

# Entitativity and Intergroup Bias: How Belonging to a Cohesive Group Allows People to Express Their Prejudices

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We propose that people treat prejudice as more legitimate when it seems rationalistic—that is, linked to a group’s pursuit of collective interests. Groups that appear to be coherent and unified wholes (*entitative* groups) are most likely to have such interests. We thus predicted that belonging to an entitative group licenses people to express prejudice against outgroups. Support for this idea came from 3 correlational studies and 5 experiments examining racial, national, and religious prejudice. The first 4 studies found that prejudice and discrimination seemed more socially acceptable to third parties when committed by members of highly entitative groups, because people could more easily explain entitative groups’ biases as a defense of collective interests. Moreover, ingroup entitativity only lent legitimacy to outgroup prejudice when an interests-based explanation was plausible—namely, when the outgroup could possibly threaten the ingroup’s interests. The last 4 studies found that people were more willing to express private prejudices when they perceived themselves as belonging to an entitative group. Participants’ perceptions of their own race’s entitativity were associated with a greater tendency to give explicit voice to their implicit prejudice against other races. Furthermore, experimentally raising participants’ perceptions of ingroup entitativity increased explicit expressions of outgroup prejudice, particularly among people most likely to privately harbor such prejudices (i.e., highly identified group members). Together, these findings demonstrate that entitativity can lend a veneer of legitimacy to prejudice and disinhibit its expression. We discuss implications for intergroup relations and shifting national demographics.

*Keywords:* entitativity, prejudice, license, legitimacy, psychological standing

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People draw an intuitive distinction between violence in the service of self-interest and violence that is “senseless.” Violence enacted in the name of self-preservation, self-defense, or even self-enrichment can seem more rational and legitimate than violence that lies outside the bounds of logic and justification (Ray, 2011). In the present work, we suggest that prejudice and discrimination are much like violence—that when outgroup bias reflects the pursuit or defense of ingroup interests, it seems more natural, understandable, and acceptable than prejudice that bears no plausible relation to group interests. We refer to such instances of outgroup bias as *rationalistic* to highlight their apparent origin in perpetrators’ group-interested calculations.<sup>1</sup>

The present research examines how being in the right sort of social group—namely, the kind most likely to have collective interests—can legitimize the expression of bias against outsiders.

We contend that the same acts of prejudice and discrimination will seem more rationalistic when perpetrated by members of tightly knit and unified (i.e., entitative) groups than by members of diffuse and heterogeneous (i.e., nonentitative) groups. As a result, people who perceive their ingroup as entitative, compared with people who do not, will be more likely to give voice to their anti-outgroup prejudices (if they indeed have such prejudices). We describe this phenomenon as a *licensing effect* (Miller & Effron, 2010), indicating that membership in an entitative group grants people permission or legitimacy to express prejudiced attitudes without necessarily changing their private attitudes.<sup>2</sup>

Our theoretical logic rests on two propositions: that the ability to attribute prejudice to the defense or pursuit of collective interests can legitimize outgroup bias, and that entitativity signals that a group has collective interests. We discuss each proposition in turn. We then review previous research connecting entitativity perceptions to intergroup bias. Finally, we present eight studies demon-

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<sup>1</sup> The term *rationalistic* describes instances of prejudice and discrimination that a reasonable person might regard as furthering a group’s interests. Rationalistic prejudice is not necessarily rational in the sense of actually being in a group’s interests.

<sup>2</sup> The licensing effect we examine is theoretically distinct from the “moral self-licensing effect,” whereby securing a moral identity (e.g., by demonstrating a lack of prejudice) makes one willing to act less morally (e.g., by expressing seemingly prejudiced views; Merritt, Effron, & Monin, 2010; Monin & Miller, 2001).

strating (a) that perceivers will judge bias as more socially acceptable when perpetrated by entitative, compared with nonentitative, groups; (b) that this licensing effect stems from the attribution of entitative groups' prejudice to the defense or pursuit of collective interests; and (c) that perceiving their own ingroup as entitative makes people more likely to express their prejudice against outgroups.

### Collective Interests Provide Legitimacy

The defense or pursuit of collective interests can justify actions that might otherwise seem illegitimate. For example, people are more likely to violate social norms concerning equality and fairness when acting on behalf of others than when acting only on behalf of themselves (Diekmann, 1997; Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2013; Wiltermuth, 2011). People also feel more comfortable voicing opinions about social and political issues that directly affect their group's interests than issues that do not (Efron & Miller, 2012; Ratner & Miller, 2001)—particularly when their opinions are unpopular (Morrison, 2011). One interpretation of these findings is that the ability to attribute one's behavior to collective interests can grant people a license to do what they would otherwise inhibit themselves from doing.

Collective interests may also legitimize behavior that harms outgroups. Consistent with this idea, a *norm of group interest* permits people to prioritize ingroup interests ahead of outgroup interests (Wildschut, Insko, & Gaertner, 2002). According to this norm, individuals should strive to maximize ingroup benefits, even if doing so negatively affects outgroups. Previous empirical work has emphasized how the norm of group interest can *obligate* individuals to help their group at others' expense: Participants playing a zero-sum economic game made more ingroup-favoring decisions at the expense of an outgroup when decisions were public versus private, presumably because the participants felt pressure to conform publicly to the group-interest norm (Wildschut et al., 2002 Study 3). In our view, this norm can also *license* people to publicly express private prejudices against the outgroup—legitimizing, without necessarily obligating or motivating, outgroup derogation (cf. Miller, 1999; Miller & Efron, 2010). The subjective sense of legitimacy or entitlement to express one's views or to act on one's attitudes has been called *psychological standing* (Miller, 1999; Miller & Efron, 2010; Miller, Efron, & Zak, 2009). Without psychological standing, people tend to inhibit their behavior rather than risk opprobrium. We propose that one source of standing is the ability to point to collective interests.

Research on the effects of "intergroup threat" (e.g., Blumer, 1958; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996) underscores the importance of collective interests in intergroup relations. Indeed, there can be no intergroup threat *without* collective interests, although the mere existence of such interests does not imply that they are threatened. Intergroup threat "occurs when one group's actions, beliefs, or characteristics challenge the goal attainment or well-being of another group" (Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006, p. 336). Thus, one group's actions only become threatening—in the intergroup sense—if they impinge on or conflict with another group's collective interests (i.e., its desire for well-being and goal attainment). Whereas previous work has shown that intergroup threat (and thus concern for collective interests) can provoke prejudiced attitudes (e.g., Bobo, 1988; Kinder & Sears, 1981; Riek et al., 2006; Sherif

& Sherif, 1969; Stephan & Stephan, 1996, 2000), we argue that the expression of prejudice seems more legitimate when it can be attributed to a desire to defend collective interests against threat.

### Entitativity Provides Collective Interests

We have argued that outgroup bias seems more legitimate when it can be attributed to group members' concern for their collective interests. But when does prejudice and discrimination seem to stem from collective interests? The most basic prerequisite is the existence of a collective. In this respect, some social aggregates constitute truer collectives than others. For example, Yankees fans attending a game form a more coherent, unified entity—and more clearly have collective interests—than do pedestrians outside the stadium. In other words, the former social group is more entitative than the latter (Campbell, 1958; Hamilton & Sherman, 1996). Entitative groups are characterized by high similarity, proximity, and interdependence among members who share information and have strong interpersonal bonds (Brewer, Hong, & Li, 2004; Campbell, 1958; Crump, Hamilton, Sherman, Lickel, & Thakkar, 2010; Ip, Chiu, & Wan, 2006). Of particular relevance to the present analysis, the pursuit of common goals—and thus the existence of collective interests—is a central characteristic of entitative-group members (Denson, Lickel, Curtis, Stenstrom, & Ames, 2006; Lickel et al., 2000).

If, as we suggest, prejudice seems more legitimate when motivated by collective interests, then membership in an entitative group—the only kind that can possess such interests—should license bias against outgroups. Hence, outside observers should tolerate a group's bias to the extent they regard the group as entitative. Moreover, to the degree that group members themselves see the ingroup as entitative, they should feel liberated to express their own biases against outgroups.

### A Plausibility Constraint

We do not expect that entitativity will always give a group psychological standing to discriminate against outgroups. Entitativity provides collective interests, but these interests should only legitimize prejudice that they could reasonably have engendered. In this respect, bias against outgroups that could not plausibly interfere with ingroup interests should seem illegitimate—even when the ingroup's entitativity makes those interests seem particularly strong. For example, perceiving Palestinians as a cohesive group with clear collective interests might lead a person to grant Palestinians greater license to express bias against Israeli Jews, because Israeli Jews could be perceived as interfering with the pursuit of those interests. By contrast, we would predict that clear collective interests would not give Palestinians a license to be prejudiced against African Americans, as it is difficult to argue that such prejudice could be motivated by those interests. Thus, we theorize that the standing to express bias depends not only on the existence of ingroup interests but also on the plausibility that the outgroup might threaten such interests. Prejudice or discrimination that does not meet this plausibility constraint is not rationalistic.

### Prior Research on Entitativity and Intergroup Bias

Prior research has examined the role of entitativity in intergroup bias, but has not considered how membership in an entitative

group gives one license to express prejudice. Perceiving outgroups as homogeneous—a correlate of perceiving them as entitative—has long been associated with stereotyping (Allport, 1954; Brewer & Harasty, 1996; Hamilton, Sherman, & Rodgers, 2004), and people who perceive an outgroup as entitative are more likely to endorse and apply stereotypes about that group (Levy, Plaks, Hong, Chiu, & Dweck, 2001; Levy, Stroessner, & Dweck, 1998; Ryan, Bogart, & Vender, 2000; Rydell, Hugenberg, Ray, & Mackie, 2007; Spencer-Rodgers, Hamilton, & Sherman, 2007; Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, Hamilton, Peng, & Wang, 2007). Compared with less-entitative outgroups, highly entitative outgroups tend to elicit greater suspicion (Newheiser, Sawaoka, & Dovidio, 2012) and more negative evaluations (Abelson, Dasgupta, Park, & Banaji, 1998; Dasgupta, Banaji, & Abelson, 1999). Increasing a disliked group's apparent entitativity reduces people's willingness to help its members (R. W. Smith, Faro, & Burson, 2013). In short, people tend to have stereotyped beliefs and prejudiced feelings toward more entitative outgroups (see also Newheiser, Tausch, Dovidio, & Hewstone, 2009). We make the novel claim that people whose *ingroup* is entitative feel more licensed (and are perceived by others as being more licensed) to express prejudice against outgroups.

