

Perceived Entitativity and the Black-Sheep Effect: When Will We Denigrate Negative Ingroup Members?

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ABSTRACT. Although ingroup favoritism is a robust effect, there are notable exceptions. For example, the outgroup extremity effect indicates outgroup derogation, whereas the black-sheep effect indicates ingroup derogation. We propose that perceived entitativity, the degree to which a group is viewed as a unified social entity, may help explain ingroup derogation. Negative ingroup members from high perceived entitativity groups may pose a meaningful threat to the perceiver's social identity that can be alleviated by denigrating the target (i.e., the black-sheep effect). Participants evaluated high or low quality essays attributed to ingroup and outgroup members. Participants did not differentiate based on ingroup/outgroup membership for low perceived entitativity groups. However, when rating high perceived entitativity groups, ingroup extremity emerged. These results confirm and provide explanations for ingroup denigration.

Keywords: black-sheep effect, entitativity, ingroup bias, social-identity

RESEARCH HAS DEMONSTRATED that individuals typically evaluate ingroup members more favorably than outgroup members (Brewer, 1979; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However, when the targets are inconsistent or negative, two contradictory effects have been documented. Evaluations of negative outgroup

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targets may be more extreme or harsh (Linville, 1982; Linville & Jones, 1980); under some circumstances, unfavorable outgroup targets are viewed more negatively than equivalent ingroup targets. In contrast, there is compelling empirical evidence that the opposite pattern (i.e., rating negative ingroup targets more harshly) also emerges (Marques, Robalo, & Rocha, 1992; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988; Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). The current research attempts to reconcile these two effects by examining the *types* of groups for which negative ingroup or outgroup members are rated most extremely and negatively. Specifically, we examine groups that differ in the degree to which they are seen as unified social entities, a construct known as “perceived entitativity” (Campbell, 1958). Some groups can be seen as having a higher degree of “groupness” than others (Abelson, Dasgupta, Park, & Banaji, 1998), and these more “real” groups are argued to have the potential to pose a greater threat to an individual’s social identity than more trivial groups (Sherman, Hamilton, & Lewis, 1999). Drawing on Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978), we argue that individuals should strategically respond to social targets in a manner that helps to maintain a positive social identity, denigrating negative ingroup members when they pose a significant threat to one’s social identity.

One explanation for why individuals generally favor ingroup targets involves the effect such decisions have upon the perceiver’s own identity (Tajfel, 1978). Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) proposed that individuals attain some aspect of their self-definition from the groups to which they belong. Individuals are motivated to see their ingroups in the most favorable light possible in order to maintain a positive social identity. Social identity theory argues that this motivation may help explain bias in favor of the ingroup.

Although in many situations positive bias toward an ingroup target would result in positive social identity implications for the individual passing judgment, that is not invariably the case. For example, an individual may struggle to maintain a positive social identity when faced with an extremely negative ingroup member. The shared group membership might increase our embarrassment at this association (Abrams, Marques, de Moura, Hutchinson, & Bown, 2004). The actions (or existence) of such a negative member may pose a threat to the evaluation of the group as a whole. In this case, an effective tactic might be to bias evaluations of ingroup members in whatever way will salvage the group’s overall image and thus the judge’s self image. That is, a negative ingroup member might be “derogated precisely *because* they are seen as ingroup members” (Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Hogg, 2001, p. 410). Sometimes evaluating an ingroup member harshly might be a strategy to preserve the positive evaluation of the group as a whole.

The research demonstrating negative ingroup extremity supports this argument. For example, the “black-sheep effect” (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988; Marques et al., 1988) occurs when individuals rate the poor performance of an ingroup member

(the “black-sheep”) more negatively than comparable outgroup performance. Marques argues that judgments about ingroup members are more extreme due to identification with one’s ingroup and the resulting social identity implications. When evaluating a positive ingroup member, these evaluations are more favorable than comparable outgroup targets (i.e., the typical ingroup favoritism effect). When evaluating a negative ingroup member, these evaluations are more unfavorable than a comparable outgroup target. Marques argues that, by evaluating negative ingroup members more harshly, individuals are able to preserve the group’s general positivity (Marques et al., 1988). This strategy is claimed to be a “sophisticated form of ingroup favoritism” (Marques et al., 1988, p. 5) and is comparable with the research on subtyping deviants to avoid modifying stereotypes (e.g., Kunda & Oleson, 1995). By classifying a negative ingroup member as a “bad example” (or the “black-sheep” of the group), individuals can justify excluding the deviant member from the overall group evaluation. Such separation allows individuals to preserve existing positivity, without having the ingroup evaluation “brought down” by the negative ingroup member (Castano, Paladino, Coull, & Yzerbyt, 2002).

