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Theorizing the Relationship Between Identity and Diversity Engagement: Openness Through Identity Mismatch

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Abstract

Psychological research suggests that engagement with diversity-relevant materials can have a positive impact on interracial relations. However, prior research also suggests that there may be individual differences in how effective exposure to critical diversity narratives would be in facilitating positive intergroup attitudes. The primary aim of this paper is to provide some empirically based theorizing about patterns of group identification and their relationship to effective diversity exposure. In this chapter, we discuss two examples of research that explore for whom engagement with critical diversity activities may facilitate increased perceptions of social inequality. We begin by conceptualizing four race-based identity profiles derived from orthogonal considerations of attachment and glorification. We discuss support for findings that suggest that scoring high on one dimension but not the other (mixed or mismatched identity profiles) constitutes the identity profiles most likely to facilitate openness to critical, potentially identity-threatening, diversity content.

Theorizing the Relationship Between Identity and Diversity Engagement: Openness Through Identity Mismatch

Psychological research suggests that engagement with ethnic studies and diversity-relevant curricula can have a positive impact on student learning and engagement. In the United States (US), much of this work is grounded in educational psychology and theorizes the impact of "culturally relevant pedagogy" on the academic outcomes for students of color (see Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011 for review). As an example, Dee and Penner (2016) found significant gains in GPA and attendance rates for at-risk students of color who were enrolled in ethnic studies courses. Other examples of this work focus on the impact of required "diversity" courses on interracial and intergroup attitudes for all students, but particularly for White American students (e.g., racial understanding; prejudice reduction, Chang, 2002; Dovidio et al., 2004; attitudes toward diversity, Terenzini, Pascarella, Springer, Nora, & Palmer, 1996; awareness of privilege and racism, Cole, Case, Rio, & Curtin, 2011). In a meta-analysis of 27 studies, Denson (2009) concluded that diversity-themed courses have an impact on reducing racial bias. Denson concluded that diversity-related interventions were moderately effective in reducing racial bias for all students, but perhaps particularly beneficial to White students in regards to racial bias reduction.

The Denson meta-analysis reviewed prior work that included the impact of different courses, diversity workshops, and peer-facilitated interventions. She noted that the diversity-related interventions primarily utilized content-based knowledge as their approach to reducing college students' racial bias. Deemed an "enlightenment" approach, the basic idea is that exposing students to information about other groups can alter their perceptions of that group. The "enlightenment" could detail diverse cultural practices, historical events and encounters, and/or contemporary issues and the experiences of being a member of a marginalized or minority group. This approach is consistent with seminal work in multicultural counseling, which suggests that *knowledge*—an understanding and knowledge of worldviews of culturally different individuals and groups—is a key component of multicultural competence (Sue, 2001; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). There is support for the role of cultural knowledge in facilitating positive interpersonal interactions among future counselors, but there is also support for its important role in facilitating positive intergroup relations more broadly.

However, not all diversity exposure is created equal. Sue and colleagues also suggest that merely learning about different, exoticized, ethnic "others" is not enough to develop multicultural competences (Sue, 2001; Sue et al., 1992). Whether making efforts to diversify the classroom or make psychological science itself less "WEIRD" (western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010), cultural psychologists emphasize two strategies for avoiding the pitfalls of othering or pathologizing diverse psychological experiences (Adams & Salter, 2007). The first step is to provide a *normalizing*, context-sensitive account of "other" patterns that mainstream psychological science regards

as abnormal. Exposure to information about the histories, cultural contexts, and their connections to contemporary cultural practices give students the initial tools to perform this step. The second step is to “turn the analytic lens” or *denaturalize* patterns that mainstream psychological science tends to portray as standard. This step aims to help psychologists (practitioners and students alike) to understand and examine cultural differences beyond slight deviation from some unnamed or unmarked American or dominant group norm, but as the product of cultural processes that impact everyone. This step helps to combat implicit attributions of power or superiority that are attached to being considered the norm (e.g., Bruckmüller & Abele, 2010; Hegarty & Pratto, 2001) or feelings that one is a part of a group that just does things the right way. A major goal of the second step is to make visible the cultural context of experience, not just for *exotic* patterns of people in "other cultures," but also for the *familiar* patterns observed in one’s own backyard routinely underlying the otherwise invisible cultural norms from which one is operating (Adams & Salter, 2007).

