Maintaining the status hierarchy: The effect of threat on perceptions of reappropriated racial

slurs

by

Conor James O'Dea

B.S., Kansas State University, 2013
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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Abstract

Racial slurs are terms that disparage individuals on the basis of their racial group. Interestingly, racial slurs are often reappropriated and used among the targeted group as a means of affiliation rather than derogation (subversive use; Bianchi, 2014). The current studies examined majority group members' resistance to affiliative slur use. Previous research has shown (correlationally) that majority group members higher in socially dominant attitudes perceived a Black individual using "nigga" affiliatively toward a White person as threatening, and this threat was related to more negative perceptions of the reappropriated slur use and greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified (O'Dea & Saucier, revision in preparation). Extending this work, the current studies causally examined these effects by testing whether a high threat prime from Black individuals was associated with more negative attitudes toward a Black individual using a reappropriated term (i.e., "nigga") affiliatively toward a White individual (Study 1) and toward another Black individual (Study 2), compared to a low threat condition or to a control condition. Further, the current studies examined whether participants' existing socially dominant beliefs interacted with threat condition (high threat, low threat, control) in predicting their perceptions of reappropriated racial slur use. Consistent with my hierarchy defense hypothesis, the current findings showed that greater socially dominant attitudes were associated with more negative perceptions of "nigga" used affiliatively by a Black individual toward a White individual (Study 1) but not by a Black individual toward a Black individual (Study 2) which supported my competing hypothesis that intragroup uses of reappropriated racial slurs are not perceived as threatening. These relationships were largely unaffected by threat condition in either study. Further, while people higher in socially dominant attitudes were shown to be more resistant to intragroup uses of racial slurs, people across the spectrum of social dominance did

not perceive slur reappropriation very negatively in either intergroup (Study 1) or intragroup (Study 2) uses. These findings extend previous research on the subversive perspective (Bianchi, 2014). Indeed, slur reappropriation may have a prosocial benefit of helping marginalized groups cope with prejudice (Galinsky et al., 2013) and may even be used to affiliate between groups. However, when used to bridge group boundaries, it may moderately increase highly socially dominant White peoples' negative perceptions of slur reappropriation and their subsequent perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is acceptable.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

"Many Black folks do not advocate and refuse to use the word. That is

their prerogative, it is their choice. They are selected members of that group and

have freely chosen to not mention a word heavily used within that group. The best

analogy I could think of is like a frequent flyer with Delta Airlines being invited

into their First-Class lounge before takeoff but declines because she would rather

be with her husband and kid who cannot get into the lounge because they only

have Economy tickets. The woman is still a part of the frequent flyer group but

simply didn't want to take part in the First-Class lounge activities. This doesn't

mean she isn't a frequent flyer and it doesn't mean that she will continue to reject

offers, it simply means that right now she has chosen not to participate."

The above is a quote from Marcus Donaldson in a written piece on Medium.com

(Donaldson, 2017). What Donaldson is describing is a reality for many Black Americans who

choose to use or not use the term "nigger(a)". Indeed, "nigger" is a term entangled in the history

of discrimination against Black people in the United States. Amid this historical discrimination,

many Black individuals *reappropriated* the use of "nigger." However, the ending of the term was

changed to "nigga". This was done to cope with racial prejudice and to mock White individuals

who were exhibiting discrimination in a way that was non-threatening. Specifically, although

"nigger" and "nigga" are not true homonyms, the sounds of each of these terms in casual speech

is so close that White people assumed that if a Black person used the term "nigga", he or she was

referring to him- or herself colloquially using the socially acceptable (at the time), "nigger."

Thus, there was little backlash for Black individuals and Rappoport (2005) describes this

reclamation of historically derogative language as functioning as an inoculation against

discrimination (see Rappoport, 2005), making Black people less likely to respond aggressively or emotionally when they were targeted by the term by a White person (something that had extremely negative, and often violent, consequences; see Kendi, 2016). Societal norms have shifted in recent decades toward more intolerance of racial and other forms of group-based prejudice. As such, the derogative use of racial slurs has decreased, and their use is perceived negatively (O'Dea, Miller, Andres, Ray, Till, & Saucier, 2015).

That said, Black individuals (and other minority groups) continue to have to cope with prejudice and, while existing literature describes slur reappropriation as slurs being used as terms of endearment rather than derogation, there is less of a societal consensus on the reappropriative use of racial slurs (e.g., "nigga" by Black individuals). Even more important is the lack of empirical work testing perceptions of reappropriated racial slurs. Indeed, while these reappropriative uses are arguably more societally acceptable in modern society than the derogative use of "nigger" by outgroup members (i.e., a White individual using "nigger" toward a Black individual derogatively), these reappropriative uses are contentious among Black individuals, and are also perceived as controversial by White individuals (see O'Dea & Saucier, revision in preparation).

Extending these findings, the goal of the current studies is to further examine majority group members' resistance to reappropriative racial slur use. Previous research has shown correlationally that White individuals higher in racial prejudice experience more threat (specifically threat perceptions that the use of the slur is to subvert and challenge their position in the status hierarchy) following a Black individual using "nigga" reappropriatively toward them (O'Dea & Saucier, revision in preparation). Further, this threat is related to greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified. The current studies will examine these

effects causally by examining whether participants' levels of prejudice interact with a manipulated threat condition (high threat, low threat, or control prime) to predict White individuals' perceptions of racial slurs and the extent to which participants perceive prejudice toward Black individuals as justified. Consistent with previous research, it was predicted that participants' levels of prejudice would interact with threat condition such that higher levels of prejudice would be associated with more negative perceptions of "nigga" used by a Black individual toward a White target (Study 1) when participants are primed with high threat. However, when primed with low threat, it was predicted that participants' levels of SDO would be either unrelated or negatively related to perceptions of reappropriated slur use by a Black individual toward a White individual (Study 1). There are competing hypotheses about White individuals' perceptions of reappropriated slur use by a Black individual toward another Black individual. On one hand, White people may perceive reappropriative slur use as a coping strategy, which presumably will have less of an impact on the minority group's status. As such, this should be less threatening to majority group members' status position and socially dominant attitudes should either be unrelated or negatively related to perceptions of the reappropriative slur use as negative and as a justification for prejudice toward Black people. On the other hand, White people may perceive this slur use as subversive (i.e., being used by Black people to raise their own position in the status hierarchy). If this is the case, higher socially dominant attitudes should be associated with significantly more negative perceptions of the slur and greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black people is justified.

The Social Functions of Racial Slurs

Slurs (e.g., "nigger") are terms that disparage individuals perceived to be an *outgroup* on the basis of their membership in an ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, gender, sex, or

other social group (Archer, 2015; Blakemore, 2014; Henderson, 2003; Henry, Butler, & Brandt, 2014; Leets, 2003; Spotorno & Bianchi, 2015; Vallee, 2014). There are multiple debates in the literature about what slurs are, how they function, and what properties of slurs give them power. While the extant discussion of slurs describes slurs as being proportionally more offensive than non-group-based derogative terms, there is little consensus about what, specifically, gives slurs their power.

One debate discusses the semantic versus pragmatic meaning of slurs. When discussing the derogative power of slurs, researchers have examined the semantic properties of racial slurs compared to other derogative terms and non-derogative terms. Interestingly, there have been highly contentious debates about how racial slurs should be represented in speech. For example, until relatively recently, "nigger" was described in the dictionary as a "Black person" (Himma, 2002). Unfortunately, this definition makes it semantically impossible for someone to be Black without being a "nigger", thereby endorsing the label (Himma, 2002). As social issues have become more at the forefront of public discourse, researchers have begun to examine the differences between racial slurs, racial descriptors, and non-racial derogative terms (see Archer, 2015; Croom, 2008, 2011, 2014; Henderson, 2003; Henry, Butler, & Brandt, 2014; Hom, 2008; Kremin, 2017; Leets, 2003; Spotorno & Bianchi, 2015; Uhlmann, Zhu, & Diermeier, 2015).

Researchers have identified differences between these categories in that racial descriptors (e.g., "Black") describe the race or ethnicity of the target but do so in a non-disparaging way unless used as a race-marking tool in an instance of derogation. Non-group-based derogatives (e.g., "asshole") generally only derogate the targeted individual(s) unless paired with a group-based descriptive term (see O'Dea, Smith, & Saucier, in preparation). For example, non-group-based derogative terms indicate that the target of the slur is despicable and can have negative

impacts on the target (e.g., lower self-esteem). Croom (2011) describes how racial slurs differ

from non-racial derogatives and group-based descriptive terms because they possess both

descriptive and derogative components. Thus, rather than indicating that the target is individually

and idiosyncratically despicable (e.g., "asshole"), Croom notes that a racial slur indicates that the

target is despicable because of a characteristic of themselves that cannot be changed (i.e., their

race), and thus the derogation extends beyond the targeted individual to the broader social group.

Interestingly, while this debate suggests what makes slurs unique from non-group-based

derogative terms, this debate does little to incorporate the historical context of racial slurs or the

effects that situational factors may have on perceptions of slurs.

Some researchers advocate that the power of slurs comes from the historical context in

which they were used and contend this historical context has become woven into the literal

meaning of the term in ways that cannot be undone, independent of how the slurs are used

(Anderson & Lepore, 2013). Although no researchers contend the historical context of slurs does

not affect perceptions of slurs in contemporary society, in recent years there is a growing body of

empirical work that suggests that the offensiveness of slurs is not entirely limited to the semantic

meaning of the terms or the historical context of the terms independent of one another. For

example, previous research has examined perceptions of racial slurs used between friends versus

between strangers and found that slurs used between friends are perceived as substantially less

offensive than racial slurs used between strangers (O'Dea et al., 2015). Although perhaps not a

surprising finding, these results indicate that the perceived offensiveness of racial slurs is

situationally and contextually dependent, and these findings have consistently replicated in a

variety of situations and using a variety of slurs (e.g., O'Dea & Saucier, 2016). Further

supporting the idea that racial slur offensiveness extends beyond historical contexts of the slur,

recent researchers paired racially descriptive terms (e.g., "Black") with non-racial derogative terms (e.g., "motherfucker"), and compared perceptions of these terms in combination (e.g., "Black motherfucker") to traditional derogative slurs (e.g., "nigger"; O'Dea, Smith, & Saucier, in preparation). These findings showed that, while previous researchers have discussed the importance of the historical context of slurs, there were small or non-significant differences in how offensive and negatively expressive the combination terms versus the traditional racial slurs were perceived to be (O'Dea et al., in preparation). Thus, it appears that while the historical denigration of a group is what likely creates and reinforces the negative stereotypes, the negative associations, and the social hierarchies between groups, the collective derogation that comes with the pairing of group-based descriptors with non-group-based derogative terms evoke stereotypic thinking similar to that evoked by historical racial slurs. Thus, it appears that the very properties of racial slurs being used to both express negative emotion toward the target as well as to describe the target are what continue to reinforce the power of racial slurs in contemporary society.

Negative Effects of Racial Slurs

Taken together, racial slurs possess what Croom (2011, 2014) labels as a *conceptual anchor*. While some researchers (e.g., Hedger, 2012; Hedger, 2013) suggest that racial slurs do not function as descriptors in modern society, instead solely functioning as negative expressives; Croom contends that the descriptive component of slurs is not lost, but instead may be precisely what gives slurs their power. This is what allows racial slurs to not just be extremely damaging to individual targets, but also to the entire targeted group. Thus, racial slurs condemn the individual, the group, and, more importantly, indicate that future condemnation is likely to continue because the reason for condemnation (i.e., one's race) cannot be changed (e.g., Citron,

Chein, & Harding, 1950; Graumann, 1998). There are several theories that explain why racial slurs have been, and continue to be, used. However, perhaps the simplest explanations are present in social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and the self-esteem hypothesis (see Abrams & Hogg, 1988).

Social dominance theory explains that discrimination is intended to reinforce and maintain existing hierarchies that people find important (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Groups at the top of this social hierarchy enjoy benefits that lower status groups do not. Further, people higher in support of existing status hierarchies endorse legitimizing myths that reinforce the idea that social groups atop the status hierarchy attained that status by merit rather than some other arbitrary categorization (for additional information on status hierarchy legitimization see system justification theory; Jost & van der Toorn, 2012). By justifying the use of racial slurs, majority group members delegitimize the societal advancement of lower status groups, thereby reinforcing existing status hierarchies.

Similarly, the self-esteem hypothesis predicts that majority groups discriminate more when they feel that their collective self-esteem is in jeopardy, and this discrimination gives a boost to their collective self-esteem (see Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Hunter, O'Brien, & Stringer, 2007). Showing support for this theory, research has shown that people experience threat if they feel that their group's status or collective self-esteem is in jeopardy (Aberson & Gaffney, 2008; Corenblum & Stephan, 2001; Crocker, Thompson, McGraw, & Ingerman, 1987; Gonsalkorale, Carlisle, von Hippel, 2007). By reestablishing social control via the use of racial slurs or other hierarchy enhancing forms of discrimination/derogation, majority group members may be able to maintain or reestablish collective self-esteem (e.g., Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Fritsche & Jugert, 2017; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998).

Taken together, these theories suggest that racial slurs may be used to assert dominance over other racial groups (e.g., Blakemore, 2015; Embrick & Henricks, 2013; Gabriel, 1998; Henry et al., 2014; Kraus, Horberg, Goetz, & Keltner, 2011; Mullen, 2001; Mullen, Rozell, & Johnson, 2001; Palmore, 1962) and may have extreme negative impacts for individuals and groups targeted by the slur. For example, targets of racial slurs experience extreme emotional reactions (Brandt & Henry, 2012; Kremin, 2017; Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002; Schneider, Hitlan, & Radhakrishnan, 2002); negative perceptions and stereotypes about their group are primed (Jeshion, 2013; Merskin, 2010); feel devalued (Kremin, 2017); and experience dehumanization (Graumann, 1998; Haslam, Loughnan, & Sun, 2011; Henderson, 2003; Dodson, 2014).

These slurs can also have longer-term negative impacts on targets of the slur. For example, these slurs bring negative perceptions and stereotypes to mind both in observers of the slur and individuals targeted by the slur (Jeshion, 2013; Merskin, 2010). This can lead to individuals who are targeted by racial slurs to attempt to overcome these negative stereotypes, which can have many negative effects in situations such as in educational settings and the workplace (see stereotype threat theory; Steele, 1997). Although somewhat criticized in recent years, stereotype threat theory combines literatures on social facilitation and stereotypes to describe a pattern of effects that can be extremely damaging to individuals belonging to a variety of groups. Specifically, when negative stereotypes about one or more of an individuals' perceived ingroup(s) are made salient, individuals often fear confirming the negative stereotype. This may put additional stress onto the individual which can decrease performance on more difficult tasks (see social facilitation; Augustinova & Ferrand, 2012; Zajonc, 1965) such as those that may be performed in the workplace. Thus, if a racial slur targets a member of a minority

racial group in the workplace, the targeted individual may experience stressors due to fear of confirming the aroused negative stereotypes, which may inhibit performance and cause observers to make fundamental attribution errors by attributing that failure to personal attributes rather than seeing it as a product of discrimination. Research has empirically supported this process by showing that individuals who are targeted by racial slurs attain lower workplace advancement, report lower job satisfaction, and receive more negative evaluations of targeted individuals in the workplace (Gabriel, 1998; Greenberg & Pyszcynski, 1985; Henry, 2011).

Each of the above effects can also lead to more lasting negative outcomes in individuals targeted by slurs, including negative health concerns (Schneider, Hitlan, & Radhakrishnan, 2002). For example, experiences of discrimination are associated with increased heartrate and blood pressure (e.g., Krieger & Sidney, 1996). These connections may be due to experienced stress from the negative emotions discussed above, but may also be due to physical fears such as interpersonal violence, as research has shown racial slurs are thought of as the defining feature of a hate crime (e.g., Saucier, Hockett, & Wallenberg, 2008). Further, racial discrimination is associated with greater likelihood of engaging in negative health behaviors (e.g., smoking, alcohol dependence; Ladrine & Klonoff, 2000; Taylor & Williams, 2003). Studies have even suggested that these negative health behaviors (e.g., smoking) are potentially ways that individuals choose to cope with discrimination (Ladrine & Klonoff, 2000; Mays, Cochran, & Barnes, 2007). Admittedly, the effects discussed in this paragraph are related to Black individuals' experiences with discrimination in a context wider than the use of racial slurs. However, it is reasonable to expect that being targeted by racial slurs functions similarly to other overt forms of discrimination.

