

Reverse Inference Process of Emotions

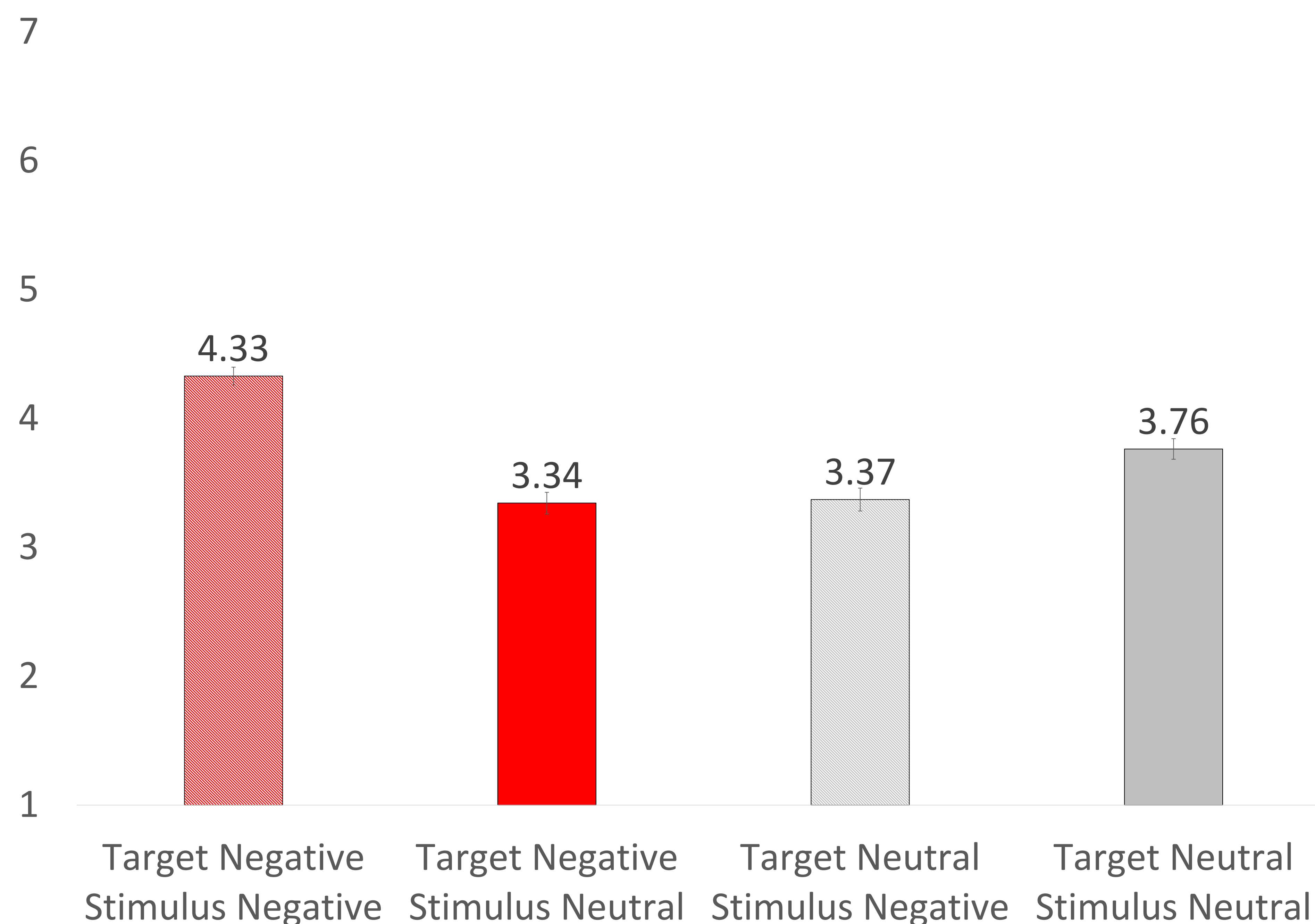
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ABSTRACT

We demonstrate that expressing negative affect can boost trust. Specifically, when negative affective expressions are congruent with the affective context, the context that co-occurs with the affective expression, observers trust individuals who express negative affect more than they trust individuals who express neutral affect. We explore the underlying reverse inference process, and find that emotional expressions that are congruent with the affective context signal diagnostic information of sensibility. Inferences of diagnosticity and sensibility are particularly strong for congruent, negative affective expressions. Our findings deepen our understanding of the relationships among emotion, cognition, and trust, and highlight the importance of accounting for affective context in emotion research.