Careful consideration of the impact of merely addressing diversity exposure has also been taken up by cultural psychologists concerned with the extent to which their cultural courses have positive or negative impacts on their students. In particular, cultural psychologists have been concerned that knowledge about cultural differences can facilitate cultural stereotyping and essentialism. For example, Buchtel (2014) used a longitudinal design to examine the effects of her cultural psychology course at the beginning of a semester and the end and compared the change over time to students in a control classroom. She was interested whether her course impacted their cultural awareness, cultural intelligence, moral relativism, essentialism, cultural entitativity, prejudice, and stereotype endorsement. On one hand, Buchtel hypothesized positive effects for students taking the cultural psychology course. Namely, she predicted an increase in cultural awareness and open-mindedness (i.e., decreased judgmental assessments of cultural differences). On the other hand, Buchtel thought that cultural psychology might also have negative effects because emphasizing cultural boundaries can be associated with essentialist thinking. So, she predicted that students might also increase in their essentialist thinking about cultures and in their reliance on group stereotypes. In general, she found that there were more positive effects for the cultural psychology course than there were negative, but she also noted that the cultural psychology course had a pernicious effect on “casual” readers of cultural psychology (i.e., the students who did not perform well). Buchtel (2014) found that students who received lower grades were more likely to endorse stereotypes of any kind, especially stereotypes that, in fact, were not related to cultural psychology research.

Butchel’s (2014) research suggests that individual differences might matter for whom an intervention might have a positive influence. Though there is evidence for global positive effects, in this chapter we discuss some of our preliminary work that indicates there may be particular identities, captured in specific kinds of profiles, which are particularly “open” to the positive influence of exposure to a diversity intervention. Considerations of identity may be especially important since exposing dominant groups to critical aspects of intergroup relations may implicitly or explicitly implicate them in historical wrong-doing of marginalized or subjugated groups. From the standpoint of the nation, addressing historical wrong-doing

can be identity-threatening, particularly for highly identified group members (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doojse, 1999; Morton & Sonnenburg, 2011; Kurtiş, Adams, & Yellow Bird, 2010); thus, history tends to glorify the nation and sanitize that negative history (Loewen, 1995; Trouillot, 1995). Reminders of past wrong-doing constitutes a threat to viewing one's group as moral or competent, and, for those identified with the group, there are motivations to avoid such damaging information (Baumeister & Hastings, 1997) or simply forget such events (Sahdra & Ross, 2007). However, from the perspective of the oppressed, knowledge of historical injustices constitute a key part of identity (Eyerman, 2004; Moreton-Robinson, 2003) and has liberatory potential (Martín-Baró, 1994). Knowledge of critical histories can impact perceptions of present social inequality and policy endorsement (e.g., Mukherjee, Salter, & Molina, 2015; Nelson, Adams, & Salter, 2013). For example, engagement with cultural materials that invoked more critical Black history themes (e.g., addressing historical barriers) were more effective at increasing perceptions of racism in the present than celebratory versions of Black history (Salter & Adams, 2016). Additional work utilizing photographic materials collected from an American Immigration History Museum found that the impact of engaging with photographs addressing historical injustices in America's immigration history (e.g., highlighting discrimination faced by Asian Americans) impacted perceptions of what it means to be truly American. Participants who engaged with critical (versus glorifying) images depicting US immigration had less narrow, assimilationist conceptions of American, which in turn, had an impact on perceptions of social inequality (Mukherjee & Salter, 2017). Taken together, the empirical evidence suggests that if and when critical forms of knowledge are integrated into diversity initiatives or interventions, those narratives may be met with resistance to the extent that the information is processed as identity-threatening.

Openness to Critical Histories through Racial Identity Profiles: A Case for Mismatch

In this chapter, we propose that there may be particular collective identity profiles that are "open" to the positive influence of exposure to a diversity intervention. Historically, the predominant approach to measuring collective forms of identity in a study was to treat identity as a unidimensional construct (i.e., what is your attachment to a particular social group?). Several scholars have identified limitations in a unidimensional approach (e.g., Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006; Leach et al., 2008). Take, for example, conflicting findings in the collective-guilt literature resulting from unidimensional explorations. Roccas and colleagues (2006) identified a paradox in which high group identification seems to simultaneously correspond to both increases and decreases in feelings of group-based guilt. Group-based guilt can be simply understood as the guilt an individual feels through association with persons who have committed immoral acts; this association can be felt due

to something as tenuous as shared group membership (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998).

In order to reconcile these conflicting findings, Roccas et al. (2006) proposed that group identification is more complex than one dimension simply capturing high versus low attachment. Through an integration of the relevant literature concerning group identification, Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, Halevy, and Eidelson (2008) identified a robust multidimensional model that described four primary modes of identification. These modes—commitment, importance, superiority, deference—were found to be relevant across a number of group identity categorizations, including national and organizational contexts. Importantly, the validated model of these modes supports a two-factor understanding of group identification: group attachment (representing the intercorrelations between commitment to the group and importance of the group to one's self) and positive evaluation of the group (representing the intercorrelations between finding one's group to be superior and showing deference to the group). These two factors[1], while given various monikers, have now consistently been demonstrated across a substantial body of literature (see Roccas et al., 2006 for a review). Hereafter, the terms "attachment" and "glorification" will be used.

Group attachment can more generally be understood as a person's level of identification with their group. High group attachment tends to correspond with high group-self overlap; this can include gaining self-esteem and positive emotions from the group, as well as defining one's self in terms of group membership (Roccas et al., 2006; Roccas et al., 2008). People who have high levels of group attachment tend to strongly agree with statements such as "I identify with other (name of group members)," "(name of group) is an important group to me," and "Being an (demonym of group) is an important part of how I see myself at this moment" (Doosje et al., 1998).

