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John T. Jost
Diana Burgess

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John T. Jost
Diana Burgess
Stanford University

It is argued that members of low status groups are faced with a psychological conflict between group justification tendencies to evaluate members of one's own group favorably and system justification tendencies to endorse the superiority of higher status outgroups. In Study 1, members of low status groups exhibited less ingroup favoritism and more ingroup ambivalence than did members of high status groups. Perceptions that the status differences were legitimate increased outgroup favoritism and ambivalence among low status groups, and they increased ingroup favoritism and decreased ambivalence among high status groups. In Study 2, the belief in a just world and social dominance orientation increased ambivalence on the part of women toward female victims of gender discrimination, but they decreased ambivalence on the part of men. Evidence here indicates that system-justifying variables increase ingroup ambivalence among low status group members and decrease ambivalence among high status group members.

It was at one time an assumption of the fledgling field of intergroup relations that members of disadvantaged groups could not help but internalize society's biases against them and to adopt certain preferences for other, more advantaged groups (e.g., Allport, 1954/1958; Lewin, 1941). The hypothesized result was a kind of inferiority complex at the group level (Bettelheim, 1960; Sarnoff, 1951; Sartre, 1948/1976). Psychoanalytically inspired work by Anna Freud, Bruno Bettelheim, and others on the phenomenon of "identification with the aggressor" suggested that among victims of injustice and deprivation, there was an implicit "resentment against one's own kind, who are, however unintentionally, the reasons for one's suffering" (McGuire, 1985, p. 265). This was also the conclusion reached by Clark and Clark (1947), whose research on African American children's preferences for White dolls is among the most influential social psychological work in history from the standpoint of social policy (e.g., Allport, 1954/1958). For more than 3 decades, social scientists documented the extent to which "self-hatred," as it was originally called, encumbered minority groups low in social status (inter alia, Gregor & McPherson, 1966; Jahoda, Thompson, & Bhatt, 1972; McNaught, 1988).

Kurt Lewin (1941), like Clark and Clark (1947), sought to normalize the twin phenomena of ingroup derogation and outgroup favoritism by explaining them in terms of the social environment faced by disadvantaged groups. He noted that although "self-hatred appears to be a psychopathological phenomenon...modern psychology knows that many psychological phenomena are but an expression of the situation in which the individual finds himself" (p. 197). Allport (1954/1958), too, in writing about the historical plight of African Americans, argued that they have heard so frequently that they are lazy, ignorant, dirty, and superstitious that they may half believe the accusations, and since the traits are commonly despised in our western culture...which, of course, Negroes

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The notion that members of disadvantaged groups internalize the cultural values and stereotypes of the very social system that oppresses them is a constant thread in Marxist theorizing on topics of dominant ideology, cultural hegemony, and false consciousness (e.g., Gramsci, 1971; Lukács, 1971; Marx & Engels, 1846/1970). Drawing on this theoretical tradition, Jost and Banaji (1994) proposed that outgroup favoritism among groups low in social standing is due to system justification tendencies to defend the ideological integrity of existing social systems, even at the expense of personal and group interests. Tendencies to accept existing social arrangements as fair and legitimate are not necessarily in conflict with tendencies to develop positive social identities (e.g., Tyler & Degoeij, 1995), except when members of disadvantaged groups must choose between the interests and esteem of their own group (group justification) and the rationality and fairness of the social system (system justification). Under these circumstances, group members are faced with—at the very least—a certain amount of ambivalence concerning their group membership.

A number of methodological and substantive objections have been raised against the pioneering research conducted by Clark and Clark (e.g., Banks, 1976). Subsequent research has tended to find that African Americans possess, if anything, higher personal self-esteem than do European Americans (Crocker & Major, 1989; Porter & Washington, 1993), although the connection to stereotypes and other group-level beliefs is less clear. A number of field studies—even recently—indicate that many low status groups continue to engage in system justification and to display preferences for higher status outgroups (e.g., Brown, 1978; Hewstone & Ward, 1985; Mlicki & Ellemers, 1996; Skevington, 1981; Sniderman & Piazza, 1993).

Reviews of the experimental literature on intergroup relations similarly reveal strong evidence of outgroup favoritism among members of groups that are assigned to positions of low status (e.g., Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Jost & Banaji, 1994). None of this is to say that all low status groups exhibit outgroup favoritism, only that it is an observable social phenomenon deserving of explanation. The research reported here addresses the possibility that members of disadvantaged groups are faced with a psychological conflict between group justification tendencies to develop and promulgate favorable images of their own groups, on one hand, and system justification tendencies to accept the legitimacy of the status quo, to blame fellow ingroup members for their low status, and to endorse the superiority of higher status outgroups, on the other (see also Jost, in press; Jost & Thompson, in press).

One of the ways in which social identity theory has handled the effects of status differences on intergroup behavior has been to focus on the relevance of dimensions on which intergroup comparisons are made (e.g., Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992; Spears & Manstead, 1989; van Knippenberg, 1978). Specifically, it has been suggested that members of low status groups may accept their inferiority and engage in outgroup favoritism on dimensions that are highly relevant to the status differences, but they may exhibit ingroup favoritism on irrelevant dimensions as a way of compensating for an otherwise negative social identity. Skevington (1981), for instance, examined intergroup relations among professional nursing groups that differed in status and found that low status group members judged the other group to be more intelligent, ambitious, responsible, organized, and confident than their own group, but they saw themselves as more cheerful, thoughtful, happy, and practical than the outgroup.