More recent work has framed the black-sheep effect as a phenomenon consistent with both social identity theory and self categorization theory. Self-categorization theory (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wheterel, 1987) addresses the question of which categorizations will be salient in a given social context. It argues individuals make categorizations that maximize a meta-contrast ratio, maximizing differences between groups while minimizing within group differences. This process is context dependent, and one consequence of an atypical ingroup member could be an increase in within-group variability that may undermine the group boundary. However, the current research is concerned with how group members are evaluated in the context of salient group membership, rather than the process by which we categorize individuals. We do not dispute that an obvious solution to mitigate the threat posed by embarrassing ingroup members would be to recategorize them so that they are no longer included in the group. In fact, this seems a viable strategy. Eidelman and colleagues demonstrated that when participants were afforded the opportunity to reclassify ingroup members before judgment, the black-sheep effect attenuated (Eidelman, Silva, & Biernat, 2006). This strategy might be of limited use, as it is often not feasible to re-categorize a negative ingroup member (Marques, Abrams, & Serodio, 2001, p. 437). As we will not always have the luxury of excluding embarrassing members from our groups, we should consider how they may affect group evaluations.

Subjective group dynamics proposes an evaluative process that simultaneously considers both intergroup and intragroup differentiation (Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998). If we are unable to exclude negative ingroup members, subjective group dynamics argues that they would be evaluated in terms of whether they violate “prescriptive” ingroup norms (Abrams et al., 2004;

Marques et al., 1998). These prescriptive norms of how members should act may be specific to a group stereotype or simply an expectation of general positivity for the ingroup (Marques, Abrams, & Serodio, 2001). Derogation of negative ingroup members may actually reinforce these prescriptive norms and help restore group distinctiveness and solidarity (Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Hogg, 2001).

In contrast to the black-sheep finding, where negative ingroup members are rated most harshly, there is also evidence that the opposite pattern—outgroup negative extremity—occurs. For example, several lines of research have found that White participants judge highly unqualified Black targets in an extremely negative manner (e.g., Feldman, 1972; Linville & Jones, 1980). Linville (1982; Linville & Jones, 1980) proposed that, because people have a less complex representation of outgroup information, judgments about outgroup members will be based on fewer dimensions and thus will be more polarized. Linville and Jones (1980) asked White participants to rate individuals who had been accepted into a prestigious law school. When the individuals performed relatively poorly, Black targets were rated more negatively than comparable White targets. However, Black targets were rated more positively than comparable White targets when their performances were favorable. Both positive and negative Black targets were rated more extremely; negative targets received very harsh evaluations, and positive targets received very favorable evaluations. The fact that negative outgroup members were rated more harshly than negative ingroup members contradicts the black-sheep effect and has been found with groups such as race and gender (Bettencourt, Dill, Greathouse, Charlton, & Mullholland, 1997).

Branscombe, Wann, Noel, and Coleman (1993) presented results that might help account for the seemingly contradictory findings of whether negative ingroup or negative outgroup targets will be rated most harshly. They reported that highly identified sports fans derogated a “disloyal” (and thus unlikable) ingroup member, whereas lowly identified fans did not show this pattern. Similarly, work by Ellemers and colleagues has found that individuals who are highly identified with their group react to an identity threat by attempting to preserve or improve the status of the group as a whole (Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; Spears, Doosje, & Ellemers, 1997). This work also found that lowly identified group members were more likely to distance themselves from the threatened group. Thus, degree of identification with the group may also account for the occurrence of ingroup member derogation versus outgroup member derogation, and has been illustrated in numerous studies (e.g., Biernat, Vescio & Billings, 1999; Castano et al., 2002).