Reducing the Use and Negative Impacts of Racial Slurs

Research examining how to reduce the use or negative impacts of racial slurs is important to reduce or remove the negative outcomes discussed above. In recent decades, society has shifted from greater allowance of overt forms of prejudice, including the use of racial slurs, toward greater intolerance of overt forms of prejudice (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000, Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; McConahay, Hardee, & Batts, 1981; Murrell, Dietz-Uhler, Dovidio, Gaertner, & Drout, 1994; Nail, Harton, & Decker, 2003; Sydell & Nelson, 2000). This has led racial slur use in modern society to be taboo, surprising, easily remembered, and salient (Jay, Caldwell-Harris, & King, 2008; Kensinger & Corkin, 2003) due to the extremity of racial slurs (Holt, 2018; Jeshion, 2013) and the persistence of racial slurs despite societal norms that vilify their use. As linguistic and social psychological researchers have attempted to reduce the use and negative impacts of racial slurs further, two competing perspectives have emerged.

Some authors suggest what I have labeled as a *prohibitive perspective*, asserting that slurs, regardless of circumstance, should never be expressed (see Anderson & Lepore, 2003). The prohibitive perspective asserts that the best way to get rid of slurs is to vilify all uses of slurs under any circumstances (Anderson & Lepore, 2013). Whether being used in a positively expressive way to affiliate, in a negative way to derogate, or as a descriptor meant to indicate someone's ethnicity, this perspective asserts all uses of racial slurs are inappropriate and should be vilified. This norm contends that the offensiveness of a slur is part of the inherent semantic meaning; the negativity cannot be disentangled from its use. Anderson and Lepore (2013) propose that "slurs are prohibited words; and as such, their uses are offensive to whomever these

prohibitions matter" (p. 43). Thus, Anderson and Lepore (2013) contend that racial slurs should not be used in any situation for any reason.

However, other researchers (e.g., Bianchi, 2014; Spotorno & Bianchi, 2015) suggest an *echoic perspective* in which social groups reappropriate and use slurs positively, in direct contradiction to their original meaning, as a way to subvert status hierarchies (e.g., the prosocial use of "nigga" among Black Americans). That said, the term *echoic* is not an ideal term. To echo something means to repeat or parallel (dictionary.com). Thus, proposing an echoic perspective implies that one is simply repeating the term in the same context. On the contrary, Bianchi (2014) describes this perspective as being subversive and in contradiction to the original meaning of the term. Therefore, this perspective should be relabeled to the *subversive perspective* to more accurately describe the phenomenon with implications that reappropriated slurs are used defensively and offensively to counter the negative effects of the terms when used disparagingly, and this terminology will be used throughout the current dissertation. Rappoport (2005) describes the affiliative use of slurs (including in humor) as a shield to cope with and defend against prejudice, functioning as an inoculation. This use of slurs passes along a shared cultural heritage in minority group members' past and current battles against discrimination (Imoagene, 2015; King & Clarke, 2002; Motley & Craig-Henderson, 2007), creates ingroup bonds, and subverts existing status hierarchies (Cupkovic, 2014; Jacobs, 2002) by reclaiming a divisive tool used by racists against minority groups to reinforce status hierarchies. That said, reappropriative uses of slurs, similarly to the derogative uses of racial slurs, have created tension. The affiliative use of "nigga" is contentious among the Black community with some people supporting, and some people discouraging, its use (e.g., Dodson, 2014; King & Clarke, 2002; Motley & Craig-Henderson, 2007).

Each proposed norm (*prohibitive* and *subversive*) contends that the *derogative* use of slurs should be vilified in all circumstances. However, the two proposed norms diverge in their endorsement of slur reappropriation, (i.e., the use of slurs among the group they were once meant to target as a means of affiliation and group bonding). Specifically, the prohibitive norm vilifies these utterances whereas the subversive norm encourages them. Importantly, very little research has empirically tested the validity of the two competing perspectives. The effectiveness of the subversive norm has received some empirical support: Galinsky and colleagues (2013) found that marginalized group members who use reappropriated slurs feel more in control over the slur and report greater perceptions of ingroup power and self-power (Galinsky et al., 2013). Further, some research has shown that majority group members evaluated direct racist speech (i.e., racial slurs) as more harmful than did minority group members (Leets, 2003). Leets (2003) contends this effect may be due to desensitization on the part of minority group members as well as possible guilt and an overestimation/overreaction to the racist speech by majority group members which could theoretically be a result of White individuals attempting to show how non-racist they are (Goff, Steel, & Davies, 2008). That said, for reasons discussed below, while many majority group members may be supportive of reappropriative slur use, certain others majority group members may perceive the reappropriative slur use as being done to advance the status position of minority group members.

Antecedents of Intergroup Threat

There is a wealth of research examining predictors, correlates, and intergroup behaviors associated with intergroup threat that may help explain perceptions by majority group members of reappropriated racial slur use. Broadly, according to social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), groups experience threat when they fear their position in the status hierarchy is

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vulnerable (e.g., Hornsey, Spears, Cremers, & Hogg, 2003). Majority group members fear that

when outgroups advance, they will be competing with more people for what they perceive to be

limited resources (see Conservation of Resources Theory; Hobfoll, 1989; and Instrumental

Model of Group Conflict, Esses et al., 1998). More specifically, researchers have shown that the

increase of outgroup size, or perceptions that outgroup size is increasing, can directly influence

threat due to fears of greater diversity/multiculturalism (Alba, Rumbaut, & Barotz, 2005;

Blalock, 1967; Blumer, 1958; Craig, Rucker, & Richeson, 2018; Herda, 2010; Hogg, 2016; Jost

& van der Toorn, 2012; Outten, Schmitt, Miller, & Garcia, 2012; Pettigrew, Wagner, & Christ,

2010; Putnam, 2007; Schmid, Al Ramiah, & Hewstone, 2014; Semyonov, Raijman, Yom Tov, &

Schmidt, 2004; Skinner & Cheadle, 2016; Zou & Cheryan, 2017). When majority group

members fear that their group is getting comparatively smaller than minority outgroups, they fear

that their social influence may be taken away.

That said, the effects of perceived group size on experiences of threat are also dependent

on other factors. For example, these effects are diminished in people who have a lower national

identity, but are heightened for people who have a higher national identity (e.g., Falomir-

Pichastor & Federic, 2013) or higher ingroup identification (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey,

1999; Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Castano & Yzerbyt, 1998; Christensen, Rothgerber, Wood, &

Matz, 2004; Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995; Doosje, Spears, Ellemers, & Koomen, 1999;

Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Falomir-Pichastor, &

Frederic, 2013; Falomir, Gabarrot, & Mugny, 2009; Gabarrot, Falomir, & Mugny, 2009;

Hutchinson, Jetten, Christian, & Haycraft, 2006; Jetten, Postmes, & McAuliffe, 2002; Jetten,

Spears, & Manstead, 1996; Levine & Campbell, 1972; Simon & Klandersmans, 2001; Tajfel &

Turner, 1986; Voci, 2006; Wohl, Giguere, Branscombe, & McVicar, 2011). The effect of

outgroup size can also be affected by salience, perceived control, and proximity (Enos, 2016; Fossett & Kiecolt, 1989; Giles & Evans, 1986; Pettigrew, 1959; Taylor, 1998). Specifically, when group differences or group sizes are made salient, threat from these groups is heightened (Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992; Sigelman & Niemi, 2001). When majority group members do not feel in control, they also experience threat (e.g., Greenaway, Louis, Hornsey, & Jones, 2014).

Negative contact with outgroups can heighten the negative effects of proximity, salience, control, and group size on threat and prejudice toward outgroups (Aberson & Gaffney, 2008; Corenblum & Stephan, 2001; Crocker, Thompson, McGraw, & Ingerman, 1987; McManus, Saucier, O'Dea, & Bernard, revision under review). Specifically, if interactions (in person or through social media) with outgroup members result in greater perceived danger or greater perceptions that outgroups are trying to change existing values and norms, perceived threat is increased. That said, consistent with the contact hypothesis, if these interactions are positive, perceived threat is lessened (see Hall & Krysan, 2016; MacInnis & Page-Gould, 2015; McManus, Feyes, & Saucier, 2011; Oliver & Wong, 2003; Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton, & Tropp, 2008; Paolini, Harwood, & Rubin, 2010; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Richeson & Shelton, 2007; Schlueter & Scheepers, 2010; Schmid, Al Ramiah, & Hewstone, 2014; Schmid, Hewstone, & Al Ramiah, 2012; Sibley, 2013; Wagner, Christ, Pettigrew, Stellmacher, & Wolf, 2006) and people consequently generally report more positive outgroup interactions and more support for multiculturalism (e.g., Plaut, Thomas, & Goren, 2009; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Verkuyten, 2005, 2011; Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000). However, multiculturalism is a broad concept and, while people may support the general idea, when faced with less ambiguous information that is more specific about how multiculturalism can, will, and does happen, and in particular how multiculturalism efforts and policies will impact them, groups can experience

threat due to perceptions that these efforts and policies promote the welfare of minority groups over majority groups (e.g., affirmative action; Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2014). Applying this to the current examination of reappropriative racial slurs use, if majority group members perceive this racial slur use as promoting the advancement of Black individuals compared to White individuals, they may perceive reappropriative slur use more negatively and, consistent with intergroup threat theory, these perceptions may then function as justification for prejudice (see Justification Suppression Model of Prejudice; Crandall & Eshleman, 2003) toward Black individuals.

Intergroup (formerly integrated; Aberson & Gaffney, 2008; Stephan et al., 2002) threat theory broadly describes the above pattern of effects by which different outcomes associated with outgroup advancement, numerical growth in society, or proximity (e.g., negative stereotypes, negative contact, ingroup identification, conflict, status) are related to significantly greater intergroup anxiety, realistic, and symbolic threats. Each of these indicators of threat then predict significantly more negative attitudes toward outgroups, more discrimination, and greater support for policies that promote majority group members over minority group members (Alexander, 2009; Barlow, Sibley, & Hornsey, 2011; Butz & Yogeeswaran, 2011; Cotrell & Neuberg, 2005; Carvacho et al., 2013; Green et al., 2010; Earle & Hotson, 2018; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2011; Onraet & van Hiel, 2013; Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006; Stephan & Stephan, 2000; Wood & Finlay, 2008).

Showing empirical support for intergroup threat theory, the dual process model of prejudice (e.g., Crawford, 2012; Crawford, Jussim, Cain, & Cohen, 2013; Duckitt, 2006; Duckitt & Sibley, 2010) tested these pathways using individual differences related to socially dominant and authoritarian attitudes. Specifically, the dual process model of prejudice brought together

research on right-wing authoritarian attitudes (RWA; Altemeyer, 1981) and socially dominant attitudes (SDO; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle, 1994) and predicted that these variables are related, but independent predictors of prejudice. RWA refers to the extent to which people believe that existing values and norms in society are important and should not be changed (Altemeyer, 1981), while SDO refers to the extent to which people believe that status hierarchies are important and should be reinforced (Pratto et al., 1994). Since the development of the dual process model of prejudice, researchers have identified symbolic and realistic threats as explanations for the differential relationships that RWA and SDO exhibit with the endorsement of prejudice. Symbolic threat is a threat to one's beliefs and values, while realistic threats include threats to safety, security, and one's resources (Stephan et al., 2002). While each of the two types of threat, their antecedents, and endorsements of prejudice are generally correlated, there has been some empirical support that shows that symbolic threats more strongly mediate the relationships between RWA and prejudice, whereas realistic threats more strongly mediate the relationships between SDO and prejudice (see Duckitt, 2006). That said, these effects are not always consistent. While RWA, SDO, and threat each seem to be valid and reliable predictors of prejudice toward social groups, their differential mediation effects are not always consistent with the original model (see Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009; Miller, Sonnentag, O'Dea, & Saucier, submitted).

Taken together, these findings indicate that majority groups experience threat from outgroups for a variety of reasons, they perceive these outgroups more negatively after they have experienced threat, and they use this threat as justification for their own discrimination against the threatening group to reassert their dominance and position in the status hierarchy. This discrimination often comes in the form of perpetuating legitimizing myths (see system

justification theory; Jost & van der Toorn, 2012), hate crimes (Huddy, Feldman, & Weber, 2007; Skitka, Bauman, Aramovich, & Morgan, 2006), greater conservatism, more explicit prejudice and implicit prejudice toward the threatening group (Craig & Richeson, 2014), lower support for immigration/diversity (Danbold & Huo, 2015; Major, Blodorn, & Blascovich, 2016), and as a way to reassert control and gain a sense of collective self esteem (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Fritsche & Jugert, 2017; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998; see also Downward Comparison Theory; Cadinu & Reggiori, 2002; Steele, 1988; Fein & Spencer, 1997; Costarelli, 2009, 2012; and Self-Esteem Hypothesis; Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Hunter, O'Brien, & Stringer, 2007).

Intergroup Threat and the Subversive Perspective

Extending these theories and empirical support for the effects of threat on interactions with and perceptions of outgroup members, the current studies examined the role of threat on perceptions of reappropriated racial slur use. Previous researchers examined these effects in the context of a Black individual using a reappropriated Black racial slur toward a White individual, theorizing this may function similarly to the creation of a common ingroup (see the Common Ingroup Identity Model; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) because the reappropriative slur use seeks to tear down existing boundaries between White and Black individuals. Specifically, O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) examined White individuals' perceptions of reappropriated racial slur use and showed that White people generally perceive this use as a term of endearment (thus showing that the effects of slur reappropriation can extend beyond just intragroup affiliation to intergroup affiliation). Extending these findings, this research then examined the role of socially dominant, authoritarian, and prejudicial attitudes on perceptions of reappropriated racial slurs. The findings showed overwhelming support for their hierarchy defense hypothesis that higher levels of socially dominant attitudes would be associated with

significantly more perceptions of threat when a Black individual uses "nigga" toward a White

individual which would be related to significantly more negative perceptions of the slur – White

individuals higher in socially dominant, authoritarian, and prejudicial attitudes perceived the use

of "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual more negatively than did White

individuals lower in these social attitudes. Further, O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation)

examined whether these increases in negative perceptions of reappropriated racial slurs were

attributable to intergroup threat. Due to motivations to reinforce and protect existing status

hierarchies, O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) hypothesized that majority group

members higher in socially dominant, authoritarian, and prejudicial attitudes would perceive

reappropriative slur use as more threatening, and subsequently perceive the slurs as more

negative and as a justification for prejudice toward Black individuals. Across five additional

studies, greater socially dominant, authoritarian, and prejudicial attitudes were associated with

significantly more negative perceptions by White people of Black people's reappropriated slur

use. Further, greater levels of perceived threat by White people were associated with their

significantly greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified (O'Dea &

Saucier, revision in preparation). These findings are consistent with each of the threat theories

discussed above. These findings are also consistent with the concept of categorization threat (see

Branscombe & Ellemers, 1998; Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Hornsey,

Blackwood, & O'Brien, 2005), which states that when people do not identify with a particular

social category, but then are grouped into that category (as might be the perception when a Black

individual uses the reappropriated term "nigga" toward a White individual), they experience

intergroup threat, perceive the interaction more negatively, and may distance themselves from

the outgroup/outgroup member(s) by engaging in discriminatory or avoidance behavior.

The current studies examined these effects experimentally. Participants were presented with either a prime that Black individuals presented high threat, a prime that Black individuals presented low threat, or a control prime that had nothing to do with Black individuals or threat. These primes were pilot tested and are based on exisiting research related to threat (e.g., Bahns & Crandall, 2013). Consistent with theories related to social dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and the hierarchy defense hypothesis, in Study 1 it was predicted that, when primed with high threat, White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes would perceive reappropriated slur use by a Black individual toward a White individual as more negative and as more of a justification for prejudice toward Black individuals. However, in the low threat condititon, it was predicted that greater socially dominant attitudes would either be unrelated or be associated with significantly lower negative perceptions and perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified because their position in the status hierarchy is not being threatened. This previous research provided the foundation for O'Dea and Saucier's (revision in preparation) hierarchy defense hypothesis which is now applied to the current studies:

> **Hierarchy Defense Hypothesis:** White individuals will perceive reappropriated racial slur use by a Black individual toward a White individual as more negative and as more of a justification for prejudice toward Black people in the high threat condition compared to the control condition which will be higher than the low threat condition. It was predicted that this effect would be stronger for individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes.

Extending these findings, Study 2 examined perceptions of reappropriated slur use by a Black individual toward another Black individual. No researchers have examined this reappropriative use of slurs among the minority group in terms of majority group members'

perceptions. There are competing hypotheses about the relationships between racial prejudice and perceptions of reappropriated racial slurs used among the minority group. On one hand, if White individuals higher in prejudicial attitudes toward Black individuals perceive the use of reappropriated slur use among Black individuals as threatening to their position in the status hierarchy, the results should be consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis above, with White individuals higher in negative attitudes toward Black individuals reporting significantly more negative perceptions of reappropriated slur use among Black individuals in the high threat and control condition, but not in the low threat condition.