Not only do individuals define or see themselves as more or less attached to one's group, they may also garner positive feelings from belonging to that group to a greater or lesser extent. Group glorification is particularly affective in nature. It occurs when an individual views the in-group as superior to other groups. While this is not uncharacteristic of group identification in general, glorification involves a more specific elevation of in-group symbols, rules, norms, and values above those of other groups (Roccas et al., 2006). High group glorification also tends to correspond with beliefs involving the regulation of others' behavior, specifically in displays of respect for the in-group's symbols (Roccas et al., 2006).

While they are distinct modes of group identification, glorification and attachment have been shown to have a moderate positive relationship (Chiou, 2001; Karasawa, 2002; Li & Brewer, 2004; Roccas et al., 2006). These findings parallel our conceptual understanding of group identification, as both these modes should indicate how strongly and in what ways an individual identifies with their group. That is, one might expect that those high on dimensions of group attachment would be similarly high on dimensions of group glorification. In other

[1] Leach and colleagues (2008) propose a similar two-factor model that underlies identification: Self-definition and Self-investment. Self-definition appears to parallel attachment and captures individuals' perceptions of themselves as similar to an in-group prototype and their perception that their in-group has commonalities in experience. Self-investment (mirroring glorification) captures individuals' positive feelings about and bonding with their in-group.

words, if they are strongly attached to their group, then they should usually glorify it (Roccas et al., 2006). However, these two modes are orthogonal and remain distinct from each other. It is not necessary to glorify the group, even if attachment to the group is high, and it is not necessary to be particularly attached to the group, even if glorification of the group is high.

When considered in relationship with one another, these two modes of group identification—attachment and glorification—interact to create four distinct group identity profiles. Two of these profiles are consistent with unidimensional understandings of group identification in that they *match*: an individual could be high in both attachment and glorification, and an individual could be low in both attachment and glorification. However, the two other profile alternatives are of particular interest to us because they denote ambiguity in one's identification with their group; that is, there is *mismatch* in the two modes of identification (i.e., high in attachment but low in glorification, or high in glorification but low in attachment).

These modes of identification are particularly interesting because when an individual indicates strongly identifying on one dimension but not the other, it could indicate gradation or flexibility in that individual's relationship to that identity category. For instance, one might expect that someone who highly identifies with their group across both dimensions/modes—that is, is both highly attached to and highly glorifying of their group—would not be open to threatening information about the group because it would be unambiguously highly threatening to the self. On the other hand, someone who is ambivalently identified with their group (perhaps Buchtel's "casual readers," as noted above) may not see threatening information about a group to which they belong as challenging to the self, since they may already have conflicting feelings about the group for whom that information is threatening. Alternatively, an ambivalently identified group member could respond like a high identifier, not because they care about being in the group, but because without much thought or concern about group issues, they may just rely on group norms or other socially acceptable responses. Thus, this individual could be just as likely as a high-identifier to resort to standard/stereotypical responses to critical information (e.g., with denial, resistance, or even prejudice).

We were also interested in testing the theoretical extension of these national identity profiles to racial identity[2]. These modes of identification/identity profiles may have particular relevance to our research interests in diversity engagement because of the perceived entitativity—"the extent to which a group is perceived as being a coherent unit in which the members of the group are bonded together in some fashion" (Lickel, Hamilton, & Sherman, 2001, p. 131)—of racial groups. That is, race is deployed in the US as a clear marker between "us" and "them," between those in the in-group and those in the outgroup. We describe a set of studies below to articulate our exploration of these "matched" or "mixed"

[2] Here it is important to note that although we are conceptually following Roccas and colleagues' model, there are several prominent multidimensional racial identity models in the literature (see Sellers et al., 1998 for review). Many of the underlying concepts are similar to what we use (i.e., centrality; private regard), but to our knowledge have not focused on the racial identity profiles within the four quadrants that might be produced by orthogonal consideration of these underlying variables.

identity profiles in the context of race. We wanted to explore whether the aforementioned mixed or matched racial identity profiles could explain dominant group (in our context, White American) reactions to diversity-relevant cultural products created by members of a subordinated racial group (in our context, Black Americans).

Empirical Examples: Engagement with Diversity and Identity

In line with the cultural psychological principle of mutual constitution (i.e., the idea that psyche and culture "make each other up," Shweder, 1990; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), culturally relevant materials are not only imbued with the identity of the creator but can also have an impact on the perceiver. Importantly, perceivers are not just passive recipients of cultural messages. When cultural products offer critical histories (as opposed to mainstream offerings of glorifying narratives/folk tales), they can be met with acceptance or resistance.

In the first empirical example below, we discuss a set of studies in which we asked participants to engage with previously created Black History Month (BHM) posters. We wanted to explore the psychological process through which White participants were engaging with this critical, culturally relevant material. In the second empirical example, we extended the theoretical model of group identification to another racial/ethnic group in the United States, Hispanic Americans. This study is both related to and distinct from the first BHM study, as we discuss in more detail below.

