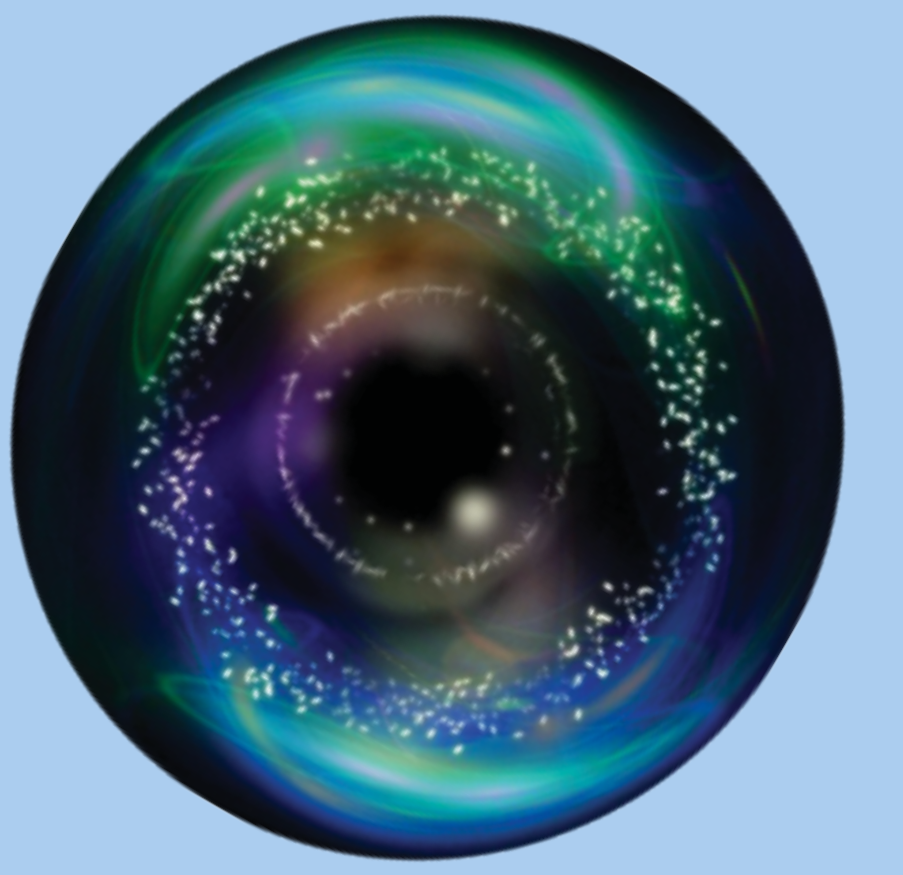




A crowd amplification effect in the