On the other hand, reappropriative slur use among minority group members is generally described in existing literature as a mechanism for coping with prejudice (see Bianchi, 2014; Galinsky et al., 2013; Rappoport, 2005; Spotorno & Bianchi, 2015). Recent research has showed that majority group members are generally favorable toward policies that help minority group members as long as these policies do not help the lower status group members advance (dependency-oriented versus autonomy-oriented helping) in the status hierarchy (see the Intergroup Helping Relations as Status Relations Model; Halabi, Dovidio, & Nadler, 2008; Nadler, 2002). Such help can actually foster perceptions within the minority group such as, "while there is a status hierarchy, this is okay because majority group members help us, therefore it is okay that they are at the top of the status hierarchy" (i.e., dependency-oriented helping). Further, because there is less possibility for categorization threat (Branscombe & Ellemers, 1998; Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Hornsey, Blackwood, & O'Brien, 2005) in Study 2 when a Black individual is using "nigga" toward another Black individual, the hierarchy defense hypothesis may not be supported if it is reliant on category threat and participants are not in the high threat condition. It is important to note that the difference in the two hypotheses lies

primarily in the control condition. The hypotheses of both studies predict that racial prejudice would be associated with significantly more negative perceptions of reappropriated slur use when participants are primed with high threat, and uncorrelated or negatively correlated with negative perceptions of repappropriate slur use when participants are primed with low threat. However, as discussed above, the control condition was neither be related to Black people or threat. If participants do not perceive reappropriative slur use among Black individuals as threatening to their position in the status hierarchy in the absence of a threat prime, racial prejudice should be uncorrelated or negatively correlated to negative perceptions of reappropriative slur use in the control condition.

Chapter 2 - Current Studies Overview

Anderson and Lepore (2013), through their prohibitive perspective, contend that all uses of racial slurs are negative because "the offensive potential of racial slurs is offensive to whomever these prohibitions matter." (p. 43). On the other hand, Bianchi (2014) identified a subversive perspective contending that, while derogative uses of racial slurs should be discouraged, slur reappropriation including the affiliative and subversive uses of racial slurs have the potential to help individuals cope with and fight against racial prejudice. Very little research has empirically tested the efficacy of these two competing theoretical perspectives in reducing the use and negative impacts of racial slurs.

The current studies focused on majority group members' resistance to the subversive perspective. O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) showed that majority group members higher in prejudice toward Black individuals perceived a Black individual using "nigga" toward a White person affiliatively as threatening, and then used this threat to justify prejudice toward Black individuals. O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) showed these effects correlationally. However, extending this work, the current studies causally examined the effect of threat in predicting White individuals' responses to a reappropriated Black racial slur ("nigga") used by a Black individual toward a White individual (Study 1) and toward a Black individual (Study 2). Further, the current studies examined whether participants' socially dominant attitudes interact with threat condition in predicting their perceptions of reappropriated racial slur use.

Prior to conducting the proposed studies, five pilot studies were conducted to identify a prime that significantly increased threat compared to a control prime. While many studies have examined the relationship of prejudice on perceptions of realistic, symbolic, multicultural, and

other forms of threat from Black people, few studies have experimentally tested the effect of threat on perceptions of Black people. Many studies use threat primes related to salience and growing size/proportions of outgroup individuals (typically used to prime threat from Mexican immigrants; e.g., Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992; Sigelman & Niemi, 2001). However, these primes are less appropriate to the current studies given the non-salient threat of immigration from Black individuals. Instead, the current studies used primes based on recent events that have sparked controversy between White and Black individuals in the media (e.g., the kneeling of Colin Kaepernick; see Stratmoen et al., 2018). Each of these pilot studies are described below.

Chapter 3 - Pilot Studies

Pilot Study 1

The first pilot study sought to find a manipulation of threat that successfully primed greater realistic and/or symbolic threat compared to a control condition. A recent event that has sparked dissent and outrage on social media was used; Colin Kaepernick's kneeling during the national anthem at National Football League games (see Stratmoen, Lawless, & Saucier, 2018). Colin Kaepernick claimed his kneeling was to protest social injustices that Black people face. However, people on social media, including United States President Donald Trump, have claimed this kneeling threatened both our values as a nation (United States) and individuals' safety due to its ties to the Black Lives Matter movement which some claim to be a dangerous movement. Thus, it was predicted that participants who were primed with either a realistic or symbolic prime regarding Kaepernick's protests would experience greater perceptions of Black individuals as threatening compared to a control prime.

Method

Participants

Recruitment of participants was based on a GPower power analysis for a MANOVA (special effects and interactions) with an effect size $f^2 = .0625$, $\alpha = .05$, power $= .80$, three groups, and two response variables. This yielded a necessary sample size of 158 White participants. Because our typical sample on Amazon TurkPrime (Litman, Robinson, & Abberbock, 2016) yields approximately 60% of White participants who complete the entire survey, the current study sought to recruit at least 263 participants for the current study. 292 participants accessed the study on Qualtrics online survey software. 108 of these participants were removed because they either did not respond to or indicated their ethnicity as non-White.

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An additional 25 participants were removed who did not complete the full survey. There were 159 White participants who remained for data analysis. Of these, 72 were men and 87 were women. The average age of participants was 38.94 ($SD = 12.06$).

Materials

Vignettes. Two vignettes were created to prime either realistic or symbolic threat. Each of these primes centered around NFL players kneeling during the national anthem. This is a recent societal event that has sparked controversy, with many people indicating that they believe that Black people are not disadvantaged and the protests are just a way for Black people to get economic or political advantages (realistic threat), and many people indicating that it violates important societal norms of respect for our nation and for people who serve in the military (symbolic threat). The two vignettes are as follows:

Realistic. "Football is America's favorite pastime, or it was until the problem of kneeling players. Colin Kaepernick, former NFL quarterback, began kneeling in 2016. Kaepernick stated his reason for kneeling is to protest the existing disadvantage of Black individuals in the United States. Ryan Anderson, a regular watcher of the NFL stated, "You have to stand proudly for the national anthem or you shouldn't be playing. Black people aren't oppressed. Kneeling during the anthem is a call for special treatment for Black people and this will take opportunities away from others who deserve them more."

Symbolic. Football is America's favorite pastime, or it was until NFL players began to kneel during the national anthem. Colin Kaepernick, former NFL quarterback, began kneeling in 2016. Kaepernick stated his reason for kneeling was to protest discrimination by White people toward Black people in the United

States, and in particular the increased rates of shooting of Black people by White police officers. Ryan Anderson, a regular watcher of the NFL stated, "You have to stand proudly for the national anthem or you shouldn't be playing. Black people aren't oppressed. Kneeling during the anthem is a violation of our existing values as Americans and challenges the integrity of the American Way."

Realistic Threat. Realistic threat was measured using Stephan and colleagues' (2002) measure of realistic threat. The full scale is presented in Appendix A. This measure consists of 12-items designed to measure the extent to which White individuals perceive Black individuals as economically and socially threatening and dangerous. The scale includes items such as, "Blacks hold too many positions of power and responsibility in this country." Participants responded on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*) scale. Scores were averaged across each of the items to generate a composite score with higher values indicating greater realistic threat. The reliability was $\alpha = .97$.

Symbolic Threat. Stephan and colleagues' (2002) measure of symbolic threat was used to measure the extent to which participants perceive Black individuals as threatening to existing values and norms in American society. The full scale is presented in Appendix B. This scale includes items such as, "Whites and Blacks have very different values." This scale was measured using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*) scale. Items were averaged to create a composite score with higher values indicating greater levels of symbolic threat from Black individuals. The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .95$.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from Amazon's TurkPrime software (Litman et al., 2016) and completed the study on Qualtrics online survey software. Participants then completed

demographic information. They then read the randomly assigned realistic or symbolic threat vignette or were randomly assigned to a control in which they did not read a vignette. They then completed the realistic and symbolic threat scales, indicated whether they agreed or disagreed with the vignette (and why), and were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

To test whether threat condition would predict different levels of realistic and symbolic threat for the realistic and symbolic versus control primes, a between-groups MANOVA predicting participants' self-reported symbolic and realistic threat was used. This analysis yielded no significant effect of threat condition predicting the set of dependent variables (realistic threat, symbolic threat), Wilks' $\lambda = .96$, $F(4, 310) = 1.52$, $p = .197$, $\eta^2_p = .02$. Upon examination of the univariate ANOVAs, there was a marginally significant main effect of threat condition predicting participants' realistic threat, $F(2, 156) = 2.908$, $p = .058$, $\eta^2_p = .04$; and a non-significant main effect of threat condition predicting participants' symbolic threat, $F(2, 156) = 2.22$, $p = .112$, $\eta^2_p = .03$. To further test whether the threat conditions were significantly different from the control, Bonferroni pairwise comparisons were conducted. These comparisons yielded a marginally significant difference between realistic threat and the control condition predicting participants' perceptions of realistic threat such that the realistic threat condition ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 2.17$) was marginally more realistically threatening than the control condition ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 2.05$), $p = .058$. There were no other significant or near significant effects ($ps > .147$).

Additional exploratory analyses were conducted by coding[1] participants' responses by whether they agreed with the prime (collapsed across the realistic versus symbolic prime because there were no significant differences in the effects of these two primes), did not agree with the prime, or were in the control condition in which they did not see the prime. These codings were

then examined to see whether they predicted differences in participants' reported symbolic and realistic threat. Recall, the prime was a post by an individual who does not believe that Colin Kaepernick should be kneeling. It was expected that participants who agreed with the prime would report significantly greater realistic and symbolic threat. 11 participants either did not respond or their open-ended answer was ambiguous about whether they agreed or disagreed with the prime and were not analyzed. There were 43 participants who agreed with the prime, 51 participants who disagreed with the prime, and 54 participants who viewed the control prime. A between-groups MANOVA was conducted in which agreement (agree, disagree, control) was entered as the independent variable and realistic and symbolic threat were entered as the dependent variables. This analysis revealed a significant effect of agreement predicting the set (realistic threat, symbolic threat) of dependent variables, $Wilks' \lambda = .77$, $F(4, 288) = 10.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .13$. Upon examination of the univariate ANOVAs there was a significant effect of agreement predicting both realistic, $F(2, 145) = 62.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .18$; and symbolic, $F(2, 145) = 21.89$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .23$; threat. When these effects were probed using Bonferroni pairwise comparisons there was a significant difference between participants who agreed with the prime (Realistic: $M = 4.51$, $SD = 2.18$, Symbolic: $M = 5.69$, $SD = 1.96$) and participants who did not agree (Realistic: $M = 2.31$, $SD = 1.73$, Symbolic: $M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.84$) with the prime as well as between participants who agreed with the prime and participants who saw the control condition (Realistic: $M = 2.75$, $SD = 2.05$, Symbolic: $M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.79$; $ps < .001$). There was no significant difference between participants who did not agree with the prime and the control condition for either realistic, $p = .789$; or symbolic, $p = .223$; threat. These results indicate that the prime could be associated with greater perceptions of threat for those who agree with the prime but not those who disagree with the prime. However, it is important to note that White

participants who generally perceive higher threat from Black individuals likely also would come into the study agreeing with that prime (i.e., a statement that Black people should not protest during the national anthem, that Black people are not oppressed, and that the protest was either realistically or symbolically threatening to White people). Taken together, Pilot Study 1 did not successfully prime threat. However, the exploratory findings are promising – participants who agreed with either the realistic or symbolic primes stating that Black people should not be kneeling reported significantly greater realistic and symbolic threat. That said, it could be that participants who have a greater propensity to report agreement with that prime entered the study with significantly higher realistic and symbolic threat. As such, additional pilot research needs to examine whether the threatening prime significantly increases threat or if people who are generally higher in symbolic and realistic threat have a natural propensity to agree versus disagree with the prime.

Pilot Study 2

Pilot Study 2 examined the effect of racial prejudice on perceptions of realistic and symbolic threat following presentation of the prime versus the control of not viewing the prime. Only the realistic threat vignette used in Pilot Study 1 was used in Pilot Study 2 because this vignette was associated with greater symbolic and realistic threat compared to the symbolic threat prime. The results of the exploratory analyses in Study 1 indicated that this prime may be successful in priming greater threat. However, at best, this is only effective for participants who reported agreement with the prime (under half of the sample). While the final study samples could be limited to just participants who agreed with the vignette and manipulate whether participants evaluate reappropriative racial slur use before or after viewing the vignette, omitting over half of the sample is not ideal. Therefore, Pilot Study 2 measured participants' negative

attitudes toward Black individuals and then presented them with the realistic threat vignette or did not present them with the threat vignette. It was predicted that racial prejudice would interact with threat condition such that higher levels of prejudice would be associated with significantly greater perceptions of threat generally consistent with existing correlational research showing relationships between racial prejudice and perceptions of threat from minority group members (e.g., Duckitt, 2006). That said, it was predicted the effect of prejudice on realistic and symbolic threat would be stronger for participants who viewed a threat prime compared to participants who did not view a threat prime.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited via Amazon's TurkPrime software (Litman et al., 2016). Sample size was chosen based on a power analysis using GPower for a linear multiple regression, fixed model testing the R^2 increase with an effect size $f^2 = .0625$, $\alpha = .05$, power = .80, and 3 tested predictors (ATB, condition, and their interaction). This power analysis yielded a necessary sample of 179 White participants. The current study aimed to collect data from at least 300 participants due to our typical TurkPrime sample having approximately 60% of participants who pass all manipulation checks and self-identify as White. A total of 389 participants accessed the survey on Qualtrics. 140 participants were removed who either did not advance past the informed consent or indicated their ethnicity as something other than "White". An additional 29 participants were removed who did not complete the survey. 220 participants remained for data analysis. There were 99 men and 121 women. The average age was 36.56 ($SD = 11.69$).

Materials

Racial Prejudice. To measure participants' levels of racial prejudice, the Attitudes Toward Blacks (ATB; Brigham, 1993) scale was used. This scale includes 20 items such as, "Generally Blacks are not as smart as Whites." The full scale is presented in Appendix C. Participants responded to each item on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*) scale. A composite score was created by averaging participants' responses to each of the items with higher scores being greater levels of racial prejudice. The reliability of the scale was α = .91.

Vignette. Participants read a vignette similar to the vignettes used in Pilot Study 1. However, only the realistic threat vignette used in Pilot Study 1 was used because this vignette was associated with greater symbolic and realistic threat.

Criterion Measures. Participants completed the same scales measuring realistic and symbolic threat as were used in Pilot Study 1. The reliability for the realistic threat scale was α = .97 and the reliability for the symbolic threat scale was α = .94.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from TurkPrime and accessed the study on Qualtrics online survey software. After providing consent, participants completed demographic information. They then completed the Attitudes Toward Blacks scale. This was then followed by a filler task in which participants indicated their favorite movies from a variety of categories (e.g., action) and noted how much the average person likes the films they reported. Participants were then randomly assigned to read the threat vignette or the control vignette without the additional threat prime. After reading the vignette, participants completed the measures assessing their realistic and symbolic threat. Finally, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

The interaction between racial prejudice and condition (being primed with a threat vignette or not) predicting participants' perceptions of Black people as realistically and symbolically threatening was tested. The current study predicted main effect of racial prejudice such that higher levels of racial prejudice would be associated with significantly greater perceptions of realistic and symbolic threat from Black individuals regardless of condition. Ideally, there would be a main effect of condition such that participants primed with threat would experience significantly greater realistic and symbolic threat than participants who were not primed. However, given the findings of Pilot Study 1, this expectation was tempered. Finally, it was predicted that racial prejudice would interact with condition such that higher levels of prejudice would be associated with significantly greater perceptions of threat in both conditions, but that this relationship would be stronger in the prime condition than in the no prime condition. To test these hypotheses, separate linear regression analyses were conducted using Hayes (2017) process model 1 for realistic and symbolic threat. Consistent with the hypotheses, there was a main effect of ATB in each of these models such that higher levels of ATB were associated with significantly greater perceptions of realistic ($B = 1.08$, $t = 20.03$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.97, 1.19]) and symbolic ($B = 0.99$, $t = 16.33$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.87, 1.11]) threat. Inconsistent with the hypotheses, there was again no main effect of condition in predicting participants' realistic ($B = -.19$, $t = -1.23$, $p = .218$, 95% CI[-0.50, 0.12]) or symbolic ($B = -0.31$, $t = -1.78$, $p = .077$, 95% CI[-0.66, 0.03]) threat. There was also no significant interaction between racial prejudice and condition found in predicting participants' perceptions of realistic ($B = -0.00$, $t = -0.04$, $p = .966$, 95% CI[-0.22, 0.21]) or symbolic ($B = -0.11$, $t = -0.93$, $p = .352$, 95% CI[-0.35, 0.13]) threat. Thus, consistent with Pilot Study 1, the manipulation of threat was unsuccessful either as a main

effect or interaction with participants' scores on the ATB. These findings are consistent with Pilot Study 1, but are unfortunate given the primary goal of these studies is to identify a successful manipulation of threat from Black individuals to use as a prime in the current studies.