Our empirical examples deployed methodology to test our extension of national identity and an orthogonal model of group identification. Thus, we propose terminology and descriptions for four identity profile manifestations theorized to impact whether our participants supported race-relevant policies after engaging with diversity-relevant information. These identity profiles are in part derived from prior literature (e.g., Roccas et al., 2008), but are also based on a series of studies conducted over the past several years (Rieck, Haugen, & Salter, 2015; Salazar, Haugen, Rieck, & Salter, 2016; Salter & Adams, 2016). If our theoretical extension of national identity to racial identity is indeed appropriate, then we should expect to see similar patterns of responses to the experimental methodology described below.

Four Proposed Racial Identification Profiles

Committed proponents (high attachment-high glorification)

Individuals with high attachment and high glorification (matched profile) are, theoretically, some of the most passionate members of any group. When confronted with members of an outgroup, these committed proponents will likely make generalizing, stereotypical, and/or derogatory statements to describe the outgroup. This profile may be parallel to nationalists who believe in the superiority of the group (e.g., Gellner, 2005). Committed proponents are most likely to find members of an outgroup threatening, and overt liking outgroup members by committed proponents is likely low. Extreme examples of committed proponents of White

racial identity may include members of the Ku Klux Klan or American citizens who self-appoint for violent Mexican border control.

Indifferent followers (low attachment-low glorification)

Individuals with low attachment and low glorification (matched profile) are theorized as some of the most disengaged members of a group. Because of this disengagement, there is likely to be little critical self-analysis in terms of one's own racial identity. Indifferent followers of a racial identity may make claims such as "I don't see race." Indifferent followers, theoretically, are also not likely to appreciate what they perceive to be as excessive racialization of a given event by members of a racial outgroup: "Why do *they* always have to make it about race?" When confronted with members of an outgroup, especially in situations of perceived threat, indifferent followers will likely behave in ways that conform to in-group norms. This is not because they necessarily want to conform to their in-group (or would even consider that that is what they are doing); rather, it is because they are most likely to uncritically follow the norms established by and for their in-group. Though they do not gain positive feelings from their in-group (and may even resist being identified as a member of the relevant in-group), they may often nevertheless behave in ways considered more characteristic of committed proponents (see above).

Insecure proponents (low attachment-high glorification)

Insecure proponents are the first example of a mixed profile: individuals who highly glorify their in-group yet do not express a particular attachment to it. These individuals hold their in-group membership in high esteem (high glorification), perhaps relative to other racial groups. However, insecure proponents do not internalize their racial identity in the same way as the other high glorifiers (committed proponents); they do not find their racial identity to be important to who they are as an individual. As such, insecure proponents are theorized, in certain circumstances, to be able to distance themselves from the group as they may not feel a strong need to defend their in-group when critically challenged (because it is not also challenging their sense of self). This may make insecure proponents more open to otherwise threatening messages from outgroup members.

Committed critics (high attachment-low glorification)

Committed critics are the second example of a mixed profile. These individuals are relatively more attached to their group (or perhaps recognize the importance of race in shaping their individual psyche), but this attachment does not garner particularly positive feelings for committed critics. They perceive their group membership as important, but they (theoretically) are able to acknowledge there may be some shortcomings to being a member of this group. Though being a member of their in-group does not give them particularly good feelings, committed critics typically share the values of the in-group and may unconsciously enact the normative behaviors of the in-group (because they have been socialized into these values). However, when provided with an opportunity to be critical of the in-group, committed

critics are theoretically more likely to take that opportunity because their lack of glorification of their in-group allows them to be less defensive: they are not targeting the source of positive affect but rather neutral or negative.

Summary

The four identity profiles described above—committed proponents, indifferent followers, insecure proponents, committed critics—represent an attempt to both integrate the current understanding of group identification and propose a theoretical advancement to include other types of identification beyond national—that is, racial (Figure 1). This presentation of these identity profiles is largely based both on the work of Roccas et al. (2006) and our own empirical observations, narratively described below (Rieck et al., 2015; Salazar et al., 2016; Salter & Adams, 2016). As this is a theoretical proposal, provided here is a high-level overview of our methods and findings. More detailed reports of the studies described below are forthcoming.