Our work builds on three prior investigations that establish a connection between perceived ingroup entitativity and bias, but that do not share our focus on the legitimization of anti-outgroup prejudice and discrimination. First, Insko, Wildschut, and Cohen (2013) found that laboratory-created groups made more competitive choices in a prisoner's dilemma game when they were induced to view their own group as more (vs. less) entitative. Competition could arise from intergroup prejudice, but Insko and colleagues instead emphasized the role of greed. Moreover, these researchers did not examine whether ingroup entitativity licensed people to act on extant competitive motives (as our account would predict) or instead strengthened the motives themselves. Second, Gaertner and Schopler (1998) manipulated impressions of ingroup entitativity by varying the level of interpersonal interaction within experimenter-created three-person groups. Members of the more entitative groups allocated more money to the ingroup at the expense of the outgroup, and rated ingroup solutions to a problem more favorably than outgroup solutions. In contrast to our focus on anti-outgroup prejudice, these findings were entirely explained by increased positivity toward the ingroup (see also Gaertner, Iuzzini, Witt, & Oriña, 2006) and not by increased negativity toward the outgroup—perhaps because dislike had little opportunity to develop between minimal three-person groups. Third, Castano, Yzerbyt, Paladino, and Sacchi (2002) found that priming thoughts of death led to more favorable ratings of ingroup members (Italians)—an effect mediated by perceptions of the ingroup's entitativity—but did not influence ratings of an outgroup (Germans). Thus, although this study suggests a relationship between ingroup entitativity and intergroup bias, it did not show our predicted relationship between ingroup entitativity and the expression of anti-outgroup prejudice—perhaps because derogating the outgroup was a less appealing strategy than affirming the ingroup for dealing with death-related anxiety.

Whereas these three prior investigations argued that perceived ingroup entitativity can *motivate ingroup favoritism*, ours is the first to show that perceived ingroup entitativity can *license anti-outgroup prejudice*. Motivation impels people to act; a license, by

contrast, allows people to act if they wish (Miller & Effron, 2010). In other words, we propose that perceived ingroup entitativity seems to legitimize prejudice, and gives people standing to express prejudiced views if they already hold them. Our claims are particularly important to test because scholars have advanced (but not tested) a conflicting hypothesis: that perceived ingroup entitativity will predict *less* outgroup derogation (Yzerbyt, Castano, Leyens, & Paladino, 2000, p. 287), because the esteem afforded by membership in a cohesive group could obviate the need to derogate outsiders (cf. Lickel et al., 2000).

## The Present Research

We tested two hypotheses related to the proposed licensing effect of ingroup entitativity. First, if membership in an entitative group legitimizes prejudice, then observers should expect entitative-group members to be granted greater standing to express prejudice than non-entitative-group members (cf. Effron & Miller, 2012; Ratner & Miller, 2001). Specifically,

*Hypothesis 1 [H1]:* People will think prejudice and discrimination are more socially acceptable when committed by members of more- versus less-entitative groups.

We use the term *socially acceptable* to refer to people's beliefs about what others find acceptable.

Our second hypothesis examines a potential behavioral consequence of the entitativity–legitimacy link. If people are aware that expressing prejudice is more socially acceptable for members of entitative groups, then perceiving their own group as entitative should make them feel that they have psychological standing to express prejudice against outgroups. Thus,

*Hypothesis 2 [H2]:* Perceiving one's own group as more versus less entitative will disinhibit the expression of prejudice against outgroups.

In other words, belonging to an entitative group makes people feel licensed to express prejudice.

We tested H1 in four studies. In Study 1, participants rated the entitativity of the largest racial groups in the United States and estimated how socially acceptable it would be for a member of one such group to discriminate against a member of another. Studies 2A and 2B manipulated the entitativity of novel groups, assessed the social acceptability of intergroup bias, and tested for mediation by the attribution of prejudice to the defense or pursuit of collective interests. Study 3 used the same paradigm to test a boundary condition: Whereas our other studies examined intergroup contexts in which an outgroup could plausibly threaten an ingroup's interests, Study 3 tested whether rendering such threat implausible would eliminate the licensing effect of entitativity.

Studies 4 through 7 tested H2. Study 4 examined the association between non-Blacks' perceptions of ingroup entitativity and their willingness to express prejudice against Blacks. Study 5 tested our licensing account by examining whether perceiving one's ingroup as entitative predicts non-Blacks' tendency to give explicit voice to their implicit anti-Black prejudice. Finally, Studies 6 and 7 tested whether perceiving a racial or religious ingroup as entitative could *cause* greater expressions of, respectively, racial or religious prejudice.

Our hypotheses apply specifically to prejudice expressed by entitative (vs. nonentitative) groups, but we also examined how legitimate it seems to express prejudice *against* entitative (vs. nonentitative) groups. We were unsure what to predict. On the one hand, entitative groups seem more dislikeable (e.g., Dasgupta et al., 1999; Newheiser et al., 2009), which could legitimize prejudice against them. On the other hand, positively regarded victims seem to elicit greater sympathy when they are members of entitative groups (R. W. Smith et al., 2013), and prejudice directed at an individual could seem to harm more people when the individual belongs to a tightly knit, interdependent group—possibilities that both suggest that a group's entitativity could delegitimize prejudice against it. Our examination of this issue was thus exploratory.

### Study 1: Measured Entitativity Is Associated With a License to Be Biased

As a first test of H1, Study 1 examined whether members of entitative groups are seen as having greater standing to be prejudiced and discriminate against outgroups. We measured participants' perceptions of several racial groups' entitativity, and then assessed their beliefs about how socially acceptable it would be for each group to express bias against the other.

#### Participants

American participants on Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) service received \$.51 to complete the study. Data collected from MTurk have shown reliability at least as high as data collected from traditional sources (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Horton, Rand, & Zeckhauser, 2011; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). In advance of data collection, we decided to request 250 complete responses. Two hundred sixty participants began the study, and 253 provided responses that were complete enough to analyze. After excluding participants who failed an attention check (described subsequently  $n = 4$ ) and anyone who submitted their responses faster than an a priori cutoff of 2 min ( $n = 1$ ), the final sample contained 248 participants (136 females, 111 males, and one of unknown gender;  $M_{\text{age}} = 32.85$ ,  $SD = 12.40$ ; 80% White, 6% Black, 6% Asian, 3% multiracial, and 3% Latino, 2% other races). Results were identical in direction and significance when we analyzed all 253 participants' data.

#### Overview

We asked participants to consider a racial group, randomly selected from the following list: White Americans, Black Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans. Participants indicated how entitative they found this group, responded to several control measures, and then completed the same items for a second group randomly selected from the same list. Next, participants indicated how socially acceptable it would be for the first group to discriminate against the second, and vice versa. Finally, they completed an attention-check question and a measure of social dominance orientation (SDO—another control variable), and they provided demographics.

#### Materials

**Independent variable: Perceived entitativity.** A six-item scale used in previous research measured perceptions of each

group's entitativity (Denson et al., 2006). Each item assesses a different facet of entitativity: the extent to which group members interact with each other, can influence each other, have shared norms, have strong interpersonal bonds, share knowledge, and have common goals ( $\alpha > .84$  for each group). Responses were made on scales from 1 to 7 anchored at *not at all* and *very much so*.

**Dependent variable: Social acceptability of bias.** Participants read about seven prejudiced or discriminatory behaviors and estimated the social acceptability of each (e.g., "How socially acceptable is it for a [Black/White/Hispanic/Asian] American to avoid shopping at stores owned by [Asian/Hispanic/White/Black] Americans?"). Because we wanted to measure beliefs about what *others* think is legitimate (i.e., perceived *social* acceptability), the instructions explained, "We are not interested in whether you personally think it is ok to perform these behaviors," and said that responses should reflect what the "average American" thinks is acceptable. Appendix A of the online supplemental materials shows the seven items, which we averaged for analysis ( $\alpha > .88$  for the first- and second-group participants considered). Response options, coded 1 to 6, were *completely unacceptable*, *somewhat unacceptable*, *slightly unacceptable*, *slightly acceptable*, *somewhat acceptable*, and *completely acceptable*. This measure thus captures psychological standing, or the perceived legitimacy to express a view or commit an action (Miller & Effron, 2010).

**Control variables.** We assessed several additional variables to control for possible confounds in the relationship between entitativity and the social acceptability of bias.

**Victimization.** Three items controlled for the possibility that groups typically victimized by discrimination would be more likely to be perceived as entitative: Participants estimated how common it is for people to be prejudiced against each group, the extent to which the group is currently victimized by prejudice in American society, and the extent to which it has historically been victimized (7-point scales anchored at *not at all* and *very much so*). We averaged these items into a single measure ( $\alpha > .82$ ).

**Perceived social status.** To control for the possibility that perceived entitativity would act as a proxy for social status, we administered a modified version of the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status (e.g., Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000). Participants indicated each group's social status by clicking on one of 10 rungs of a ladder, said to represent "where people stand in the United States." Higher rungs represented higher status.

**Feelings toward the group.** To ensure that perceptions of a group's entitativity were not merely a proxy for participants' feelings toward the group, we administered a "feeling thermometer" measure (Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1982; Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2006). Participants viewed a picture of a thermometer and chose a temperature ranging from 0° (*cold*) to 100° (*warm*) that best represented their feelings toward the relevant group. Then they used the same scale to indicate how they thought the average American feels about the group.

**Subjective group size.** Because the perceived size of an outgroup is potentially related to the threat seemingly posed by it (Allport, 1954; Craig & Richeson, 2014a; Danbold & Huo, 2014), we also asked participants them to estimate the percentage of people who identify as a member of the relevant group.

**Social dominance orientation.** Generalized anti-egalitarian sentiment, or the desire to uphold and bolster intergroup inequal-

ity, has proven one of the most robust predictors of intergroup and political attitudes (Sidanius, Pratto, Van Laar, & Levin, 2004). To ensure that our results did not reflect differences in individuals' levels of anti-egalitarianism, we administered the 16-item SDO scale ( $\alpha = .94$ ; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994).

**Demographics.** We also controlled for participants' own race and their political conservatism. Participants used a 7-point scale to identify themselves as very, moderately, or slightly liberal; neither liberal nor conservative; or slightly, moderately, or very conservative.

**Attention check.** For the attention check (adapted from Oppenheimer, Meyvis, & Davidenko, 2009), participants read a short filler paragraph and viewed a list of four racial groups; the last sentence in the paragraph instructed them to click on an option labeled "other" and write the word "group" in the blank provided. As noted, we excluded those who did not follow these instructions.

## Results

We hypothesized that participants would judge prejudice as more socially acceptable when perpetrated by groups high (vs. low) in entitativity (H1). As an exploratory step, we also examined the social acceptability of prejudice targeted *against* groups high (vs. low) in entitativity. Because each participant made two judgments for the dependent variable (i.e., the social acceptability of bias perpetrated by a first group against a second group, and vice versa), we used a multilevel linear regression analysis with a random intercept to analyze the social acceptability measure, specifying that pairs of judgments were nested within participants.

First, we entered ratings of the perpetrator and target groups' entitativity as fixed effects. Table 1 displays the results. Consistent with hypothesis H1, participants judged prejudice and discrimination as more socially acceptable when they perceived the perpetrator group as more entitative,  $b = .14$ ,  $z = 2.54$ ,  $p = .01$ . Interestingly, participants showed a marginally significant tendency to rate discrimination as less socially acceptable when they perceived the target group as more entitative,  $b = -.09$ ,  $z = 1.69$ ,  $p = .09$ .