<p style="text-align:center">Pilot Study 3</p>

Pilot Study 3 returned to the findings from the exploratory analyses showing a significant effect of agreement with the vignette on participants' self-reported symbolic and realistic threat. In Pilot Study 1 it was found that participants who agreed with the prime saying that Black NFL players should not kneel during the anthem reported significantly greater threat than participants who did not agree with the prime. That said, because everyone was shown the prime prior to completing the measures of threat, Pilot study 1 is unable to conclude that the prime increased threat in participants who agreed with the prime. Accordingly, in the current study the ordering of the materials (i.e., reading the threat prime prior to versus after completing the realistic and symbolic threat scales) was manipulated which allowed a test of whether the prime significantly increased threat in participants who agreed with the prime, and whether this was exacerbated for participants higher in racial prejudice. Therefore, Pilot Study 3 examined whether participants' negative attitudes toward Black individuals interacted with the manipulation of threat (presenting the threat prime before versus after completing the measures of threat) in predicting participants' reported levels of perceived realistic and symbolic threat, and the sample was limited to participants who agreed with the threat prime. The realistic and symbolic primes used in Pilot Study 1 were also combined into one prime which was predicted to be a stronger manipulation than either in isolation. Consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis, it was predicted that participants higher in prejudicial attitudes would report significantly greater levels of perceived symbolic and realistic threat regardless of whether they completed the measures before or after

the prime, but that this effect would be even stronger when they viewed the threat prime prior to reporting their realistic and symbolic threat due to participants' motivations to maintain and be vigilant against threats to the status hierarchy (see Social Dominance Theory, Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited via Amazon's TurkPrime software. Sample size was chosen based on a power analysis using the same parameters as Pilot Study 2 yielding a necessary sample of 179 White participants. The current study aimed to collect data from at least 300 participants due to our typical TurkPrime sample having approximately 60% of participants who pass all manipulation checks and self-identify as White. There were 394 participants who accessed the study. However, 162 were removed because they either did not respond to or indicated their ethnicity as something other than White. 36 participants were removed who did not complete the survey or who failed an attention check. There were 196 participants remaining for data analysis. Of these, 40 were men and 156 were women. The average age of participants was 38.65 ($SD = 12.51$).

Materials

Vignette. The prime used in this pilot study was a combination of the realistic and symbolic primes that were used in Pilot Study 1. As discussed above, these were combined these under the assumption that the two types of threat would be stronger in conjunction than either in isolation. Specifically, the vignette depicted a White individual, Ryan Anderson, stating that he believes that Black people should stand for the national anthem. The full vignette is presented below:

Football is America's favorite pastime, or it was until the problem of kneeling

players. Colin Kaepernick, former NFL quarterback, began kneeling in 2016.

Kaepernick stated his reason for kneeling is to protest the existing disadvantage of

Black individuals in the United States. Ryan Anderson, a regular watcher of the

NFL stated, "You have to stand proudly for the national anthem or you shouldn't

be playing. Black people aren't oppressed. Kneeling during the anthem is a

violation of our existing values as Americans and challenges the integrity of the

American Way. It is a call for special treatment for Black people and this will take

opportunities away from others who deserve them more."

Realistic Threat. Stephan and colleagues' (2002) measure of realistic threat was again

used. However, because the mean and standard deviation for this measure were quite low across

all of the previous pilot studies, these items were rewritten to be less overt. This measure still

consisted of 12-items designed to measure the extent to which White individuals perceive Black

individuals as economically and socially threatening and dangerous. The modified scale is

presented in Appendix D. As an example of a modified item, the scale originally included items

such as, "Blacks hold too many positions of power and responsibility in this country." This item

was changed to, "I sometimes worry that White people are losing positions of power to Black

people." By making this item less concrete (i.e., "Blacks hold" versus "I sometimes worry"),

participants may experience less suppression in their responses and feel more comfortable

reporting threat which would hopefully result in a more normal distribution of scores.

Participants responded on 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*) scales. Scores were

averaged across each of the items to generate a composite score with higher values indicating

greater realistic threat. The reliability was α = .90. Unfortunately, the mean was similar to the mean of the previous studies at 3.43 (*SD* = 1.73).

Symbolic Threat. Stephan and colleagues' (2002) measure of symbolic threat was also modified to be less overt. This scale included items such as, "Whites and Blacks have very different values", which I modified (similar to the above) to, "I sometimes worry that the values of Black people and White people are too different." The modified scale is presented in Appendix E. This scale was measured using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*) scale. One item from the original scale, "Blacks don't value the traditions of their group as much as Whites do." was removed because it was not measuring a threat to White individuals' values, but rather, saying that Black people don't value their own values as much as White people value their own values. Given the current studies were intended to examine resistance to what White people may perceive as a threat to their own existing norms, this item was removed. The final 11 items were averaged to create a composite score with higher values indicating greater levels of symbolic threat from Black individuals. The reliability of the scale was α = .95. Unfortunately, the mean was similar to the mean of the previous studies at 3.14 (*SD* = 1.97).

Procedure

Participants were recruited via Amazon's TurkPrime software and completed the study on Qualtrics online survey software. Participants first completed demographic information. Next, participants completed the ATB scale followed by the movie questionnaire to disguise the true nature of the study. Participants then were randomly assigned to either read the threat prime and report their agreement (in the current study participants were asked to indicate if they agreed with the prime by categorically indicating "yes" or "no" and then allowed the participants to expand in a short answer which was not analyzed) and then complete the measures of symbolic

and realistic threat, or to complete the measures of symbolic and realistic threat and then read the threat prime and report their agreement. Finally, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

Prior to analyzing only participants who agreed with the prime, the interaction between racial prejudice and the presentation of the threat prime (before or after completing the measures of realistic and symbolic threat) was examined. Consistent with Pilot Study 2, the prime was not expected to be successful at priming threat. Realistic and symbolic threat were analyzed in separate regressions using Hayes (2017) process model 1. Each of these models predicting realistic, $R^2 = .57$, $F(3, 192) = 83.14$, $p < .001$; and symbolic, $R^2 = .50$, $F(3, 192) = 63.87$, $p < .001$; were significant. However, inconsistent with the objectives of the study, but consistent with the previous pilot studies, there was again no effect of threat prime presentation for perceptions of either realistic, $B = -0.27$, $t = -1.62$, $p = .108$; or symbolic threat, $B = -0.18$, $t = -0.93$, $p = .354$. The small effect of threat prime condition was actually opposite of the predicted direction with participants reporting less threat ($M_{realistic} = 3.29$, $SD_{realistic} = 1.72$; $M_{symbolic} = 3.03$, $SD_{symbolic} = 2.03$) when the prime was presented before completing the threat measures than after ($M_{realistic} = 3.58$, $SD_{realistic} = 1.73$; $M_{symbolic} = 3.25$, $SD_{symbolic} = 1.91$). Consistent with hypotheses, there was a main effect of prejudice predicting perceptions of realistic, $B = 1.03$, $t = 15.69$, $p < .001$; and symbolic, $B = 1.10$, $t = 13.76$, $p < .001$; threat, such that higher levels of prejudice were associated with significantly higher levels of perceived realistic and symbolic threat. There was no significant threat prime condition x prejudice interaction predicting perceptions of either realistic, $B = -0.15$, $t = -1.14$, $p = .255$; or symbolic, $B = -0.01$, $t = -0.07$, $p = .948$; threat.

The effects of prime presentation condition, prejudice, and their interaction were then

tested only for people who agreed with the prime (70 participants versus 125 participants who

disagreed) that Colin Kaepernick should not be kneeling. Because participants were asked

directly whether they agreed or disagreed with the prime, these responses were not coded (as

they were in Study 1) but rather grouped based on participants' yes/no answers. The two models

predicting perceptions of realistic, $R^2 = .42$, $F(3, 66) = 16.15$, $p < .001$; and symbolic, $R^2 = .37$,

$F(3, 66) = 13.10$, $p < .001$; threat were both significant. However, again, there was no significant

effect of threat presentation condition for perceptions of either realistic, $B = -0.36$, $t = -1.24$, p

$=.220$; or symbolic, $B = -0.25$, $t = -0.64$, $p = .527$; threat. There was still a significant effect of

prejudice such that higher levels of racial prejudice were associated with significantly greater

perceptions of realistic, $B = 0.77$, $t = 6.90$, $p < .001$; and symbolic, $B = 0.96$, $t = 6.26$, $p < .001$;

threat. There was no significant prime presentation condition X prejudice interaction predicting

perceptions of either realistic, $B = -0.16$, $t = -0.69$, $p = .491$; or symbolic, $B = -0.03$, $t = -0.09$, $p =$

$.927$; threat.

The current study also examined whether people who agreed with the prime reported

higher levels of perceived threat than did people who did not agree with the prime. Replicating

the findings of Pilot Study 1, there was a significant effect of agreement predicting perceptions

of both realistic, $t(193) = 10.16$, $t < .001$, $d = 1.49$; and symbolic, $t(193) = 7.19$, $p < .001$, $d =$

1.03; threat such that participants who agreed with the prime reported significantly greater

perceptions of realistic ($M = 4.78$, $SD = 1.53$) and symbolic ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 2.02$) threat than did

participants who disagreed with the prime ($M_{realistic} = 2.66$, $SD_{realistic} = 1.31$; $M_{symbolic} = 2.46$,

$SD_{symbolic} = 1.59$). These results indicate that there is a difference in threat generally between

people who agree versus disagree with the prime, but that the prime does not significantly

exacerbate threat in White individuals, even for those higher in prejudice toward Black individuals.

Pilot Study 4

Unfortunately, it seems as though White individuals' perceptions of Black people as threatening are not as malleable as anticipated. It could be that, even though there was a filler task in between completing the Attitudes Toward Blacks scale and reading the prime/completing the measures of threat, indicating their level of prejudice may have affected participants' threat response. As such, in the current study, the prejudice measure and filler task were removed and the current study just manipulated whether the prime was presented before or after participants completed the threat measures and measured their agreement with the prime. Doing this allows the current study to more specifically focus on the manipulation of threat and ensure participants' responses are not being influenced by external factors unrelated to the threat prime.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited for the current study using Amazon's TurkPrime software (Litman et al., 2016). An approximate sample size was calculated using Gpower for a 2-tailed t-test with a Cohen's d of .50, $\alpha = .05$, power of .80, and an allocation ratio of 1. This yielded an approximate sample size requirement of 128 White participants. Because the typical TurkPrime sample consists of approximately 60% White participants who pass all manipulation checks, the current study aimed to collect at least 213 participants for the current study. There were 375 participants who accessed the survey. However, 149 participants either did not advance past the informed consent or indicated their ethnicity as non-White and were removed from data analysis. Eight additional participants did not advance beyond the demographic questionnaire and eight

more participants failed an attention check. This left a sample of 210 participants. Of these participants, 54 were men and 156 were women. The average age of the participants was 38.23 ($SD = 13.41$).

Materials and Procedure

The materials and procedure for this study were the same as in Pilot Study 3 except that participants did not complete the ATB or filler movie questionnaire. Specifically, after completing the informed consent, participants completed demographic information. They then were randomly assigned to either view the threat prime either before or after completing the revised measures of perceived realistic and symbolic threat that were used in Pilot Study 3. After reading the prime (including indicating categorically (i.e., selecting "yes" or "no") whether they agreed or disagreed with it) and the measures of symbolic and realistic threat, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

<div align="center">Results</div>

To test whether there was an effect of prime presentation condition (before or after completing the threat measures), a MANOVA was conducted with threat condition entered as the independent variable and realistic and symbolic threats entered as the dependent variables. This test yielded no effect of prime presentation condition (presented before or after completing the measures of threat) predicting the set of dependent variables measuring participants' perceived levels of realistic ($M_{before} = 3.89$, $SD_{before} = 2.16$; $M_{after} = 3.60$, $SD_{after} = 1.79$) and symbolic ($M_{before} = 3.44$, $SD_{before} = 2.16$; $M_{after} = 3.32$, $SD_{after} = 2.13$) threat, *Wilks'* $\lambda = .99$, $F(2, 207) = .92$, $p = .401$, $\eta^2_p = .01$. None of the univariate analyses were significant ($ps > .281$).

Next, only participants who agreed with the prime were selected (84 participants versus 126 participants who disagreed) and the current analyses examined whether there was an effect

of prime presentation condition on realistic and symbolic threats in another MANOVA. This

yielded a significant effect of prime presentation condition on the set of dependent variables,

Wilks' $\lambda = .93$, $F(2, 81) = 3.24$, $p = .044$, $\eta^2_p = .07$. Upon examination of the univariate effects,

there was a significant effect of threat prime condition on participants' perceptions of realistic

threat ($M_{before} = 5.72$, $SD_{before} = 1.70$; $M_{after} = 4.92$, $SD_{after} = 1.39$), $F(1, 82) = 13.32$, $p = .020$, η^2_p

$= .06$, such that (for participants who agreed with the prime) participants reported significantly

greater levels of perceived realistic threat when they read the prime before responding to the

realistic threat measure than after. However, there was no effect of prime presentation predicting

perceptions of perceived symbolic threat ($M_{before} = 5.18$, $SD_{before} = 1.93$; $M_{after} = 4.81$, $SD_{after} =$

1.91), $F(1, 82) = 2.89$, $p = .379$, $\eta^2_p = .01$. Finally, a MANOVA was conducted to compare

participants who agreed with the prime to participants who disagreed with the prime on their

perceived levels of realistic and symbolic threat. This analysis yielded a significant effect of

agreement predicting the set of dependent variables, *Wilks'* $\lambda = .57$, $F(2, 207) = 79.53$, $p < .001$,

$\eta^2_p = .44$. Upon examination of the univariate effects, there was a significant effect of prime

agreement on both realistic, $F(1, 208) = 145.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .41$; and symbolic, $F(1, 208) =$

124.89, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .38$; threat such that participants who reported that they agreed with the

prime ($M_{realistic} = 5.29$, $SD_{realistic} = 1.58$; $M_{symbolic} = 4.98$, $SD_{symbolic} = 1.92$) reported significantly

higher levels of perceived realistic and symbolic threat than participants who did not agree with

the prime ($M_{realistic} = 2.71$, $SD_{realistic} = 1.48$; $M_{symbolic} = 2.31$, $SD_{symbolic} = 1.53$).

Taken together, Pilot Study 4 was again generally unsuccessful at priming threat. There

was a significant effect of prime condition on participants' realistic threat perceptions for

participants who agreed with the prime, but this effect was smaller than desired for a prime

aimed at affecting perceptions of a subsequent use of a slur in the proposed studies. The hope of

the current study, based on the findings of Pilot Studies 1-3 that only examining participants'

data who agreed with the prime that Colin Kaepernick should not be kneeling (who reported

significantly higher threat than participants who disagreed with this), not having participants

respond to the Attitudes Toward Blacks scale (a highly overt measure of prejudice) during the

study session, and using a less overt measure of threat, was that this would result in a significant

effect of threat prime condition on participants' perceptions of realistic and symbolic threat.

Unfortunately, this was not shown to be the case.

Pilot Study 5

Because the findings of Pilot Studies 1-4 did not show successful manipulation of threat

or an interaction between threat prime and participants' levels of racial prejudice, Pilot Study 5

sought to create a vignette that more strongly primed threat. White individuals who are higher in

racial prejudice toward Black individuals tend to endorse policies that favor White people over

Black people, seek to reinforce interracial distancing, and experience anxiety when interacting

with or being exposed to Black people (e.g., Esses et al., 1998). Further, building on Social

Dominance Theory, the advancement of Black people should be threatening to White individuals

higher in prejudice toward the targeted group (e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Thus, a vignette

was created that described the advancement of Black individuals in society and greater exposure

to Black people in media, society, and the workplace. It was predicted that higher levels of racial

prejudice would be associated with significantly greater levels of perceived threat in both

conditions (being primed with the threat prime versus not), but that this effect would be

significantly stronger when participants were primed with the threat vignette than when they

were not primed with the threat vignette.