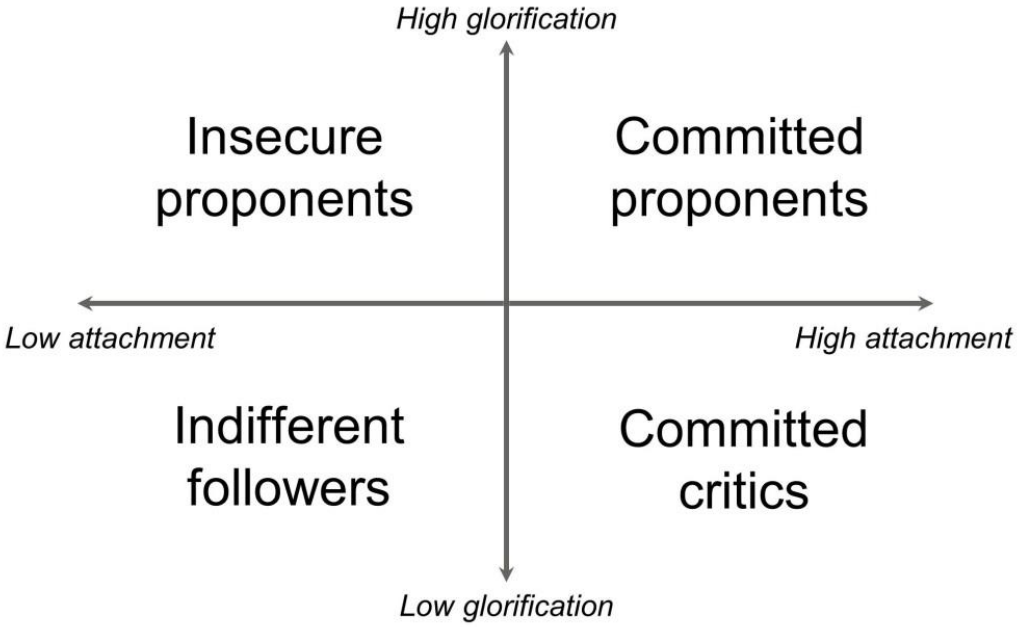

Figure 1. Proposed racial identification profiles

Empirical Example #1: Exposure to Black History Month Posters

Black History Month (BHM) is typically recognized during the month of February and can vary to the extent that it is primarily celebratory and achievement oriented versus racism relevant and historical barriers oriented (Salter & Adams, 2016). In their initial qualitative study, Salter and Adams (2016) found that predominately-White schools tended to have centralized BHM displays that emphasized celebrations of diversity and achievements while displays in predominately-Black schools tended to acknowledge historical barriers. One of

the implications of their study is that the cultural context contributes to the type of BHM representations that were produced and/or selected for that space. In follow-up studies, they also found that patterns of preference for celebratory BHM displays from predominately-White schools (over more critical representations from predominately-Black schools) were strongest among White American participants who strongly identified with being American or White. Furthermore, they found that exposure to critical representations facilitated perceptions of racism and support for anti-racism policies. However, when examining the relationship between critical BHM exposure and perceptions of racism, they did not account for identification. Taken together, one might suggest that critical BHM exposure can facilitate perceptions of social injustice, but that it may not be as effective for strongly identified White Americans (who indicated their distaste for critical representations from predominantly Black schools in their prior study).

Below we describe a study we conducted where we utilized BHM posters designed by prior participants to commemorate and celebrate the contributions and achievements of Black Americans. Utilizing the multidimensional conception of racial identification described above, we explore how exposure to BHM posters interacts with the participants' racial identification profile to influence perceptions of racism and endorsement of public policies aimed at alleviating racism.

The goal of this study was to explore how racial identity might interact with engagement with diversity-related materials—here, Black History Month posters—to influence perceptions of racism against Black people in the United States. To do this, we asked 136 undergraduates at a large, public university in the South to engage with BHM posters created by designers in a prior study (Rieck, Salter, & Haugen, 2016). Each participant viewed three posters previously created by a different set of designers; these designers varied both on racial background (Black or White) and how strongly they unidimensionally identified with that racial group (high vs. low). The designers had previously indicated their level of racial identification using a continuous measure depicting self-other overlap (adapted from Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992; Rieck et al., 2016). From this, designers were identified who were either one standard deviation above or below the mean level of identification. These designers' posters (categorized as "high" or "low") were then used as stimuli for the study described below.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four viewing conditions: viewing posters by highly-identified White designers, highly-identified Black designers, lowly-identified White designers, and lowly-identified Black designers. Within each condition, participants viewed three different posters by three different designers. With each poster, participants were encouraged to engage with the poster. One way of achieving this was by measuring affect and reactions to the poster through scales presented on the same page as the poster itself. Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they feel a certain way in this moment, given several forms of affect (e.g., excited, upset, interested, irritable) and using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Very slightly or not at all). Participants were also asked several questions about their reaction to various qualities of the poster, e.g., "Overall, how attractive is this poster?" and "How aggressive or hostile is this poster?" These questions,

again, primarily served the purpose of encouraging repeated and extended engagement with each poster; analysis of responses to these items will not be presented here.

Participants also completed a measure of racial attachment and glorification, which was adapted from Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) Collective Self Esteem Scale: "Identification" and "Private Regard." These subscales (each four items long) were identified, in our review of the literature, as those measures with the most adaptation potential as we theoretically extended these modes of group identification from national to racial identity. The "Identification" subscale closely maps onto our understanding of attachment, with items such as, "The racial/ethnic group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am" (participants respond using a 7-point Likert scale, 1="Not at all"). The "Private Regard," or here, glorification, subscale asked participants to respond (using the same scale) to items such as "I feel good about the racial/ethnic group I belong to."[3]

Our outcome measures of interest in this study were participants' perceptions of racism and race-relevant policies immediately after exposure to diversity-relevant material. After exposure to and engagement with the posters, participants reported how much they thought prejudice, discrimination or racism played a role in 5 hypothetical scenarios, such as "a group of three African American friends were waiting for a table at a restaurant. While they waited, two other groups of similar size arrived and were seated before them." Participants also rated their support for 10 race-relevant policy items, such as "As long as there are no rigid quotas, I support affirmative action."