From a system justification perspective, one unintended consequence of this state of affairs may be to increase ideological support for the system of status differences, insofar as the superiority of the high status group is granted on dimensions that matter most for the status differences (Jost & Banaji, 1994). Members of low status groups may feel better by alleging their superiority on irrelevant dimensions, but the original status difference goes unchallenged. Thus, the relevance of the comparative dimension was considered to be a potential moderator of ingroup and outgroup favoritism among high and low status groups in Study 1, suggesting that the enhancement of social identification (or group justification) and system justification are not always incompatible goals, even among members of low status groups (see also Jost, in press). A major goal of the present research was to explore the theoretically related possibility that conflicts between group and system justification motives also result in greater attitudinal ambivalence on the part of individual members of low status groups, especially on attributes that are directly relevant to the status differences.

Ambivalence Toward the Ingroup

According to system justification theory, members of low status groups are faced generally with an incompatibility between group justification motives to favor members of their own group and system justification motives to accept the legitimacy of the status quo and to favor members of high status outgroups (Jost, in press; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Thompson, in press). There is no corresponding conflict between group and system justi-
fication tendencies for members of high status groups because both types of tendencies pull for ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation. Consistent with this proposition, research by Jost and Thompson (in press) suggests that the group-based dominance and (system-justifying) anti-egalitarian components of social dominance orientation (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) are more highly intercorrelated for European Americans than for African Americans. Other evidence that disadvantaged group members experience a high degree of ambivalence with regard to social identification comes from a replication by Fine and Bowers (1984) of Clark and Clark’s (1947) original finding that African American children express ambivalent attitudes toward Black dolls and experience some degree of confusion around issues of racial self-identification.

Most previous research on the subject of ambivalence toward social groups has focused on the ambivalent attitudes held by members of relatively high status groups toward relatively low status groups (e.g., Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986). Katz and his colleagues (Hass, Katz, Rizzo, Bailey, & Eisenstadt, 1991; Katz & Hass, 1988), for example, have argued that because of a psychological conflict between egalitarian values and a commitment to the Protestant Work Ethic, European Americans often hold ambivalent attitudes toward disadvantaged groups such as African Americans. High status perceivers also have been found to hold ambivalent attitudes toward lower status groups such as women (Glick, Diebold, Bailey-Werner, & Zhu, 1997; Glick & Fiske, 1996; MacDonald & Zanna, 1998) and the physically disabled (Katz, 1981). Much less research attention has been given to the possibility, explored here, that members of low status groups may hold ambivalent attitudes about their own group.

In the present research, decisions about how to operationalize attitudinal ambivalence were guided by Priester and Petty’s (1996) analysis of dominant and conflicting attitudinal responses. Three empirically validated measures of attitudinal ambivalence discussed by these authors were used in the present research. All three measures employ mathematical formulae for calculating objective levels of ambivalence on the basis of participants’ independent judgments on positive (e.g., intelligent) and negative (e.g., unintelligent) dimensions, which are then translated into dominant and conflicting responses. The Similarity Intensity Model (SIM) described by Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin (1995) conceptualizes ambivalence as a joint function of similarity (the extent to which dominant and conflicting reactions are similar or different from one another) and intensity (the extent to which either or both reactions are relatively extreme in themselves). This is the measure that has been used most often in prior investigations of ambivalence on the part of high status groups toward members of low status groups (e.g., Glick et al., 1997; Glick & Fiske, 1996; MacDonald & Zanna, 1998). A second measure, known as the Conflicting Reactions Model (CRM), treats ambivalence in terms of the extremity of the conflicting reactions only, without taking into account the dominant reaction (Kaplan, 1972). A third measure, favored by Priester and Petty (1996), is referred to as the Gradual Threshold Model (GTM), and according to this procedure, ambivalence is operationalized as a function of both conflicting and dominant reactions when the conflicting component is relatively weak, but when conflicting reactions are above a certain threshold, ambivalence is considered to be a function of the conflicting reactions only. By using three distinct methods of calculating ambivalence, we sought to maximize convergent validity in assessing the nature of attitudinal ambivalence on the part of high status and low status groups.

It was hypothesized that among members of psychologically meaningful groups that are low in social status (for whom at least moderate levels of social identification/group justification motives are present), ambivalence toward the ingroup would be intensified as system justification motives are increased. In Study 1, the low status ingroup was composed of fellow students at one’s own university, who were said to be less socioeconomically successful than students at a rival university. In Study 2, the basis for status distinctions was gender; women constituted the lower status ingroup in the context of a gender discrimination lawsuit. System justification was operationalized in the first study as perceived legitimacy of the socioeconomic differences (see also Jost, in press), and it was operationalized in the second study in terms of individual difference measures—specifically, the belief in a just world and social dominance orientation. It was hypothesized that for members of groups that are high in social status, ambivalence would be related negatively to system justifying variables insofar as group justification and system justification motives are complementary for high status groups. System justification variables, in other words, should reduce ambivalence among high status groups, but they should increase ambivalence among low status groups, especially on status-relevant dimensions of comparison.

Variables of System Justification

According to a system justification analysis of intergroup relations, members of groups that are low in social or material standing should exhibit ingroup derogation and outgroup favoritism to the extent that they perceive the overarching social system to be fair, legitimate, and
justifiable (e.g., Jost, in press; Jost & Banaji, 1994). In support of this point, an influential study by Turner and Brown (1978) found that members of a low status group exhibited outgroup favoritism under conditions that conveyed either legitimacy or stability; the only situation in which they failed to show outgroup favoritism was when the status system was perceived to be both illegitimate and unstable. More recently, a study by Ellemers, Wilke, and van Knippenberg (1993, Experiment 1) indicated that the illegitimate assignment of a group to a low status position resulted in enhanced ingroup identification, although no effects were observed on ingroup favoritism per se and no measures of ingroup ambivalence were taken.