Just as individual differences in identification with or self-importance of a group can affect judgments of negative ingroup and outgroup members, so too can the *type* of group to which an individual belongs. Lickel et al. (2000) identified three major group types: intimacy groups (e.g., families), task groups (e.g., work teams), and social categories (e.g., nationalities). These types of groups differ in many aspects, but perhaps the most important to the present research is the

degree to which they are perceived as unified, coherent entities, referred to as the degree of perceived group entitativity (Campbell, 1958). Intimacy groups have the highest perceived entitativity; task groups also have substantial perceived entitativity; social categories have the least degree of perceived entitativity (Lickel et al., 2000).

The degree of perceived group entitativity has been shown to be related to many key aspects of group impressions, such as importance, similarity, threat, stereotyping, and goal attainment (Abelson et al., 1998; Brewer & Harasty, 1996; Lickel et al., 2000; Yzerbyt, Rogier, & Fiske, 1998). Highly entitative groups, primarily intimacy and task groups, are judged as highly important and goal fulfilling. Social categories, such as race or gender, are not only seen as lower in entitativity, they are generally perceived as less unified, less goal fulfilling, and less important (Lickel et al., 2000).

We propose that this difference in entitativity, inherent to group types, might explain the difference between studies that report ingroup versus outgroup derogation of negative members. Outgroup derogation has emerged in studies that have used social categories as target groups (Linville & Jones, 1980), whereas ingroup derogation (the black-sheep effect) has been reported for groups such as professional affiliations, where the degree of perceived importance and identification is high (Branscombe et al., 1993). According to the Lickel et al. work (2000), these groups are also rated as higher in perceived entitativity.

Highly entitative groups are proposed to have a larger impact upon their member's social identity than less entitative groups (Sherman et al., 1999). If these groups play a larger role in the social identity of their members, the implications of an ingroup member's positive or negative actions should be greater as perceived entitativity increases. Highly entitative groups should have a greater potential to boost or harm an individual's social identity. Negative actions of an ingroup member from an important group may pose a serious threat that the perceiver must take steps to alleviate. If the black-sheep effect is indeed a form of "sophisticated ingroup favoritism" employed to preserve positive group (and hence self) evaluations, this greater threat should evoke a harsher response to the threatening ingroup member. However, a threat from a member of a trivial group might be ignored with few, if any, negative consequences. The question of whether negative ingroup or outgroup members will be evaluated more harshly can perhaps be answered by examining the group's perceived entitativity. We predict derogation of a negative ingroup member (relative to a negative outgroup member) for highly entitative groups but not for groups of low perceived entitativity. We argue that this differential derogation (or "sophisticated" favoritism) may help protect overall ingroup evaluations.

We propose that the discrepancy between cases of negative ingroup and outgroup extremity results from a strategy to maximize positive social identity. The present study employs differing levels of perceived entitativity to predict when denigration of a negative ingroup member (the black-sheep effect) will occur.

Drawing on the research of Lickel et al. (2000), we selected a group that has consistently been rated as high in perceived entitativity: chapters of fraternities and sororities. Our low perceived entitativity group was class sections of introductory psychology, which were large lecture sections with enrollment of at least 200 students. To avoid possible problems of self-selection, participants were concurrently members of both groups and randomly assigned to the high or low perceived entitativity conditions.

An individual faced with a threat from an ingroup member should act in a manner to neutralize that threat. Ingroups that have higher perceived entitativity should have the potential both to bolster and to threaten one's social identity to a greater degree than less entitative ingroups (Sherman et al., 1999). Individuals should be motivated to counteract threats from ingroups with high perceived entitativity to a greater extent than threats from ingroups with lower perceived entitativity.

On the one hand, when evaluating good performance of an ingroup member from the high perceived entitativity fraternity or sorority, the ingroup member has the potential to increase the positive social identity value accrued from membership in that group. Participants should show favoritism to these positive ingroup members. If faced with a "slightly bad" performance, it is conceivable (even likely) that pro-ingroup bias might likewise lead participants to inflate their judgments. On the other hand, an embarrassingly poor performance by an ingroup fraternity or sorority member should pose some degree of threat to the judge because the image of the group might be threatened. With such an unambiguously bad performance, participants should employ strategic evaluations and denigrate the negative ingroup target. When evaluating targets from the high perceived entitativity groups, we predict the direction of ingroup/outgroup preference to reverse when the target's performance is unacceptably low.