Next, we tested the robustness of these effects by adding the control variables as fixed effects. As shown in Table 1, the positive relationship between the perpetrator group's perceived entitativity and the social acceptability of bias remained significant with these control variables in the model,  $p < .01$ ; the negative relationship between the victim group's entitativity and the social acceptability of bias did not,  $p = .21$ .<sup>3</sup>

## Discussion

Study 1 found robust evidence that entitative groups are given greater license to be prejudiced and discriminate than are nonentitative groups. Consistent with H1, observers thought that, according to the average American, bias committed by members of entitative groups is more acceptable than bias committed by members of less-entitative groups. Importantly, this relationship cannot be explained in terms of a confound between perceived group entitativity and groups' history as targets of bias, their social status, their perceived size, participants' affect toward them, or participants' levels of social dominance orientation or political conservatism, as we controlled for these variables.

Table 1  
*Fixed Effects in a Stepwise Mixed-Effect Linear Regression Analysis in Study 1*

Step	Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i> ( <i>b</i> )	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
1	Perpetrator group entitativity	0.14	0.06	2.54	.01*
	Victim group entitativity (constant)	-0.09 2.55	0.06 0.44	-1.69 5.74	.09 .00***
2	Perpetrator group entitativity	0.15	0.06	2.64	.01**
	race_black	-0.22	0.27	-0.80	.43
	race_asian	-0.06	0.26	-0.22	.83
	race_hispanic	-0.15	0.29	-0.51	.61
	participant_ingroup	0.09	0.22	0.42	.68
	warmth_self	0.00	0.00	0.55	.58
	warmth_others	0.01	0.00	2.05	.04*
	victimized	0.04	0.04	0.93	.35
	status	-0.02	0.03	-0.88	.38
	size	0.00	0.00	-0.37	.71
	Victim group entitativity	-0.07	0.06	-1.16	.24
	race_black	-0.54	0.27	-2.00	.05*
	race_asian	0.11	0.26	0.43	.67
	race_hispanic	-0.29	0.29	-1.00	.32
	participant_ingroup	0.44	0.22	1.95	.05†
	warmth_self	0.00	0.00	0.60	.55
	warmth_others	-0.01	0.00	-2.43	.02*
	victimized	0.14	0.04	3.36	.00**
	status	0.00	0.03	-0.18	.86
	size	0.00	0.00	1.56	.12
Participant SDO	0.27	0.07	4.09	.00***	
conservatism	0.00	0.04	0.04	.97	
(constant)	2.07	0.71	2.93	.00**	

*Note.* The dependent variable was the social acceptability of bias. Predictors are sorted by whether they apply to the perpetrator group, victim group, or participants themselves. Predictors are abbreviated as follows. Variables with "race\_" prefix are dummy codes for the relevant group's race, with Whites as the reference group; *participant\_ingroup* was coded 1 if participants were a member of the relevant group, and 0 if they were not; *warmth\_self* = warmth of participants' own feelings towards the relevant group; *warmth\_other* = perceptions of others' warmth towards the group; *victimized* = perceived contemporary and historical victimization of the group; *status* = perceived social status; *size* = perceived group size; *SDO* = participants' social dominance orientation; *conservatism* = participants' political conservatism.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Although the results were consistent with the idea that perceiving a group as entitative increases the social acceptability of prejudice committed by its members, Study 1's correlational design allows other causal interpretations. To examine causality, Studies 2A and 2B manipulated the entitativity of novel groups and measured the social acceptability of bias perpetrated by them. Study 2B also assessed a potential mediator: perceptions that anti-outgroup bias is more likely to stem from group interests in entitative (vs. less-entitative) groups.

<sup>3</sup> To address potential concerns about multicollinearity among control variables, we also ran separate models that each contained only one of the control variables. The coefficient for perpetrator group entitativity remained significant in each model; the coefficient for victim group entitativity was marginally significant in some models and not significant in others.

## Studies 2A and 2B: Manipulated Entitativity Licenses Bias

### Participants

American MTurk users were paid \$.51 each. In these and in all subsequent MTurk studies, we took precautions to prevent sign-ups from people in our previous studies (Peer, Paolacci, Chandler, & Mueller, 2012).

In advance of data collection, we chose to request 120 complete responses for Study 2A. Of the 120 participants we obtained, we dropped 12 for failing an attention check (described subsequently) and two who took less than an a priori cutoff of 2 min to complete the study, leaving a final sample of 106 participants (73 males, 33 females;  $M_{\text{age}} = 27.84$ ,  $SD = 8.32$ ).

We collected data for Study 2B in two waves. For the first wave, we requested 120 complete responses. The effects from Study 2A replicated, and the hypothesized mediation effect received some support without reaching significance. To increase statistical power, we requested 360 complete responses in a second wave. We report analyses collapsed across both waves, but results were identical in direction and significance when we analyzed the second wave separately. Across waves, a total of 490 participants began the study; we dropped participants who failed an attention check ( $n = 17$ ) or who took less than 2 min to complete the study ( $n = 13$ ), and one person with missing data on the dependent variables, leaving a final sample of 459 people (279 males, 179 females, and one of unknown gender;  $M_{\text{age}} = 32.23$ ,  $SD = 10.93$ ). In both studies, the direction and significance of the results were identical when no participants were dropped.

### Overview

Participants in Study 2A read about a pair of groups whose members differed in their degree of interdependence. After completing a measure of perceived entitativity, participants completed the dependent measure—the social acceptability of each group discriminating against outgroups—and responded to an attention check. Participants also completed the same tasks for a different pair of groups whose members differed in their degree of similarity. Interdependence and similarity are both cues that a group is entitative (Campbell, 1958; Crump et al., 2010; Lickel et al., 2000; McConnell, Sherman, & Hamilton, 1997; Rothbart & Park, 2004).

Participants in Study 2B followed the same procedure, except that we assessed a hypothesized mediator (attributions of prejudice to collective interests) between the entitativity measure and the dependent measure. Additionally, to reduce the length of the study, Study 2B only asked participants about one pair of groups, employing only the interdependence manipulation.

### Materials

**Interdependence manipulation (religious groups).** Participants in both studies read about a pair of (fictional) religious groups: the “Ebbites” and the “Hentites”:

Both groups are relatively obscure denominations of Protestantism, and each has a similar number of followers. The beliefs of each group are fairly traditional and conservative, and although they disagree on

some specific doctrines, their religious beliefs are quite similar to each other.

The remainder of the description used an entitativity manipulation by Crump and colleagues (2010) that varied whether the individuals within each group pursue its objectives independently versus interdependently. Participants read that members of the interdependent (more-entitative) religion

pursue a common set of goals. Since the members of this religious group are concerned with achieving their common goals, they depend upon each other to a large extent. For the most part, this group is described as a tightly structured group.

In contrast, members of the independent (less-entitative) religion

pursue a variety of goals that are relevant to completing their group’s objectives. Since the members of this religious group are primarily concerned with pursuing these goals independently, group members do not depend on each other a great deal. For the most part, this group is described as a loosely structured group.

We counterbalanced which group, Ebbites or Hentites, was interdependent; Ebbites were always described first.

**Similarity manipulation (national groups).** To increase the generalizability of our findings, participants in Study 2A also read about a second pair of groups: “two neighboring nations in Eastern Europe” that “have similar populations, levels of economic development, and forms of government.” We used a different entitativity manipulation that varied the similarity among group members (McConnell et al., 1997). Members of the high-similarity (more entitative) nation

are very similar to each other and do not differ in many ways from each other. The people of this nation come from similar backgrounds and have the same opinions, similar important beliefs, and similar personalities. Across a variety of situations, people of this nation will act in a similar manner.

Members of the low-similarity (less entitative) nation, by contrast,

are very diverse and differ in many ways from each other. The people of this nation come from different backgrounds, have different opinions, different important beliefs, and different personalities. Across a variety of situations, people of this nation will act in a different manner.

Once again, we counterbalanced whether the group described first was the entitative one. We also counterbalanced which pair of groups (national or religious) was presented first.

**Entitativity measure (manipulation check).** To evaluate the extent to which each manipulation affected perceptions of entitativity, we administered the entitativity scale from Study 1 ( $\alpha > .92$  for each pair of groups).

**Hypothesized mediator: Attributions of prejudice to collective interests.** Participants in Study 2B read about a member of each group who felt and acted negatively toward members of other groups. The specific feelings and actions were the same as those referenced in our measure of the social acceptability of bias (e.g., making “prejudicial remarks,” preferring “not to hire members of other groups”; see Appendix A of the online supplemental mate-

rials). Participants indicated their agreement with each of four explanations for this individual's feelings and actions he: (a) thinks that other religious groups threaten his group's interests, (b) thinks that other groups will try to take his group's resources, (c) worries that other groups will interfere with his group's goals, and (d) thinks that his behavior toward other groups is helpful to his own group. Response options ranged from *strongly disagree* (−3) to *strongly agree* (+3). We averaged these four items into a single scale for each group ( $\alpha_s > .71$ ), measuring the extent to which participants attributed an individual's prejudice to a motivation to defend or promote his group's collective interests.

**Dependent variable: Social acceptability of bias.** The dependent measure was adapted from Study 1. Specifically, participants indicated how socially acceptable it would be for a member of each of the religious groups to discriminate “against members of other religious groups,” and for a member of each of the two national groups to discriminate and express prejudice “against members of other national groups.” We provided five response options: *not at all*, *slightly*, *somewhat*, *mostly*, and *entirely*. Participants were told that their responses should reflect their judgments of what the average participant in the study finds acceptable (rather than the average American, as in Study 1). For each group, responses to the seven items were averaged into a single composite ( $\alpha_s > .92$ ).

**Attention check.** For the pair of religious groups, participants were asked to recall “which religion's members are more likely to pursue common goals, depend on each other, and form a tightly structured group.” For the pair of national groups, participants were asked to recall “which nation's citizens are more likely to come from similar backgrounds, have the same opinions and similar personalities, and act in a similar way across a variety of situations.” These questions were multiple choice and listed the two relevant groups as options.

## Results

**Manipulation check.** The interdependence and similarity manipulations each had the intended effect on perceptions of entitativity (see Table 2). Participants perceived the interdependent group as more entitative than the independent group in both Study 2A, paired  $t(105) = 28.25, p < .0001, d = 3.77$ , and Study 2B, paired  $t(458) = 47.28, p < .0001, d = 3.33$ . Likewise, they thought the high-similarity group was more entitative than the low-similarity group in Study 2A, paired  $t(105) = 20.66, p < .0001, d = 2.92$  (the similarity manipulation was not administered in Study 2B).

Because our theorizing focuses on collective interests, we separately analyzed the item from the manipulation check that captures this dimension of entitativity (i.e., the extent to which group members “have common goals”). As expected, participants thought group members were more likely to share common goals in the interdependent group than in the independent group in both Study 2A (respectively,  $M_s = 6.56$  and  $3.63, SD_s = .86$  and  $1.67$ ) and Study 2B ( $M_s = 6.50$  and  $3.79, SD_s = .88$  and  $1.70$ ),  $t_s > 17.00, p_s < .0001, d_s > 2.00$ . Likewise, they thought that the highly similar group members were more likely to share common goals than the less-similar group members in Study 2A (respectively,  $M_s = 6.25$  and  $2.97, SD_s = .90$  and  $1.27$ ),  $t(105) = 20.08, p < .0001, d = 2.98$ .