Although the studies carried out by Turner and Brown (1978) and Ellemers et al. (1993) do suggest that outgroup favoritism among low status groups is linked to perceptions of legitimacy, there are at least three ways in which the significance of this connection might be expanded. First, all three of these studies measured ingroup and outgroup favoritism with the use of point-allocation matrices; none of them addressed people's evaluative beliefs about the characteristics of the ingroup and the outgroup. From the standpoint of system justification theory, stereotypes and other social judgments are instrumental to the legitimation of social and economic differences between groups (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990; Jackman & Senter, 1983; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Major, 1994). The present research examines effects of social status on evaluative beliefs about the characteristics of ingroup and outgroup members (Study 1) and on feelings directed at an individual ingroup member who is posing a threat to the system (Study 2).

A second way in which the present research goes beyond past research is that previous operationalizations of illegitimacy involved an apparent act of capriciousness or impropriety on the part of the experimenter. Although the perceived legitimacy of specific authority figures is an important predictor of social and political attitudes (e.g., Tyler, 1997), it also is possible for people to have generalized attitudes about the fairness and legitimacy of hierarchical systems such as those involving income differences among various social groups (e.g., Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Lane, 1962). These types of legitimacy appraisals are measured in Study 1. In addition, there are individual difference variables that are designed to gauge generalized attitudes concerning system justification motives. These include Rubin and Peplau's (1975) Belief in a Just World scale and Pratto et al.'s (1994) Social Dominance Orientation scale, both of which were administered in Study 2.

A third way in which the present research extends previous conceptualizations of the effects of social status on attitudes toward ingroups and outgroups is to focus on ambivalence as a function of the conflict between group and system justification motives. To the extent that members of low status groups are torn between allegiances to their own groups, on one hand, and the tendency to perceive the overarching system to be fair and just and legitimate, on the other hand, their attitudes should reflect a degree of ambivalence that is not present for members of high status groups. By looking at ambivalence on status-relevant and status-irrelevant attributes separately, it is possible to distinguish genuine attitudinal ambivalence, that is, truly conflictual attitudes, from a kind of artifactual ambivalence that might arise from the fact that members of low status groups tend to exhibit outgroup favoritism on status-relevant dimensions and ingroup favoritism on status-irrelevant dimensions (e.g., Spears & Manstead, 1989; van Knippenberg, 1978). In other words, the psychological conflict between the demands of the group and the demands of the social system is hypothesized to take place on a trait-by-trait basis, and it is not resolved solely by evaluating groups differently on relevant and irrelevant traits. Furthermore, variables associated with increased system justification, such as perceived legitimacy, belief in a just world, and social dominance, also should be associated with increased ambivalence on the part of low status groups and decreased ambivalence on the part of high status groups. It is reasonable to expect that such patterns would be stronger on status-relevant than status-irrelevant attributes insofar as the conflict between group and system justification should be most salient when one considers attributes that are closely related to the status system.

OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

The present research was designed so that the effects of social status and system justification could be examined on attitudes toward the ingroup and outgroup. Study 1 used an experimental procedure whereby relative socioeconomic status was manipulated via false feedback at the group level. Study 2 made use of gender as a real-world status distinction in the context of a hypothetical university dispute involving gender discrimination. System justification was operationalized as perceived legitimacy of the socioeconomic success differences in Study 1 and as just world and social dominance beliefs in Study 2. It was hypothesized that, in general, ambivalence toward the ingroup would be greater among members of low status rather than high status groups and that system justification tendencies would moderate the expected relation between group status and ambivalence such that system justification would increase ambivalence among members of low status groups but decrease ambivalence among members of high status groups.
In an experimental study, University of Maryland students received bogus information suggesting that University of Maryland alumni (the ingroup) achieve either greater or lesser socioeconomic success (as measured by average postcollege financial incomes, career advancement, status of professions entered, and admissions to graduate and professional schools) than do University of Virginia alumni (the outgroup). Participants were asked to complete evaluative ratings of the ingroup and the outgroup, along with a measure of perceived legitimacy of the system of socioeconomic success differences, to assess the effects of socioeconomic status and perceived legitimacy on ambivalence toward the ingroup and on ingroup versus outgroup favoritism.

**STUDY I**

*Overview*

In an experimental study, University of Maryland students received bogus information suggesting that University of Maryland alumni (the ingroup) achieve either greater or lesser socioeconomic success (as measured by average postcollege financial incomes, career advancement, status of professions entered, and admissions to graduate and professional schools) than do University of Virginia alumni (the outgroup). Participants were asked to complete evaluative ratings of the ingroup and the outgroup, along with a measure of perceived legitimacy of the system of socioeconomic success differences, to assess the effects of socioeconomic status and perceived legitimacy on ambivalence toward the ingroup and on ingroup versus outgroup favoritism.

**METHOD**

*Participants*

One hundred and thirty-one University of Maryland students volunteered for the experiment to satisfy a course requirement for introductory psychology. Of the 118 participants who disclosed gender information, 61 were female and 57 were male. Participation took place in groups that ranged in size from 6 to 11 persons. Before arriving, people knew only the duration and title of the experiment, which was billed as “The Inter-Collegiate Study of Abstract Thought.”

