

REPORT ON SOCIALIZATION OF INTERGROUP BIASES
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EXPERT BACKGROUND AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. My name is Elizabeth Cauffman. I am a Professor in the Department of Psychological Science at the University of California, Irvine (UCI) and hold courtesy appointments in the Department of Criminology, Law & Society, the School of Education, and the School of Law. I received my Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology with a specialization in adolescent development from Temple University. I completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the Center on Adolescence at Stanford University and have served as a member of the MacArthur Foundation's Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice. I served as a member of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Committee on the Neurobiological and Socio-behavioral Science of Adolescent Development and Its Applications. I am currently the President of the Society for Research on Adolescence – the leading national organization on adolescent development. In addition, I am the Director of the on-line Masters in Legal & Forensic Psychology at UCI and also direct the Center for Psychology & Law at the University of California, Irvine.
2. Findings from my research were incorporated into the American Psychological Association's amicus briefs submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Roper v. Simmons* (2005), which abolished the juvenile death penalty, and in both *Graham v. Florida* (2010) and *Miller v. Alabama* (2012), which placed limits on the use of life without parole as a sentence for juveniles.
3. At the broadest level, my research addresses the intersection between adolescent development and juvenile justice. I have published over 150 articles, chapters, and books on the study of contemporary adolescence, including adolescent brain development, risk-taking and decision-making, and juvenile justice. In addition, I have received over \$35 million dollars in funding from both the Federal government (e.g., National Institute of Mental Health, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, National Institute of Justice, etc.) private foundations (William T. Grant Foundation, John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, etc.), and county agencies (Orange County, CA Health Care Agency) to conduct my research.
4. I have served as a consultant on numerous cases and have testified as an expert witness in court over 100 times. My testimony typically pertains to the sentencing phase of the defendant's trial; however, several cases have involved the guilt phase or whether the youth was competent to stand trial. In addition, I have also served as an expert witness on the issue of transferring juveniles to adult court as well as the re-sentencing of juveniles who have received life without the possibility of parole. I have testified as an expert in both state and federal court.
5. My post-doctoral fellow, Melanie Fessinger, assisted me in preparing this brief. She received her Ph.D. in Psychology with specializations in Basic and Applied Social Psychology and Psychology and Law from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. At the broadest level, her research examines legal decision-making processes. She has published nearly 20 articles, book chapters, and law reviews on people's experiences in the legal system,

including their interactions with legal authority figures and their use of unreliable evidence.

REASON FOR REFERRAL

6. I was contacted by the Center for Truth and Justice to provide information on the harmful effects of socializing children to be prejudiced against others. Specifically, I was asked to summarize research from developmental and social psychology as it applies to the educational materials being used to teach schoolchildren in Azerbaijan about Armenians.

HUMANS HAVE A FUNDAMENTAL NEED TO BELONG WHICH CAN LEAD TO THE ADOPTION OF INTERGROUP BIASES

7. Humans have a pervasive need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This need is considered fundamental and rooted in our ancestry, in that belonging to a group increases the chances of survival and reproduction in a world that requires competition for a scarce number of resources. Such a need leads us to seek close personal connections with others with whom we can share our resources and work together to procure more. It leads us to find ways of categorizing people into groups – those who are “us” and those who are “them.”
8. This categorization into groups leads to the development of intergroup biases, in which we evaluate those with whom we share a common social identity (i.e., our in-group) more favorably than those with whom we do not share a common social identity (i.e., our out-group; Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Such biases can lead us to show favoritism toward those in our in-group and to feel animosity toward those in our out-group. These biases can emerge early in life; children as young as three years old show favoritism toward their own group and bias toward others (e.g., Johnson, 1992; Yee & Brown, 1992). Some data suggest these biases peak around the age that children begin attending school (Clark, Hocevar, & Dembo, 1980; Doyle & Aboud, 1995).