Prior qualitative explorations of the Black History Month posters used as stimuli indicated that those created by highly-identified Black designers were the most critical, followed by lowly-identified White and Black designers, and those produced by highly-identified White designers were the least critical (Rieck et al., 2016). Thus, we expected differences in perceptions of racism and race-relevant policies to vary by racial identification of the designer as a category (black vs white) and level (highly vs lowly identified). For perceptions of racism, results indicated a marginal 3-way interaction between designer race, attachment, and glorification [b = 0.55, SE = 0.32, $t(132)$ = 1.69, p = .093], see Figure 2. Interestingly, when engaging with posters created by White designers, responses to our racism perception questionnaire hovered below or around the mid-point of the scale. When engaging with BHM posters by Black designers, however, identity profile matters. Not surprisingly, committed proponents (high attachment-high glorification) were less likely than the other identity profiles to both perceive racism in those items and endorse race-relevant policies. Notably, participants with the other "matched" identity profile, indifferent followers (low attachment-low glorification), paralleled those committed proponents. Although these participants report no particular attachment to or positive feelings from their racial group, they reacted to the Black BHM posters in much the same way as those who strongly identify with their racial group on both modes of identification.

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[3] Immediately prior to completing these measures, participants were asked to complete the following sentence: "In terms of racial/ethnic group, I prefer to identify with the label _____." Participants were then asked to briefly describe why they preferred this label. These items were ordered as such to make the participants' own racial identity salient and to ensure participants were thinking of the racial/ethnic identity with which they personally identified.

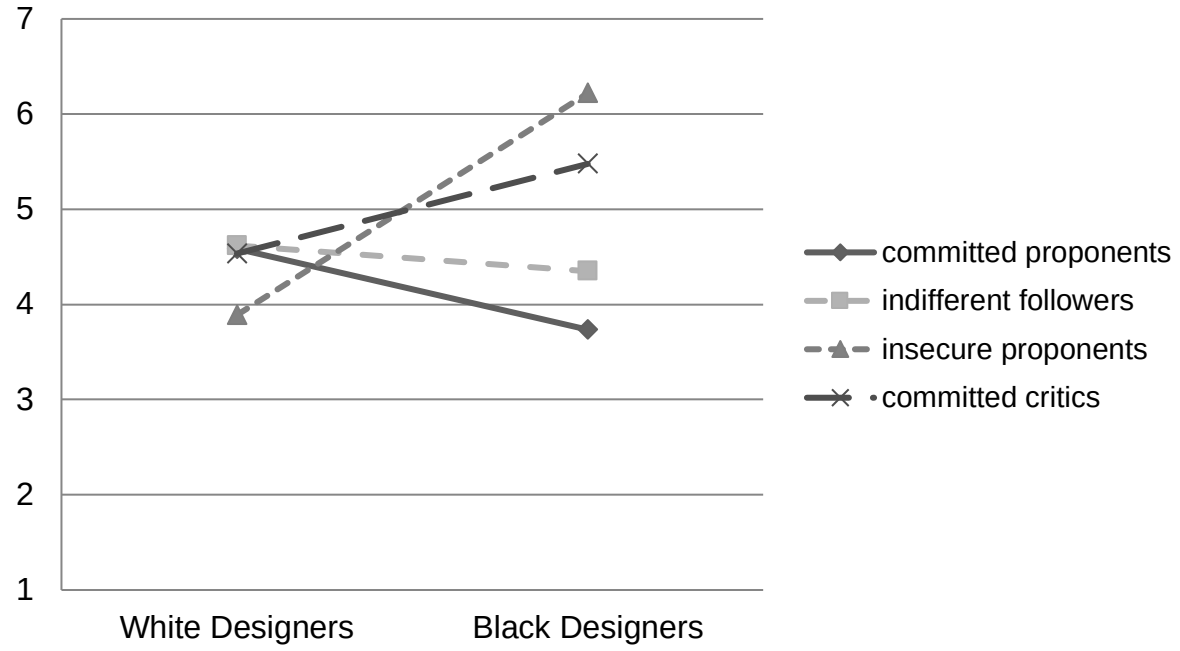

Figure 2. BHM Example: Perceptions of racism in hypothetical scenarios. Values range from 1 to 7.