*Procedure*

**Overview.** Every participant received an experimental booklet that contained all of the following: (a) a cover sheet explaining the ostensible purpose of the study, which was to compare Maryland and Virginia students on a variety of dimensions related to verbal reasoning and socioeconomic success; (b) a table of data allegedly demonstrating the existence of socioeconomic success differences between graduates of Maryland and Virginia; (c) a scale measuring perceptions of legitimacy of the socioeconomic success differences; (d) a task of abstract verbal reasoning in which participants evaluated the quality of several thought lists, strengthening the credibility of the cover story; and (e) measures of evaluative beliefs about Maryland and Virginia student populations, from which ingroup favoritism and ingroup ambivalence could be calculated.

**Independent Variable Manipulations**

*Manipulation of socioeconomic success.* Shortly after their arrival, participants were informed that the study in which they were about to participate was part of a larger research project involving other public universities (such as the University of Virginia) and that the aim of the research was “to understand why differences in social and economic success exist between graduates of different colleges and universities.” Approximately half of the participants (n = 62) read statistics indicating that Maryland graduates were significantly less successful in terms of socioeconomic achievement than were Virginia graduates (low status condition), whereas the statistics read by the other half (n = 69) indicated that Maryland students were significantly more successful than Virginia graduates (high status condition). The statistics included information concerning average financial income, career advancement and promotions, status of professions entered, rates of admission to graduate and professional schools, and years of postgraduate education completed (see Jost, in press).

**Dependent Measures**

*Check on the manipulation of socioeconomic success.* Soon after being informed about the alleged socioeconomic differences between Maryland and Virginia graduates, participants were asked to respond to the following question: “Do you think that Maryland students’ social and economic success is greater or less than that of Virginia students?” Respondents were asked to circle a number on a 15-point scale ranging from much less to much greater.

*Perceptions of legitimacy.* Participants were asked how fair or unfair, how justifiable or unjustifiable, and how legitimate or illegitimate the socioeconomic success differences between Maryland and Virginia graduates were. All of these ratings were made on 15-point scales ranging from extremely unfair to extremely fair. A general index of perceived legitimacy was calculated by averaging across the three items (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .71$).

*Ambivalence toward the ingroup.* To measure ambivalence toward the ingroup, participants were asked to indicate how intelligent and how unintelligent, how hardworking and how lazy, how skilled and how unskilled at verbal reasoning, how friendly and how unfriendly, how honest and how dishonest, and how interesting and how uninteresting each of the two groups are in general. All evaluations were made on rating scales ranging from 0 (not at all) to 9 (extremely). By eliciting independent judgments of favorable and unfavorable poles for each attribute, it was possible to calculate three different measures of ambivalence (see Priester & Petty, 1996; Thompson et al., 1995).

Following Priester and Petty (1996), dominant (D) and conflicting (C) attitudinal components were identified for each pair of trait ratings (e.g., intelligent vs. unintelligent). For example, if the ingroup received a 7
for the rating of intelligent and a 4 for the rating of unintelligent, then $D = 7$ and $C = 4$. The three methods of calculating ambivalence (SIM, CRM, and GTM) are presented below. (For elaborations and derivations of these formulae, see Priester and Petty [1996].)

SIM: Ambivalence (SIM) = $3C - D$

CRM: Ambivalence (CRM) = $2C$

GTM: Ambivalence (GTM) = $5C^3 - D^{1/3}$, (where 1 is added to C and D to avoid division by 0).

An ambivalence score was calculated for each individual research participant and for each attribute pair (e.g., intelligent/unintelligent) according to the above three formulae. Overall ambivalence toward the ingroup was then calculated by taking the means of the ambivalence scores across each of the six attribute dimensions. Thus, ambivalence was calculated in a within-participants fashion for each trait independently before aggregating across traits and across research participants. This means that ambivalence is a property of individual respondents rather than a property of the group as a whole.

**Ingroup favoritism.** Research in social identity theory has demonstrated that members of low status groups frequently exhibit outgroup favoritism on status-relevant dimensions of comparison but they compensate for this potential threat to identity by exhibiting ingroup favoritism on status-irrelevant dimensions. To measure ingroup favoritism on relevant attributes, ratings of friendly/unfriendly, honest/dishonest, and interesting/uninteresting were used.

Ingroup favoritism was calculated by subtracting unfavorable ratings from favorable ratings for each of the two groups and then by subtracting outgroup ratings (Virginia) from ingroup ratings (Maryland) and dividing by the number of dimensions. Following this procedure, positive scores reflect ingroup favoritism and negative scores reflect outgroup favoritism. Principal components analysis (using oblique rotation) of ingroup favoritism scores on the six dimensions yielded a two-factor solution, such that ratings of intelligence, industriousness, and skillfulness at abstract verbal reasoning loaded exclusively on Factor 1 with loadings greater than .75, whereas ratings of friendliness, interestingness, and honesty loaded exclusively on Factor 2 with loadings greater than .70.

**RESULTS**

*Check on the manipulation of socioeconomic success.* As a check on the manipulation of socioeconomic success, participants were asked whether they believed Maryland students’ social and economic success to be greater or less than that of Virginia students. As expected, Maryland students’ success was judged to be greater relative to that of Virginia students in the high status condition ($M = 10.71$) as compared with the low status condition ($M = 6.11$). Analysis of variance confirms that the manipulation was extremely successful, as indicated by a huge main effect of ingroup status, $F(1, 130) = 112.07, p < .0001$.

