**Influence of violent depictions of mental illness on prejudice; ‘Why so serious?’**

**Introduction**

…

**Method**

We had a community sample of 163 participants attend the viewing and complete both pre- and post- movie surveys, none of whom reported seeing either movie previously. Participants were then randomly assigned to a theatre with 80 (49 female) viewing Joker and 84 (53 female) viewing Terminator. In both groups, the average age was 30 years old and there was a representative mix of ethnicities. In the pre-movie survey, participants reported demographics and a baseline level of prejudice. Directly after viewing the movie, participants completed the post-movie survey, reporting levels of prejudice (Kenny, Bizumic, & Griffiths, 2018), empathy (Bizumic & Duckitt, 2018), and authoritarianism (Davis, 1983) using Likert scales. We conducted confirmatory factor analysis to produced latent variables of each scale for our analyses.

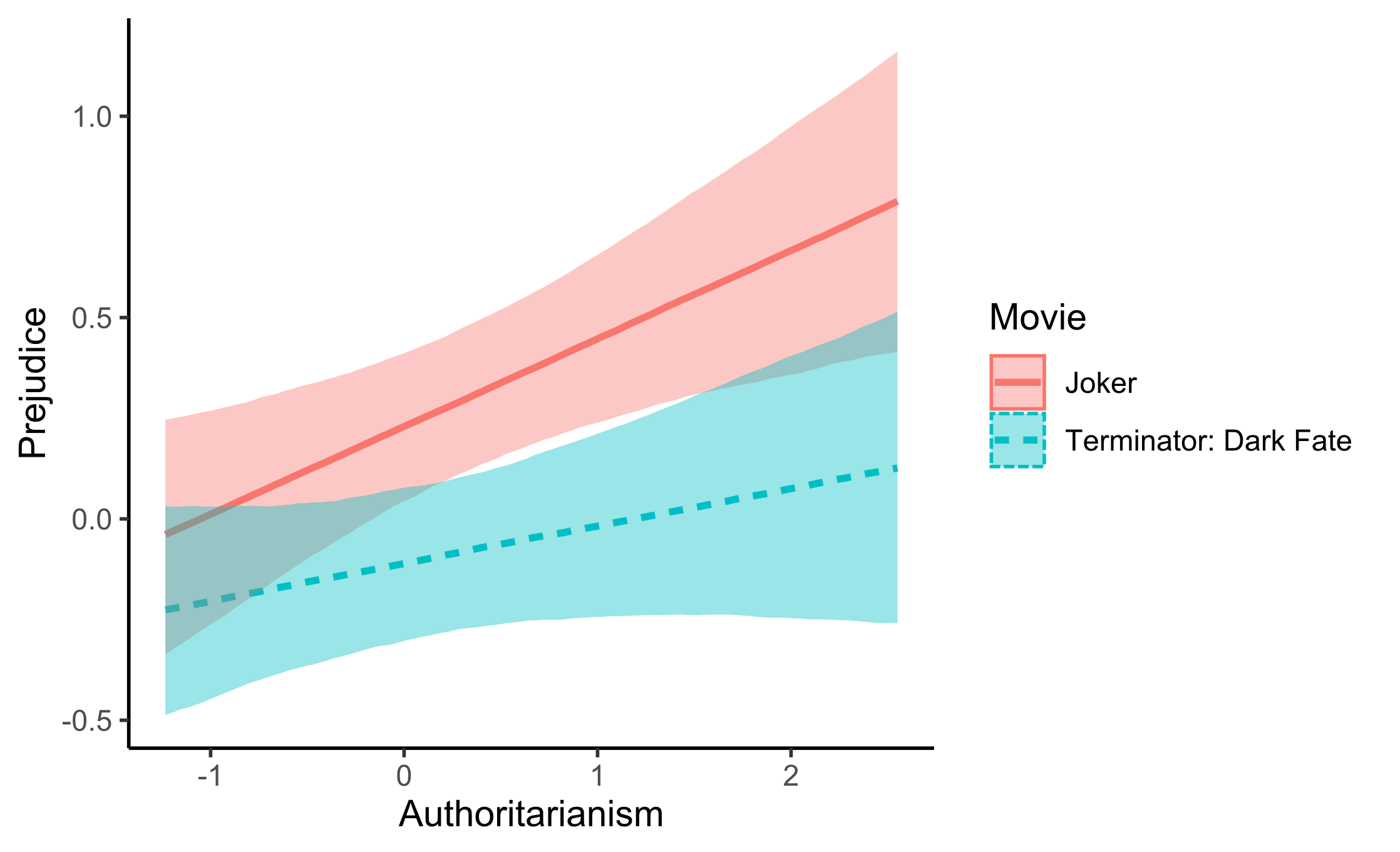
**Results**

Change in prejudice was assessed using a lagged Bayesian regression, with weakly informative priors. Specifically, our outcome was prejudice after the movie, while using prejudice before the movie as a covariate, along with age, gender, mental illness history, movie, empathy, and authoritarianism. We also included an empathy-movie and authoritarianism-movie interaction. Our analysis indicated that Joker significantly increased prejudice relative to Terminator, as did higher levels of authoritarianism increase prejudice (All posterior probabilities above 95%; Table 1). We also noted that higher levels of authoritarianism significantly increased the prejudice elicited by Joker (Figure 1).

**Table 1.** Summary of lagged Baysian regression analysis on change in prejudice after watching Joker.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | 95% Credible Interval | |  |
|  | Estimate | Lower | Upper | Probability |
| Intercept | 0.34 | 0.16 | 0.53 | 100.0% |
| Prejudice (lag) | 0.85 | 0.73 | 0.97 | 100.0% |
| Age | 0.01 | -0.08 | 0.10 | 58.9% |
| Sex (female) | 0.06 | -0.13 | 0.25 | 75.2% |
| Mental health history | -0.08 | -0.31 | 0.13 | 80.5% |
| Movie (Terminator) | -0.34 | -0.50 | -0.18 | 100.0% |
| Empathy | -0.08 | -0.21 | 0.06 | 89.8% |
| Authoritarianism | 0.22 | 0.07 | 0.37 | 100.0% |
| Movie (Terminator) \* Empathy | -0.02 | -0.21 | 0.17 | 60.0% |
| Movie (Terminator) \* Authoritarianism | -0.13 | -0.30 | 0.06 | 96.9% |
| NB: Probability is the posterior probability that an effect deviates from zero in its given direction. | | | | |

**Figure 1.** Significant two-way interaction between movie and levels of standardised authoritarianism when predicting change in prejudice. Error bands are 95% credible intervals.

**Discussion**

…

**References**

Bizumic, B., & Duckitt, J. (2018). Investigating Right Wing Authoritarianism with a Very Short Authoritarianism scale. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, *6*(1), 129–150. https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v6i1.835

Davis, M. H. (1983). Measuring individual differences in empathy: Evidence for a multidimensional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *44*(1), 113–126. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.44.1.113

Kenny, A., Bizumic, B., & Griffiths, K. M. (2018). The Prejudice towards People with Mental Illness (PPMI) scale: Structure and validity. *BMC Psychiatry*, *18*.