What then of the ratings of the performance of ingroup members from the low perceived entitativity sections of introductory psychology? This is an admittedly trivial group. As mentioned above, course sections were large lectures, and the time course of such group membership is limited to the semester. Such a group should have very low perceived entitativity and limited impact upon the self. With groups that are of little importance to the individual, any bias (positive or negative) should have less impact upon the perceiver's resulting social identity. That is, showing ingroup favoritism or denigration should have relatively small utility for trivial groups. Although Linville and Jones (1980) found evidence of denigration of negative outgroup targets and augmentation of positive outgroup targets, we do not predict this pattern. In the absence of pre-existing stereotypes, expectations, or heightened threat (e.g., Lemyre & Smith, 1985), we argue that participants should not differentiate between the low perceived entitativity groups. Neither a negative nor a positive ingroup member may pose enough of a threat or a boost to the individual's social identity to warrant a biased response. When evaluating targets from low perceived entitativity groups, we expect biased evaluations to attenuate.

Method

Participants

Fifty-three undergraduates from a large Midwestern university introductory psychology participant pool were recruited for this study as partial fulfillment of a course requirement. All participants were identified in pre-screening as current members of sororities or fraternities on campus.

Design

Participants were randomly assigned to conditions in a 2 (Target: Ingroup and Outgroup) by 2 (Perceived Entitativity of groups: Low vs. High) by 2 (Quality of essay: Low vs. High) factorial design with target as a within participant factor.

Materials

Two essays that appeared as editorials in the student newspaper were selected and modified so that they could have been written by students at any university. These two well-written essays were used in the high quality condition. Additionally, each of the two essays was degraded for use in the low quality condition. The low quality essays included many typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. Furthermore, sentence and paragraph structure was changed to produce essays that were somewhat incoherent (and unambiguously bad). Thus, the four essays consisted of high and low quality versions of essays written on two topics. Pretesting ensured that the low quality essays were viewed by undergraduates to be of unacceptable quality, and that the quality of essays did not vary as a function of the topic.¹

Procedure

Screening and recruitment. All participants completed a mass survey administered during the first few weeks of the semester. Included in this survey was a question asking whether the respondent was a member of a fraternity or sorority. If they were members of a Greek organization they were also asked to give the name of their chapter and the length of their membership. Those who indicated that they belonged to a Greek organization were contacted by phone or email and invited to complete the study. They were told that they were eligible to participate in the study based on their responses to the mass survey, but not the selection criterion. During the scheduling process, we also determined their introductory psychology section. This information allowed the preparation of stimulus materials that idiosyncratically and unobtrusively manipulated the operative ingroup and outgroup for each participant.

Experimental session procedure. Participants were scheduled to complete the study individually. Upon arriving at the lab, they were told that the experiment examined how writing abilities varied among different groups. In the low perceived entitativity condition, participants were informed that we were interested in the writing abilities of students enrolled in different sections of introductory psychology. In the high perceived entitativity condition, participants were informed that we were examining the writing abilities of students in different fraternities and sororities. They were asked to fill out a brief demographic sheet that asked them, among other things, to indicate whether they belonged to a Greek organization, and if so, which one (high perceived entitativity); or to indicate the section of introductory psychology in which they were enrolled (low perceived entitativity). This information was requested to increase the plausibility of the target individuals' group manipulations as well as to make it appear that we did not already know the participant's group membership.