**Perceptions of legitimacy.** A main effect of ingroup status on perceived legitimacy was obtained, $F(1, 130) = 4.61, p < .05$. Members of high status groups perceived the system of socioeconomic success differences between groups to be more fair, legitimate, and justifiable ($M = 8.83$) than did members of low status groups ($M = 8.05$).

**Ambivalence toward the ingroup.** Three major indexes of attitudinal ambivalence were used in this research: the SIM, the CRM, and the GTM. As can be seen in Table 1, ambivalence directed at the ingroup was higher for members of low status groups than for members of high status groups. For all three measures, differences due to status of the ingroup were statistically reliable, as determined by $t$ test results presented in the last column of the table. Thus, strong support was obtained for the hypothesis that members of low status groups exhibit stronger attitudinal ambivalence than do members of high status groups, presumably because group justification motives are in conflict for low status groups but are complementary for high status groups (c.f. Jost & Thompson, in press).

Some readers might worry that the greater ambivalence exhibited by low status group members is a methodological artifact related to the tendency for low status group members to display ingroup favoritism on status-irrelevant dimensions and outgroup favoritism on status-relevant dimensions (e.g., Mullen et al., 1992). Because the procedure for calculating ambivalence scores involves first computing an ambivalence score for each attribute pair (e.g., honest/dishonest) and then averaging ambivalence scores across attribute pairs, differences due to status of the ingroup on relevant versus irrelevant ingroup favoritism cannot account for the ambivalence findings. Nevertheless, there are theoretical as well as methodological reasons for investigating status differences with respect to ambivalence on relevant and irrelevant dimensions separately.

Repeated measures analyses were conducted to examine main and interaction effects of ingroup status (high vs. low) and attribute relevance (relevant vs. irrelevant) for each of the three measures of ambivalence. In every case, both main effects and the interaction effect attained statistical significance. For the SIM measure, for example, there was a main effect of status such that $F(1,$
129) = 4.29, p < 0.05, a main effect of attribute relevance such that F(1, 129) = 12.09, p < .001, and an interaction between status and relevance such that F(1, 129) = 6.99, p < .01. For the CRM measure, the results were very similar; there were main effects of status, F(1, 129) = 5.62, p < .02, and relevance, F(1, 129) = 16.07, p < .0001, as well as an interaction effect, F(1, 129) = 4.88, p < .03. For the GTM measure, the F values were, respectively, 4.19 (p < .05), 8.98 (p < .05), and 6.29 (p < .05), with degrees of freedom again equal to 1 and 129. In all cases, members of low status groups exhibited greater attitudinal ambivalence than did members of high status groups, both groups showed greater ambivalence on status-relevant traits, and the difference between high and low status groups was more pronounced on relevant than on status-irrelevant traits. As can be seen from the comparisons of means presented in Table 2, differences between high and low status groups are statistically significant for status-relevant attributes only.

It was hypothesized that for members of low status groups, ambivalence toward the ingroup would be associated positively with the perception that the socioeconomic differences between the groups were legitimate. Collapsing across relevant and irrelevant attributes, all three measures of ambivalence were indeed found to correlate positively with perceived legitimacy of the socioeconomic success differences for members of low status groups. These correlations are presented in the top panel of Table 3, along with Z scores for the difference between correlations for high and low status groups (Howell, 1992). For members of high status groups, by contrast, the three measures of ambivalence correlated negatively with perceived legitimacy, although these correlations were weaker in magnitude than those obtained for the low status groups. For all three measures of ambivalence, correlations between perceived legitimacy and ingroup ambivalence differed reliably between low status and high status groups.

Examining relevant and irrelevant traits separately, it appears that the above patterns are again stronger for...
status-relevant than for status-irrelevant attributes. As can be seen in Table 3, the differences in correlations between high and low status groups attain statistical significance for all three of the ambivalence measures with respect to relevant attributes. For irrelevant attributes, only one of the three comparisons is statistically significant.

All of these findings support the notion that low status group members are faced with a psychological conflict between group and system justification motives and that the strength of this conflict is associated with increased ideological acceptance of the status quo. For members of high status groups, however, ingroup ambivalence was found to relate negatively (albeit nonsignificantly) to perceived legitimacy of the socioeconomic differences. Thus, as predicted, ambivalence toward the ingroup was associated with greater system justification among members of low status groups, and it was associated with lesser system justification among members of high status groups. These effects were stronger on status-relevant dimensions than on status-irrelevant dimensions.

**Ingroup favoritism.** To identify the effects of ingroup status, perceived legitimacy, and attribute relevance on ingroup favoritism, a 2 (high vs. low ingroup status) × 2 (high vs. low perceived legitimacy) × 2 (relevant vs. irrelevant attributes) mixed-design analysis of variance was conducted, with repeated measures on the last factor. A median split was performed on perceived legitimacy scores (Mdn = 8.67) to create a categorical variable for this analysis. The resulting analysis yielded a marginal interaction between ingroup status and perceived legitimacy, a reliable main effect due to attribute relevance, and a reliable interaction involving ingroup status and attribute relevance.

Regardless of attribute relevance, ingroup status interacted with perceived legitimacy to predict ingroup favoritism in general, F(1, 120) = 3.68, p < .06, as predicted on the basis of system justification theory (see also Jost, in press). When perceived legitimacy is high, members of high status groups exhibit greater ingroup favoritism (M = +89) than do members of low status groups, who exhibit outgroup favoritism (M = −60), a difference that is highly reliable, F(1, 56) = 11.50, p < .001. When perceived legitimacy is low, however, there is no difference between high (M = +36) and low (M = +40) status groups in terms of ingroup favoritism (F < 1). Correlational analyses indicate that for members of low status groups, perceived legitimacy is related negatively to ingroup favoritism on both relevant (r = −.36, p < .01) and irrelevant (r = −.32, p < .05) attributes. For members of high status groups, perceived legitimacy is related positively to ingroup favoritism, although the correlation reaches significance for irrelevant attributes (r = +.25, p < .05) but not for relevant attributes (r = +.18, ns).