CHILDREN ADOPT INTERGROUP BIASES QUICKLY IN SITUATIONS WHERE THEY ARE IN CONFLICT WITH ANOTHER GROUP OR WHERE IT IS TAUGHT BY AN AUTHORITY FIGURE

9. Children are likely to adopt intergroup biases in situations involving conflict or competition with others. In a classic demonstration of the formation of these biases known as the “Robber’s Cave Study,” Muzafer Sherif and colleagues (1961) observed twenty twelve-year-old boys who were strangers before arriving at a summer camp. The researchers arranged them into two groups of ten boys each who would separately occupy different areas of the camp. In the initial phase of the study, the groups did not know of each other’s existence. They spent the first few days bonding and creating group social identities by choosing names for their group, creating group symbols, and establishing leaders. In the second phase of the study, the groups learned of each other’s existence through overhearing noises and finding items around the camp that were

not their own. Upon learning that there was another group occupying the camp, the boys immediately began to show signs of out-group bias: they expressed resentment toward the other group through the use of expletives, became territorial about the resources at the camp (e.g., “*They* better not be in *our* swimming hole,” p. 94), and wanted to challenge the other group to show their own group’s superiority (e.g., “We’ll challenge them first... They’ve got a nerve,” p. 79). Before coming into physical contact with one another, the boys had “built up a highly competitive mood” about “those boys at the other end of the camp” and even made threatening remarks about the others (Sherif, 1961, p. 96). After coming into physical contact with one another, the boys’ behavior showed even clearer signs of out-group bias: they destroyed and set fire to each other’s flags, broke out into fist fights, raided each other’s cabins, and stole each other’s belongings. Importantly, the boys in the Robber’s Cave Study were strangers to one another upon arrival to the camp. Yet, after a few days of spending time together, and upon learning that there were “others” occupying the same camp, the boys established their own group identities and became protective of their own groups. What began as an arbitrary decision to place the boys into one of two groups became a dividing line upon which they were willing to inflict harm and steal resources. Such behaviors occurring within a week of the boys arriving at the camp also demonstrated the speed at which such group identities can be fostered and outgroup biases can arise.

10. Children are also likely to adopt intergroup biases when they learn to do so from authority figures (e.g., parents, teachers). In a classic example of how easily children can be taught these biases, Jane Elliot conducted a demonstration with her third-grade classroom which later became known as “A Class Divided” (Peters, 1985). In the demonstration, Elliot arbitrarily divided her classroom by their eye color. On the first day, Elliot instructed her third-grade students that those with blue eyes were superior to those with brown eyes. She told them that blue-eyed people were better and smarter than brown-eyed people. She told brown-eyed students that they would receive five minutes less of recess, that they were not allowed to use the drinking fountain, and that they were not allowed to play with the blue-eyed students. The effects of such instructions were nearly immediate. The blue-eyed students started to act superior to their brown-eyed peers, teased them for their eye color, and began using “brown-eyed” as a derogatory remark. In turn, the brown-eyed students began internalizing the narrative that they were inferior to their blue-eyed peers. They became demotivated, appeared down and defeated, and reported that they felt alone among their peers. When Elliot asked one of her brown-eyed students what it meant when his blue-eyed peer called him “brown eyes,” the student remarked that it meant “that we’re stupid.” In fact, within the span of that single day, such instruction led to violence among the third graders; one of the brown-eyed students physically hit one of the blue-eyed students after being teased for his eye color. As Elliot described, “I watched what had been marvelous, cooperative, wonderful, thoughtful children turn into nasty, vicious, discriminating little third graders in the space of fifteen minutes” (Peters, 1985). On the second day, Elliot switched the groups and instructed her third-grade students that those with brown eyes were actually superior to those with blue eyes. There was a near-immediate difference in the behavior and motivation of the previously demotivated

brown-eyed students. The brown-eyed students began to perform tasks more efficiently and had a discernable improvement in mood. In turn, the blue-eyed students began to behave as their brown-eyed students had the day before. They now appeared demotivated, were less effective at performing tasks, and reported that they felt powerless. The children likened their feelings of being inferior as feeling like “a dog on a leash” or like “you’re chaining them up in a prison and throwing the key away.” Overall, Elliot’s two-day demonstration in her third-grade classroom shows how quickly intergroup biases can be learned and adopted by schoolchildren. These children, who previously were friends and who had likely never paid much attention to their peers’ eye color, were socialized within two days to perceive others as inferior simply because of a trait that they had no control over.

