

Ovulating Women Primed with Aggression Prefer Less Masculine Men Than Non-Ovulating Women

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Introduction

- Ovulating women prefer more masculine men than non-ovulating women (e.g., Gangestad et al., 2007; Little, Jones, & Burriss, 2007; Perrett et al., 1998)
- Ovulating women are more sensitive to sexually coercive threats than non-ovulating women (e.g., Garver-Apgar, Gangestad, & Simpson, 2007)
- Masculinity may signal a likelihood of aggression (Stillman, Maner, & Baumeister, 2010)

HYPOTHESIS:

- Women primed with aggression will be less attracted to high masculinity as they approach peak fertility. Women in control condition will be more attracted to high masculinity as they approach peak fertility.

Study 1 Method

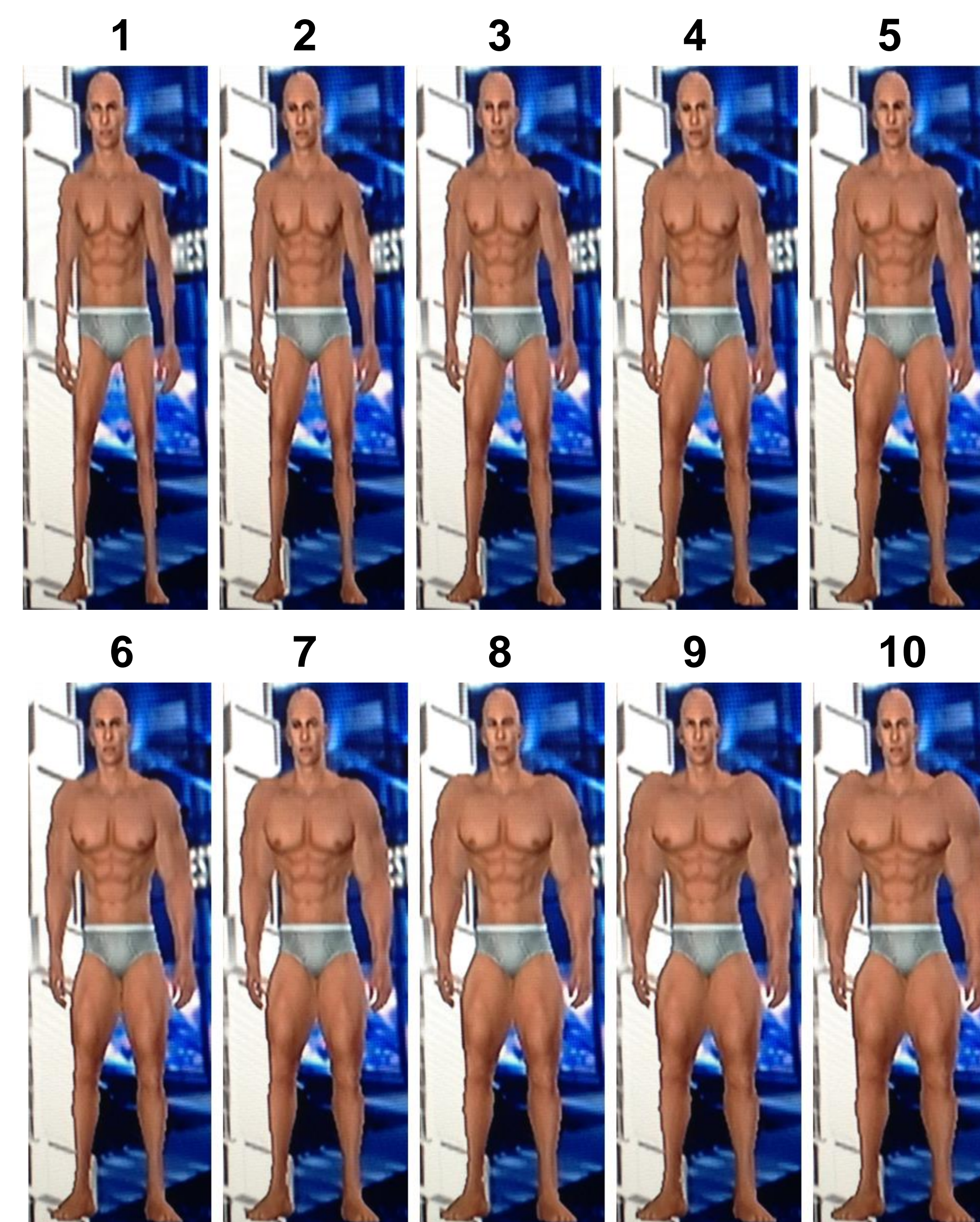
PARTICIPANTS

- 111 women from mTurk
- Naturally cycling
 - E.g., not on hormonal birth control
- Heterosexual
- Ages 20-40