perception of social status

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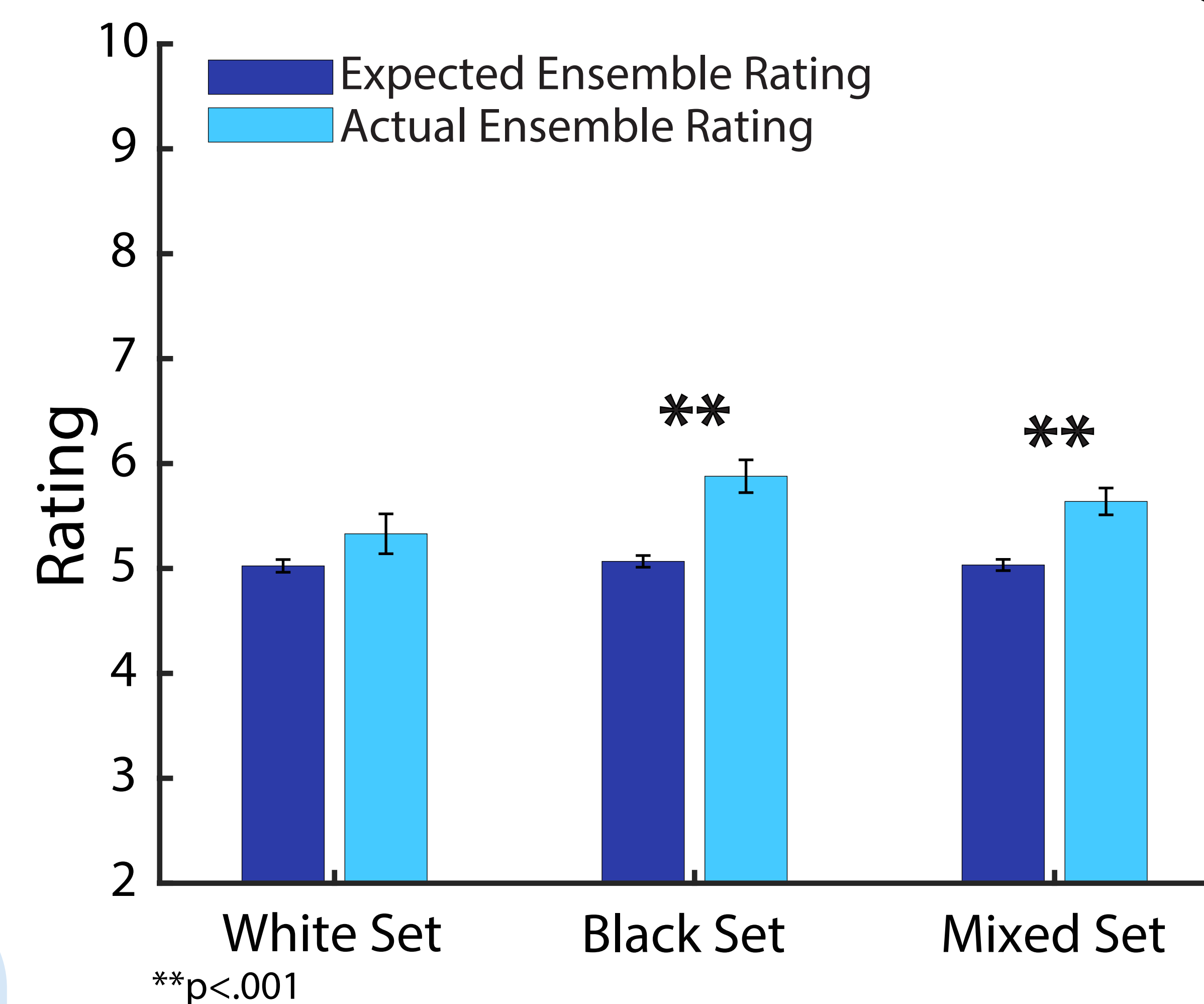
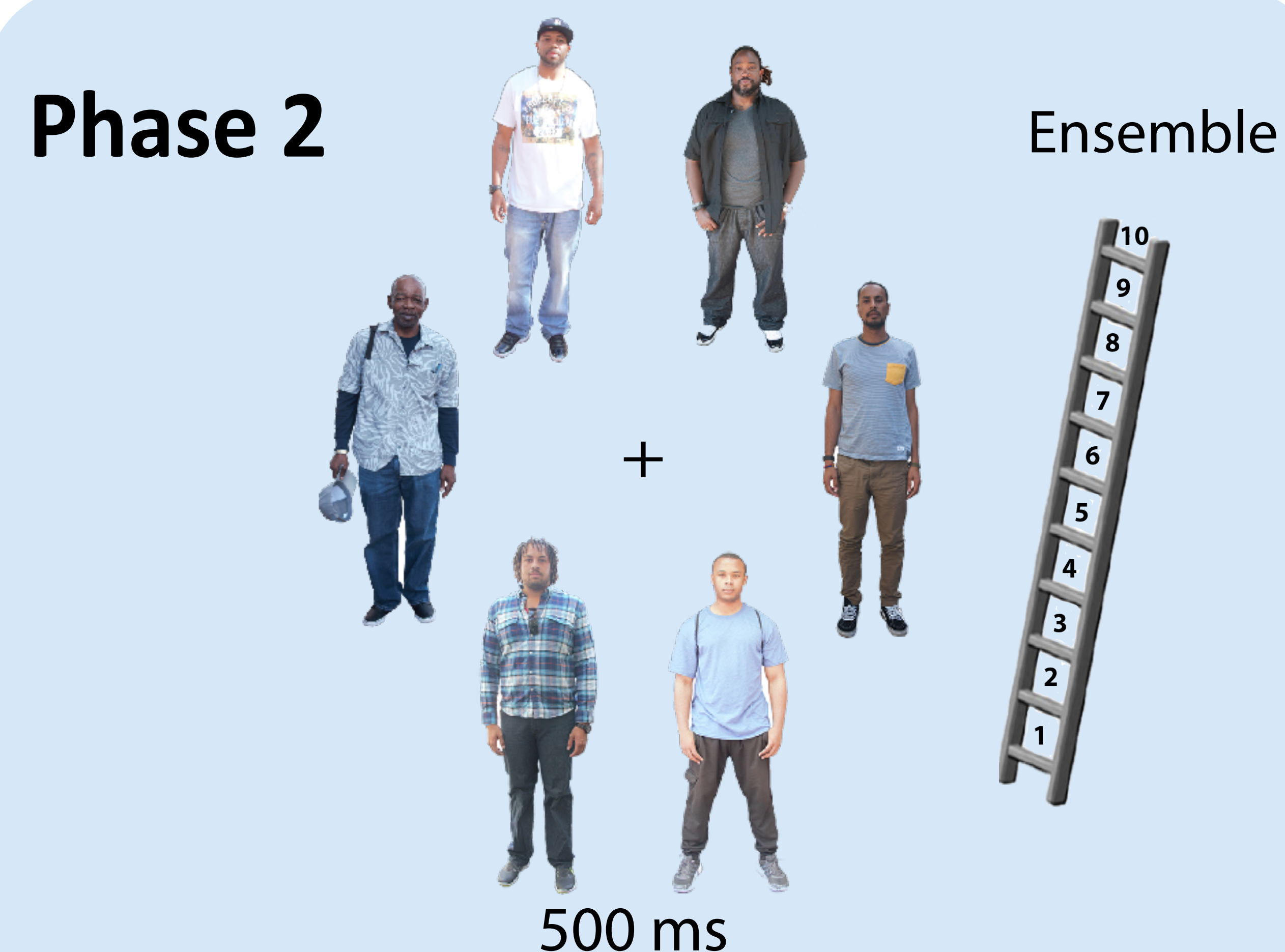