**Social acceptability of bias.** Both manipulations also had the hypothesized effect on perceptions of the social acceptability of bias (see Table 2). Specifically, participants thought that their peers would find bias more socially acceptable if committed by a member of an interdependent versus an independent religious group in Study 2A, paired  $t(105) = 7.09, p < .0001, d = .79$ , and in Study 2B, paired  $t(458) = 5.63, p < .0001, d = .17$ .<sup>4</sup> Likewise, participants thought that it would be more socially acceptable for someone to enact bias if members of his national group were similar to each other than if they were not, paired  $t(105) = 7.82, p < .0001, d = 1.17$ , in Study 2A.

**Mediation analysis.** Why did manipulating entitativity affect the perceived social acceptability of bias? The manipulation check showed that participants perceived entitative groups as having clearer collective interests (common goals) than less-entitative groups; Study 2B allowed us to test whether participants were more likely infer that such interests explained bias committed by entitative versus less-entitative groups. We tested for mediation by estimating a multilevel structural equation model (SEM) using Stata 13's *gsem* (i.e., generalized SEM) command, which accounted for the within-participant nature of the experimental design. The hypothesized model, depicted in Figure 1, received strong support: As predicted, the interdependence manipulation significantly increased the attribution of the actor's behavior to collective interests,  $b = .32, SE(b) = .04, z = 8.10, p < .001$ , which, in turn, was associated with perceiving prejudice as more socially acceptable,  $b = 0.20, SE(b) = .03, z = 3.73, p < .001$ . Using Stata 13's *nlcom* (i.e., nonlinear combination) command, we found that collective interests mediated a significant indirect effect of the entitativity manipulation on social acceptability,  $b = 0.06, SE(b) = .01, z = 4.96, p < .01$ ; this indirect effect accounted for 33% of the manipulation's total effect on acceptability.<sup>5</sup>

## Discussion

Studies 2A and 2B provide causal evidence that belonging to an entitative group makes the expression of bias seem more socially acceptable. This appears to be because bias seems more rationalistic—that is, plausibly connected to the ingroup's collective interests—when committed by members of entitative groups. Compared with nonentitative groups, entitative groups more clearly have collective interests with which outgroups can interfere. Study 2B demonstrated that prejudiced acts committed by individual members of entitative groups were more readily attributed to the defense or promotion of such interests, which made prejudiced acts seem more legitimate.

These results support our prediction that a group's entitativity grants it psychological standing to be biased to the extent that (a) ingroup entitativity provides collective interests, and (b) the out-

<sup>4</sup> We computed within-participant effects sizes from means and pooled standard deviations; calculating them from the  $t$  statistic would have inflated the results (Dunlap, Cortina, Vaslow, & Burke, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> We also tested an alternative mediation model, in which the social acceptability of prejudice mediated the effect of the entitativity manipulation on attributions to collective interests. Although significant,  $b = .03, \beta = .01, z = 3.99, p < .01$ , this indirect effect explained substantially less of the manipulation's total effect (11%) than in our preferred model (33%). Thus, collective interests better explain the effect of entitativity on social acceptability of bias than social acceptability does entitativity's effect on collective interests.

Table 2  
Means and Standard Deviations for Studies 2A and 2B

	Religious groups		National groups	
	Independent	Interdependent	Low similarity	High similarity
Entitativity perceptions				
Study 2A	3.36 (.89)	6.28 (.64)	3.52 (.90)	5.94 (.75)
Study 2B	3.31 (1.02)	6.22 (.71)	—	—
Social acceptability of bias				
Study 2A	2.30 (.81)	3.02 (1.00)	2.00 (.90)	3.17 (1.09)
Study 2B	2.51 (1.08)	2.70 (1.20)	—	—
Attribution of prejudice to collective interests				
Study 2B	5.16 (.99)	5.48 (1.02)	—	—

Note. Values in parentheses are SDs.

group could plausibly interfere with those interests. Our next study sought further support for the second of these criteria by orthogonally manipulating ingroup entitativity and the likelihood that outgroup actions could threaten ingroup interests. We expected that the licensing effect of ingroup entitativity on prejudice would be attenuated or even eliminated when the outgroup was unlikely to interfere with the ingroup’s collective interests.

### Study 3: A Plausibility Constraint on the Licensing of Bias

Participants indicated how socially acceptable it would be for an entitative or a nonentitative group to perpetrate acts of prejudice. (Unlike Studies 2A and 2B, Study 3 manipulated entitativity between participants). This time, we also manipulated (within participants) the type of group targeted by the prejudice: It was either the same type as the perpetrator group (i.e., both were religious groups or both were ethnic groups) or a different type (i.e., one was a religious group and the other was an ethnic group). We reasoned that collective interests could more plausibly conflict when the two groups were of the same type than when they were not. Thus, we expected that the perpetrator group’s entitativity would provide psychological standing to commit prejudiced acts against only groups of the same type.

### Method

**Participants.** We posted sign-ups for 150 MTurk participants (paid \$.41 each) because pretesting suggested that this sample size would provide sufficient statistical power; 154 began the study, and 151 provided responses to the dependent measure. We dropped the nine participants who failed at least one of two attention checks (described subsequently) and the two who took less than 1.5 min to complete the study (this a priori cutoff was shorter than in our prior studies because Study 3 contained fewer questions). The final sample size was 140 people (93 males, 46 females, 1 unknown gender;  $M_{age} = 31.06, SD = 9.27$ ). Without excluding any participants, the direction and significance of the results were identical.

**Procedure.** We used the interdependence manipulation from Studies 2A and 2B to vary the entitativity of a fictional group (the “Ebbites”) between participants. We also manipulated, between participants, whether the Ebbites were a religious group that “contains people from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds” or an ethnic group that “contains people from a variety of different religious backgrounds.” Participants responded to the entitativity manipulation check from Studies 2A and 2B ( $\alpha = .95$ ), and answered a multiple-choice attention-check question that asked them to identify whether the Ebbites were an ethnic, religious, or national group, or none of those options.

The dependent measure was the perceived social acceptability of prejudice. Seven items administered in Studies 2A and 2B asked how acceptable the “average participant in this study” would find acts of prejudice committed by “Ed,” an individual member of the Ebbites. Participants completed the scale twice ( $\alpha > .91$  for each): once to rate prejudice that targeted “ethnic groups” and once to rate prejudice that targeted “religious groups” other than Ed’s own—a within-participants manipulation. Before responding to these items, participants were reminded about the Ebbites’ religious and ethnic composition. After the dependent measure, participants answered a second attention-check question: If the Ebbites were a religious group, it asked whether being an Ebbite signaled anything about ethnicity; if the Ebbites were an ethnic

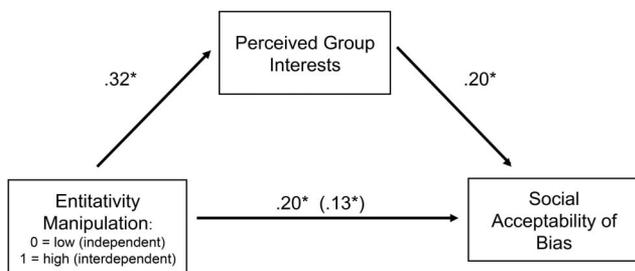


Figure 1. Mediation analysis in Study 2B. Coefficients are unstandardized.  $N = 459$ . Path in parentheses is the direct effect of entitativity on expressed prejudice (i.e., controlling for perceived group interests). \*  $p < .001$ .

group, it asked whether being an Ebbite signaled anything about religion. Finally, participants provided demographics.

In sum, the design was a 2 (entitativity: low vs. high; between subjects)  $\times$  2 (group type: same vs. different; within subjects) factorial design. The results were not significantly moderated by whether the Ebbites were a religious or ethnic group ( $p = .88$ ), so we do not discuss this factor further. A pilot study confirmed our expectation that two groups of the same type could more plausibly have conflicting interests than two groups of a different type (see Appendix B of the online supplemental materials).

## Results and Discussion

As in Studies 2A and 2B, the manipulation check showed that the perpetrator group seemed more entitative when its members were interdependent than when they were independent (respectively,  $M_s = 6.24$  and  $3.27$ ,  $SD_s = .68$  and  $.75$ ,  $n_s = 69$  and  $71$ ),  $t(138) = 24.42$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $d = 4.16$ . An individual item in this scale showed that the interdependent group seemed to have “common goals” to a greater extent than the independent group (respectively,  $M_s = 6.55$  and  $4.32$ ,  $SD_s = .88$  and  $1.53$ ),  $t(138) = 10.51$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $d = 1.79$ .

Our manipulations affected the perceived social acceptability of prejudice, as expected (see Figure 2). We analyzed this measure with a Group Type  $\times$  Entitativity mixed ANOVA. Only the main effect of group type and the hypothesized interaction were significant,  $F(1, 138) = 47.17$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .25$ ,  $p < .0001$ , and  $F(1, 138) = 17.54$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .11$ , respectively. To better understand the interaction, we computed simple main effects using the pooled error term from the ANOVA (Howell, 2002). We replicated the effect from Studies 2A and 2B in the same-group-type condition: Prejudice was seen as more socially acceptable when committed by a member of a more-versus less-entitative group (respectively,  $M_s = 2.45$  and  $2.12$ ,  $SD_s = 1.13$  and  $.90$ ),  $F(1, 225) = 4.45$ ,  $p = .04$ ,  $d = .32$ . Adding to these prior studies, and as predicted, no such effect emerged in the different-group-type condition; in fact, unexpectedly, prejudice was seen as *less*

socially acceptable when committed by a more entitative versus less-entitative group (respectively,  $M_s = 1.58$  and  $1.91$ ,  $SD_s = .66$  and  $.89$ ),  $F(1, 225) = 4.76$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $d = -.42$ . Perhaps in this condition, in which prejudice could not plausibly be attributed to collective interests even in highly entitative groups, people were more suspicious of the high-entitativity group than the low-entitativity group, which made them judge the former group more harshly (Neu-weiser et al., 2012).

These results further support our contention that entitativity grants standing to be prejudiced by making prejudice attributable to collective interests. Two criteria are necessary for observers to make such an attribution: (a) the prejudice must be perpetrated by a group with clear collective interests, and (b) the group targeted by prejudice must have the potential to interfere with those interests. The entitativity of a perpetrator’s ingroup satisfies the first criterion, as our manipulation check showed. The second criterion is satisfied when two groups are of the same type (e.g., they are two religious groups, as opposed to one religious group and one ethnic group), as our pilot study demonstrated (see Appendix B of the online supplemental materials). Accordingly, people in Study 3 thought that it was most socially acceptable for an individual to express prejudice when his ingroup was entitative and of the same type as the group against which he directed his prejudice. Thus, whereas Study 2A used a measurement-of-mediation approach to demonstrate the role of collective interests in the licensing effect of entitativity, Study 3 found convergent support using a moderation approach, providing evidence that competing collective interests must plausibly explain prejudice for licensing to occur.