A main effect of attribute relevance was obtained, F(1, 120) = 28.72, p < .001, indicating that ingroup favoritism was greater on irrelevant (M = +.96) than on relevant (M = −.25) attributes. This was qualified by a significant interaction between attribute relevance and ingroup status, F(1, 120) = 25.73, p < .001. In accordance with expectations derived from social identity theory, members of low status groups showed strong outgroup favoritism on attributes that were considered relevant to the status differences (M = −1.20) and strong ingroup favoritism on attributes that were considered irrelevant (M = +1.33), a difference that was found to be highly reliable, F(1, 58) = 40.19, p < .001. However, members of high status groups did not show greater ingroup favoritism on relevant (M = +.54) compared to irrelevant (M = +.63) attributes (F < 1), as also has been suggested (e.g., van Knippenberg, 1978).

**DISCUSSION**

In a first study, it was demonstrated that an experimental manipulation of socioeconomic success leads members of a real-world group to display greater ingroup ambivalence when their group occupies a relatively low status position compared with a relatively high status position. Furthermore, perceived legitimacy of the status differences was related positively to ingroup ambivalence for members of low status groups, but it was related negatively to ingroup ambivalence for members of high status groups. These effects were stronger for status-relevant than status-irrelevant dimensions of comparison. Members of low status groups exhibited outgroup favoritism on relevant attributes and ingroup favoritism on irrelevant attributes, whereas members of high status groups exhibited ingroup favoritism on both types of attributes. Perceptions of legitimacy also increased the discrepancy between high and low status groups in terms of ingroup versus outgroup favoritism.

**STUDY 2**

To further explore the connection between group status and attitudinal ambivalence, a scenario study was conducted in which men and women were asked about their positive and negative feelings toward a female plaintiff who was launching a gender discrimination lawsuit against her university. It was hypothesized that system-justifying variables such as belief in a just world and social dominance orientation would be positively related to ambivalence toward the female target person among women and negatively related to ambivalence among men. Thus, Study 2 made use of preexisting status differences between men and women and chronic ideological beliefs about system justification.
Overview

Male and female participants received an experimental booklet that contained (a) a cover sheet describing the ostensible purpose of the study, which was to survey college students about the "university experience"; (b) a fictional newspaper article that described a female undergraduate who was suing her university for gender discrimination; (c) measures of positive and negative feelings toward the female plaintiff from which ambivalence could be calculated; (d) measures of feelings toward the university from which ambivalence toward the system could be calculated; and (e) the Social Dominance Orientation scale (Pratto et al., 1994) and the Belief in a Just World scale (Rubin & Peplau, 1975), both of which served as individual difference measures of system justification.

METHOD

Participants

Seventy-nine undergraduate students (51 women and 28 men) at the University of Minnesota volunteered for the experiment in exchange for extra credit in their introductory psychology course.

Procedure

Scenario. Participants were presented with a brief newspaper story about a woman named Ann who was suing her university for gender discrimination based on the fact that she was denied acceptance into an honors program. The plaintiff was described as a strong candidate who was better than average on some dimensions and below average on other dimensions. According to the story, Ann had been told by the administration that, although her verbal Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores were higher than the average student in the program, her math SAT scores were significantly lower than those of other honors students. After discovering that men were accepted to the honors program at a rate that was much higher (18%) than the rate for women (5%), Ann confronted the program director with these statistics. The program director's response was that the discrepancy in acceptance rates reflected differences in actual qualifications. This response was perceived as unsatisfactory to Ann, and it prompted her to seek legal action against the university in an effort to gain acceptance into the honors program.

Ambivalence toward the female plaintiff. Participants were asked to answer seven questions about positive and negative feelings toward the female plaintiff. An index of positive feelings toward the plaintiff (α = .94) was created by averaging responses to the following four items: "I respect Ann for suing the university," "I feel supportive of Ann," "I feel proud of Ann," and "I feel bad for Ann." An index of negative feelings (α = .89) was created by averaging the following three items: "I feel angry at Ann for charging the university with discrimination," "I feel that Ann has been unfair to the university," and "I feel ashamed of Ann." All judgments were made on rating scales ranging from 0 (not at all) to 6 (a great amount). The same three measures of ambivalence (SIM, CRM, GTM) used in Study 1 were computed from the indexes of positive and negative feelings toward the plaintiff.

Ambivalence toward the university system. In addition to measuring ambivalence toward Ann, ambivalence toward the university system also was measured. Participants responded to seven questions about their feelings toward the larger system—in this case, the university that was the target of the lawsuit. An index of positive feelings toward the university (α = .82) was created by averaging responses to the following four items: "I feel proud of the university for standing its ground," "I feel bad for the university for having to contend with yet another lawsuit," "I feel that the university has been quite fair," and "I feel bad for university students who will have to pay the price for this lawsuit." An index of negative feelings (α = .92) was created by averaging the following three items: "I feel angry at the university for discriminating against women," "I feel disappointed at the university," and "I feel ashamed of the university." Ratings were again made on scales ranging from 0 (not at all) to 6 (a great amount), and ambivalence scores were calculated by recoding positive and negative emotional reactions into dominant and conflicting responses and then following the equations listed in the Method section for Study 1.