Methods

Participants

Participants were again recruited via Amazon's TurkPrime software (Litman et al., 2016). The parameters for recruitment were the same as Pilot Studies 2-3, with the power analysis yielding a necessary sample of 179. There were 437 participants who accessed the survey on Qualtrics online survey software. However, 179 were removed because they did not respond to or indicated their ethnicity as something other than "White". An additional 31 participants were removed because they did not complete the survey. This left 227 participants for data analysis who indicated their ethnicity as "White." Of these participants, 51 were men and 175 were women and 1 participant self-identified as "other." The average age of participants was 39.94 ($SD = 13.85$).

Materials

Prejudice was again measured using the Attitudes Toward Blacks scale (ATB; $\alpha = .93$; Brigham, 1993). Participants reported how realistically and symbolically threatening Black people they perceived Black people to be using the realistic ($\alpha = .97$) and symbolic ($\alpha = .94$) measures created by Stephan and colleagues (2002) that was used in Pilot Studies 1 and 2.

Vignette. A vignette was written and designed to highlight the achievements of Black individuals and their greater representation in media and other domains in recent years. This was designed to incite threat in White individuals who endorse existing status hierarchies and place emphasis on pushing outgroup members down in the status hierarchy. The full vignette is presented below:

> Black people have achieved many things in the last decade. For example, prior to
> recent years, Black people were almost never portrayed in films as the lead actor.

However, from Black Panther to Hidden Figures, Black people are taking the

spotlight, and a Black actor may even be playing Superman and James Bond

soon! Affirmative action and diversity initiatives have also increased the presence

of Black individuals on college campuses and in the workplace by providing more

access to education and resources leading to some of the lowest numbers of Black

unemployment in history. #blacklivesmatter

Procedure

Participants were recruited via Amazon's TurkPrime software and accessed the survey on

Qualtrics online survey software. They first completed demographic information followed by the

ATB. This was followed by the brief movie questionnaire used in Pilot Study 2 to disguise the

nature of the study. Participants then were randomly assigned to read the above prime or not.

They then completed the measures of perceived symbolic and realistic threat, were debriefed,

and thanked for their participation.

Results

It was predicted that racial prejudice would interact with threat condition such that higher

levels of prejudice toward Black individuals would be associated with significantly greater levels

of perceived threat, but that this effect would be significantly stronger when participants viewed

the threat vignette versus when they did not view the vignette. To test this hypothesis, a linear

regression was conducted using Hayes (2017) process model 1. Participants' scores on the ATB

and threat prime condition were entered as independent variables and their reported levels of

perceived realistic and symbolic threat were entered as dependent variables in separate analyses.

The models predicted a significant amount of variance in participants' perceptions of realistic

threat, $R^2 = .66$, $F(3, 223) = 147.24$, $p < .001$; and symbolic threat, $R^2 = .65$, $F(3, 223) = 139.98$,

$p < .001$. These analyses further yielded a significant main effect of threat condition predicting

participants' perceptions of realistic threat, $B = 0.34$, $t = 2.18$, $p = .030$; but not symbolic threat B

$= 0.19$, $t = 1.22$, $p = .224$. Interestingly, and contrary to hypotheses, the threat prime effect was

opposite of the predicted effect in that being primed with the threat vignette before completing

the threat measures resulted in lower threat than reading it after completing the threat measures.

There was also a significant main effect of racial prejudice such that higher levels of racial

prejudice were associated with significantly greater perceptions of realistic threat, $B = 1.03$, $t =$

19.98, $p < .001$; and symbolic threat, $B = 1.06$, $t = 19.94$, $p < .001$. There was a significant

prejudice x threat condition interaction predicting how realistically, $B = 0.28$, $t = 2.71$, $p = .007$;

but not symbolically, $B = 0.13$, $t = 1.19$, $p = .237$; threatening participants perceived Black

people to be. Again, participants' levels of racial prejudice were associated with significantly

greater realistic threat in both conditions which was consistent with the hypotheses. However,

this relationship was stronger in the control condition ($B = 0.88$, $t = 10.77$, $p < .001$) than in the

threat prime condition ($B = 1.16$, $t = 1.16$, $p < .001$) which was not consistent with the

hypotheses. Taken together, these results were not consistent with the hypotheses and the current

study, again, did not successfully prime threat, but rather, attenuated it. In hindsight, these

findings could potentially be due to our portraying Black people in entertainment venues. This

could potentially prime perceptions of Black individuals that are consistent with stereotypes, as

well as the potential that White people could perceive Black people as servants to White

consumers of media. Each of these possibilities are speculative, but this could potentially explain

why White individuals, even those higher in levels of racial prejudice, perceived this vignette as

nonthreatening.

Chapter 4 - Study 1

Although the findings of the five pilot studies were unsuccessful at inducing perceptions of threat, the current research moved forward with data collection on the main studies of this dissertation. As was described earlier, the goal of Study 1 was to examine White participants' perceptions of reappropriative racial slur use by a Black individual toward a White individual (intergroup use). Although each of the pilot studies used the Attitudes Toward Blacks Scale, in the current study a measure of socially dominant attitudes was used. This methodological choice was made to be more consistent with Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and the hierarchy defense hypothesis (O'Dea & Saucier, revision in preparation). Specifically, O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) propose that the reason White individuals might be resistant to reappropriative uses of racial slurs is because these may be perceived as ways to affiliate across group boundaries, reduce distance between groups, and effectively reduce disparities in the social hierarchy. Theoretically, people higher in socially dominant attitudes should resist this affiliation and perceive reappropriative slur use as threatening. Extending beyond this, people higher in socially dominant attitudes may further report greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified following a situation in which a Black individual uses a "nigga" affiliatively. Taken together, Social Dominance Orientation is a moderator more consistent with motivations to defend the status hierarchy in the hierarchy defense hypothesis. As further justification for this methodological change, O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) showed more consistent effects with SDO than with ATB predicting White participants' attitudes toward reappropriated racial slur use.

Each of the pilot studies operated under the assumption that the baseline for the sample is a low level of threat. However, as was shown across 5 pilot studies, the control condition

generally did not differ from the high threat condition. This is problematic when examining the interaction between social dominance beliefs and threat on perceptions of reappropriated slurs. With no or little variability, there is no possibility for moderation of social dominance beliefs. To address this issue, a third threat condition, a low threat prime, was added in the current studies. Although the hypotheses were generally discussed in terms of inducing threat as a function of social dominance beliefs, a significant reduction of threat compared to the control or high threat conditions would allow the current studies to causally study the interaction between social dominance beliefs and threat on perceptions of reappropriated slur use.

Some recent empirical findings by Bahns and Crandall (2013) support this methodological choice. Specifically, Bahns and Crandall (2013) examined the effect of SDO on perceptions of negative attitudes toward gay people and varied a threat prime as a control prime, a high threat prime, and a low threat prime. At the zero-order level, higher levels of SDO are associated with more negative attitudes toward gay people. Thus, Bahns and Crandall (2013) predicted that greater levels of socially dominant attitudes would be associated with more negative perceptions of gay people in the control prime condition, but that these effects would be significantly stronger in the high threat condition, and reduced, eliminated, or reversed in the low threat condition. Their findings were partially consistent with these hypotheses. Specifically, the low threat condition did reduce the effect of SDO on negative attitudes toward gay people with their results showing that there was very little effect of social dominance orientation on negative attitudes toward gay people in the low threat condition. However, their results were not consistent with their predictions in the high threat condition. Specifically, there was a strong effect of social dominance orientation on negative perceptions of gay people in both the control condition and the high threat condition and these slopes were not significantly different. Thus,

their high threat prime did not significantly impact the relationship between SDO and negative perceptions of gay people (i.e., the baseline of threat was similar to being primed with a high threat prime), but their low threat condition did significantly reduce this relationship, supporting the choice in the current studies to causally test the interaction between social dominance beliefs and threat by reducing threat.

The lack of effect of SDO in the low threat condition in Bahns and Crandall (2013)'s study is also consistent with research on helping behaviors and Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Specifically, Social Dominance Theory does not predict that majority group members do not ever help minority groups or support minority groups. Instead, this help and support is context-dependent. When the outgroup does not pose a threat (i.e., when individuals are primed with low threat), majority group members are supportive and when the outgroup does pose a threat, majority group members are not supportive (see Social Dominance Theory; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

Taken together, the current studies first measured participants' socially dominant attitudes. Participants were then experimentally primed with intergroup threat using an intergroup contact theory approach, asking participants to imagine an interaction with a Black person that is positive (low threat condition) or negative (high threat condition), or to imagine a control situation. Participants were then shown a vignette in which a Black person used a reappropriated Black racial slur ("nigga") toward a White person affiliatively, and participants reported their perceptions of the affiliative slur use as negative and as a justification for prejudice toward Black people. Consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis, it was predicted that in the high threat condition White individuals would perceive reappropriative racial slur as more negative and a justification for prejudice toward Black people, but in the low threat condition

White individuals would perceive reappropriative slur use as less negative and less of a justification for prejudice toward Black people, than when participants were not primed with threat. It was further predicted this effect would be moderated by socially dominant attitudes with SDO having no effect in the low threat condition (Bahns & Crandall, 2013) and a strong positive effect in the control and high threat condition consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis. This is because, with the reduction of threat, White individuals' position in the status hierarchy is more secure because they are being told that Black individuals are struggling to advance in society. As such, Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) would suggest that White individuals higher in social dominance beliefs should be more supportive of reappropriative slur use when threat is reduced.

Method

Participants

Participants for the current study were recruited using Amazon's TurkPrime software (Litman et al., 2016). Participation was limited to only include White participants. The current study attempted to recruit 263 White participants who would pass all manipulation checks. This number of participants was based on a power analysis using GPower. The parameters entered into the power analysis were an $f^2 = .05$ (which is a fairly conservative low effect size), $\alpha = .05$, Power $= .80$, with five tested predictors (one continuous IV, two categorical IVs to carry the 3-level threat variable, two 2-way interactions). Participants were paid $0.25 for their participation. 351 participants accessed the study on Qualtrics. There were 11 participants who were removed because they indicated their ethnicity as something other than White, 47 participants who did not complete the entire survey, and 12 participants who indicated they either did not read the threat prime or who failed the manipulation check. This left 281 White participants for data analysis.

Of these participants, 90 reported their sex as male, 190 as female, and 1 as "other". The average age of participants was 39.54 (*SD* = 13.20).

Materials

All scales described below were completed on 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*) scales. Composite scores were calculated by averaging across participants' responses to each item with higher scores indicating a higher level of the construct being measured. Means, standard deviations, and correlations between each of the measures are presented in Table 1.

Socially Dominant Attitudes. To measure participants' socially dominant attitudes, the Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDO; Pratto et al., 1994) was used. This scale consisted of 16-items such as, "Some groups are simply inferior to other groups". The full scale is presented in Appendix F. Participants' responses to each item were averaged to calculate a composite score with higher values indicating greater socially dominant attitudes.

Threat Manipulation. Participants were given one of three threat imagination tasks. These were designed using previous literature to either increase (high threat condition), decrease (low threat condition), or not affect perceptions of threat (control threat condition). To further emphasize the effects of each of the imagination tasks above (Husnu & Crisp, 2010), participants then responded to prompts that promoted additional thought about the imagined situation. Specifically, participants were asked to describe what the person they were asked to imagine looks like, what the person is wearing, describe the specific negative event that occurred, and describe how that event makes them feel. Consistent with the manipulation check used by Harwood, Paolini, Joyce, Rubin, and Arroyo (2011), participants then responded to one item on a 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*very*) scale indicating how pleasant the encounter/situation was.

In the high threat condition participants imagined a negative interaction with a Black person in which they competed against the Black person who was attempting to beat him or her to achieve a goal. Participants were then asked to think of differences between the Black person and themselves in terms of personality traits and values. Participants were then shown a statement similar to that used in Bahns and Crandall (2013) to manipulate threat. The statement read, "Recent statistics have shown that the number of Black people on welfare is dropping compared to the number of White people on welfare which is increasing. Because of this, Black people are quickly gaining political leverage while White people are losing political leverage. Thus, Black people are experiencing considerable advancements in becoming successful and respected members of American society." Similar manipulations have been used in previous research (e.g., Harwood et al., 2011) to manipulate positive and negative contact which should predict threat according to intergroup threat theory (Stephan et al., 2002).

In the low threat condition, participants were asked to imagine a positive interaction with a Black person in which they worked together with the Black person to achieve a goal. Participants were asked to think of similarities between the Black person and themselves in terms of personality traits and values. After they responded, participants read a statement similar to the one used by Bahns and Crandall (2013) to attenuate threat which reads, "Recent statistics have shown that over 42% of Black people are on welfare. Because of this, Black people have very limited political leverage compared to White people and are experiencing considerable difficulty in becoming successful and respected members of American society."

In the control condition participants were asked to imagine an outdoor scene. This control is consistent with Harwood and colleagues (2011) and was designed and has been shown to not affect participants' levels of perceived threat.

Vignette. Participants read through a short vignette in which a Black individual used "nigga" toward a White individual affiliatively. This vignette was used previously in research by O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation). The full vignette is presented below. The race of the individuals in the vignette was indicated by images. The images were chosen from the Chicago Face Database to have moderate but roughly equal levels of attractiveness and happiness on their faces (see Appendix F; Ma, Correll, & Wittenbrink, 2015).

> "DeShawn is walking on the sidewalk through town. He turns the corner and sees
> his best friend, David, walking toward him. DeShawn and David high five and
> they embrace in a one arm hug. Smiling, DeShawn says "what's up nigga" in a
> friendly tone to David. David smiles back and says, "nothing much." Smiling
> after seeing his friend, DeShawn continues down the sidewalk.

Negative perceptions of the slur. To measure participants' perceptions of the slur as negatively expressive by DeShawn toward David, O'Dea and Saucier's (2017) negatively expressive scale combined with their positively expressive scale (reverse-scored) was used. This combination has been used by O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) to simplify the reporting of results and provide a more comprehensive measure of racial slur perceptions. This scale consisted of 8-items which are presented in Appendix G. The positively expressive items were reverse-scored and participants' responses to the items were averaged to create a composite score with higher values indicating greater perceptions of the slur as negatively expressive toward the target.

Justification of prejudice toward Black individuals. Participants' perceptions that racial prejudice toward Black individuals is justified was measured using O'Dea and Saucier's (revision in preparation) justification of prejudice toward Blacks scale. The full scale is presented

in Appendix G. Responses to each item were then averaged after reverse-scoring antithetical items to create a composite score with higher values indicating greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified.

Procedure

Participants were recruited via Amazon's TurkPrime software (Litman et al., 2016). They completed the study on Qualtrics online survey software. After providing informed consent and reporting their demographic information, participants completed the Social Dominance Orientation scale to measure their socially dominant attitudes. Participants then completed a brief filler survey assessing their favorite movies from a variety of categories (e.g., science fiction, action) and indicate how much the average person likes this movie. This was to distract participants from the true nature of the study. Participants then completed the randomly assigned low threat, high threat, or control priming imagination task. They then read the vignette in which the Black individual, DeShawn, used "nigga" in an affiliative way toward his White friend, David. Participants then reported their perceptions of the slur as negatively expressive and indicated their perceptions that racial prejudice toward Black individuals is justified. Participants were then debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results and Discussion

Only participants who self-identified as White and who passed all attention checks throughout the survey were included in data analyses. Composite scores were calculated for participants' reported levels of SDO, negative expressive perceptions, and perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified by averaging across participants' responses to each item. Higher scores indicate more socially dominant, negative expressive, and justification perceptions for prejudice toward Black individuals.

Manipulation Check

The manipulation was checked to examine whether the manipulation caused participants to report more positive perceptions of the imagination situation in the low threat condition and more negative perceptions of the imagination situation in the high threat condition compared to a control condition. To examine this effect, a one-way ANOVA was conducted in which condition (high threat, low threat, control threat) was entered as the independent variable and participants' perceptions of the imagination situation as pleasant was entered as the dependent variable. This dependent item was chosen as the manipulation check based on previous research by Harwood and colleagues (2011) who used this item to examine the efficacy of their imagination situation to manipulate positive and negative contact with an outgroup member. As discussed in the introduction, positive contact has been shown to be related to decreased, while negative contact has been shown to be related to increased, interracial anxiety (e.g., Aberson & Gaffney, 2008). Consistent with predictions, there was a main effect of condition, $F(2, 278) = 127.01$, $p < .001$. This effect was probed using Bonferroni pair-wise comparisons which showed that the low threat condition ($M = 8.38$; $SD = 0.93$) was not perceived as significantly different from the control condition ($M = 8.15$, $SD = 1.32$; $p = 1.000$), but both were perceived as significantly more pleasant than the high threat condition ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 2.35$; ps $< .001$). These findings indicate that the manipulation of positive versus negative contact was successful in priming significantly more negative perceptions of the interaction in the high threat compared to the low threat and control conditions.