Studies 1 through 3 established that observers believe members of entitative groups to have greater psychological standing to commit prejudice than members of less-entitative groups. In Studies 4 through 7, we examined a potential consequence of this belief: Membership in an entitative group increases willing to express prejudice (H2). Rather than asking participants to assess the entitativity of various target groups, as we did in our previous studies, we measured (in Studies 4 and 5) and manipulated (in Studies 6 and 7) how entitative they perceived their ingroup to be, and subsequently assessed their expression of outgroup prejudice.

## Study 4: Ingroup Entitativity Predicts Expressions of Prejudice

Study 4 tested whether perceptions of ingroup entitativity would be associated with expressing more prejudice.

### Participants

Participants ( $N = 1,035$  American MTurk users) completed Study 4 online, embedded in a series of other surveys, for \$.75. The other surveys were prescreening instruments for an unrelated research project, which dictated the sample size. Because our measure of outgroup bias assessed anti-Black prejudice, we did not analyze data from participants who identified as Black ( $n = 49$ ). Of the remaining responses, 89 were insufficiently complete to analyze, and we excluded people who failed an attention check (described subsequently  $n = 29$ ), but the results were identical in direction and significance without this exclusion. No one completed the series of surveys faster than our a priori cutoff of 3 min. (The cutoff was higher than in our previous studies because the series of surveys required longer to

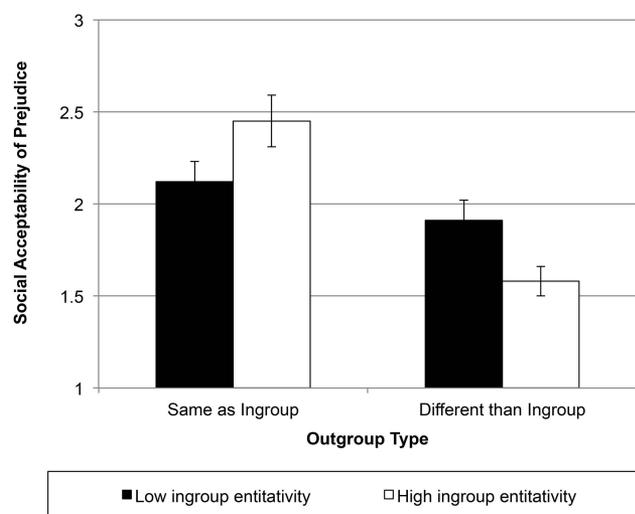


Figure 2. Mean social acceptability of perpetrating prejudice ( $\pm SE$ ) in Study 3, as a function of the entitativity of the perpetrator’s ingroup and the type of outgroup. The y-axis plots a scale of 1 to 5, ranging from *not at all* to *entirely* socially acceptable.

complete.) The final sample size was 868 (466 females, 401 males, 1 unknown gender;  $M_{\text{age}} = 33.25$ ,  $SD = 11.87$ ).

## Materials

Participants completed the measures of interest for this study in the middle of a larger series of surveys.<sup>6</sup>

**Independent variable: Perceived entitativity.** Using the scale from Studies 1 through 3 (Denson et al., 2006), we measured participants' perceptions of the entitativity of "African Americans" ( $\alpha = .82$ ) and "your own racial or ethnic group" ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

**Dependent variable: Expressed prejudice.** To measure expressed prejudice, we administered the Attitudes Toward Blacks scale (ATB; Brigham, 1993; sample item: "I would rather not have Blacks live in the same apartment building I live in";  $\alpha = .94$ ). Response options on a 7-point scale ranged from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*, coded so that higher numbers indicated greater anti-Black prejudice. We varied the order in which participants completed the entitativity measure and the ATB scale, and this did not affect the results.

**Attention check.** An attention-check item showed a Likert-type scale and instructed participants not to respond; those who did respond were excluded from analysis.

## Results

We predicted that perceiving one's own group as entitative would be associated with a greater willingness to express negative attitudes toward Blacks, and that perceiving Blacks as entitative would not be.

A regression model, using expressed prejudice as the dependent variable and the perceived entitativity of Blacks and participants' own racial group as predictors, confirmed these hypotheses. The more entitative participants perceived their own racial group to be, the more prejudice they expressed,  $b = .10$ ,  $SE(b) = .04$ ,  $\beta = .10$ ,  $t(865) = 2.53$ ,  $p = .01$ . The same relationship was not observed between Blacks' perceived entitativity and prejudice. In fact, the more entitative participants thought Blacks were, the *less* prejudice they expressed,  $b = -.13$ ,  $SE(b) = .05$ ,  $\beta = -.11$ ,  $t(865) = 2.70$ ,  $p = .007$ .<sup>7</sup>

## Discussion

The results of Study 4 are consistent with the idea that perceived ingroup entitativity licenses people to express prejudiced attitudes that they would otherwise keep to themselves. Nonetheless, an alternative explanation is that individuals who perceive their own racial group as entitative simply have more prejudiced attitudes to begin with.

These two explanations make different predictions about the relationship between implicitly measured prejudice and the explicit expression of prejudice. Implicit measures of prejudice are less susceptible to self-presentational efforts than self-report measures (Hofmann, Gawronski, Gschwendner, Le, & Schmitt, 2005). It follows that when people are motivated to suppress or hide their biases, self-report and implicit measures should be only weakly associated, because even the strongest implicit prejudice will not be explicitly expressed; when people instead feel licensed to express their biases, the implicit–explicit association should be stronger (Fazio & Olson, 2003). Our licensing account thus predicts that the more entitative people perceive their group as being

(i.e., the more licensed they feel), the stronger the positive association between implicit and self-reported prejudice will be; people who do not feel licensed because they think their group is not entitative should explicitly express little prejudice regardless of their implicitly measured prejudice. This pattern should not emerge if entitativity perceptions are merely a proxy for prejudicial feelings. Study 5 tested these predictions.

## Study 5: Ingroup Entitativity Predicts the Explicit Expression of Implicit Prejudice

### Participants

In exchange for \$5.00, 98 White students at a large, Midwestern university participated in the present study. The sample size was determined by the number of subjects we were able to run before the end of the academic term. We only recruited White participants because the participant pool gave us access to a smaller sample than MTurk, and we wanted to avoid error variance from any differences in racial attitudes among different racial groups. Data from nine participants could not be analyzed because of missing responses, and we excluded three participants who failed an attention check (described subsequently), two with an error rate of greater than 30% on the measure of implicit prejudice (Nosek et al., 2007), and one who took the study despite not meeting our recruitment criteria (i.e., did not identify as White). No observations exceeded a speed cutoff on the implicit prejudice measure (Greenwald, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003). The final sample size was 83 people (58 females, 22 males, and 3 of unknown gender). Results were identical in direction and significance when no participants were excluded, except where indicated.

### Procedure

Participants, recruited for a "decision-making study," came to the lab several at a time and were seated at computer terminals in private cubicles by a White female experimenter. They completed an entitativity measure about Blacks and Whites, filler items (i.e., a self-esteem measure), a measure of explicitly expressed prejudice, and an implicit measure of prejudice.<sup>8</sup> Participants were then paid, debriefed, and dismissed.

<sup>6</sup> The other surveys, included to prescreen participants for an unrelated study, contained measures that are known to correlate with racial prejudice: the Outgroup Orientation scale (Phinney, 1992), the Implicit Theories of Prejudice scale (Carr, Dweck, & Pauker, 2012), the Internal and External Motivation to Respond Without Prejudice scales (Plant & Devine, 1998), and a measure of orientation toward interracial interactions (Migacheva & Tropp, 2013). Including these measures in our analyses as covariates did not alter the results. Measures of self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1989) and behavioral inhibition/activation (Carver & White, 1994) were also administered.

<sup>7</sup> Because of eight outliers on the ATB scale (defined as  $>3.29$  SDs away from the mean; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), we reran the analyses with a robust regression procedure (implemented using the *rreg* command in StataCorp, 2013). It produced identical results.

<sup>8</sup> The only other measure was the Internal and External Motivation to Respond Without Prejudice scales (Plant & Devine, 1998), which we administered after the entitativity measure as an exploratory step. Neither the Internal Motivation nor the External Motivation Scale significantly moderated the hypothesized Implicit Prejudice  $\times$  Entitativity interaction.

## Materials

### Independent variables.

**Perceived entitativity.** Participants completed the entitativity measure used in the previous studies for each of four groups (order randomized), ostensibly chosen randomly from a longer list of groups: “your own racial or ethnic group” (i.e., Whites;  $\alpha = .84$ ), “African Americans” ( $\alpha = .81$ ), and two filler groups (i.e., “teachers” and “people from your hometown”).

**Implicit prejudice.** We administered the Implicit Association Test (IAT) as the implicit measure of prejudice (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). This task requires using a keyboard to rapidly categorize words as “good” or “bad,” and faces as “Black” or “White.” By assigning the same keys to prejudice-consistent (e.g., Black and bad) and prejudice-inconsistent (e.g., Black and good) combinations of stimuli, the researcher can compute a score that reflects the relative ease with which participants complete the prejudice-consistent (vs. inconsistent) trials—thus implicitly gauging prejudice.

**Dependent variable: Expressed prejudice.** As in Study 4, we administered the ATB scale to measure explicitly expressed anti-Black prejudice ( $\alpha = .85$ ). Higher numbers indicate greater expressed prejudice.

**Attention check.** Participants read a paragraph and viewed a list of 11 groups. The last sentence instructed them to click on an option labeled “none of the above” and write the word “groups” in the corresponding blank. As noted, we dropped participants who did not follow these instructions (Oppenheimer et al., 2009).

## Results and Discussion

We hypothesized that perceptions of White entitativity would predict a higher positive association between implicitly measured and explicitly expressed prejudice (respectively, IAT and ATB scores). To test this hypothesis, we first scored the IAT using the algorithm suggested by Greenwald and colleagues (2003), which computes the  $D$  statistic; higher values represent a stronger implicit association between Black (vs. White) faces and negative (vs. positive) words. We then regressed explicit prejudice scores on implicit prejudice scores ( $D$ ), perceptions of Whites’ entitativity, perceptions of Blacks’ entitativity (all three of these predictors were standardized), and the interaction between implicit prejudice and Whites’ entitativity. (The interaction between perceived implicit prejudice and Blacks’ entitativity was not significant when added to the model,  $p = .60$ .)

Table 3 displays the results. Consistent with Study 4, there was a trend for perceived White entitativity to predict greater explicitly expressed prejudice and for perceived Black entitativity to predict *less* explicitly expressed prejudice, but with the smaller sample in the present study neither effect was significant,  $ps = .12$ . (The positive association between White entitativity and expressed prejudice was significant when no participants were excluded from analysis,  $p = .04$ .)