MATERIALS & PROCEDURES

- **Prime:** vignette about woman who was followed to her car (Petralia & Gallup, 2002)
 - **Aggression:** followed by man at night
 - **Control:** followed by squirrel during day
- **Rated Male Bodies:** 10 images of male bodies that varied in muscularity
 - “How physically attractive is this image?” not at all – 0-1-2-3-4-5-6-7 – extremely
- **Fertility:** Reported first day of last menses. Counted forward to study date for estimate of conception likelihood (Wilcox et al., 2001)

Study 1 Masculinity

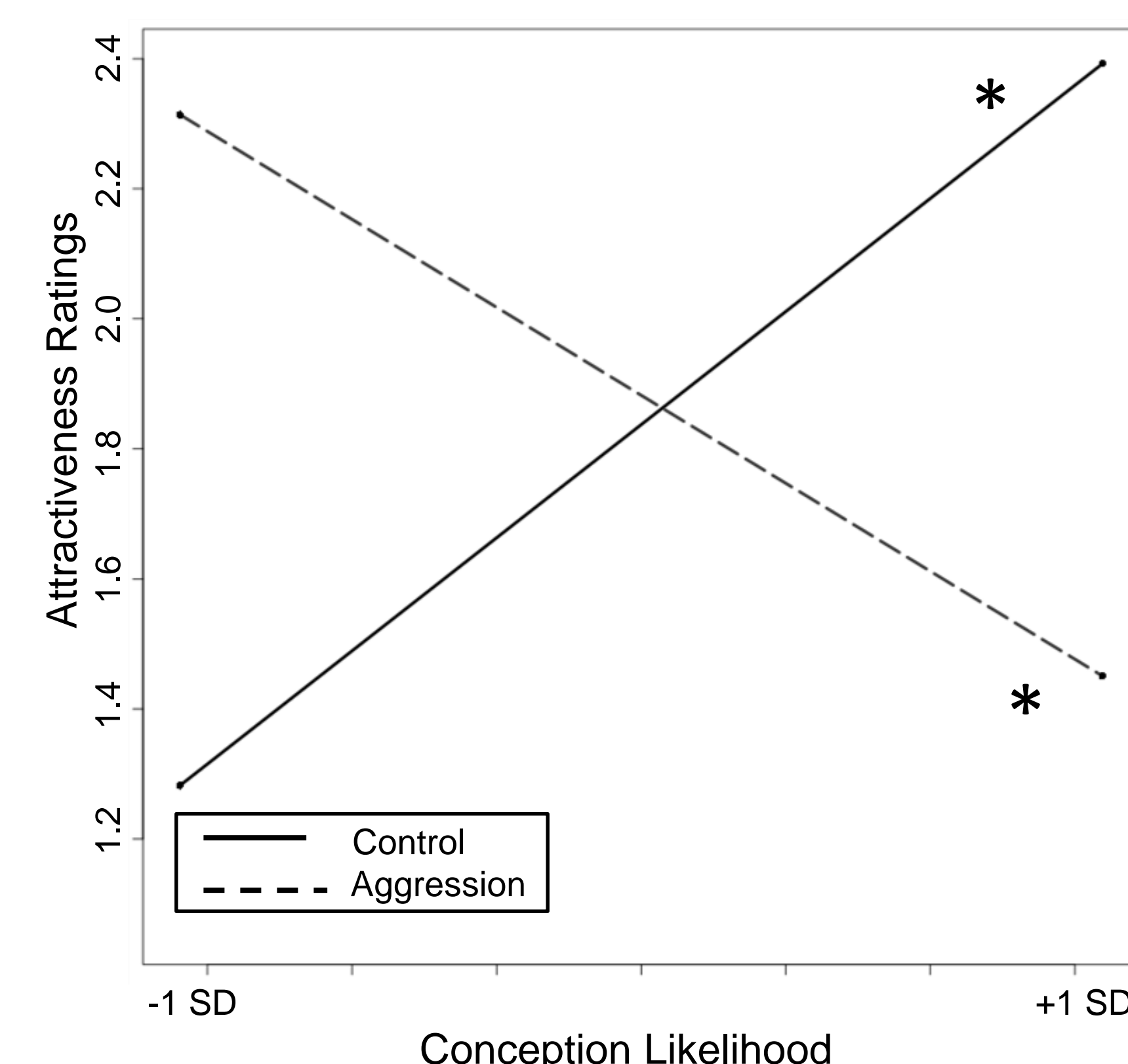


Study 1 Results

PRIME x FERTILITY x MUSCLE INTERACTION

$t(268) = -3.18, B = -5.14, p = .002, 95\% CI [-8.33, -1.96], pseudo-R^2 = .45$

Interaction between Prime and Fertility on Level-10 Muscle



Study 2 Method

PARTICIPANTS

- 78 female TTU students
- Naturally cycling
 - E.g., not on hormonal birth control
- Heterosexual
- Ages 20-40

MATERIALS & PROCEDURES

- **Prime:** 8 photographs, 3 times (Li et al., 2014)
 - **Aggression:** man-on-woman violence
 - **Control:** no depictions of violence
- **Selected Male Face:** 1 masculinized face and 1 feminized face (Perrett et al., 1998)
 - “Select the face that you find most attractive as a short-term mate”
- **Fertility:** Reported first day of last menses. Counted forward to study date for estimate of conception likelihood (Wilcox et al., 2001)