The Effects of SDO and Threat on Perceptions of Reappropriated Slurs

Regression analyses were conducted using Hayes (2017) process macro model 1. Recall, in the current study it was hypothesized that higher socially dominant attitudes would be

associated with significantly more negative perceptions of reappropriated slur use by a Black

individual toward a White individual in the high threat and control conditions, but not in the low

threat condition (consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis and Bahns & Crandall, 2013).

This is because when threat is removed, individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes have

less reason to resist the reappropriative uses of racial slurs because their position in the status

hierarchy is not in danger. These predictions are founded in Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius

& Pratto, 1999) and the Justification-Suppression Model of Prejudice (Crandall & Eshleman,

2003). Specifically, Social Dominance Theory predicts that majority group members who

endorse existing status hierarchies who experience threat to their position in the status hierarchy

will distance themselves from minority group members, be less supportive of policies that

benefit minority group members, and seek justification for prejudice toward Black individuals

(Craig & Richeson, 2014; Esses et al., 1998; Hobfoll, 1989; Stephan et al., 2002).

To test these hypotheses, a 3 (threat condition: high threat, low threat, control) x

continuous between-groups regression was conducted using the Hayes (2017) process model 1.

Participants' levels of SDO and threat condition were entered as the independent variables, and

their levels of negatively expressive perceptions and perceptions that prejudice toward Black

individuals is justified were entered as dependent variables in separate analyses. These analyses

yielded no significant difference between the control and low threat condition predicting

participants' perceptions of the use of the term "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White

individual as negatively expressive, $B = 0.10$, $t = 0.64$, $p = .523$, 95% CI[-0.20, 0.40]. There was

also no significant difference between the high threat ($M = 1.76$, $SD = 0.82$) and low threat ($M =$

1.89, 0.98) conditions predicting participants' perceptions of the use of the term "nigga" by a

Black individual toward a White individual as negatively expressive, $B = -0.18$, $t = -1.16$, $p =$

.246, 95% CI[-0.49, 0.13]. There was, however, a marginally significant difference between participants' perceptions of the use of the term "nigga" in the high threat and control conditions (M = 2.10, SD =1.89), B = -0.28, t = 1.87, p = .063, 95% CI[-0.57, 0.02]; such that participants perceived "nigga" as marginally more negatively expressive in the control condition than the high threat condition. However, this difference was still quite small. To more specifically test the hierarchy defense hypothesis, the effect of SDO in each of the threat conditions was examined. Inconsistent with the hypotheses, greater levels of SDO were associated with significantly greater perceptions of the use of the term "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual as negatively expressive in the low threat condition, B = 0.21, t = 3.06, p = .002, 95% CI[0.08, 0.35]. Consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis, greater levels of SDO were associated with significantly greater negatively expressive perceptions of the use of the term "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual in the high threat condition, B = 0.13, t = 2.06, p = .041, 95% CI[0.01, 0.25]; and the control condition, B = 0.32, t = 5.35, p < .001, 95% CI[0.20, 0.44]. Interestingly, the effect of SDO was significantly stronger (interaction B = -0.19, t = -2.22, p = .027, 95% CI[-0.37, -0.02]) in the control threat condition than in the high threat condition, and no other 2-way interactions were significant (ps > .220). Another interesting finding is the drastically low perceptions of the use of the term "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual as negatively expressive. These findings are illustrated in Figure 1. As can be seen, even for individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes, the projected means do not go above 3 on a 1 to 9 scale with higher scores indicating more negative perceptions of the slur. As such, participants generally did not perceive the term "nigga" used by a Black person toward a White person to be very negative.

These findings generally support the findings from previous research showing that greater levels of SDO are associated with significantly more negative perceptions of the reappropriated use of the term "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual. However, these findings call into question the causal effect of threat in explaining these relationships. Previous research has shown that greater levels of SDO are associated with perceiving reappropriated slur use as more threatening and subsequently more negative (O'Dea & Saucier, revision in preparation). Extending these findings in the current study, it was predicted that people higher in SDO would perceive the reappropriated use of the term "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual as more negative after imagining a high threat prime, but this was not the case. While previous research has shown that imagining a negative interaction with a Black person can heighten animosity toward Black individuals, this does not seem to be the case with reappropriated slur use. Instead, it appears that reappropriative slur use may actually function to lessen the negative effects of a negative interracial interaction (i.e., the high threat condition).

This possibility was tested further by examining participants' perceptions of justification for prejudice toward Black individuals. These findings are illustrated in Figure 2. As discussed above, White individuals' imagined or real negative experiences with Black people have been shown to heighten their negative attitudes toward Black individuals, and this should be especially true for White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes. Interestingly, the findings above indicate that, while White people higher in SDO are generally more resistant to slur reappropriation than people lower in SDO, the reappropriative slur use may function to reduce the heightened animosity that typically is shown following negative contact (or imagined contact) with a Black individual.

There were no significant differences in participants' perceptions that prejudice toward Black people is justified between any of the threat conditions ($M_{\text{low threat}} = 2.23$, $SD_{\text{low threat}} = 1.56$; $M_{\text{control threat}} = 2.75$, $SD_{\text{control threat}} = 1.77$; $M_{\text{high threat}} = 2.71$, $SD_{\text{high threat}} = 1.69$; all ps > .074). The effect of SDO in each of the threat conditions was examined and the results showed, consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis, SDO was again related to significantly greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified in the low, $B = 0.48$, $t = 5.39$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.30, 0.65]; control, $B = 0.75$, $t = 9.69$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.60, 0.91]; and high, $B = 0.56$, $t = 6.97$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[0.41, 0.72]; threat conditions. Interestingly, the effect of SDO on participants' perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified was strongest in the control condition; it was significantly stronger than in the low threat condition, interaction $B = 0.28$, $t = 2.34$, $p = .020$, 95% CI[0.04, 0.51]. No other interactions were significant, ps > .095.

These findings, again, supported previous findings that people higher in socially dominant attitudes are more resistant to slur reappropriation than are people lower in socially dominant attitudes, and may subsequently increase in their perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified. However, these findings do not support the hypothesis that the effect of SDO on perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified would be strongest following exposure to a high threat condition and control condition compared to a low threat condition. Instead, the effect of SDO on perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified in the high threat condition seems to be more similar to the effect of SDO in the low threat condition. These findings are surprising because previous research suggests that White individuals imagining or experiencing a negative interaction should not be similar to the effects of positive contact (and can even reduce the positive effects of positive contact; e.g., Gijsberts, van der Meer, & Dagevos, 2012; Hooghe & De Vroome, 2015; van der Meer &

Tolsma, 2014). Thus, it appears that the effect of threat induction on participants' perceptions

that prejudice toward Black people is justified may be at least partially neutralized by exposure

to a Black individual using the reappropriated slur "nigga" toward a White person, possibly

providing additional support for the subversive perspective that promotes the use of

reappropriated racial slurs.

Chapter 5 - Study 2

Study 2 extended the findings of Study 1 by examining White individuals' perceptions of

intragroup (i.e., between two Black individuals) reappropriated slur use rather than the

intergroup (i.e., Black individual toward a White individual) use that was used in Study 1. Threat

condition was again manipulated as a high threat condition, low threat condition, and control

condition. Although appearing to be a simple methodological change, the current studies have

many important implications. Specifically, previous research showed that, even when not primed

with threat, White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes perceive reappropriative slur

use by a Black individual toward a White individual more negatively and reported greater

perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified. These relationships were

explained by White individuals' experiences of threat (O'Dea & Saucier, revision in

preparation). Thus, in Study 1 it was predicted that socially dominant attitudes would be

positively related to negative perceptions of "nigga" used by a Black individual toward a White

individual in the control condition. This prediction was based on Social Dominance Theory

which states that White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes are motivated to

reinforce, maintain, and keep distance between their group and lower status groups. Because the

use of "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual is generally perceived as a

positive encounter (see O'Dea & Saucier, in preparation), White individuals higher in socially

dominant attitudes should be motivated to resist this affiliation in both the control and high threat

conditions, consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis. That said, in Study 1 it was

predicted that higher socially dominant attitudes would be uncorrelated or negatively correlated

with negative perceptions of intergroup reappropriated racial slur use in the low threat condition

because this threat would be absolved. These findings were generally not supported; higher levels of SDO were generally associated with more negative perceptions of reappropriated slur use by a Black person toward a White person, but this relationship was generally not dependent on the threat condition.

In Study 2, it was predicted that individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes would report significantly more negative perceptions of intragroup reappropriated racial slurs in the high threat condition. However, White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes would not report significantly more negative perceptions of intragroup reappropriated racial slurs in the low threat condition. Recall, there were competing hypotheses about the relationships between socially dominant attitudes and negative perceptions of intragroup reappropriated racial slurs in the control condition. On one hand, White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes may still perceive the use of intragroup reappropriated racial slurs as threatening to their position in the status hierarchy. If this is the case, consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis and Study 1, people higher in social dominance beliefs should report significantly more negative perceptions of the intragroup use of "nigga" among two Black individuals. On the other hand, White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes may not perceive the intragroup use of reappropriated racial slurs as threatening to their position in the status hierarchy. Rappoport (2005) describes the intragroup use of reappropriated racial slurs as being used to cope with and defend against prejudice. If White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes do not perceive the intragroup use of reappropriated racial slurs as negatively expressive and as a justification for prejudice toward Black individuals in the control condition this would theoretically be a result of their perceiving intragroup uses of reappropriated racial slurs as being used to cope with prejudice rather than subvert existing status hierarchies.

Method

Participants

Participants for Study 2 were recruited using Amazon's TurkPrime software (Litman et al., 2016). Similar to Study 1, data analysis was limited to only include White participants. The design of the study was identical to Study 1 except that participants evaluated a reappropriated Black racial slur used by a Black individual toward another Black individual instead of by a Black individual toward a White individual. The number of participants the current study sought to recruit was 263 White participants who passed all manipulation checks. This was based on a GPower analysis with the same parameters as Study 1. Participants were paid $0.25 for their participation. 366 participants accessed the survey. However, 12 of these participants either did not answer or indicated their ethnicity as something other than White, 58 additional participants did not complete the study, and 18 participants either indicated that they did not read the threat prime or failed the manipulation check. This left 278 White participants for data analysis. There were 90 men and 188 women. The average age of participants was 39.31 ($SD = 13.38$).

Materials and Procedure

Similar to Study 1, participants were recruited via Amazon's TurkPrime software and completed Study 2 on Qualtrics. After the informed consent, participants completed demographic information followed by the Social Dominance Orientation scale (Pratto et al., 1994) used in Study 1. Next, participants completed the filler items assessing their movie preferences and they reported how much the average person likes the movie using a 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*a lot*) response scale. They then read the randomly assigned control or threatening prime. Participants then read the vignette which was identical to the vignette used in Study 1 except the target of the slur, David, was depicted in an image as a Black individual (rather than a White

individual as in Study 1). David's picture was also taken from the database used in Study 1 and has been shown to be roughly equivalent in attractiveness and happiness to the images in Study 1. Participants then reported their perceptions of the slur used by the Black individual, DeShawn, toward the Black individual, David as negatively expressive (O'Dea & Saucier, 2017; See Study 1). They then reported their perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified (O'Dea & Saucier, revision in preparation) using the same measure as Study 1. Participants were then debriefed and thanked for their participation. The means, standard deviations, and correlations among all measures are presented in Table 2.

Results and Discussion

Prior to analyzing the findings, the data were checked to ensure that all participants self-identified as White and passed attention checks. The main hypotheses of Study 2 were then tested by examining whether SDO interacted with the randomly assigned threat condition to predict participants' perceptions of reappropriated slur use among Black individuals as negatively expressive and perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified. To examine these effects, Hayes (2017) process macro model 1 was used. Participants' reported levels of SDO and threat condition were entered as the independent variables, and perceptions of the reappropriative slur use among Black individuals as negatively expressive and perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified were tested as dependent measures in separate regression analyses.

Consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis, it was predicted that higher reported levels of SDO would be associated with significantly more negative perceptions of reappropriated slur use among Black individuals in the high threat condition. Specifically, it was predicted that White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes primed with threat would

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be more motivated to perceive reappropriative slur use among Black individuals to be dangerous to their position in the status hierarchy. As such, they should perceive the slur use more negatively and report significantly greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified than participants lower in SDO.

Conversely, it was predicted that, for participants primed with low threat, their reported levels of SDO would either be unrelated or negatively related to negatively expressive perceptions of reappropriative slur use among Black individuals and perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified. This is likely due to White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes not perceiving reappropriative slur use among Black individuals as threatening to their position in the status hierarchy generally, but only when they have been primed with threat. By reducing participants' perceptions of threat from Black individuals, it was expected that people higher in socially dominant attitudes would become supportive of slur reappropriation as a coping strategy because this is a form of dependency-related support (i.e., is not threatening to their position in the status hierarchy) rather than autonomy related support (i.e., is threatening to their status position). This prediction is consistent with system justification theory (Jost & van der Toorn, 2012) that higher status groups should be motivated to appease lower status groups when possible to maintain positive perceptions as a way to *justify* their position in the status hierarchy.

Recall, however, that there are competing hypotheses about the effects of socially dominant attitudes on perceptions of reappropriated racial slurs used by a Black person toward another Black person in the control condition. On one hand, consistent with the hierarchy defense hypothesis, greater socially dominant attitudes may be associated with significantly more negative perceptions of reappropriated racial slur use among Black individuals. In accordance

with the hierarchy defense hypothesis, this is likely due to perceptions that this use is subversive, intended to reduced status disparities between Black individuals and White individuals.

On the other hand, White people higher in social dominant attitudes are supportive of helping lower status group members in ways that are non-threatening to their majority group position (i.e., dependency helping) in the status hierarchy. Thus, if there is no effect, or even a negative relationship, between participants' socially dominant attitudes and their negatively expressive perceptions and perceptions in the control condition, this would imply that participants are perceiving reappropriative uses of racial slurs among the minority group to be a form of coping rather than subversion of the existing status hierarchy. These perceptions are similar to the above predictions in the low threat condition but are more likely in that condition due to the reduction of threat following the low threat condition.

Upon examination of the effects of SDO, threat condition, and their interaction predicting participants' perceptions of reappropriated slur use among two Black individuals as negatively expressive, the findings showed no significant differences between the low threat ($M = 1.89$, $SD = 1.12$), control threat ($M = 1.81$, $SD = 1.06$), and high threat ($M = 1.79$, $SD = 0.83$) conditions (all ps > .492) which is not consistent with hypotheses, but is consistent with the findings of Study 1. More important to the hypotheses of the current study were the effects of SDO within each threat condition. Similar to Study 1, there was generally not a large effect of threat on the relationships between SDO and participants' perceptions of "nigga" used by a Black individual toward another Black individual. That said, supporting the hypotheses founded on Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000) and the Intergroup Helping Relations as Status Relations Model (Halabi et al., 2008; Nadler, 2002), participants' levels of SDO were generally unrelated to participants' perceptions of reappropriated slur use among Black individuals in the

low threat condition as negatively expressive, $B = 0.13$, $t = 1.93$, $p = .055$; control threat condition, $B = 0.09$, $t = 1.56$, $p = .120$; and high threat condition, $B = 0.10$, $t = 1.56$, $p = .120$. These findings are shown in Figure 3 and indicate that Black individuals' reappropriative use of the term "nigga" is not perceived negatively as a function of socially dominant beliefs, indicating that it is not perceived as a threat to White people's position atop the status hierarchy. These findings have important implications for the subversive strategy for reducing the negative implications of racial slurs which will be discussed more in the discussion section.