Introduction

Ensemble perception is the ability to perceive sets of similar objects using summary statistics. This process necessarily removes information about individual items. These experiments explore the socio-cognitive consequences of losing individual information through the lens of social status, a multidimensional construct.

Questions: How do observers perceive the social status of a crowd? What role does race play in influencing that perception?

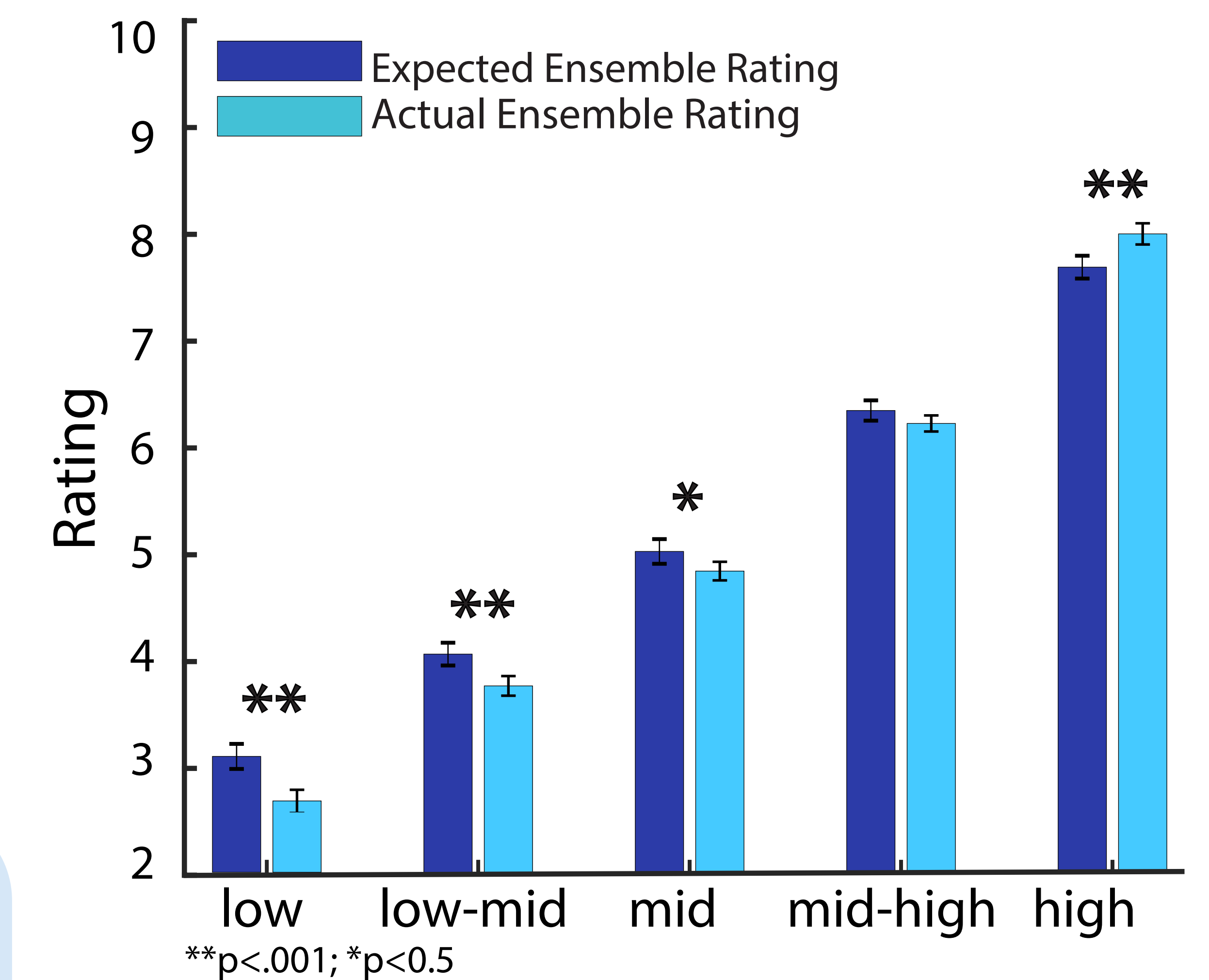
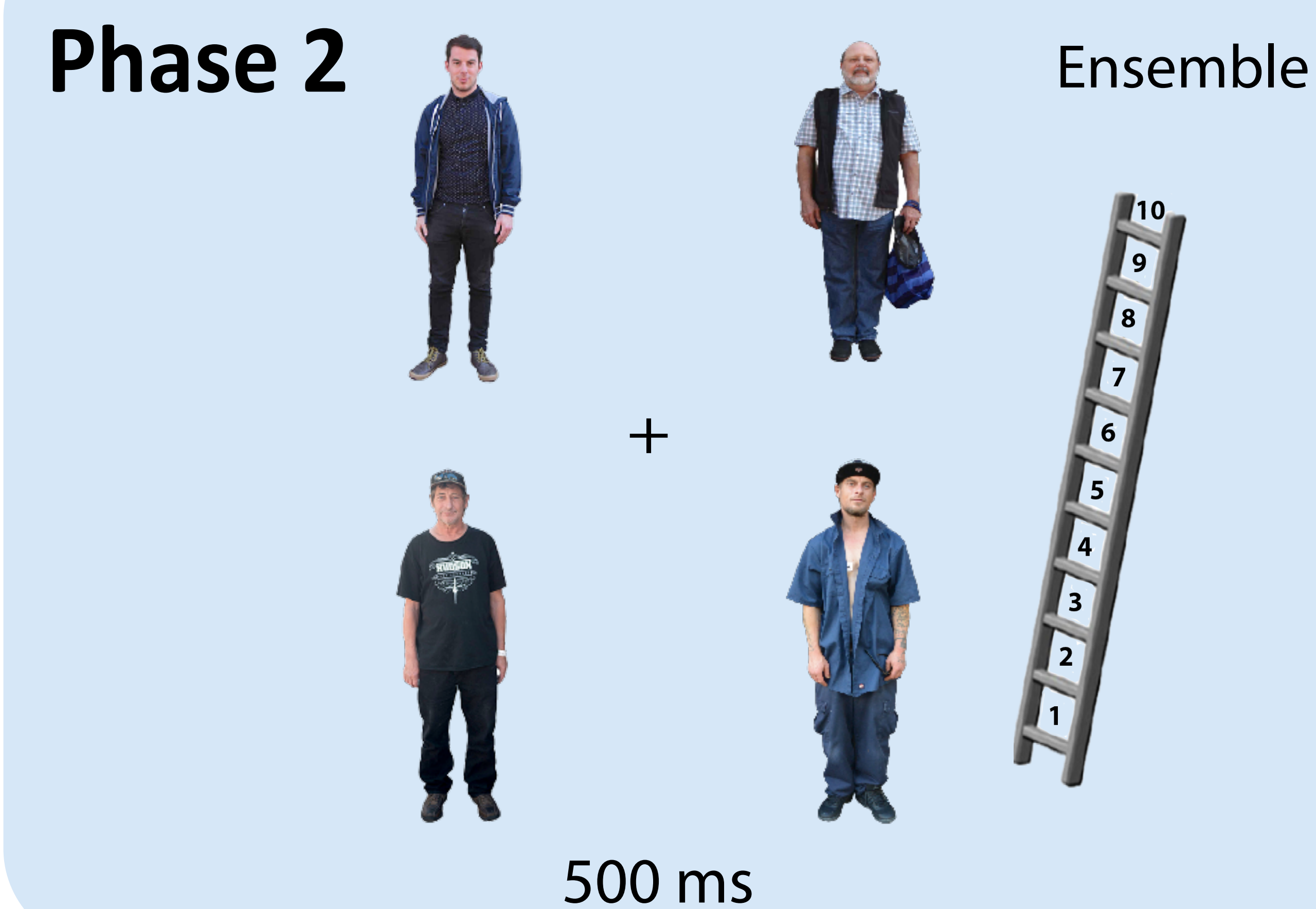
Experiment 1



Methods: Participants rated the social status of individuals and ensembles taken from the middle rungs of ladder. Racial composition was varied.

Takeaway: There was an amplification of social status ratings across all ensemble conditions. The interaction with race was significant, demonstrating even greater amplification of sets containing black individuals.

Experiment 2



Methods: Participants rated the social status of individuals and ensembles stimuli taken from all rungs of ladder. Racial composition is homogeneous.

Takeaway: Even when expected ensemble social status ratings were extreme, the actual ratings were even more extreme. Low sets got even lower and high sets got even higher.

Conclusions

Perception of social status is altered when judging people within the context of a crowd versus in isolation. Race played a role in amplifying ensemble ratings.

References

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