 2 other, 1 questioning or unsure, 1 unidentified) were recruited as part of the psychology subject pool ($n = 44$) or on campus ($n = 57$).

Design

2 (country-of-origin acceptance; within) × 2 (sexual orientation; between). All within-subjects variables (country-of-origin acceptance, country name, and name of target) were fully counterbalanced.

Materials and Procedures

Participants were presented with a hypothetical country either named Boden or Thamen. They were told either that gay people are less welcome and accepted in Boden/Thamen than in the United States, or that they are equally welcome and accepted in Boden/Thamen and the United States. Then, they read about a gay man ("X is a gay man") or straight man ("X is a straight man"). Participants rated the target's American identity on three questions: "How likely is it that this person is Bodenian/Thamenian or American?," "How Bodenian/Thamenian or American is this person?," and "To what extent do you believe this person identifies as Bodenian/Thamenian or American?" on a scale from 1 (*very [likely] Bodenian/Thamenian*) to 7 (*very [likely] American*; equally accepting condition $\alpha = .89$, less accepting $\alpha = .91$). Participants then learned about the other

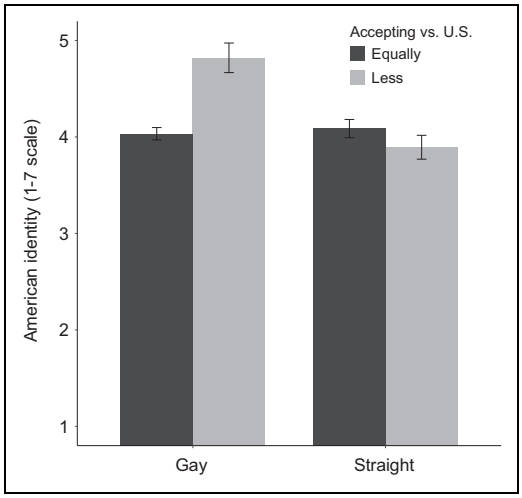

Figure 3. Gay, but not straight, people are seen as more American when their potential country of origin is less accepting of gay people than the United States in Study 4. Error bars represent standard error.

hypothetical country paired with the other acceptance condition. They read about another target with the same sexual orientation ("Y is a gay/straight man") and answered the same three questions about his American identity.

As manipulation checks, participants reported how accepting the country that they read about was compared to the United States on a scale from 1 (*much less accepting*) to 7 (*much more accepting*) and the sexual orientation of the person they read about with a multiple-choice question.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation Checks

In the less accepting condition, participants rated the country as significantly less accepting ($M = 1.79$, $SD = 1.31$) than the midpoint, $t(99) = 16.84$, $p < .001$, and significantly less accepting than in the equally accepting condition ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.75$), $t(99) = 18.66$, $p < .001$, $d_{av} = 2.29$. Targets' sexual orientations were generally correctly remembered (gay targets: 96/100, straight targets: 79/99), with the most common error being that 13 straight targets were incorrectly remembered as having an unspecified sexual orientation.

Perceptions of American Identity

A 2 (sexual orientation: gay, straight; between) × 2 (country of origin: equally accepting, less accepting; within) mixed-model ANOVA on American identity revealed main effects of sexual orientation, $F(1, 98) = 12.54$, $p = .001$, $d = .52$, country of origin, $F(1, 98) = 8.21$, $p = .005$, $d_{av} = .34$, and a significant interaction, $F(1, 98) = 22.39$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 3). As predicted, gay targets were perceived as significantly more American when their potential country of origin was less accepting of gay people ($M = 4.82$, $SD = 1.08$) than when their potential country of origin was equally accepting of gay people ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.45$), $F(1, 98) = 28.86$, $p < .001$, $d_{av} = .95$. There was no significant difference in straight targets' perceived American identity between the equally accepting ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.67$) and less accepting ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.87$) conditions, $F(1, 98) = 1.74$, $p = .19$. There were no significant main effects or interactions with counterbalancing orders, all ps > .097. Thus, gay, but not straight, people were conferred a greater American identity when their potential country of origin was perceived as less accepting of gay people than the United States.

Mini Meta-Analysis

We conducted a mini meta-analysis using the procedures from Goh, Hall, and Rosenthal (2016), including all studies we ran (Studies 1 and 2 plus the study described in the Study 2 footnote), to test effects of sexual orientation on judgments of Asian Americans' American identity. Gay Asian Americans were seen as more American than Asian Americans whose sexual orientation was unspecified, $d = .14$, 95% CI [.05, .24], $Z = 2.90$, $p = .002$, one-tailed. Including Study 4 data also revealed a significant effect of sexual orientation on American identity, $d = .18$, 95% CI [.09, .28], $Z = 3.84$, $p < .001$, one-tailed. Removing the footnoted study on MTurk participants revealed a stronger (yet still small) effect, $d = .33$, 95% CI [.20, .46], $Z = 4.99$, $p < .001$, one-tailed.