The effects of SDO and threat condition predicting participants' perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified were then tested. These findings are shown in Figure 4. Given that this measure is independent of the slur use, it was predicted that the results would generally mirror the findings from Study 1, such that participants higher in SDO would generally report significantly greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified. This hypothesis was supported such that greater levels of SDO were associated with significantly greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified in the low threat condition, $B = 0.65$, $t = 6.99$, $p < .001$; control threat condition, $B = 0.39$, $t = 4.58$, $p < .001$; and high threat condition, $B = 0.54$, $t = 6.02$, $p < .001$. Interestingly, while the results of the current study are similar to Study 1 in that higher levels of SDO were associated with significantly greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified, the pattern of simple slopes across the three threat conditions was reversed. Specifically, in Study 1, the strongest effect of SDO was in the control threat condition. However, in the current study, the strongest effects of SDO were in the low threat and high threat conditions with the strongest difference in slopes between the low threat and control threat conditions, interaction $B = -0.23$, $t = -2.07$, $p = .040$. No other interactions were significant ($ps > .217$). This could be cautiously and

speculatively explained by the Intergroup Helping Relations as Status Relations Model (Halabi et al., 2008; Nadler, 2002). Again, this model predicts that majority group members will be supportive of behaviors and policies that benefit minority group members as well as these behaviors and policies do not function to reduce distance between social groups. Specifically, it could be that individuals higher in SDO who are asked to imagine a contact scenario with a Black person but then are shown a situation in which two Black individuals reappropriatively use the term "nigga" among themselves perceive this use as functioning to create ingroups among Black individuals but separate from White individuals thus maintain existing group differences (specifically pushing the lower status group lower), and thus perceiving the lower status group as more deserving of prejudice.

Taken together, the current study advances existing research and Study 1. By examining whether White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes resist the use of not only intergroup uses of reappropriated racial slurs (e.g., "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual), but intragroup uses of reappropriated racial slurs as well (e.g., "nigga" by a Black individual toward a Black individual), the current study has provided additional understanding of White individuals' resistance to the subversive strategy (Bianchi, 2014). Previous research has shown that White individuals higher in socially dominant and prejudicial attitudes may resist this use of racial slurs in intergroup situations (O'Dea & Saucier, revision in preparation). However, it is possible that, in the current studies, these negative perceptions may be constrained to intergroup, but not intragroup, uses of reappropriated racial slurs. These findings contribute to our understanding of how Social Dominance Theory predicts support for the reappropriation of slurs and coping/subversive attempts more generally and furthering understanding the prosocial boundary conditions of the subversive strategy – White individuals higher in socially dominant

attitudes may be supportive of this use, but only in situations in which it poses no threat to their position in the status hierarchy.

Chapter 6 - General Discussion

The current studies extended previous research on the reappropriation of racial slurs by examining the effects of socially dominant attitudes and perceptions of Black people as threatening on White individuals' perceptions of this slur use. Reappropriation of racial slurs is a subversive use of racial slurs intended to combat, rather than reinforce, racist social hierarchies. Specifically, it is the use of racial slurs by individuals belonging to the targeted social group among their ingroup as a means of affiliation and group bonding rather than as a means of derogation and disrespect. Extending the hierarchy defense hypothesis and research related to Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), it was hypothesized that White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes would generally resist any use of reappropriated racial slur use which they perceived as threatening to their position in the status hierarchy.

More specifically, it was predicted that White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes would be more resistant to slur reappropriation when participants had just been primed with a high threat condition compared to a control or low threat condition. Further, it was predicted that in the control condition, greater socially dominant attitudes would be associated with significantly more negative perceptions of intergroup racial slur use. However, there were competing hypotheses about the relationship between socially dominant attitudes and negative perceptions of reappropriative slur use in intragroup situations. On one hand, if this is perceived as threatening to White people's position in the status hierarchy, the hierarchy defense hypothesis predicted that White individuals higher in social dominance beliefs would be more resistant to intragroup slur reappropriation. However, if this is perceived as non-threatening to White people's position in the status hierarchy, the hierarchy defense hypothesis predicted that

social dominance beliefs would be uncorrelated with White individuals' perceptions of intragroup reappropriation of racial slurs in the control condition.

The overarching prediction of the hierarchy defense hypothesis, that White people higher in social dominance beliefs would be more resistant to slur reappropriation when it threatened their position in the status hierarchy, was supported in both studies. Specifically, White individuals higher in social dominance beliefs perceived that prejudice toward Black individuals is more justified in both Study 1 and Study 2, and perceived intergroup racial slur use by a Black individual toward a White individual as more negative in Study 1. Interestingly, however, even White individuals higher in social dominance beliefs did not perceive intragroup reappropriative slur use (i.e., the use of "nigga" by a Black individual toward another Black individual in Study 2) as negative. These findings are consistent with Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) which suggests that higher status group members are resistant to policies/procedures that benefit minority group members in a way that helps them advance upward through the status hierarchy but are generally supportive of dependency-related policies that allow groups to cope with or flourish in ways that do not promote status advancement. This allows majority group members to maintain their higher status position while also maintaining positive and system-justifying perceptions from minority group members (see System Justification Theory; Jost & van der Toorn, 2012). As such, White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes may be supportive of "nigga" among Black individuals. Inconsistent with the specific predictions of the current studies regarding externally induced threat, each of the effects discussed above were largely independent of threat.

Taken together, these findings and previous research by O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) indicate that individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes perceive

reappropriative slur use by a minority group member toward a majority group member as being more threatening, more negative, and more as a justification for prejudice toward Black individuals. However, consistent with the results of the current research, these effects do not appear to be affected by external experimental manipulations of threat. Further, the findings of Study 2 indicated that, while SDO was still positively related to perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified, it was generally uncorrelated with participants' perceptions of intragroup uses of reappropriated racial slurs as negatively expressive and participants were generally supportive of both types of reappropriative slur use with average negative perceptions of this slur use being below 3 on a 9 point scale on which higher scores indicated more negative perceptions of the slur. These findings indicate that people higher in SDO do not perceive the intragroup use of "nigga" among Black individuals to be threatening to their position in the status hierarchy and may suggest that the subversive strategy may have merit in helping minority group members cope with prejudice without increasing resistance from majority group members, especially when constrained to intragroup uses.

Limitations

The current studies do have important limitations that could affect the interpretation of the findings. First, the studies were conducted using Amazon's TurkPrime software. While this is a highly used method of data collection and has generally been shown to produce similar responding to other convenience sampling (e.g., introductory course participants) methods (e.g., Kees, Berry, Burton, & Sheehan, 2017), the current research may have lack realism for the participants if they either could not imagine themselves in the story, or if they did not perceive the situations in which the slurs were used to be plausible. In these situations, the power to detect

the hypothesized effects in these studies may be reduced, and the effects that did emerge may have less external validity.

The current studies are also limited in the scope of threat that was examined. Previous research has identified a variety of threat experiences participants may have, including (but not limited to) categorical threat, realistic threat, stereotype threat, symbolic threat, and interracial anxiety. Each of these could be important in explaining why White individuals were shown to experience more negative perceptions of reappropriated racial slur use in O'Dea and Saucier's (revision in preparation) studies. However, the current studies did not directly compare or limit the induction/reduction of threat to one of these responses. Instead, the pilot studies, and the subsequent manipulation of threat in Studies 1 and 2, were designed to be a combination, rather than an isolation of these findings. This methodological choice was due to the existing literature on slur reappropriation or slur use in general being relatively scant. Thus, it will be advantageous to understand which of these motivated responses is/are affecting participants' perceptions and endorsement of reappropriated racial slurs as well as their subsequent prejudicial responding. However, the current studies were necessary to establish the impacts of threat more generally first, and future research should further probe the relative effects of more specific forms of threat. Interestingly, the findings of the current studies suggest that, while O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) showed that threat explains the relationships between SDO and perceptions of intergroup uses of reappropriated racial slurs, externally manipulated threat does not seem to affect the relationships between SDO and perceptions of racial slurs in either intergroup or intragroup uses. Future research could address the impact of threat on perceptions of reappropriative slur use by manipulating the intentions behind the perpetrator of the slur's use of the reappropriated term. It may be that more subversive intentions are perceived as more

threatening, while more intragroup affiliative intentions are perceived as less threatening, by White individuals (especially those higher in socially dominant attitudes).

Finally, the current studies were limited to one slur, "nigga", targeting one social group, Black people. These findings may not generalize to slurs targeting other social groups because there may be differences in how the groups reappropriated the terms. For example, some social groups may embrace and take pride in the stereotypes that are present in the derogative slur use claiming these differences between majority group members and their group should be celebrated rather than vilified. On the other hand, social groups may reappropriate slurs as a way to distance themselves from the associated stereotypic associations if the groups perceive these associations as either uncharacteristic or undesirable traits. Thus, based on previous research and Social Dominance Theory, it should be expected that majority group members would respond similarly in all situations involving slur reappropriation and perceptions that minority group members are attempting to subvert existing status hierarchies. However, it is possible that what constitutes a threat to the existing status hierarchy may be group dependent or may be functionally dependent on how the slur is reappropriated and used.

Implications and Future Directions

The current studies contribute to the growing body of literature focused on reducing the negative impacts of slurs toward minority group members. Slurs used derogatively toward minority group members have deleterious effects on targets, including negative emotions (e.g., fear), negative perceptions of self and group status, lower career advancement, and negative physiological symptoms (e.g., Brandt & Henry, 2012; Dodson, 2014; Graumann, 1998; Haslam et al., 2011; Henderson, 2003; Jeshion, 2013; Kremin, 2017; Mendoza-Denton, et al., 2002; Merskin, 2010; Schneider et al., 2002). Therefore, research examining the possibility of reducing

the use and/or the negative power of slurs is important. Although the majority of existing literature to this point has almost exclusively examined the derogative potential of racial slurs, these terms are not always intended and perceived negatively. Instead, social groups may reappropriate the use of these stigmatizing labels causing the slurs to function not only as derogative terms, but as affiliative terms as well. It is in this way that social groups reclaim slurs (see Rappoport 2005), changing/subverting the original intention to allow these social groups to better cope with prejudice. However, research examining the implications of this use of slurs is scant. The research that does exist primarily focuses on the benefits of slur reappropriation (Galinsky et al., 2013), showing that group members who reappropriate racial slurs previously used to target their racial group are perceived as more in control over stigmatizing slurs, report greater self power, and report greater group power. Asserting a prohibitive perspective, Anderson and Lepore (2013) contend that the offensiveness of racial slurs is part of the literal, semantic meaning of the term and this offensiveness cannot be disentangled from the slur, even if the slur is intended and perceived positively. It is in this way that Anderson and Lepore (2013) suggest that, even though there are potential benefits to social groups reappropriating the use of racial (or other group-based) slurs, the costs outweigh the benefits. Even more contrary to the empirical findings of Galinsky and colleagues (2013), Anderson and Lepore (2013) do not discuss the benefits of slur reappropriation, but rather, contend that any and all uses of slurs should be inhibited. Conversely, Bianchi (2014) and Spotorno and Bianchi (2015) contend that social groups should be able to reappropriate the use of stigmatizing slurs. It is in this way that the social groups can cope with, defend against, and potentially even subvert prejudicial beliefs and discrimination.

The current studies advance the discussion on each of these theoretical viewpoints by empirically testing the efficacy of the subversive perspective at promoting intergroup affiliation between Black individuals and White individuals, thereby reducing prejudice. O'Dea and Saucier (in preparation) showed that White individuals are generally supportive of reappropriative slur use. O'Dea and Saucier (revision in preparation) then extended and qualified these findings by showing that White individuals higher in socially dominant, authoritarian, and prejudicial beliefs may perceive this use of reappropriated slurs as threatening to their position in the status hierarchy and this threat is associated with significantly greater perceptions that prejudice toward Black individuals is justified.

Extending these findings, the current studies experimentally tested the hierarchy defense hypothesis. These findings are consistent with many theories related to social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), including the Justification-Suppression Model of Prejudice (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003), Conservation of Resources Theory (Alba et al., 2005), Instrumental Model of Group conflict (Esses et al., 1998), system justification theory (Jost & van der Toorn, 2012), self-esteem hypothesis (Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Hunter et al., 2007), stereotype threat theory (Steele, 1997), intergroup threat theory (Aberson & Gaffney, 2008; Stephan et al., 2002; Stephan & Renfro, 2002), the Dual Process Model (Crawford, 2012; Crawford et al., 2013; Duckitt, 2006; Duckitt & Sibley, 2010), the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), the Intergroup Helping Relations as Status Relations Model (Halabi et al., 2008; Nadler, 2002), and Downward Comparison Theory (Cadinu & Reggiori, 2002; Steel, 1988; Fein & Spencer, 1997; Costarelli, 2009, 2012). Broadly, each of these theories explain data showing that majority group members may experience a variety of different levels and types of threat when they perceive that their values, resources, access, status, or other position are precarious. This threat often comes

from minority group members being perceived as attempting to disrupt the status hierarchy either by being too demanding in their push for equal rights or by simply being more present, more salient, and more represented in society. As a result, a number of studies have shown that White individuals higher in socially dominant attitudes may lash out against these lower status group members as a way to keep these groups in their place. This lashing out often comes in the form of explicit discrimination (e.g., the use or support of derogative racial slurs; see O'Dea et al., 2015), increased prejudicial beliefs and greater stereotype endorsement, and more support for policies that either benefit White majority group members or that only benefit minority group members through methods of dependency induction (e.g., Halabi et al., 2008; Nadler, 2002; 2010).

The current studies provide cautiously optimistic support for the subversive perspective which is aimed at reducing the negative impacts of racial slurs by proposing that minority group members use the terms in direct contradiction to their original meaning. Consistent with previous research, the current studies showed that White individuals higher in social dominance beliefs are more resistant to reappropriative slur use in intergroup situations that individuals lower in social dominance beliefs. However, even individuals at the higher end of social dominance beliefs generally did not perceive intergroup reappropriation of "nigga" by a Black individual toward a White individual as very negative, and social dominance beliefs were uncorrelated with perceptions of intragroup reappropriative slur use among two Black individuals. Thus, the subversive strategy, which has been previously shown by Galinsky and colleagues (2013) to increase people's perceptions of self-power, group power, and perceptions of control over stigmatizing labels, may be a strategy that many majority group members support, consistent with findings by O'Dea and Saucier (in preparation) that White individuals generally perceive,

even intergroup uses of reappropriated racial slur use by a Black individual toward a White individual, quite positively.

Taken together, there may be merit to Bianchi's (2014) subversive strategy. That said, the excitement surrounding this optimism for the subversive perspective should be tempered and evaluated critically. Racial slurs are powerful terms and "nigger" has been described as one of the most-vile words in the English language (see Kennedy, 2002). Racial slurs are terms which should not be used thoughtlessly. Although some recent research, including that reported in the current studies, provides empirical support for the subversive strategy, the prohibitive strategy has not been empirically tested or compared to the subversive strategy in terms of effectiveness. Future research should examine the efficacy of the prohibitive strategy as well as examine the efficacy of each of these strategies against one another at reducing the negative use and/or negative impacts of racial slurs. Further, there is need for critical discussion of how the *allowance* of racial slurs in society affects public interaction. While reappropriative slur use may have positive outcomes, there are many in society belonging to the targeted group who are vehemently against the uses of these terms (e.g., Dodson, 2014).

Further, while existing assessments of the derogative and reappropriative uses of slurs are constrained to the use of slurs toward Black individuals or by Black individuals, it is important to note that other groups are targeted by derogative group-based slurs and have the choice to prohibit or subvert these uses as well. Future research should examine the subversive and prohibitive perspectives at reducing the use, negative impacts of, and resistance to subversive uses of these terms. Examples of other commonly used slurs toward other groups that have been, at least partially, reappropriated include the term "bitch" by women (e.g., "badass bitch"; see Stratmoen, Craig, & Saucier, in preparation) and "queer" by the LGBT community. There are

some important differences in the reappropriation of these other group labels, however. By reappropriating the term "nigga", the Black community directly refuted the negative stereotypes associated with the term (see Kendi, 2016). The LGBT community, on the other hand, has embraced the negative stereotypes contending that, 'yes we have different identities, and those identities should be celebrated rather than vilified.' This is similar to the term "bitch" by women. Women who are assertive, in positions of power, or are perceived as either non-emotional or overly-emotional are frequently regarded as "bitches". With the adoption of this term, women generally embrace many of the stereotypes asserting, 'yes we do not fit typical gender roles that restrict our involvement in the community to birthing and raising children, and we are badass bitches because of it'. There is little research to this point examining the benefits or resistance to the reappropriation of these terms. Thus, it is important to examine whether in the current studies extend to slurs targeting members of other social groups.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

While the explicit expression of prejudice is generally vilified in modern society, the use of slurs continues. The subversive and prohibitive perspectives aim to change existing norms about slur use, but in different ways: The prohibitive norm discourages all slur use; the subversive norm encourages their positive/subversive use. Social norms describe expectations for people's behavior. However, prior to endorsing either the prohibitive or subversive perspectives as prescriptive normative influences, it is important to examine the positive and negative effects of each at reducing the use or negative impacts of racial slurs. The prohibitive and subversive strategies likely have important implications for race relations, but these implications remain untested. Though many tout the complete elimination of expression of slurs as a laudatory societal goal (the prohibitive norm), there may be some potential for reappropriated slurs to combat racism and promote intergroup affiliation (the subversive norm). The majority of existing research on, and theoretical discussion of, slurs is limited to the derogative potential of slurs. However, the current studies advance a novel assessment of the subversive perspective. Specifically, the subversive norm may allow minority groups to cope with disparaging slur use and other forms of discrimination as well as to subvert status hierarchies and potentially affiliate across group boundaries (thus creating a common ingroup; see common ingroup identity model; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000).