After completing the demographic information, participants were asked to critically read and evaluate essays that had been collected in a previous study. The essays were one-page papers allegedly turned in to various classes during the previous semester. In the low perceived entitativity condition, the essays were supposedly collected from students currently enrolled in introductory psychology at the university who participated earlier in the semester. In the high perceived entitativity condition, the essays were supposedly collected at another large Midwestern university with the cooperation of their local interfraternity council. The high perceived entitativity condition used individuals at a different university to explain why participants did not personally know the ingroup target, because the targets were presented as belonging to the same fraternity/ sorority as the participants.²

Participants were then led to an individual cubicle to complete the remainder of the experiment. They were given two sets of materials that each contained a demographic cover sheet similar to the one they had filled out, the essay attributed to the target, and questions about their evaluation of the essay. Participants were required to transfer an identification number from the cover sheet to their response sheets, ensuring that they had to read the information. The target group membership was manipulated using this demographic sheet. For the ingroup target, the author of the essay was identified as either being currently enrolled in the same section of introductory psychology as the participant (low perceived entitativity) or in the same fraternity or sorority as the student at another university (high perceived entitativity). The outgroup target was either currently enrolled in a different section of introductory psychology (low perceived entitativity) or was a member of a Greek organization (high perceived entitativity) that was not represented at the university. Both targets were always the same gender as the participant.

The essays attached to the cover sheets were both either the high quality or the low quality versions discussed above. After reading each essay, participants

were asked to indicate the overall quality of the essay on a nine-point scale. The order of targets (i.e., ingroup, outgroup) was counterbalanced, as was the assignment of essay topics to target. After rating the second essay, participants were debriefed and asked not to discuss the details of the study with anyone who might complete the study.

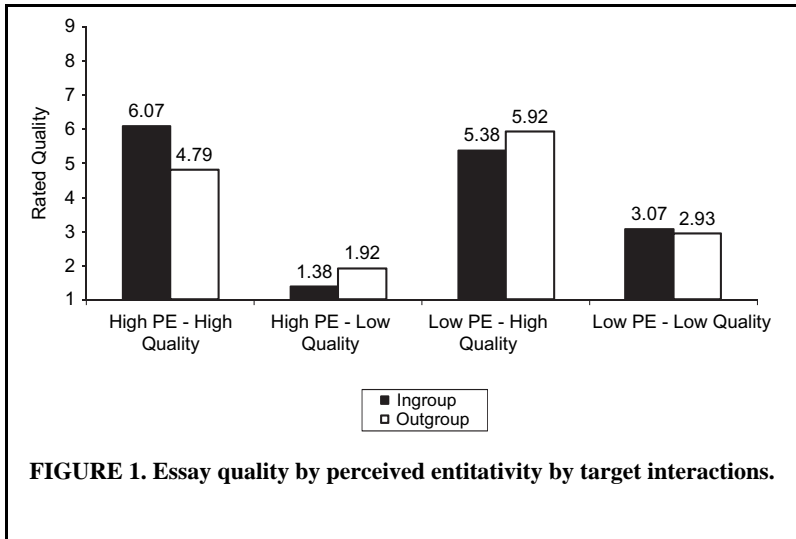
Results

The data were analyzed with a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ mixed analysis of variance with essay quality and perceived entitativity as between participants factors, and target (ingroup versus outgroup) as a within participants factor. As expected from our manipulation, participants rated the essays more positively when they were in the high quality condition compared with the low quality condition (means of 5.54 and 2.38 for high versus low quality, $F(1,51) = 132.92$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .723$). Participants also rated the essays less favorably when they were attributed to authors from groups with high perceived entitativity as compared with low perceived entitativity (means of 3.61 and 4.23 for high versus low perceived entitativity, $F(1,51) = 7.94$, $p = .007$, $\eta^2 = .135$). The perceived entitativity of the groups interacted with the quality of the essay ($F(1,51) = 4.04$, $p = .050$, $\eta^2 = .073$). High quality essays were judged equally regardless of whether the authors were from high or low perceived entitativity groups (means of 5.43 and 5.65 for high versus low perceived entitativity, $t(51) = .56$, $p = .289$), whereas low quality essays were rated significantly worse when they were attributed to authors from high perceived entitativity groups (means of 1.65 versus 3.0 for high versus low perceived entitativity, $t(51) = 3.4$, $p = .001$).