Overall evaluation of the female plaintiff. Overall attitudes toward the female plaintiff were computed by subtracting for each participant the mean score on the index of negative feelings from the mean score on the index of positive feelings.

Overall evaluation of the university system. Attitudes toward the university system were likewise computed by subtracting scores on the index of negative feelings toward the plaintiff from the mean score on the index of positive feelings.

RESULTS

Ambivalence toward the female plaintiff. As in Study 1, attitudinal ambivalence was calculated using the SIM, the CRM, and the GTM. Ambivalence directed at the female plaintiff was slightly higher among women (Ms = −.35, 2.04, and 4.22, respectively) than among men (Ms = −1.10, 1.66, and 3.63, respectively) for all three measures, but none of the gender differences reached conventional levels of statistical significance.
between the belief in a just world and all three measures for women, there were significant positive correlations for women, whereas the belief in a just world was found to be a significant predictor of the attitudes of women but not men (see Table 4).

**Ambivalence toward the university system.** Ambivalence toward the system was found to be significantly higher among women than among men for all three measures: (a) for SIM, women were more ambivalent ($M=2.20$) than men ($M=.23$), $t(77)=-2.45, p<.05$; (b) for CRM, women were more ambivalent ($M=3.80$) than men ($M=2.58$), $t(77)=-2.16, p<.05$; and (c) for GTM, women were more ambivalent ($M=6.55$) than men ($M=4.62$), $t(77)=-2.85, p<.05$. Thus, it seems that when directed to think about the system that is responsible for gender inequality, women but not men are pulled by contradictory forces of group justification and system justification.

When one investigates the relation between social dominance orientation and ambivalence toward the system, gender differences again emerge. For men, there are significant negative correlations between social dominance orientation and all three measures of ambivalence toward the system (see Table 5) such that higher social dominance scores are associated with less ambivalence toward the university administration that is being charged with sexism. For women, these correlations are positive but nonsignificant. Differences between men and women in terms of the nature of the association between social dominance orientation and ambivalence toward the system (see Table 5) suggest that group justification and system justification motives work differently for high status and low status group members. The belief in a just world was not associated with ambivalence toward the university administration, plausibly because items on the scale focus more on attributions for individual-level outcomes than with systemic factors per se.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

For decades, research in social science has addressed the circumstances in which members of low status groups find themselves (e.g., Allport, 1954/1958; Lewin, 1941; Sarnoff, 1951). One tradition of research suggests that such groups cannot help but internalize society's

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**TABLE 4: Correlations Between System Justification Variables and Attitudes Toward the Female Plaintiff Among Women and Men (Study 2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation with social dominance orientation</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Difference (t score)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward female plaintiff (SIM)</td>
<td>+.23</td>
<td>-.39**</td>
<td>-2.65**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward female plaintiff (CRM)</td>
<td>+.23</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>-2.72**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward female plaintiff (GTM)</td>
<td>+.21</td>
<td>-.52**</td>
<td>-3.17****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall evaluation of female plaintiff</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation with just world beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward female plaintiff (SIM)</td>
<td>+.44****</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward female plaintiff (CRM)</td>
<td>+.34**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward female plaintiff (GTM)</td>
<td>+.36**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall evaluation of female plaintiff</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: SIM = Similarity Intensity Model, CRM = Conflicting Reactions Model, and GTM = Gradual Threshold Model. Z score difference tests are two-tailed.

*p < .10, **p < .05, ****p < .005.

As hypothesized, all three measures of ambivalence were found to correlate positively with social dominance orientation among women, and they were found to correlate negatively with social dominance orientation among men (see top of Table 4). In all cases, correlations between social dominance orientation and ambivalence toward the female plaintiff differed reliably according to gender of the respondent. Women who were high in social dominance orientation were more likely to express ambivalence toward Ann, whereas men who were high in social dominance orientation were less likely to express ambivalence toward her. There was no reliable difference between men and women in terms of the correlation between social dominance orientation and the overall evaluation of Ann. As in Study 1, this suggests that attitudinal ambivalence may be a more subtle measure than evaluation per se, and it may be more responsive to psychological conflicts between group and system justification motives.

Paralleling the results with regard to social dominance orientation, there also were differences between men and women in terms of the association between just world beliefs and attitudinal ambivalence. In particular, for women, there were significant positive correlations between the belief in a just world and all three measures of ambivalence toward the female plaintiff (see bottom of Table 4). For men, correlations between the belief in a just world and ambivalence toward Ann approached 0. In all cases, tests of differences between women and men with regard to correlations between just world beliefs and attitudinal ambivalence attained statistical significance. As with social dominance orientation, no gender effects were observed with regard to correlations between belief in a just world and global evaluations of the plaintiff. Future research might do well to follow up on the fact that social dominance orientation was a significant predictor of the attitudes of men but not women, whereas the belief in a just world was found to be a significant predictor of the attitudes of women but not men (see Table 4).
TABLE 5: Correlations Between Social Dominance Orientation and Attitudes Toward the System Among Women and Men (Study 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation With Social Dominance Orientation</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Difference (Z score)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward system (SIM)</td>
<td>+.14</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>-2.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward system (CRM)</td>
<td>+.10</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>-2.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence toward system (GTM)</td>
<td>+.05</td>
<td>-.51***</td>
<td>-2.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall evaluation of system</td>
<td>+.12</td>
<td>+.38</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: SIM = Similarity Intensity Model, CRM = Conflicting Reactions Model, and GTM = Gradual Threshold Model. Z-score difference tests are two-tailed.
**p < .05, ***p < .01.

