

Supplementary Material File

Qualitative Data

An open-ended question was administered at the end of the questionnaire. Participants randomly assigned to the heterosexual biological condition read the following: *"According to you, what are some typical adjectives – or brief sentences – that describe a typical mother? Please, write these adjectives in the space below."* In the heterosexual stepmother condition, they read as follows: *"According to you, what are some typical adjectives – or brief sentences – that describe a typical heterosexual stepmother? Please, write these adjectives in the space below."* In the last condition, people read as follows: *"According to you, what are some typical adjectives – or brief sentences – that describe a typical lesbian stepmother? Please, write these adjectives in the space below."*

Results showed that, in total, participants produced 510 adjectives or brief sentences. The human trait "selfish" was cited 6 times. The other ontologization traits (i.e. rational, dirty and free) were never cited, but similar terms were produced (for rational: reasonable, mature, responsible, attentive; for dirty: immoral; for free: "behaving as she wishes"). As for the target "mother", participants produced 191 positive adjectives, 13 negative adjectives and 6 neutral words (e.g., educator). The typical mother was mainly described with the terms "lovely," "caring," "responsible," and "attentive." Both the heterosexual and lesbian stepmothers were described using many negative terms. As for "the heterosexual stepmother target," they reported 13 positive adjectives, 100 negative adjectives and 11 neutral words. Typical adjectives were "bad," "cold," "selfish," and "detached." Finally, as for the target "lesbian stepmother," participants reported 29 positive adjectives, 124 negative ones, and 23 neutral words. Typical adjectives were "detached," "anaffective," "severe," and "cold."

Scenario- Heterosexual Stepmother

Antonio is a 5-year-old boy who lives with his mum and dad. His dad's name is Paolo and he is his biological father. His mother is a step-mother and her name is Anna. One winter afternoon the boy is in a big shopping centre with his step-mother Anna. While they are in a shop, Antonio starts grumbling and asks for sweets and toys. Anna tells him to choose only one of two things: a packet of sweets or a toy. Antonio asks her for a packet of sweets. Anna tells him that if he is good, she will buy him the sweets, but only after she has finished her other purchases. Antonio, however, starts shouting: "I want them now!" There are a lot of people around them. Anna drags Antonio out of the shop angrily and says: "I don't know why I have to bother taking you shopping with me!" Antonio starts to cry. Anna and Antonio head towards the car park and pass a candy shop but Anna decides not to stop: "Children who misbehave don't get their candy."

Scenario - Lesbian Stepmother

Antonio is a 5-year-old boy who lives with his two mothers. His biological mother is called Paola and his step-mother is called Anna. One winter afternoon the boy is in a big shopping centre with his step-mother Anna. While they are in a shop, Antonio starts grumbling and asks for sweets and toys. Anna tells him to choose only one of two things: a packet of sweets or a toy. Antonio asks her for a packet of sweets. Anna tells him that if he is good, she will buy him the sweets, but only after she has finished her other purchases. Antonio, however, starts shouting: "I want them now!" There are a lot of people around them. Anna drags Antonio out of the shop angrily and says: "I don't know why I have to bother taking you shopping with me!" Antonio starts to cry. Anna and Antonio head towards the car park and pass a candy shop but Anna decides not to stop: "Children who misbehave don't get their candy."

Scenario – Heterosexual Biological Mother

Antonio is a 5-year-old boy who lives with his mum and dad who are his biological parents. His dad's name is Paolo and his mum's name is Anna. One winter afternoon the boy is in a big shopping centre with his mum Anna. While they are in a shop, Antonio starts grumbling and asks for sweets and toys. Anna tells him to choose only one of two things: a packet of sweets or a toy. Antonio asks her for a packet of sweets. Anna tells him that if he is good, she will buy him the sweets, but only after she has finished her other purchases. Antonio, however, starts shouting: "I want them now!" There are a lot of people around them. Anna drags Antonio out of the shop angrily and says: "I don't know why I have to bother taking you shopping with me!" Antonio starts to cry. Anna and Antonio head towards the car park and pass a candy shop but Anna decides not to stop: "Children who misbehave don't get their candy."