The critical predicted three-way interaction among target (ingroup and outgroup), perceived entitativity, and essay quality was marginally significant ($F(1,51) = 3.82$, $p = .056$, $\eta^2 = .070$). As predicted by our central hypothesis, when evaluating targets from the high perceived entitativity groups, the expected pattern of ingroup extremity emerged, showing a positive bias toward the ingroup member as opposed to the outgroup member when evaluating high quality essays (mean difference = 1.29) and a negative bias against the ingroup member when evaluating the low quality essays (mean difference = $-.54$), $t(51) = 2.0$, $p = .025$. However, when evaluating targets from the low perceived entitativity groups, participants did not differentiate between ingroup and outgroup members as a function of essay quality (mean differences of $-.54$ and $.13$ for high versus low quality, $t(51) = .75$, $p = .228$). This interaction is displayed in Figure 1.

Discussion

These data correspond to the predicted pattern of results, namely that ingroup extremity (i.e., harsh evaluation of negative ingroup targets and more favorable evaluations of positive ingroup targets) should emerge only for groups that have high



perceived entitativity. Groups that have higher perceived entitativity are argued to possess a higher “social identity value” (Sherman et al., 1999). Extremely negative ingroup members should pose more of a threat when they belong to a group with a greater potential impact upon our self-concept or social identity. Individuals rating the high perceived entitativity groups evaluated the ingroup high quality essay most positively and the ingroup low quality essay most negatively. This moderate effect ($\eta^2 = .070$) is consistent with our argument that black-sheep from high entitativity groups pose a more serious threat than negative members of trivial groups.

In the present study, essay quality clearly explained much of the variability within our data ($\eta^2 = .723$), and this powerful main effect might have masked other findings. When evaluating essays from the low perceived entitativity groups there was no differentiation between ingroup and outgroup essays, a finding somewhat surprising given the numerous findings of pro-ingroup bias in minimal group settings (e.g., Tajfel et al., 1971). If anything, means for the high quality essays showed a small, although not statistically significant ($p = .792$), tendency to favor the outgroup essay. We suspect that these low perceived entitativity groups have a negligible impact upon the perceiver’s social identity. Therefore, the advantages to the self for biased interpretation (positive or negative) may be too small to warrant the employment of such strategies. Although this lack of differentiation seems at odds with the results of minimal group studies (e.g., Tajfel et al., 1971), there is evidence that the categorization process in a minimal group paradigm induces uncertainty or self-esteem threat (Lemyre & Smith, 1985). This threat is argued to lead to a need to boost self-esteem by affiliating or showing bias in favor of an ingroup (e.g., just as one is more likely to BIRG when threatened, Cialdini et al., 1976). As the group manipulation in the low perceived

entitativity condition consisted of participants' pre-existing sections of introductory psychology, the uncertainty associated with categorization in the minimal group paradigm is unlikely to have been present.

Admittedly, the current research infers group-based threat based on previous literature rather than measuring perceptions of threat or self-esteem. Several interpretations of social identity theory include an aspect of the self-esteem implications of social identity (e.g., Hogg & Abrams, 1990). Self-esteem can be viewed as either an outcome of social differentiation (e.g., Oakes and Turner, 1980) or as an independent variable that would affect levels of differentiation (e.g., Hogg & Sunderland, 1991). The empirical evidence on the self-esteem component of social identity theory is mixed (for reviews see Long & Spears, 1997; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998). Although the current study does not address self-esteem, if the black-sheep targets are denigrated because of an individual level threat, then such threat should emerge on appropriate self-esteem measures. Future research including direct measures of self-esteem or identity threat could clarify the mechanism driving the ingroup denigration reported in this paper.

Regardless, the data are consistent with the premise that the presence and direction of ingroup bias is dependent on the importance or entitativity of the target groups. In the absence of an external threat there is little, if any, benefit to showing bias when evaluating targets from a trivial ingroup. Ingroup bias (both positive and negative) emerged only when the groups were more entitative and arguably central to the participants' self-images. This finding complements the research by Branscombe et al. (1993) that demonstrated ingroup denigration only for ingroups with which individuals were highly identified. We can thus predict whether the black-sheep effect will occur as a function of individual differences in identification (Branscombe et al., 1993) or by considering the perceived entitativity of various types of groups—as demonstrated in the current research. Whether due to characteristics of the perceiver or characteristics of the group, when the social target has greater identity implications, denigration of negative ingroup members occurs.