In contrast, the results for the mixed or mismatched identity profiles looked much different. Again, participants with mixed profiles (blind followers; committed critics) were not very likely to perceive racism after viewing posters created by White designers. Similar to committed proponents and indifferent followers, their responses hovered around the midpoint of the scale. However, this pattern of responses changed dramatically for those participants who viewed posters created by Black designers. In these cases, participants with mismatched identity profiles were more likely to perceive racism in various events. In addition, similar results emerged when we examined the policy items (Rieck et al., 2016). A 4-way interaction indicated that participants with mixed identity profiles more strongly endorsed race-relevant policies in the Black designer conditions, but especially when the Black designer was lowly identified [b = -0.63, SE = 0.34, t(132) = -1.90, p = .097]. Thus, for those with mismatched profiles (or, in our understanding, more psychologically "open" patterns of racial identification), it seems that individual racial identity interacts with the racial identification of poster designers to influence perceptions of individual racism and endorsement of race-related policies. Notably, while prior research suggests that critical history should facilitate perceptions of racism to a greater extent than more sanitized versions (Nelson et al., 2013; Salter & Adams, 2016), it appears that our participants with mixed identity profiles were “open” to critical BHM posters. However, given that policy endorsement was most likely when the poster designer was Black, but lowly identified, perhaps they are only open to critical content as long as it is not too identity threatening.

Empirical Example #2: Creation of Hispanic Heritage Month Posters

As mentioned earlier, we were also interested in exploring the relationship between diversity-relevant engagement and identity profiles with another commemoration activity. Instead of exposure to pre-existing cultural products, we chose to have the participants create a cultural product for Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM). HHM – recognized in the US from September 15 to October 15 – celebrates the histories, cultures, and contributions of American immigrants from the "Hispanic" regions of Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. With the migrant heritages and histories of African Americans and Hispanic Americans in the United States being vastly different from one another, it is perhaps not surprising that HHM also has a distinctly different historical background, feel, and presence from Black History Month. Thus, this study provided an ideal opportunity to manipulate many of our variables of interest, e.g., kind of group identification, target group and outcome, commemoration activity.

In this study, we asked 174 undergraduate participants who self-identified as non-Hispanic to either design a poster for HHM or design a creative, personally relevant poster. Our third condition asked participants, as a control, to create an HHM poster after completing all other study measures. In this case, we asked participants to rate their level of endorsement of strict immigration policies (e.g., "States should have the right to detain anyone without proper identification who is suspected of being in the U.S. illegally"). Higher levels thus indicate a more restrictive and less friendly view of immigration. In contrast to the racial identity measures utilized above, we collected information about participants' national attachment and glorification.

Similar to the BHM study discussed above, we were also interested in utilizing participants' identity profiles to explore our outcome of interest (namely, strict immigration policy endorsement). Even with a different commemorative event, different identity category (nation versus race), and a different engagement activity (creating versus viewing), results in this study paralleled the patterns of results in our first empirical example. Results indicated a significant 3-way interaction between poster condition, attachment, and glorification [b = 0.22, SE = 0.10, $t(170) = 2.14$, $p = .034$], see Figure 3 (data presented as bar graphs for ease of interpretation). Participants with matching identity profiles—the committed proponents and indifferent followers—reacted similarly to our engagement activity and did not vary in their strict immigration policy endorsement when they were creating an HHM poster before complete our measures, creating an HHM poster after completing our measures, or when creating a non-relevant poster in the "creative" condition. In other words, for these identity profiles, engaging in a diversity-relevant activity did not appear to impact their attitudes toward diversity-relevant policies.

