

The Nonverbal Display and Judgment of Extraversion, Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Diagnosticity: A Lens Model Analysis

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Thirty-four college men and 33 women were assessed on extraversion (E), gender diagnosticity (GD), masculine instrumentality (M), and feminine expressiveness (F). Participants were videotaped as they delivered talks, and their nonverbal behavior and personality were judged from videotapes. Participants' extraversion and masculinity–femininity (M–F) were reliably and accurately judged from videotapes. Judged extraversion correlated significantly with E, and judged M–F correlated most with GD, less with M, but not with F. For women but not men, judged M–F correlated strongly ($r = .67$) with judged physical attractiveness. The current research identified nonverbal cues that correlated with judged and assessed extraversion more successfully than it identified cues that correlated with GD, M, F, and judged M–F. M–F proved to be as observable a trait as extraversion, even though it was judged from different kinds of cues. © 1998 Academic Press

What makes someone seem to be masculine or feminine? Is it the way he talks, the way she walks, the way he moves his hands, or perhaps her tone of voice? When are our judgments of others' masculinity–femininity reliable?¹ When are they valid? Is appearance reality in the realm of mascu-

I thank the following research assistants who worked on various aspects of this study: Rob Bailey, Darin Beegley, Marcy Brennan, Craig Bugbee, Kim Fenstermacher, Ivano Franceschini, Robin Friend, Ken Gantz, Rene Luna, Karen Marley, Ushma Patel, Marisa Patterson, Daniel Petras, Robert Rivera, Laura Schooler, Lynn Selle, Sandee Shupe, Peggy Stevenson, Francisco Tan, Richard Veira, and Guy Venturato. Special thanks go to P. J. Fernandez and Shayla Markham, who performed the time-consuming work of rating specific nonverbal cues from videotapes.

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¹ Consistent with much previous research the current study shows that, within the sexes, lay people construe masculinity and femininity to be bipolar opposites (see Deaux, 1987). That is, judges' within-sex ratings of masculinity and femininity are strongly negatively correlated. For this reason, I frequently refer in this article to judgments of targets' masculinity–femininity (M–F) rather than to judgments of masculinity and femininity (as separate dimensions).

linity and femininity, or is it merely a mutable surface signifying nothing deeper than changing fashions and social customs?

Although fascinating, these questions have not yet received clear empirical answers. Recent research on the accuracy and consensus of personality judgments has focused primarily on the Big Five personality superfactors (see Borkenau & Liebler, 1995; Funder & Sneed, 1993; John & Robins, 1993; Kenny, 1994; Watson, 1989) and on circumplex traits (such as dominance and warmth, which are closely linked to the Big Five traits of extraversion and agreeableness; see Gifford, 1991, 1994). The research to be reported here extends this recent work on judgments of personality to the domain of gender-related individual differences, and this extension is of interest for at least two reasons: (1) Recent research suggests that masculinity-femininity (M-F)—or at least an important component of it—may be independent of Big Five and circumplex traits (Lanning, 1994; Lippa, 1991, 1995b), and (2) gender-related individual differences may be qualitatively different from other personality traits in that they are more socially constructed and culturally variable in content (Bem, 1993; Unger & Crawford, 1992).

The research reported here poses several fundamental empirical questions about the display and judgment of M-F: First, how judgable (in terms of both reliability and validity) is M-F? Second, how does the judgability of M-F compare with that of other traits—particularly extraversion, which recent research shows to be the most observable and accurately judged of the Big Five personality superfactors (e.g., see Funder, 1995; Funder & Dobroth, 1987; Kenny, 1994; Watson, 1989)? If like extraversion, M-F can be reliably and accurately judged in others, then a secondary empirical question is: What are the specific cues people use to judge others' M-F?

The current study investigated the naive judgment and display of M-F by videotaping individual college men and women, who were then rated (based on their videotaped appearance) on M-F and on specific nonverbal cues and expressive styles. These data were analyzed to determine if men's and women's assessed nonverbal cues and nonverbal styles correlated with judgments of their apparent M-F. If such correlations were strong and significant, they would provide evidence for robust, consensual cultural definitions of what constitutes nonverbal M-F.

In the current research, videotaped participants were assessed on three measures of within-sex gender-related individual differences—masculine instrumentality (M), feminine expressiveness (F), and gender diagnosticity measures (GD). If the nonverbal cues of videotaped men and women and their judged M-F correlated significantly with these personality measures, then this would provide evidence that M-F may be more than mere surface display. Such evidence would suggest that there are real gender-related personality characteristics that are displayed via observable cues and that can be accurately judged by others.

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