Unfavorable images of them (e.g., Clark & Clark, 1947; Fine & Bowers, 1984; McNaught, 1988; Snideman & Piazza, 1993). The system justification perspective proposes that members of disadvantaged groups at times even perform ideological work on behalf of the system, rationalizing inequality at the expense of personal and group interests (e.g., Jost, in press; Jost & Banaji, 1994). A second, complementary tradition of research suggests that members of low status groups find new and creative ways of maximizing favorable ingroup images and identifications despite the impact of social stigma (e.g., Ellemers et al., 1993; Spears & Manstead, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

An integration of these distinct theoretical perspectives leads to the supposition that members of low status groups are faced with a psychological conflict between incompatible motives to accept the legitimacy of the status quo and to engage in system justification, on one hand, and to compensate for a potentially negative social identity by displaying ingroup favoritism and other group justifying behaviors, on the other hand. Work by Jost and Thompson (in press) supports the notion that group and system justification tendencies are less compatible for members of low status than high status groups. The studies reported here extend these observations in several ways.

First, ambivalence toward the ingroup was found to be higher for members of low status than high status groups in Study 1, especially on status-relevant dimensions of comparison. More important, ingroup ambivalence on the part of low status groups was associated with greater system justification, as operationalized by perceived legitimacy in Study 1 and as the belief in a just world and social dominance orientation in Study 2. Obviously, there are limitations that are intrinsic to correlational designs. Future research would do well to clarify whether ambivalence toward the ingroup causes an increase in system-justifying responses or, conversely, whether ingroup ambivalence is caused by system justification. The individual difference measures employed in Study 2 seem to support the latter possibility, but both directions of causality are plausible and experimental designs would be required to assess them independently.

Second, strong evidence was obtained in Study 1 for the notion that members of low status groups exhibit outgroup favoritism on relevant dimensions of intelligence, industriousness, and verbal reasoning abilities and they exhibit ingroup favoritism on irrelevant dimensions of honesty, friendliness, and interestingness. These results buttress theoretical and empirical arguments made by social identity theorists over the years (inter alia, Mullen et al., 1992; Skevington, 1981; Spears & Manstead, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; van Knippenberg, 1978). Thus, one way in which disadvantaged group members may attempt to reconcile group and system justification needs is by accepting (and even embracing) status inequality and by taking solace in the belief that they are advantaged in other ways (e.g., Lane, 1962).

Other findings from the present set of studies help to elaborate and refine when members of low status groups will support the status system by displaying outgroup favoritism and when they will reject it by displaying ingroup favoritism. Perceived legitimacy appears to be a crucial variable, as suggested by prior research in the social identity tradition (e.g., Ellemers et al., 1993; Turner & Brown, 1978). The studies reported here extend earlier insights in that they address general ideological perceptions concerning the systemic fairness, justifiability, and legitimacy of socioeconomic differences between groups (as opposed to the legitimacy of individual authority figures) and in that they apply perceptions of legitimacy to evaluative beliefs about the characteristics of ingroup and outgroup members and to the phenomenon of ingroup ambivalence.

The present research advances knowledge concerning the psychology of legitimacy and its relation to intergroup relations (e.g., Major, 1994; Tyler, 1997) in several other ways as well. Study 1 demonstrated that perceptions of legitimacy increase ingroup favoritism and decrease ingroup ambivalence among members of high status groups but decrease ingroup favoritism and increase ingroup ambivalence among members of low status groups. Study 2 demonstrated that individual difference variables that are related to ideological tendencies to legitimize social arrangements are also strong predictors of ambivalent attitudes toward ingroup members who pose threats to the social system, which is the kind of situation in which group and system justification motives might be expected to conflict.

Prior evidence indicates that attitudinal ambivalence results in a polarization of judgments so that ambivalence toward fellow ingroup members might well mani-
fest itself in terms of preferential treatment as well as scapegoating and discrimination. For example, people who hold ambivalent attitudes toward women have been shown to evaluate them in ways that are alternately idealizing and demonizing (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Ambivalent attitudes also lead to what Katz (1981) referred to as "response amplification." Racial ambivalence facilitates the scapegoating of some African American targets and very favorable evaluations of other African American targets (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Hass et al., 1991). According to Katz (1981), response amplification serves the function of reducing the cognitive dissonance or intrapsychic conflict that occurs when both positive and negative components of ambivalent attitudes are activated. Amplifying either the positive or the negative response to the target enables the perceiver to resolve the temporary conflict caused by the ambivalence.

From the perspective of system justification theory, attitudinal ambivalence and response amplification directed at members of low status groups may stem from conflicts among ego justification, group justification, and system justification motives (see Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, in press). For example, the motivation to uphold a favorable self-image as an unprejudiced person (ego justification) may conflict with the desire to improve the status or outcomes of fellow ingroup members (group justification), which may or may not conflict with the motivation to believe that the status quo is fair and just (system justification). Although research on the significance of these conflicts is still at a relatively early stage, it seems likely that there are consequences at the level of the social system in addition to consequences at the individual and group levels of analysis. Psychological conflicts among ego, group, and system justification motives probably serve to inhibit meaningful social change, in addition to producing cognitive dissonance in individuals and decreasing solidarity in groups, insofar as such conflicts render people less capable of taking clear and direct action against the sources of inequality in society.

REFERENCES


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