Limitations and Conclusions

There are concerns that the manipulation of entitativity in this study (specifically, the use of Greek chapters from another university) is problematic. We selected chapters at a different school to increase the plausibility of the essay manipulation out of a concern that participants would know all the members of their local chapter and therefore that no one had participated in the essay collection study discussed in the manipulation. Although using Greek chapters from another school calls into question whether they would be viewed as "real" and highly entitative, anecdotal evidence such as reactions to hazing incidents at other universities implies that a chapter of one's fraternity or sorority at another university still has clear social identity implications. The post-hoc manipulation check

confirmed that even though the Greek groups were from another university, they were still seen as higher in entitativity than sections of a university class.

A related concern is that levels of identification (e.g., Branscombe et al., 1993) could still account for the differences found in this paper. It is possible that participants were more identified with the high entitativity groups. As discussed previously, several studies have determined that higher levels of identification magnify the black-sheep effect (Branscombe et al., 1993). Although identification and entitativity are strongly related concepts, they are not interchangeable. Castano and colleagues demonstrated that entitativity can fully mediate levels of group identification (2003). The current study did not measure individual differences in group identification, choosing rather to manipulate entitativity by selecting different target groups. As all of our participants were simultaneously members of both the high and low perceived entitativity groups and were randomly assigned to conditions, we feel that any resulting differences in identification can be argued to be related to the type of group. Future research addressing these concerns will help strengthen the conclusions we are drawing in this paper.

We have demonstrated that the black-sheep effect as well as ingroup favoritism emerged only for groups that had strong social identity implications for the perceiver. We argue that the differences in perceived entitativity may help explain the contradictory findings of whether negative ingroup or outgroup members will be rated more harshly. In the present research, participants were confronted with embarrassingly poor performances and were told that the purpose of the study was to look for differences in academic and writing ability among different fraternities or sections of introductory psychology. In the high perceived entitativity condition, this threat was sufficient to induce denigration of the embarrassing ingroup target, presumably to counteract the negative implications for the ingroup (Marques et al., 1988). The high perceived entitativity sorority and fraternity chapters have a large impact upon the members' social identity (and potentially their self-esteem). The possibility of the poor performance being seen as typical for the ingroup presumably posed a great threat that individuals countered using the black-sheep effect.

In the absence of sufficient threat, there is no need to denigrate an ingroup member. Ingroup favoritism is highly normative (Horwitz & Rabbie, 1982; McCool, 1999). Furthermore, there is a cost associated with being "disloyal" to the ingroup. Branscombe et al. (1993) found that disloyal group members were evaluated harshly, especially when they were evaluated by fellow ingroup members. Given the potential costs associated with denigrating an ingroup member, we argue that individuals must feel a real and meaningful threat to the self before engaging in such behavior.

NOTES

1. Eighty participants pre-tested the essays in a 2×2 between subjects design. The "high quality" essays were rated significantly higher in quality than the "low quality" essays, $F(1,76) = 46.67, p < .001, \eta^2 = .380$. There was no main effect of essay topic,

($F(1,76) = .05, p = .824$), nor essay topic by essay quality interaction ($F(1,76) = .311, p = .579$). Planned comparisons were conducted to ensure comparability of the essays. The two high quality essays did not significantly differ from each other (means of 6.3 and 6.4, $t(76) = -.12, p = .452$). Likewise, the two low quality essays did not significantly differ from each other (means of 3.7 and 3.3, $t(76) = .45, p = .327$).

2. Twenty-four participants evaluated the perceived entitativity of either fraternity chapters at a different school or sections of a business statistics class in a post-hoc manipulation check. Participants rated the entitativity of both an ingroup and an outgroup in either the Greek organization or classroom group condition, using the 6-item entitativity composite from Denson et al. (2006). These data were analyzed in a 2×2 mixed analysis of variance, and showed a significant difference in perceived entitativity ($F(1,22) = 5.9, p = .024, \eta^2 = .211$). As expected, fraternity members rated a chapter of their fraternity at another university as higher in perceived entitativity than members of an unrelated fraternity (means of 5.18 and 4.17 for ingroup versus outgroup). These ratings were higher than students evaluating class section (means of 3.72 and 3.71 for ingroup versus outgroup).

AUTHOR NOTES

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