Confirming our main prediction, perceived White entitativity significantly moderated the relationship between the implicit and explicit measures of prejudice,  $p = .03$ , for the Ingroup Entitativity  $\times$  Implicit Prejudice interaction (see Figure 3). Simple slopes analysis revealed the hypothesized pattern: Among Whites who perceived their racial group as relatively entitative (i.e., 1  $SD$  above the scale mean), those with higher implicit prejudice scores

Table 3  
Study 5: Regression Results

Predictor	$b$	$SE(b)$	$\beta$	$t$	$p$
White entitativity	0.14	0.09	0.25	1.59	0.12
Black entitativity	-0.14	0.09	-0.24	-1.57	0.12
Implicit prejudice	0.06	0.06	0.10	0.92	0.36
White entitativity $\times$ implicit prejudice	0.13	0.06	0.25	2.25	0.03*
(constant)	2.00	0.06	—	32.69	0.00

Note. The dependent variable was explicitly expressed prejudice (scores on the Attitudes Towards Blacks scale). Ingroup entitativity, outgroup entitativity, and implicit prejudice were standardized before computing the interaction. Implicit prejudice was operationalized as the  $D$  score from the Implicit Association Test. All participants were White.

\*  $p < .05$ .

expressed more prejudice on the explicit measure,  $b = .19$ ,  $SE(b) = .08$ ,  $t(78) = 2.31$ ,  $p = .02$ . By contrast, Whites who did not perceive their racial group as particularly entitative (i.e., 1  $SD$  below the mean) tended to express relatively little prejudice on the explicit measure regardless of their implicit prejudice scores,  $b = -.08$ ,  $SE(b) = .09$ ,  $t(78) = .87$ ,  $p = .39$ . This pattern suggests that perceived ingroup entitativity was associated with feeling licensed to explicitly express biases revealed by the implicit measure.

Decomposing the interaction the other way yielded further support for this interpretation. Among individuals with high implicit prejudice scores (1  $SD$  above the mean), the more entitative they perceived their group, the more prejudice they explicitly expressed,  $b = .28$ ,  $SE(b) = .10$ ,  $t(78) = 2.68$ ,  $p = .009$ . In contrast, individuals with low implicit prejudice scores tended not to explicitly express prejudice, regardless of how entitative they perceived their group as being,  $b = .01$ ,  $SE(b) = .11$ ,  $t(78) = .06$ ,  $p = .95$ . This pattern fits with the idea that when people feel licensed to explicitly express bias, only individuals who privately feel such bias will give voice to it.<sup>9</sup>

We also tested whether perceived Black entitativity significantly moderated the Ingroup Entitativity  $\times$  Implicit Prejudice interaction. It did not,  $b = .08$ ,  $SE(b) = .05$ ,  $t(75) = 1.50$ ,  $p = .14$ .

Together, these results provide strong support for the hypothesis that perceived ingroup entitativity licenses people to express outgroup bias (H2). Perceiving their racial group as entitative apparently gave White participants the psychological standing needed to give explicit voice to their implicitly measured prejudices. This pattern supports our argument that the positive correlation between perceived ingroup entitativity and expressed prejudice in Study 4 reflected a licensing effect, and casts doubt on the alternative explanation that perceived ingroup entitativity is merely a proxy for felt prejudice. Casting further doubt on this alternative, perceived White entitativity did not significantly correlate with implicit prejudice scores in Study 5,  $r(83) = -.06$ ,  $p = .60$ .

The correlational nature of Studies 4 and 5 limits strong causal conclusions. Study 6 sought to address this limitation by manipulating the entitativity of participants’ ingroup. We hypothesized

<sup>9</sup> As in Study 4, because of an outlier on the ATB scale, we reran the analyses using a robust regression procedure (see Footnote 7). It produced identical results.

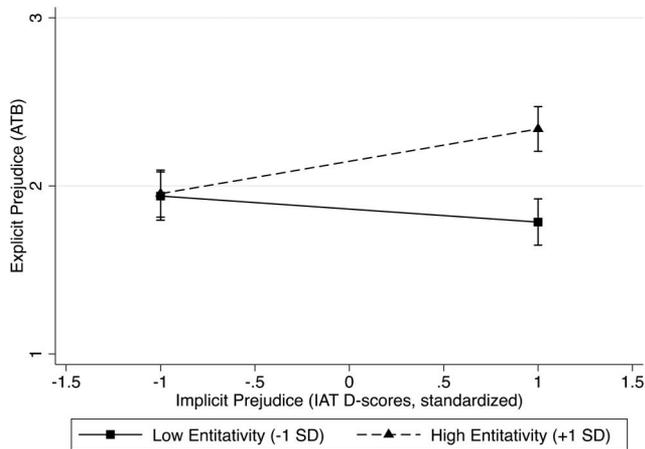


Figure 3. Relationship between implicit and explicit prejudice as a function of perceived ingroup entitativity in Study 4. The values shown were derived from the regression model at  $\pm 1$  SD away from the mean implicit prejudice score and entitativity scores. Error bars indicate  $\pm 1$  SE. Explicit prejudice scores could range from 1 to 7.

that reading an article that characterized White Americans as a cohesive group would increase Whites' perceptions of their racial group's entitativity, which would, in turn, increase their expression of anti-Black prejudice.

### Study 6: Manipulating Ingroup Entitativity Affects the Expression of Prejudice

#### Participants

We paid American MTurk users \$.51 each to complete the study online. Based on the results of a rough power calculation conducted after running 60 subjects, we chose to request 600 complete responses. Six hundred thirty-nine people began the study, and 608 provided sufficient responses for analysis. Because our manipulation targeted perceptions of White Americans' entitativity, and because our hypothesis is about perceived ingroup entitativity, we discarded data from non-Whites ( $n = 89$ ).<sup>10</sup> We also excluded people who identified as both Black and White ( $n = 4$ ), because the dependent variable was expressed anti-Black prejudice, as well as people who failed at least one of two attention checks ( $n = 11$ ; described below) or who had completed a pilot study ( $n = 1$ ), but the results were identical in direction and significance without these exclusions. No one took less than our a priori cutoff time of 2 min. The final sample contained 503 White participants (278 males, 225 females;  $M_{\text{age}} = 30.87$ ,  $SD = 10.02$ ).

#### Materials

**Manipulation.** Participants read a (bogus) *Washington Post* article, ostensibly as part of a study on media coverage of social science research (see Appendix C of the online supplemental materials). In the high-entitativity condition ( $n = 244$ ), the article described a supposed American Sociological Association study revealing that White Americans are cohesive, similar, and share a common fate—key features of entitativity (Campbell, 1958; Ham-

ilton & Sherman, 1996). In the control condition ( $n = 259$ ), the article instead described how the American Sociological Association planned to launch a new study examining similarities and differences among Americans. The articles were approximately the same length and had the same structure in both conditions.

As a manipulation check, participants used the six-item entitativity measure from our prior studies to rate the four target groups used in Study 5: “your own racial or ethnic group” (i.e., Whites, because we retained only White participants;  $\alpha = .87$ ), “African Americans” ( $\alpha = .85$ ), and two filler groups (i.e., teachers and people from their hometown).

**Dependent variable: Expressed prejudice.** As in Studies 4 and 5, we assessed expressed anti-Black prejudice with the ATB scale.

#### Procedure

Participants completed the ingroup entitativity measure, filler items (i.e., whether they had read the article before, whether they wanted to learn more about the research it described, and how they would rate the quality of the writing), and responded to a multiple-choice attention check asking them to identify the main point of the article. Next, participants completed the entitativity ratings for the four groups (which we said were randomly selected from a longer list) in randomized order. Then they completed the ATB scale, responded to a second attention check (adapted from Oppenheimer et al., 2009), provided demographics, and read a debriefing form.

#### Results and Discussion

The manipulation check showed that, as expected, reading a characterization of Whites as cohesive, similar, and sharing common fate significantly increased perceptions of White entitativity ( $M_s = 5.17$  and  $4.78$  in the entitativity and control conditions, respectively,  $SD_s = 1.07$  and  $1.09$ ),  $t(501) = 4.06$ ,  $p = .0001$ ,  $d = .36$ . Likewise, an individual item in the manipulation-check scale showed that reading this characterization significantly increased perceptions that Whites pursue common goals ( $M_s = 4.88$  and  $4.47$ ,  $SD_s$  both =  $1.47$ ),  $t(501) = 3.06$ ,  $p = .0001$ ,  $d = .27$ . The manipulation had no significant effect on the perceived entitativity of Blacks,  $t(501) = .78$ ,  $p = .44$ ,  $d = .07$ .

As predicted, people in the entitativity condition tended to express greater anti-Black prejudice than people in the control condition, but this difference was not significant in our initial analyses ( $M_{\text{ent}} = 2.70$ ,  $SD = .94$ ;  $M_{\text{control}} = 2.57$ ,  $SD = .95$ ),  $t(497) = 1.52$ ,  $p = .13$ ,  $d = .13$ . However, as in Studies 4 and 5 (see Footnotes 7 and 9), we observed outliers on the ATB scale (i.e., four scores  $> 3.29$  SDs above the mean; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), which could mask real condition differences. To address this issue, we compared trimmed means between conditions using Yuen's test, which is less biased by outliers than the Student  $t$  test, and can thus have higher statistical power, and does not suffer from the limitations of dropping outliers (Wilcox, 2003; Wilcox & Keselman, 2003; Yuen, 1974). We implemented the calculations using the *yuen* function in the S-Plus software with 5,000 bootstrap

<sup>10</sup> As expected, the manipulation of White entitativity did not affect non-Whites' perceptions of their own group's entitativity.

resamples and 20% trimming (see Wilcox, 2003). Using this more robust statistical approach revealed that people expressed marginally greater anti-Black prejudice in the entitativity condition than in the control condition (trimmed  $M_s = 2.65$  and  $2.47$ , respectively),  $T_{yuen}(302.11) = 1.95$ ,  $p < .052$ .

Study 6's results suggest that perceiving Whites as entitative can cause Whites to express more prejudice against a racial outgroup. This finding addresses a limitation of Studies 4 and 5, whose correlational designs limited causal inferences. Although the condition difference in expressed prejudice was only marginally significant by a two-tailed test,  $p = .052$ , the fact that the manipulation had only a small effect on perceptions of White entitativity,  $d = .36$ , indicates that the test of the manipulation's more distal effect on expressed prejudice was highly conservative. Moreover, it is impressive that even a weak manipulation of entitativity had a measurable effect despite strong norms proscribing racial prejudice.

### Study 7

Our final study had two goals. First, we wanted to replicate the causal effect of entitativity on the expression of prejudice in a different intergroup context. Thus, Study 7 examined anti-Muslim prejudice among Christians. Second, we sought to distinguish the effect of ingroup entitativity from the effect of another key variable in intergroup research: ingroup identification (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987).