INTERGROUP BIASES CAN BE EXACERBATED IN SITUATIONS WHERE DEATH IS SALIENT

11. People are especially likely to act upon intergroup biases in situations that remind them of death (Becker, 1973). According to terror management theory, humans are motivated by self-preservation and, thus, experience anxiety upon being reminded of their own mortality (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1986; Solomon, Greenberg, Pyszczynski, 1991). This anxiety leads them to find ways to enhance their self-esteem and find meaning in life as a means of achieving symbolic or literal immortality (e.g., through the continuation of their lineage; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1986). One means of doing so is to establish and maintain a cultural worldview that helps them understand their value and role in what is otherwise seen as an uncontrollable universe where the only certainty is death (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon, Rosenblatt, Veeder, Kirkland, & Lyon, 1990). They then become protective of this cultural worldview, which leads them to show favor to those who validate it and to disfavor those who threaten it (i.e., those who do not share the same worldview).
12. Accordingly, those who are reminded of their own death show in-group biases toward those perceived as similar to them and out-group biases against those perceived as dissimilar. In an early demonstration of this effect, Greenberg and colleagues (1990) conducted a study with two groups of Christian students. One group was prompted to think about their own death by being instructed to write about “what will happen to them as they physically die” and “the emotions that the thought of their own death aroused in them.” The second group was not prompted to think about their own death. All then rated their impressions of another student who they were led to believe was either Christian or Jewish. Results showed that those who were prompted to think about their own death rated the Christian student more favorably and the Jewish student less favorably than did those who were not prompted to think about their own death. Thus, death reminders led students to show favoritism toward those who shared a similar cultural worldview to themselves at the expense of those who held different a cultural worldview. Such an effect has been demonstrated across hundreds of studies conducted with varied samples in the United States, Israel, Japan, India, Germany, the Netherlands, and numerous other countries

(Burke et al., 2010; Greenberg & Arndt, 2012; Fernandez et al., 2010; Heine, Harihara, Niiya, 2002; Florian & Mikulincer, 1997).

13. Mortality salience can lead people to respond negatively toward out-group members beyond just seeing them as less favorable to in-group members. Indeed, one documented outcome of mortality salience is increased aggression and punishment toward those who are perceived as a threat to one's cultural worldview (Burke et al., 2010; Greenberg et al., 1990; Pyszczynski et al., 2015; Rosenblatt et al., 1989). Upon the presence of an alternative worldview, one may seek to defend their own worldview by derogating the other, by attempting to convert those who hold the alternative worldview, or, at the most extreme, by attempting to eliminate the alternative worldview from existence (Greenberg & Arndt, 2012). In a study demonstrating how death reminders lead to aggression toward out-group members, McGregor and colleagues (1998) had participants read an essay that was purportedly written by another student who either shared their cultural worldview or threatened it (e.g., "*liberals/conservatives* are the cause of so many problems in this country..."). Participants were then allowed to decide the amount of hot sauce that the other student had to consume for what they believed to be a separate experiment. Those who were prompted to think of their own death at the beginning of the experiment allocated less hot sauce to those who shared their cultural worldview and more hot sauce to those who threatened it. In contrast, those who were not prompted to think of their own death did not administer different amounts of hot sauce regardless of the other student's worldview. Thus, reminders of death led to the protection of those who shared similar political beliefs, or in-group members, and aggression toward those who were critical of their political beliefs, or out-group members. Beyond interpersonal aggression, mortality salience also increases support for violent responses to ethnic, religious, and international conflicts (Hirschberger & Ein-Dor, 2006; Pyszczynski, Solomon, and Greenberg, 2015; Pyszczynski, Abdollahi, Solomon, Greenberg, & Weise, 2006).

INTERGROUP BIASES CAN ALSO LEAD TO DEHUMANIZATION AND AGGRESSION

14. The adoption of intergroup biases—whether brought about by conflict, teaching, or perceived threats—has important implications for human behavior. For children, learning about and developing these biases can affect their emotions (Hughes, Bigler, & Levy, 2007), their trust in others (Bigler & Wright, 2014), their relations with their peers (DuBois & Hirsch, 1990), and their willingness to offer help (Katz, Katz, & Cohen, 1976). Yet, the effects of these intergroup biases persist beyond childhood.
15. One documented consequence of intergroup biases is a perception that members of out-groups are more homogeneous than are members of in-groups (Jones, Wood, & Quattrone, 1981; Park & Rothbart, 1982). As some scholars poignantly explained, "males may perceive females as more similar to one another than they perceive males and vice versa. Pro-lifers may judge pro-choicers to be more similar to one another than they judge pro-lifers to be and vice versa. Academicians may perceive business people to be more similar to one another than they

perceive fellow academicians and vice versa” (Ostrom & Sedikides, 1992, p. 536).

Accordingly, people tend to see those in out-groups as lacking individual identities and instead representing stereotypic characteristics of their group.