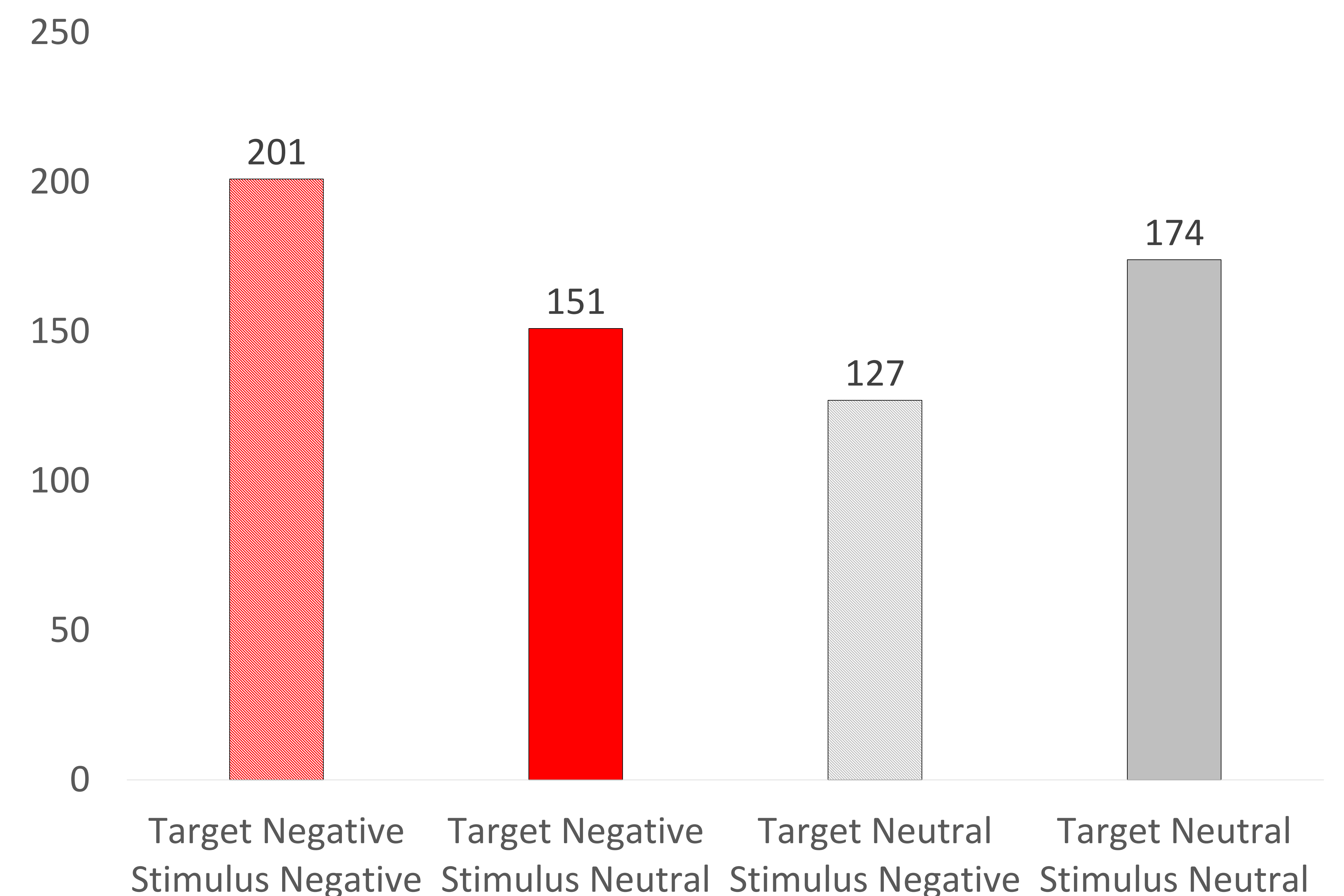
Study 2 Results

Attitudinal Trust
(MTurk; n=1200)



The effect of emotional expressions (Negative vs. Neutral) paired with stimuli (Negative vs. Neutral) on attitudinal trust.
Main effect of expressions: $p < .001^{***}$; main effect of stimuli: $p < .001^{***}$; interaction: $p < .001^{***}$

Passing Behavior
(MTurk; n=1200)



The effect of emotional expressions (Negative vs. Neutral) paired with stimuli (Negative vs. Neutral) on average passing behavior.
Main effect of expressions: $p = .003^{**}$; main effect of stimuli: $p = .844$; interaction: $p < .001^{***}$