As we emphasized earlier, our claim is not that membership in an entitative group *motivates* prejudice and discrimination against outgroups. Instead, we posit that ingroup entitativity *licenses*, or increases people's willingness to express, biases that they already hold. If this is correct, then ingroup entitativity should only predict expressions of outgroup bias in the presence of factors that do motivate bias. One such factor is ingroup identification. From our perspective, ingroup identification provides the "fuel" for bias, whereas perceived ingroup entitativity opens a "valve" through which bias can escape.<sup>11</sup>

Ingroup identification need not motivate hostility toward outgroups (Brewer, 1999), but under some conditions it does. For instance, identification with a group defined by claims of moral superiority or righteousness may stoke prejudice (Brown & Zagefka, 2005). We surmised that religious groups fit this description (Ysseldyk, Matheson, & Anisman, 2010). Thus, the present study examined the interactive effect of Christians' identification and perceived entitativity on prejudice against Muslims. If we are correct that ingroup entitativity plays a licensing role in the expression of outgroup bias, then ingroup entitativity should increase the expression of anti-Muslim prejudice among highly identified more than weakly identified Christians. High-identifiers are likely to privately harbor some prejudice, but inhibit themselves from expressing it without a license; low-identifiers should harbor less prejudice and thus express little bias regardless of whether they have a license to do so.

### Participants

We hired a survey company to recruit a panel of American Christians whose age, race, and geographical location mirrored the

distribution of these variables in the American population. Based on the results of Study 6, we expected a small effect, so we requested 1,000 complete responses from American Christians who passed attention-check questions (described subsequently).<sup>12</sup> The company oversampled to allow for exclusions. Of the 2,178 people who completed the study, 768 failed the attention checks, and we dropped one additional participant for not completing the measure of Muslim entitativity. No one took less than our a priori cutoff of 2 min to complete the study. The final sample was thus 1,409 American Christians (65% Protestant, 21% Catholic, 14% other; 917 females and 492 males; 78% White, 10% Black, 6% Asian, 6% Hispanic, <1% other racial group; 22% from the Northeast United States, 36% from the South, 22% from the Midwest, and 20% from the West;  $M_{age} = 46.41$  years,  $SD = 15.44$ , range = 18 to 91). Without exclusions, the key results showed the same patterns but were not significant.

### Materials

**Manipulation.** The present study adapted the manipulation from Study 6: Participants read either about how sociological research had revealed American Christians to be highly entitative ( $n = 716$ ), or about how sociologists would soon launch a survey of Americans (control condition,  $n = 693$ ). As a manipulation check, participants rated the entitativity of American Christians ( $\alpha = .84$ ) and Muslims ( $\alpha = .89$ ) using the measure from our prior studies.

**Group identification.** We adapted the eight-item Black Identity Centrality scale (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997) to measure the degree to which participants identified with their "religious group" (sample item: "In general, being a member of my religious group is an important part of my self-image";  $\alpha = .89$ ).

**Religiosity.** Group identification is conceptually distinct from the construct of religiosity, although the two could be expected to correlate positively. To test the unique effect of group identification above and beyond religiosity, we asked participants to indicate how religious they considered themselves to be (*not at all*, *slightly*, *moderately*, or *very*, coded 1 to 4), how often they attend religious services, and how often they pray (nine response options ranging from *never* to *several times per week*; T. W. Smith, Marsden, Hout, & Kim, 2013). We standardized and averaged these three items into a single religiosity measure ( $\alpha = .79$ ).

**Islamophobia.** As a measure of prejudice expression, participants completed the 16-item Islamophobia scale (Lee et al., 2013;  $\alpha = .98$ ). Participants used 7-point scales ( $-3 =$  *strongly disagree* to  $3 =$  *strongly agree*) to indicate agreement with statements describing negative feelings toward Muslims (e.g., "If I could, I would avoid contact with Muslims") and negative beliefs about Islam (e.g., "Islam is a dangerous religion").

**Attention checks.** We administered the same two attention checks from Study 6. We also administered a third check midway through the Islamophobia scale, instructing participants to select

<sup>11</sup> We thank Brian Lickel for suggesting that ingroup identification might play this role.

<sup>12</sup> To reduce error variance from religious diversity, we requested only Protestants. However, the survey company oversampled Protestants but also ran non-Protestant Christians.

the highest point on a 7-point scale if they were paying attention. Failure to follow this instruction would indicate inattentive or random responding.

## Procedure

After providing basic demographics and indicating their religious affiliation, participants completed the religiosity measure, the article manipulation, the filler items from Study 6, the group identification measure, and the Islamophobia measure. (We counterbalanced the order in which participants completed the manipulation checks and group identification measure.) They then provided additional demographics, including political conservatism (Likert scale from 1 = *very liberal* to 7 = *very conservative*), and read a debriefing form.

## Results

**Manipulation check.** As expected, reading a characterization of American Christians as cohesive, similar, and sharing common fate significantly increased participants' perception of their group's entitativity ( $M_s = 5.68$  and  $5.25$  in the entitativity and control conditions, respectively,  $SD_s = .86$  and  $.97$ ),  $t(1407) = 8.82$ ,  $p = .0001$ ,  $d = .47$ . Likewise, it significantly increased perceptions that their group's members pursued common goals, as shown by an individual item from the manipulation-check scale ( $M_s = 6.05$  and  $5.44$ ,  $SD_s = .99$  and  $1.22$ ),  $t(1407) = 10.36$ ,  $p = .0001$ ,  $d = .55$ . As in Study 6, these effects were modest in size, indicating that the test of the manipulation's more distal effect on the dependent measure was particularly conservative. (Compare this effect size to the Cohen's  $d$  of 4.16 observed for the manipulation check in Study 3.) Although the manipulation-check effects were significant among both low- and high-identifiers,  $ps < .0001$ , they were somewhat stronger among low-identifiers. This result also makes our hypothesis test conservative because we predicted a larger effect of the manipulation on Islamophobia among high-identifiers.

The manipulation had a much smaller and marginally significant effect on the entitativity of Muslims ( $M_s = 5.69$  and  $5.58$  in the entitativity and control conditions, respectively),  $t(1407) = 1.82$ ,  $p = .07$ ,  $d = .10$ , but our analyses of the Islamophobia measure were identical in direction and significance when we controlled for this variable.

The entitativity manipulation also slightly but significantly increased group identification,  $t(1407) = 2.81$ ,  $p = .005$ ,  $d = .15$ . Because this effect was small (equivalent to a correlation of  $r = .07$ ), we could test group identification as a moderator of the manipulation's effect on Islamophobia without concerns about multicollinearity. In the regression analyses presented next, the variance inflation factor for all coefficients was less than 1.02—well below the cutoff of 10 that indicates multicollinearity problems (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998).

**Islamophobia.** To test whether the entitativity manipulation increased the expression of prejudice for high-identifiers more than low-identifiers, we regressed the Islamophobia scale on the manipulation ( $-1 =$  control,  $1 =$  entitativity condition), group identification (standardized), and their interaction. We observed no outliers. The regression results (plotted in Figure 4) showed a main effect of group identification,  $b = .24$ ,  $SE(b) = .05$ ,  $\beta = .14$ ,

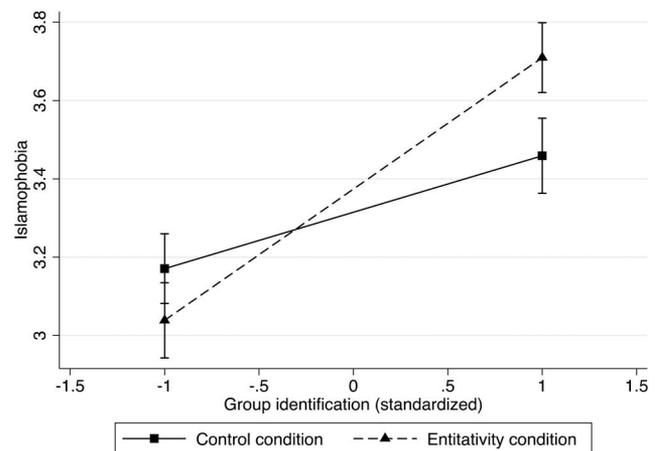


Figure 4. Mean Islamophobia ( $\pm SE$ ) by group identification and entitativity manipulation in Study 7. Islamophobia scores could range from 1 to 7.

$t(1405) = 5.18$ ,  $p < .001$ , no main effect of entitativity,  $b = .03$ ,  $SE(b) = .05$ ,  $\beta = .02$ ,  $t(1405) = .64$ ,  $p = .52$ , and the predicted interaction,  $b = .10$ ,  $SE(b) = .05$ ,  $\beta = .05$ ,  $t(1405) = 2.07$ ,  $p = .04$ . Testing simple slopes revealed that the manipulation marginally increased the expression of Islamophobia among high-identifiers (i.e., 1  $SD$  above the mean),  $b = .13$ ,  $SE(b) = .07$ ,  $t(1405) = 1.92$ ,  $p = .056$ . No such effect was found among low-identifiers,  $b = -.07$ ,  $SE(b) = .07$ ,  $t(1405) = 1.01$ ,  $p = .31$ ; the slightly negative but nonsignificant slope explains why the main effect of the manipulation was not significant. Decomposing the interaction the other way showed that the relationship between group identification and expressed Islamophobia had a steeper slope in the entitativity condition,  $b = .34$ ,  $SE(b) = .07$ ,  $t(1405) = 5.07$ ,  $p < .0001$ , than in the control condition,  $b = .14$ ,  $SE(b) = .06$ ,  $t(1405) = 2.23$ ,  $p = .03$ . This pattern fits with the idea that group identification can provide the motivation for prejudice, but that this prejudice is more likely to get explicitly expressed in entitative groups.

These results are not easily explained by positing that group identification is a proxy for religiosity or conservatism. The Identification  $\times$  Entitativity interaction remained significant when we added religiosity and its interaction with the manipulation to the model,  $p = .02$ , as well as when we instead added conservatism and its interaction with the manipulation,  $p = .04$  (Yzerbyt, Muller, & Judd, 2004).<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the simple effect of the manipulation among high-identifiers became significant in each of the new models,  $ps = .02$  and  $.04$ , respectively. (The effect among low-identifiers was not significant in either model,  $ps > .14$ .)

## Discussion

Study 7 reveals how ingroup identification can play a role in the expression of outgroup bias. Magnifying perceptions of ingroup entitativity increased Christians' expression of anti-Muslim prejudice, but only among Christians whose religious group member-

<sup>13</sup> We did not have data on conservatism for 95 participants.

ship was central to their identity. This finding fits with our reasoning that high-identifiers privately harbor more prejudice than low-identifiers, and that entitativity licenses its explicit expression. Opening a valve (i.e., by signaling an entitative ingroup) releases more prejudice when prejudice has been stoked by the fuel of ingroup identification.