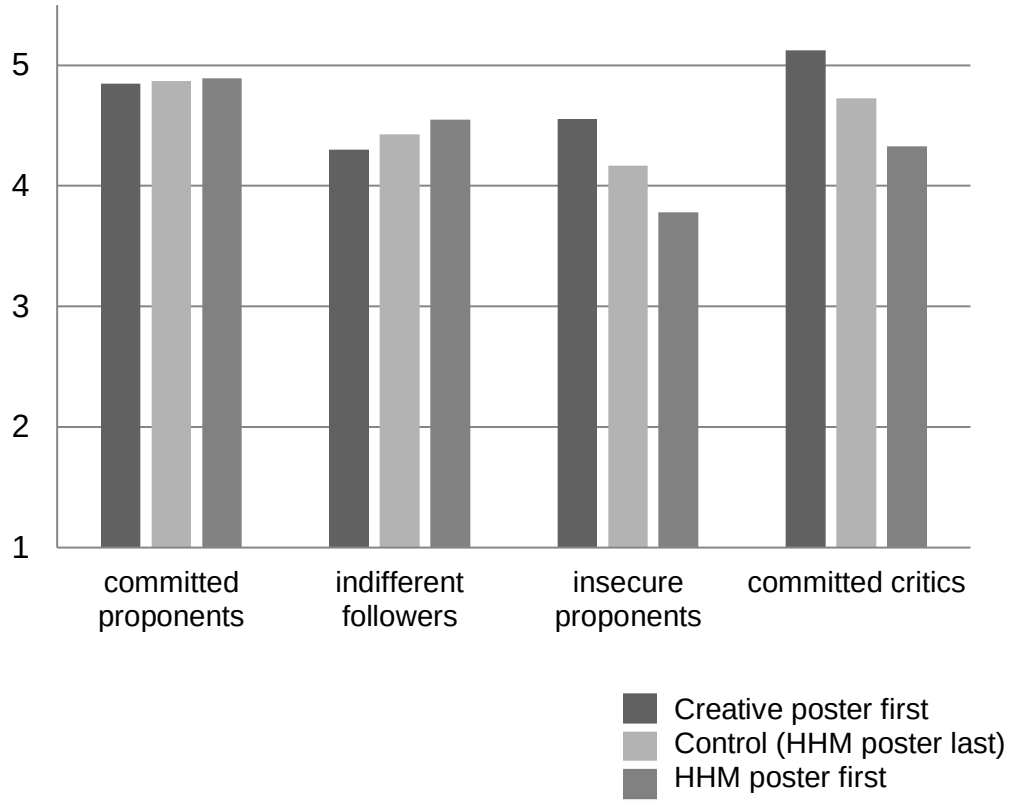

Figure 3. HHM Example: Strict immigration policy endorsement. Values range from 1 to 7.

However, those with mismatched identity profiles (indifferent followers; committed critics) showed a different pattern of responses: they were least likely to endorse strict immigration policies in the HHM poster condition compared to the other two conditions. Notably though, their levels of strict policy endorsement in the control condition were similar to the levels of strict policy endorsement observed in the HHM condition among the committed proponents and indifferent followers (who may be threatened by this activity). Here, it appears that our participants with mixed identity profiles were "open" to the influence of diversity exposure in response to engaging with the HHM commemoration activity; however, with the lack of a diversity cue, these participants responded very similarly to those individuals who are less open to culturally-sensitive information.

Concluding Thoughts

Studying cultural representations in the form of commemorative displays and posters has important implications for the study of culture and diversity. Similar to textbooks (e.g., Aldridge, 2006; Loewen, 1995), museums (e.g., Mukherjee et al., 2015), and other commemorative practices (e.g., Kurtis, Adams, & Yellowbird, 2010; Loewen, 1999),

commemorative posters bear the psychological traces of culturally shaped beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Salter & Adams, 2016). They are indicative of which ideas are selected for and reproduced and which ideas are selected out and ignored. Examining commemorative posters and displays is distinctive though because experts do not necessarily mediate the content in ways that are typical of state or nation-sanctioned textbooks, school curricula, museums, et cetera. Our preliminary work highlights the ways cultural products produced by laypersons can draw upon broader cultural scripts while simultaneously bearing the traces of individual identity concerns. Furthermore, we look at the consequences of exposure. Producers and consumers each have their own identity maintenance concerns, and by utilizing these cultural products we can examine the dynamic interplay between cultural production and consumption.

However, as educators and cultural psychologists, we are concerned with particular forms of cultural production and consumption: namely, those that can and do occur in our classrooms and with our students, many of whom may be engaging culturally critical or challenging material for the first time. We propose that the effectiveness of interventions aimed at increasing multicultural awareness and competence may depend, in part, upon the identity of the recipient. Individuals with both high attachment and high glorification (i.e., committed proponents) may be more susceptible to experiencing group-level threat when engaging with these types of tasks. Exposure to cultural products which highlight historical, and current, social inequality serve as reminders of historical wrongdoing on the part of the group, leading to subsequent defensiveness and increases in racial bias. While individuals low on both attachment and glorification (i.e., indifferent followers) were found to have similar responses as committed proponents, we suggest an alternative underlying mechanism. As these individuals are generally disinterested in their group identification, they may not be motivated to critically examine current or historical social structures and may thus default to responses perceived as normative or appropriate for their in-group.

However, individuals with mixed identity profiles (i.e., insecure proponents, committed critics) may be better able to reap the positive benefits of these types of activities. Ambivalently identified group members may be more open to information that could implicate their group in historical misdeeds, as they already hold conflicting attitudes towards their in-group. Thus, individuals with mixed profiles may be more willing or able to actively engage with cultural products which incorporate critical histories. This suggests a need for multiple and targeted intervention strategies when attempting to reduce racial bias and increase cultural competency. If individuals with matched profiles (particularly committed proponents) are more likely to experience group-level threat, interventions may backfire. Moreover, interventions may be enhanced with the inclusion of activities aimed at reducing the level of threat. For example, prior research suggests that allowing individuals to self-affirm core values may lead to a subsequent increase in perceptions of racism (Adams, Tormala, & O'Brien, 2006; Unzueta & Lowery, 2008). Thus, the inclusion of threat-reducing techniques and activities may allow for students who might otherwise be closed to messages of social inequality may be better able to engage with the information.

The interaction between identity and engagement with cultural products is an area ripe for further investigation. There is value in utilizing a multidimensional model of identification to explore the relationship between cultural production and consumption; yet, much still remains to be explored. Understanding how and why people, particularly dominant group members, respond to diversity-relevant information is vital to tackling the challenges to the status quo that these critical and important histories often pose.

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