16. Such deindividuation makes it easier for us to see those in out-groups as being less than human or not having independent human traits—a psychological phenomenon known as “dehumanization”—which, in turn, makes it easier for us to inflict harm upon them (Bandura, 1999; Haslam, Loughnan, Reynolds, & Wilson, 2007). The basic idea is that it is easier to inflict harm on someone portrayed as a “savage” or as a “parasite” or as a “barbarian” than on a person who has feelings and hopes and desires (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Haslam & Loughnan, 2012). Indeed, decades of scientific rhetoric implicate dehumanization as a factor contributing to the commission of atrocities such as mass violence and genocide (e.g., Bandura, 1999; Hewstone, Tausch, Voci, Kenworthy, Hughes, & Cairns, 2017; Ivie, 1980; Kelman, 1973). Therefore, leaders sometimes use dehumanizing language when discussing other groups as a means of gaining support for using violence to deal with a perceived threatening out-group (Ivie, 1980; Woolf & Hulsizer, 2005).

CONCLUSION

17. Social and developmental science demonstrate that children can adopt intergroup biases, in which they are more favorable to those they perceive as similar to them (i.e., an in-group bias) than to those they perceive as different from them (i.e., an out-group bias). They can adopt these biases very early in life, especially around the age that children begin attending school. They are particularly likely to adopt these biases in situations involving conflict, authority figures who promote such biases, or reminders of death. These biases can lead to prejudice and discrimination against those from other groups based on some discriminating feature (e.g., racial or ethnic identity) that are difficult to unteach once established.
18. The educational materials that I reviewed for this case, which are used in schools to teach Azerbaijani children, mirror the conditions of the research studies reviewed above that may foster intergroup biases and lead to hostility and aggression against Armenians.
 - a. For example, statements in the materials impose an “us versus them” narrative that can foster protective instincts for the in-group (i.e., Azerbaijanis) at the expense of the out-group (i.e., Armenians). This narrative may make students who are educated by such materials more likely to become protective of those who share their identity. Examples include:
 - “The Armenians skillfully used the Azerbaijanis’ trustfulness, ingenuousness and kind-heartedness.” (History, Grade 9, p. 132)
 - “The united efforts of all the layers of the Azerbaijani people were needed.” (History, Grade 10, p. 218)
 - b. There were also statements in the materials that described Armenians as a threat to the

Azerbaijani people which can also evoke in-group protective instincts in students who are educated by them. Examples include:

- “As the Armenian armed formations were seizing our lands, they were destroying the historical and cultural monuments there.” (Cognition of the World, Grade 7, p. 76)
- “The present Armenian aggression is really in no way different from the foreign invasions that happened in the past.” (History, Grade 7, p. 57)
- “A nation that... has declared you as its eternal and historical enemy. You are faced with such an enemy, who is obsessed with your existence, that does not shy away from any brutality, vileness, lowliness, hypocrisy, evil and slander.” (Additional Reading Book for Secondary School Students, p. 3)

c. Statements in the materials also serve as death reminders which can arouse intergroup biases in students who are educated by them. Examples include:

- “They had to run across the forest with everyone else under the hailing bullets in the cold winter night. Many people were killed that night.” (Cognition of the World, Grade 3, pp. 80-81)
- “Compare the mass slaughter the Crusaders perpetrated against the Muslim Turkic population of the East back then with the mass murders of civilians the Armenians committed in Garabag, including the Khojaly Genocide. Assess these murders.” (International History, Grade 7, p. 94)

d. Many statements throughout the materials use dehumanizing language to describe the Armenian people, which can foster perceptions that they are less than human and, in turn, make it easier to inflict or to support inflicting harm on them.

Examples include:

- “They are the type of a tribe that after living several dozens of years there, will shout to the whole world that it is the land of our fathers and great-grandfathers.” (History, Grade 8, p. 195)
- “Armenian terrorists” (History, Grade 9, p. 227)
- “Armenian henchmen” (History, Grade 9, p. 227)
- “Armenian bandits” (History, Grade 9, p. 227)
- “Sly and corrupt Armenians” (History, Grade 10, pp. 178-179)
- “Genetic enemies” (History, Grade 11, p. 87)
- “A nation that pours all kinds of filth from its veins” (Additional Reading Book for Secondary School Students, p. 3)
- “These scoundrels, who have the blood of the devil in their veins” (Additional Reading Book for Secondary School Students, p. 3)

19. In combination, these types of statements in the materials establish a strong sense of intergroup identity for students who are educated by them in ways that promote a view that those who are

20. not Azerbaijani— and more specifically, those who are Armenian—are a part of the out-group and represent a threat to the in-group identity. These are conditions that are likely to promote the development of intergroup biases in ways that can lead the students to be aggressive or hostile (or to support aggression and hostility) toward the Armenian people.



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