Study 2 Masculinity

Feminized Face Masculinized Face



(from Perrett et al., 1998)

CONTACT INFORMATION

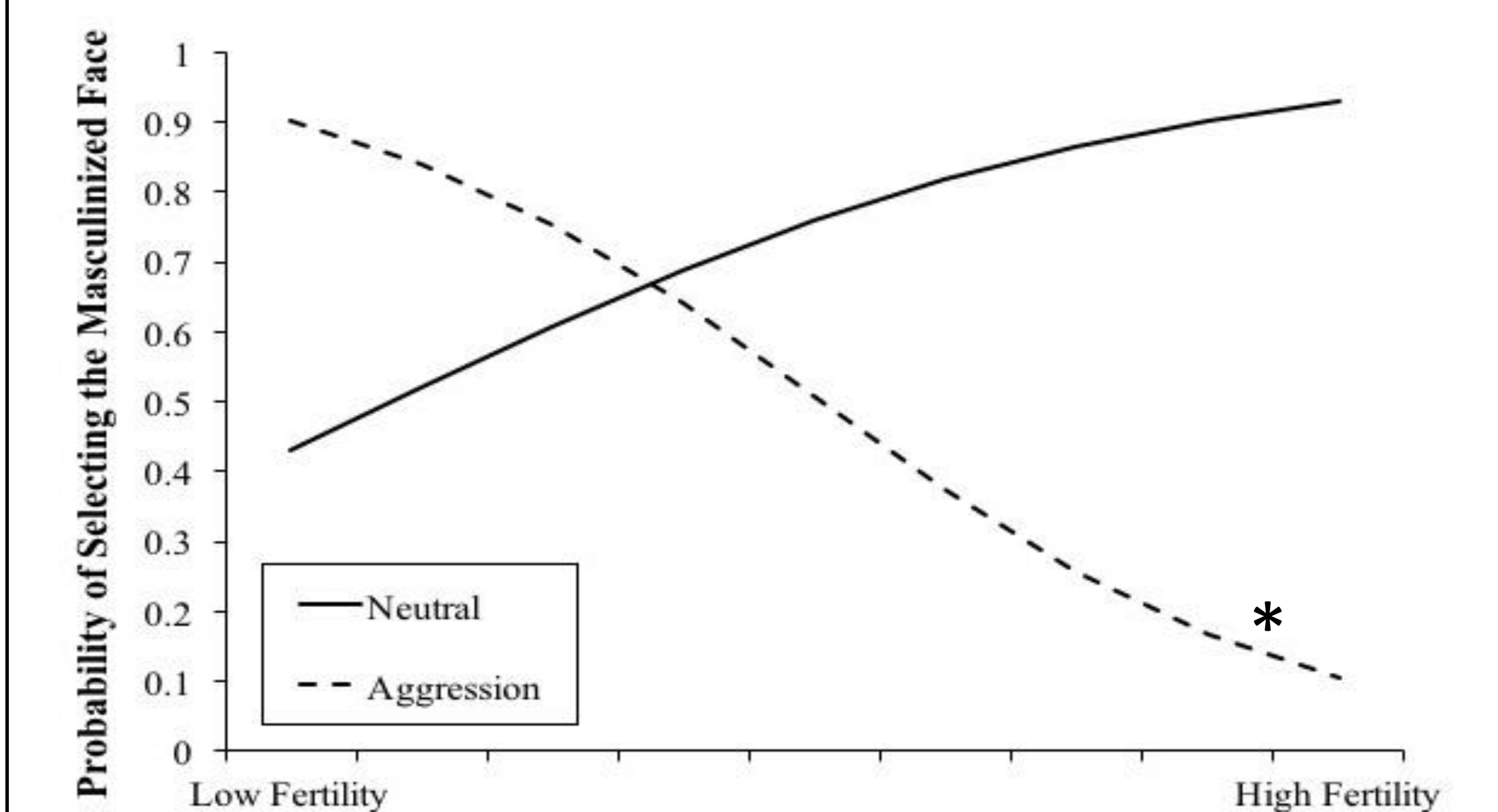
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Study 2 Results

PRIME x FERTILITY INTERACTION

$\chi^2(1) = 5.03, B = -42.08, p = .025, 95\% CI [-78.85, -5.30], pseudo-R^2 = .15$

Interaction between Prime and Fertility on Preference for Masculinized Face



General Discussion

- Women's fertility-enhanced attraction to masculinity is context sensitive.
 - **Aggression Prime:** Ovulating women were less attracted to masculinity than non-ovulating women (Studies 1 & 2)
 - **Control Prime:** Ovulating women were more attracted to masculinity than non-ovulating women (Study 1)
- Environmental cues interact with women's ovulatory cycle to enhance women's ability to choose male mates

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