General Discussion

Four studies reveal how perceptions of American identity are influenced by the intersection of race and sexual orientation, such that gay Asian Americans are less likely to be perceived as foreign than are presumed straight Asian Americans. Although being gay is associated with negative stereotypes and discrimination (Barron & Hebl, 2013; Hatzenbuehler, 2009; Herek, 2000), it may also offer a modicum of protection against race-based foreignness stereotypes for Asian Americans.

The current work also demonstrates why gay Asian Americans are seen as relatively more American. American culture is perceived as more accepting of gay people compared to Asian culture. As a result, gay Asian Americans are perceived as more likely to be American than their straight counterparts. We demonstrated the viability of this mediator by using both traditional mediation techniques (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) and the recommended experimental causal chain approach (Spencer, Zanna, & Fong, 2005). Extending these findings could involve testing acceptance as a moderator: People who do not perceive a difference between the acceptance of gay people in American and Asian cultures (e.g., because they live in a region of the United States that is less tolerant) should be less likely to show effects.

Although we investigated stereotypes of Asian Americans as a whole, our mechanism can be applied to other racial and ethnic groups as well. People of different Asian ethnicities may be perceived differently depending on the extent to which their cultures are stereotyped as accepting of gay people. Gay Asian Americans whose countries of origin are perceived as relatively

accepting of gay people (e.g., Thailand; United Nations Development Programme, USAID, 2014) may not be seen as more American, whereas gay Asian Americans whose countries of origin are perceived as particularly unaccepting of gay people (e.g., Pakistan; Pew Research Center, 2013) may be seen as even more American. More broadly, gay people of color may also be conferred greater American identity to the extent that their perceived countries of origin are stereotyped as less tolerant of gay people. For example, countries in the Middle East and North Africa tend to have anti-LGBTQ laws (Felter & Renwick, 2017), and gay people associated with these cultures may be assumed to be more American than their straight counterparts.

One implication of this work is that gay Asian Americans may be less likely to face foreignness-based prejudice compared to straight Asian Americans. For example, gay Asian Americans may be less likely to have their American identities questioned in daily interactions with others (e.g., "Where are you really from?"; Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Tuan, 1998) than straight Asian Americans. At the same time, being gay puts targets more at risk for other forms of prejudice based on sexual orientation (Barron & Hebl, 2013; Herek, 2000; Meyer, 2003). In addition, gay Asian Americans may experience other stereotypes and prejudices that rest at the intersection of sexuality and race (Poon & Ho, 2008) or cumulative discrimination accrued from having dual marginalized identities (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Furthermore, Asian Americans face other stereotypes that may not be attenuated by sexual orientation (e.g., model minority stereotypes; Siy & Cheryan, 2013, 2016). Although being gay may buffer Asian Americans somewhat from foreignness stereotypes, note that being gay by no means eliminated the assumption that Asian Americans are less American than Whites.

Future work could examine whether the effect of Asian Americans' sexual orientation depends on its visibility. Asian Americans whose gay identities are relatively concealed may not be buffered from foreignness stereotypes, compared to those whose gay identities may be more open or perceivable. In addition, future work could examine the extent to which gay Asian Americans feel more personally identified with American compared to Asian culture, such that perceivers are accurately judging gay Asian Americans' Americanness. Finally, future work could examine whether the proposed mechanism affects judgments of American identity because more tolerant countries are assumed to have larger gay populations.

Asian Americans are the fastest growing racial group in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2012), yet they consistently encounter assumptions that they are less American than Whites (Cheryan & Monin, 2005). Sexual orientation, a factor that on its surface seems independent of national identity, influences the extent to which Asian Americans are considered American. Gay Asian Americans, but not gay Whites, are more likely to be conferred the American identity than others of their race. By taking an intersectional approach, we demonstrate that sexual orientation can influence who is most likely to be targeted by harmful racial stereotypes.

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Notes

1. Due to experimenter or technical error, 1 participant in Study 1 and 23 participants in Study 2 were assigned a condition that did not match their original assigned condition based on our random assignment protocol. Removing them does not change results.
2. Two questions "How likely is it this person participates in American cultural events?" and "How much would this person be accepted within Asian culture?" were left off the online version of the study.
3. We neglected to include these two questions on our preregistration. We instead preregistered four different questions to get at mechanism (e.g., "How likely is it a gay person would be accepted in American culture?") that we removed from the actual study because they did not ask about the target.
4. We preregistered (https://osf.io/25cz8/) and ran a follow-up study on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) that was identical in procedures to the online version of Study 2. The significant effect of race on perceptions of American identity replicated, but there was no significant effect of sexual orientation or interaction of race and sexual orientation. Perhaps this represents a failure to replicate that is likely to occur when several studies are run at 80% power, or it may be due to MTurk participants not having the same perceptions of acceptance of a gay Asian American person in American versus Asian cultures. Indeed, unlike Study 2 participants, MTurk participants reported that a gay Asian American person would be accepted in American culture to a lesser extent than an Asian American person whose sexual orientation was unspecified. Future research could examine perceptions of acceptance of gay people in American and Asian culture as a moderator of effects.

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