While previous research has shown that threat from reappropriative slur use explains the relationships between participants' levels of SDO and participants' perceptions of "nigga" used by a Black individual toward a White individual, the current studies showed that experimentally manipulated threat did not affect these relationships. Further, the current studies showed that White individuals are generally supportive of reappropriative slur use with White individuals

higher in socially dominant attitudes being somewhat more resistant to reappropriative slur use

by Black individuals toward White individuals, possibly indicating that White individuals higher

in social dominance beliefs perceive this as a subversion of the existing status hierarchy. Thus,

the current studies should hopefully inspire future research on the efficacy of the subversive

perspective; the intention being that the current studies be used to inform individuals about the

costs and benefits of discouraging versus encouraging different norms for slur use. Taken

together, the use of racial slurs according to the intentions endorsed by the subversive

perspective (Bianchi, 2014) may, indeed, have a prosocial benefit of helping marginalized

groups cope with prejudice (Galinsky et al., 2013). However, this perspective does not come

without cost, especially when the terms are reappropriated and used by minority groups toward

majority groups. Indeed, the very act of seeking to remove hierarchy boundary walls between

groups via intergroup affiliation may function as one of the catalysts for its reinforcement.

Chapter 8 - Tables

Table 1

Means, standard deviations, and correlations between each of the measures used in Study 1.

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1.	2.	3.
1. SDO	2.75	1.69	(.96)		
2. Negatively expressive perceptions	1.93	1.11	.35***	(.88)	
3. Justification perceptions	2.57	1.69	.61***	.39***	(.84)

Note. ***p < .001. Cronbach alphas are presented in parentheses along the diagonal.

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and correlations between each of the variables in Study 2

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1.	2.	3.
1. SDO	2.75	1.68	(.95)		
2. Negative	1.83	1.02	.17**	(.88)	
3. Justification	2.55	1.70	.51***	.12*	(.85)

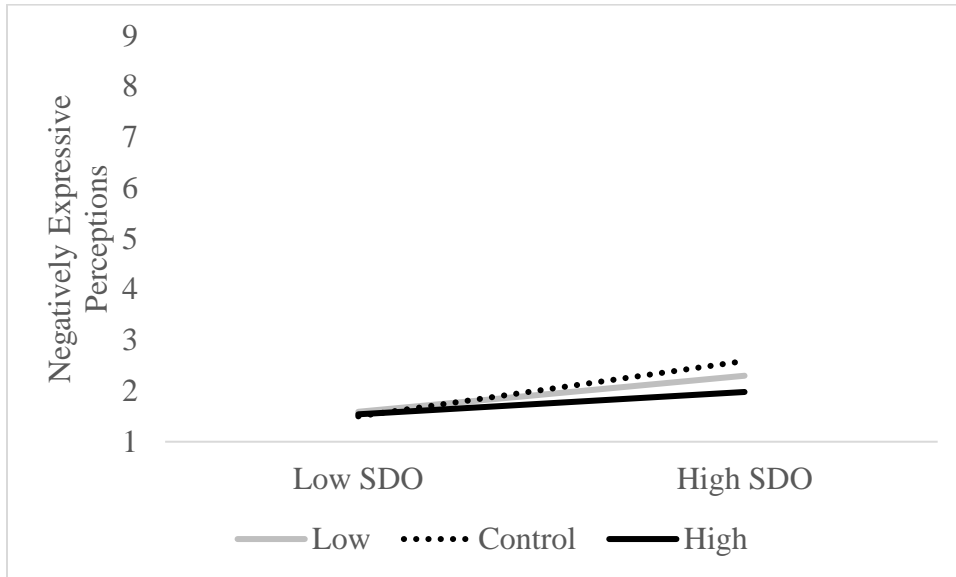*Note*. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Figure 1. Threat condition x SDO interaction predicting participants' negatively expressive
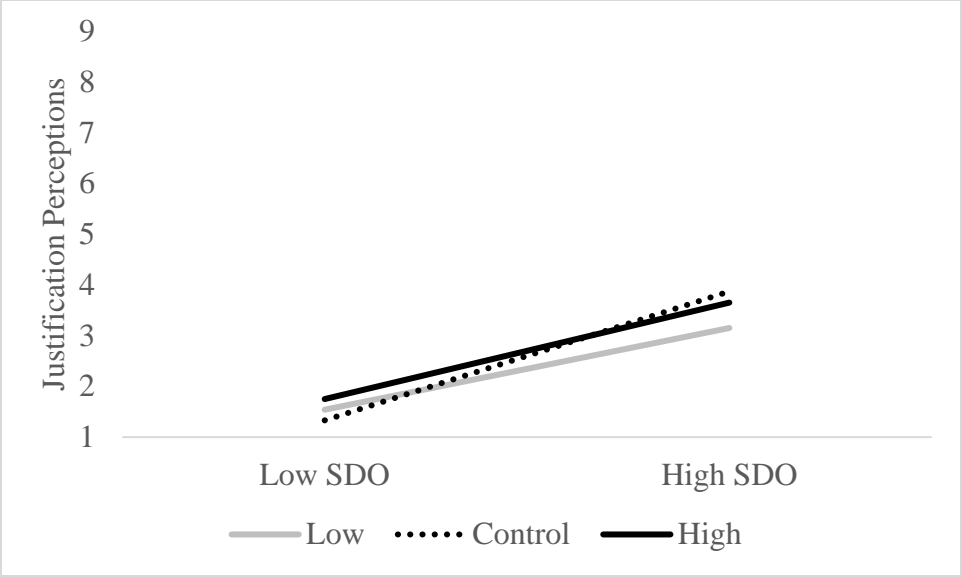
perceptions in Study 1

Figure 2. Threat condition x SDO interaction predicting participants' justification perceptions in
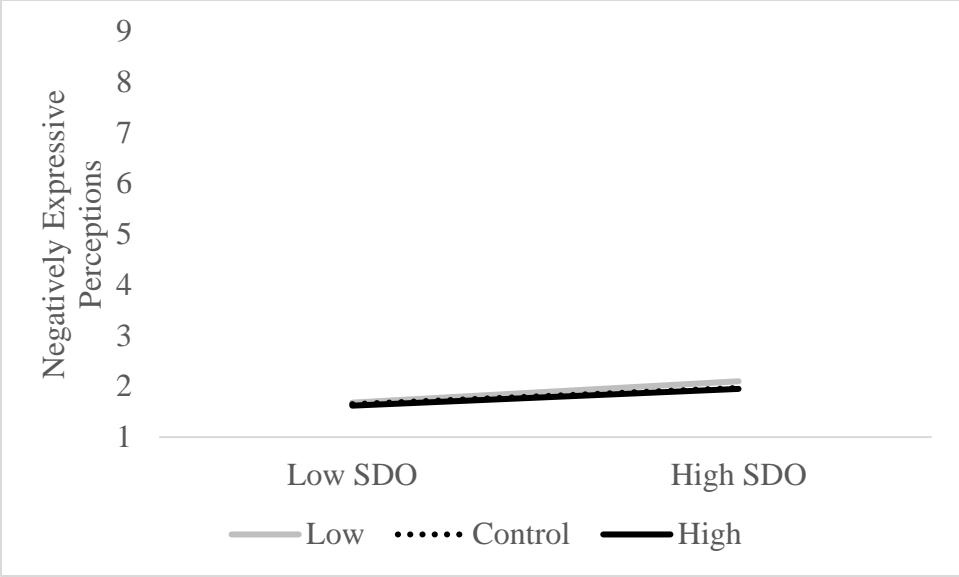
Study 1

Figure 3. Threat condition x SDO interaction predicting participants' negatively expressive
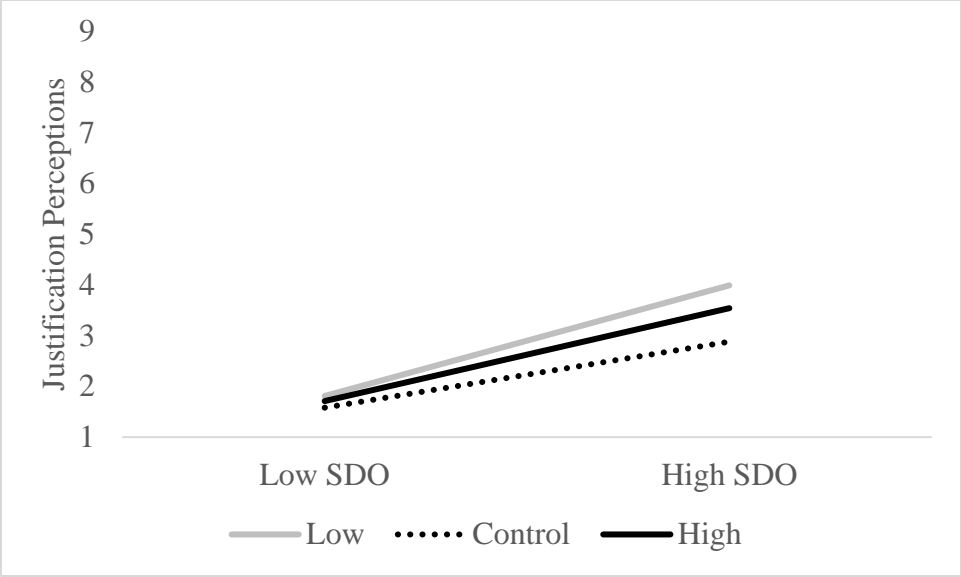
perceptions in Study 2

Figure 4. Threat condition x SDO interaction predicting participants' justification perceptions in

Study 2

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Appendix A - Realistic Threat Scale (Stephan et al., 2002)

1. Blacks hold too many positions of power and responsibility in this country.

2. Blacks dominate American politics more than they should.

3. When Blacks are in positions of authority, they discriminate against Whites when making hiring decisions.

4. Too much money is spent on educational programs that benefit Blacks.

5. Blacks have more economic power than they deserve in this country.

6. Blacks receive too much of the money spent on healthcare and childcare.

7. Too much money per student is spent on education for Blacks.

8. The tax system favors Blacks.

9. Many companies hire less qualified Blacks over more qualified Whites.

10. Blacks have more political power than they deserve in this country.

11. Public service agencies favor Blacks over Whites.

12. The legal system is more lenient on Blacks than on Whites.

Appendix B - Symbolic Threat Scale (Stephan et al., 2002)

1. Whites and Blacks have very different values.

2. Blacks have no right to think they have better values than Whites.

3. Blacks want their rights to be put ahead of the rights of Whites.

4. Blacks don't understand the way Whites view the world.

5. Blacks do not value the rights granted by the Constitution (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) as much as Whites do.

6. Blacks and Whites have different family values.

7. Blacks don't value the traditions of their group as much as Whites do.

8. Blacks regard themselves as morally superior to Whites.

9. The values of Blacks regarding work are different from those of Whites.

10. Most Blacks will never understand what Whites are like.

11. Blacks should not try to impose their values on Whites.

12. Whites do not get as much respect from Blacks as they deserve.

Appendix C - Attitudes Toward Blacks Scale (Brigham, 1993)

1. I enjoy a funny racial joke, even if some people might find it offensive.

2. If I had a chance to introduce Black visitors to my friends and neighbors, I would be pleased to do so. (R)

3. I would rather not have Blacks live in the same apartment building I live in.

4. Racial integration (of schools, businesses, residences, etc.) has benefited both Whites and Blacks. (R)

5. I probably would feel somewhat self-conscious dancing with a Black in a public place.

6. I think that Black people look more similar to each other than White people do.

7. It would not bother me if my new roommate was Black. (R)

8. Inter-racial marriage should be discouraged to avoid the "who-am-I?" confusion which the children feel.

9. If a Black were put in charge of me, I would not mind taking advice and direction from him or her. (R)

10. Generally, Blacks are not as smart as Whites.

11. The federal government should take decisive steps to override the injustices Blacks suffer at the hands of local authorities. (R)

12. It is likely that Blacks will bring violence to neighborhoods when they move in.

13. Black and White people are inherently equal. (R)

14. I get very upset when I hear a White make a prejudicial remark about Blacks. (R)

15. I worry that in the next few years I may be denied my application for a job or promotion because of preferential treatment given to minority group members.

16. I favor open housing laws that allow more racial integration of neighborhoods. (R)

17. Black people are demanding too much too fast in their push for equal rights.

18. I would not mind at all if a Black family with about the same income and education as me moved in next door. (R)

19. Whites should support Blacks in their struggle against discrimination and segregation. (R)

20. Some Blacks are so touchy about race that it is difficult to get along with them.

Appendix D - Modified Realistic Threat Scale

1. I sometimes worry that White people are losing positions of power to Black people.

2. I sometimes worry that Black people are not represented enough in American politics. (R)

3. I sometimes worry that when Black people are in positions of authority, they prefer to hire people of their own racial group rather than White people.

4. I sometimes worry that too much money is being taken away from educational programs that predominantly serve White students and is being given to educational programs that predominantly benefit Black students.

5. I sometimes worry that White people have too much economic power in this country. (R)

6. I sometimes worry that Black people are unfairly prioritized over White people for their healthcare and childcare needs.

7. I sometimes worry that Black students are prioritized over White students for educational funding.

8. I sometimes worry that Black people unfairly receive more tax benefits than do White people.

9. I sometimes worry that many companies' hiring policies unfairly benefit Black people more than White people.

10. I think that Black people should have more political power in this country than they currently do. (R)

11. I sometimes worry that public service agencies unfairly show preference for Black people over White people.

12. I sometimes worry that Black people, more than White people, are wrongly convicted when put on trial. (R)

Appendix E - Modified Symbolic Threat Scale

1. I sometimes worry that the values of Black people and White people are too different.

2. I sometimes worry that Black people think they have better values than do White people.

3. I sometimes worry that Black people want their rights to be a higher priority than the rights of White people.

4. I sometimes worry that Black people don't respect the values of White people.

5. I sometimes worry that Black people don't value traditional American values as much as White people do.

6. I sometimes worry that Black people don't value traditional family values as much as White people do.

7. Please choose option 7 (attention check)

8. I sometimes worry that Black people generally think they have better moral values than White people do.

9. I sometimes worry that the values that Black people place on work are inconsistent with the values that White people place on work.

10. I sometimes worry that many Black people have difficulty understanding White people's values.

11. I sometimes worry that Black people push their values onto White people too much.

12. I sometimes worry that Black people may not give White people an appropriate amount of respect.

Appendix F - Social Dominance Orientation Scale (Pratto et al., 1994)

1. Some groups are simply inferior to other groups.

2. In getting what you want, it is sometimes necessary to use force against other groups.

3. It's OK if some groups have more of a chance in life than others.

4. To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on other groups.

5. If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems.

6. It's probably good that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.

7. Inferior groups should stay in their place.

8. Sometimes other groups must be kept in their place.

9. It would be good if groups could be equal. (R)

10. Group equality should be our ideal. (R)

11. All groups should be given an equal chance in life. (R)

12. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups. (R)

13. Increased social equality. (R)

14. We would have fewer problems if we treated people more equally. (R)

15. We should strive to make incomes as equal as possible. (R)

16. No one group should dominate in society. (R)

DeShawn, the Black perpetrator in Studies 1-2.

David, the White target in Study 1.

David, the Black target in Study 2.

Appendix H - Negatively Expressive Perceptions

1. DeShawn used this term in a friendly way toward David. (R)

2. This term was used by DeShawn to bond with David. (R)

3. DeShawn used this term because he thought that it would show David that they could be friends. (R)

4. DeShawn was trying to be nice to David. (R)

5. This term was used to express negative emotion toward David.

6. This term was meant to insult David.

7. DeShawn said this to hurt David's feelings.

8. DeShawn used this term to get David angry.

Appendix I - Justification of Prejudice toward Black Individuals

1. Negative stereotypes about Blacks are justified.

2. Prejudice toward Blacks is justified.

3. Discrimination against Blacks is justified.

4. Negative stereotypes about Blacks should not be expressed.

5. Prejudice toward Blacks should not be expressed.

6. Discrimination against Blacks should not be expressed.