### General Discussion

Because intergroup prejudice is widely proscribed, people inhibit themselves from expressing their prejudices in many contexts. The present research reveals how membership in an entitative group can make anti-outgroup prejudice seem more legitimate to observers (H1) and can increase actors' willingness to express it themselves (H2). H1 received support in a correlational study examining the perceived entitativity of the main racial groups in the United States (Study 1) and in three experimental studies with fictional religious and national groups (Studies 2A, 2B, and 3): People thought that others would find it more socially acceptable for members of more-entitative versus less-entitative groups to enact prejudice and discrimination—but only if outgroup bias could plausibly be explained by group members' concern for their collective interests. Supporting H2 with both correlational and experimental methods, Studies 4 through 7 demonstrated that perceiving their racial or religious ingroup as entitative led people to express more prejudice against, respectively, racial or religious outgroups. These studies also revealed boundary conditions that supported our theorizing. Specifically, the more that White participants in Study 5 perceived Whites as entitative, the more anti-Black prejudice they expressed, but only if they had high levels of implicit anti-Black bias to begin with. This finding suggests that perceptions of entitativity can disinhibit people to give explicit voice to their implicit biases. Similarly, a manipulation of entitativity in Study 7 increased the explicit expression of anti-Muslim prejudice among Christians, but only those whose high identification with their religious ingroup suggested that they would privately have higher levels of prejudice to express in the first place (Brown & Zagefka, 2005). Together, these findings suggest that membership in an entitative group can provide a license to express bias against outgroups.

### Rationalistic Prejudice Seems More Legitimate

The results support our broader contention that prejudice is more socially acceptable when it seems "rationalistic"—plausibly connected to a group's interests. We suggest that membership in an entitative group makes prejudice seem more legitimate by invoking the possibility that prejudice could be motivated by the defense or pursuit of collective interests. Study 2B produced direct, mediational evidence for this claim: Participants more readily attributed prejudiced acts to collective interests when the perpetrator was a member of an entitative group, which led them to perceive these acts as more socially acceptable. Study 3 also supported this claim by demonstrating that entitative-group membership only increased the social acceptability of prejudice against outgroups that could plausibly threaten the ingroup's collective interests. Much like people have greater standing to express an unpopular view when it relates to their group's interests (Morrison, 2011), people have greater standing to express a prejudiced

view when they belong to the kind of group that is likely to have collective interests.

### Addressing Alternative Explanations

Our results allow us to rule out several alternative explanations for the relationship between perceived ingroup entitativity and a license to express outgroup bias.

**Sharp intergroup boundaries justify prejudice.** Perhaps entitativity makes divisions between groups seem sharper, which may appear to justify prejudice (Rothbart & Park, 2004; Yzerbyt, Rocher, & Schadron, 1997). If this were the case, however, then higher entitativity of both the group perpetrating the prejudice and the group targeted by it should be associated with greater license to express prejudice. Instead, we found only that the entitativity of the perpetrator group was associated with such license.

**Ingroup entitativity is a proxy for felt prejudice.** Four findings make it difficult to explain our results by positing that people who perceive their group as entitative simply hold more prejudiced attitudes (rather than feeling more licensed to *express* prejudiced attitudes). First, the stronger association between implicit and explicit measures of prejudice among Whites who viewed their racial ingroup as entitative casts doubt on this possibility; second, entitativity perceptions did not significantly predict implicitly measured prejudice (Study 5). If perceived ingroup entitativity were merely a proxy for felt prejudice, then entitativity perceptions should have been associated with both implicit and explicit measures of prejudice, but not have magnified these measures' association with one another. Instead, these results support our view that perceived ingroup entitativity grants people license to explicitly express their implicit biases. Third, if perceived ingroup entitativity is merely a proxy for felt prejudice, then a manipulation of entitativity should not have been causally related to prejudice, as it was in Studies 6 and 7. Fourth, it is unclear how this alternative explanation would explain why manipulating the entitativity of a novel group in Studies 2A through 3 would have led participants to rate prejudice committed by that group as more socially acceptable.

**Other explanations.** Other alternative explanations for our findings based on the possible association between a group's entitativity and its size, social status, or tendency to face discrimination currently or historically have difficulty accounting for our findings, as we controlled for these variables in Study 1.

### The Role of Ingroup Identification

In certain contexts, identifying with an ingroup can lead to prejudice against outgroups (Brown & Zagefka, 2005). Our theoretical analysis and the results of Study 7 suggest that group identification can provide prejudiced attitudes, while entitativity provides a license to explicitly express them. This does not preclude the possibility that ingroup identification also plays another role in the connection between entitativity and prejudice: Perceiving an ingroup as entitative could lead to greater identification (Castano, Yzerbyt, & Bourguignon, 2003; Hogg, Sherman, Dierselhuis, Maitner, & Moffitt, 2007; Yzerbyt et al., 2000), which, in turn, could produce greater intergroup bias (Castano et al., 2002; Feather, 1994). In fact, Study 7 found some evidence for this possibility: The entitativity manipulation had a small but

significant effect on group identification, which, in turn, was positively correlated with prejudiced expressions. However, these effects were not sufficient to explain the effect of entitativity: We found that the entitativity manipulation increased prejudiced expressions when we held identification constant at one standard deviation above its mean. Moreover, prior research on ingroup identification and prejudice would not clearly predict that identification would be associated with a stronger positive association between implicit and explicit attitudes (Study 5), or that observers would be more tolerant of prejudice committed by an actor who does versus does not strongly identify with his or her ingroup (Studies 1 through 3).

Thus, it may be that identification facilitates the effect of entitativity in two complementary ways. First, by increasing ingroup identification, entitativity may stoke private feelings of prejudice against outgroups. Second, entitativity may license the public expression of this prejudice by granting psychological standing—a process that will have the greatest effect among high-identifiers and others who have the most prejudice to express.

### Theoretical Advances

The present findings should be of interest to scholars working in multiple literatures. First, our results provide a novel perspective on how prejudice gets expressed in societies that generally proscribe it. People appear to relax such proscriptions for individuals whose group seems like a cohesive unit composed of similar, interdependent individuals. And members of such groups seem to be more willing to express prejudices that they would otherwise keep to themselves. These findings fit with the idea that people generally try to suppress their prejudices, but will express them given the appropriate justification (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Norton, Vandello, & Darley, 2004; Pearson, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2009). For example, research on *moral credentials* has shown that the ability to point to nonprejudiced behaviors one has enacted in the past can provide a license to commit potentially prejudiced behaviors in the future (Effron, Cameron, & Monin, 2009; Effron, Miller, & Monin, 2012; Merritt et al., 2010; Monin & Miller, 2001). Our work highlights ingroup entitativity as a novel source of bias license.

Our results also contribute to the literatures on group perceptions and intergroup relations. Although scholars have previously noted the connection between perceived outgroup entitativity and stereotyping (Brewer & Harasty, 1996; Spencer-Rodgers, Hamilton, et al., 2007), a paucity of work has examined the connection between perceived ingroup entitativity and intergroup bias. The studies that did examine this connection focused on how entitativity can increase positive evaluations of the ingroup (Castano et al., 2002; Gaertner & Schopler, 1998), whereas our results are the first to show how perceived ingroup entitativity legitimizes and increases expressed prejudice against outgroups. This is a particularly important finding because it contradicts an untested assumption in the literature: that because members of entitative (vs. less-entitative) groups tend to feel more secure about their group identity, they will be less likely to enhance their group identity through outgroup derogation (Yzerbyt et al., 2000). Although our studies do not rule out the possibility that members of entitative groups are *less motivated* to derogate outgroups, our results do suggest the members of entitative groups are *more licensed* to

express the prejudices they have. At least in our studies, the net effect was a greater expression of prejudice among members of entitative groups.

Finally, our results shed new light on how group membership can provide psychological standing—a subjective sense of legitimacy or entitlement—to express one's attitudes. Prior research on this topic focused mainly on how belonging to a group affected by an injustice entitles one to protest that injustice (Effron & Miller, 2012; Miller, 1999; Miller & Effron, 2010; Miller et al., 2009; Morrison, 2011; Ratner & Miller, 2001). The present study not only identifies group entitativity as a novel source of standing but also reveals how standing may regulate the expression of intergroup bias.

### Prejudice Against Entitative Groups

Our hypotheses focused on prejudice expressed *by* entitative groups, but we conducted exploratory analyses to examine prejudice expressed *against* entitative groups. We did not find a reliable relationship across our studies. Perhaps conflicting processes operating simultaneously explain these inconsistent results. The more entitative the relevant groups appeared, the more dislikable they may have seemed (Abelson et al., 1998; Dasgupta et al., 1999; Newheiser et al., 2009), but the more sympathy they may have elicited as well (R. W. Smith et al., 2013). Future research should explore this idea.

We also explored whether a particular combination of ingroup and outgroup entitativity would license prejudice. On the one hand, a group's lack of entitativity may make it seem less threatening to others' interests. Consistent with this idea, Dasgupta et al. (1999) found that alien creatures seemed less threatening when they looked different than each other (i.e., were less-entitative) than when they looked similar (i.e., were more-entitative). If an outgroup's lack of entitativity meant that it could not plausibly threaten the ingroup's interests, then our theory would predict that ingroup entitativity would license prejudice against only entitative outgroups (see Study 3). On the other hand, when the relevant groups are nations, religions, or races (as they were in our studies), rather than novel creatures, even groups that are low in entitativity could be seen as plausibly threatening others' interests. In that case, ingroup entitativity should license prejudice regardless of outgroup entitativity. For example, a person could perceive Whites as interfering with racial minorities' political and economic goals and thus grant minorities a license to express anti-White prejudice, even though she also views Whites as heterogeneous, lacking cohesion, and uncoordinated in performing the behavior that causes such interference.

Consistent with the second possibility, we did not find consistent evidence that the licensing effect of ingroup entitativity depends on outgroup entitativity. Study 1 and Studies 4 through 7 allowed us to test a statistical interaction between each group's entitativity. A significant interaction in Study 4 indicated that the positive correlation between perceived ingroup entitativity and prejudice was significantly weaker among participants who viewed the outgroup as *more* entitative,  $\beta = -.64$ ,  $p = .02$ . However, this result did not replicate in Study 5,  $\beta = .16$ ,  $p = .85$ , and the relevant interaction did not approach significance in any other study.

## Limitations and Future Directions

Why do people seem to feel more comfortable expressing their prejudices when they belong to entitative groups? Given that prejudice seems more socially acceptable when committed by members of entitative groups (Studies 1 through 3), people may expect less opprobrium and punishment for prejudice when they belong to such a group. Another possibility is that people have internalized the belief that belonging to an entitative group legitimizes prejudice, and they thus feel less compunction about their prejudice when they perceive their ingroup as entitative. Distinguishing between these possibilities is a task for future research.

Our studies focused on prejudice among racial groups, national groups, and religious groups. Future research should examine whether entitativity can license bias in other types of groups. For example, are highly cohesive organizations given greater license to disparage their competitors? Do academics feel more justified denigrating their colleagues in other departments when members of their own department occupy proximate offices, research similar topics, and depend on each other for resources?

It will also be important to test what forms of prejudice can be licensed by entitativity. When contrasted against the extremes of discrimination and violence perpetrated against outgroups throughout history, the prejudiced behaviors that participants considered in our studies could be considered mild (e.g., refusing to shop at stores owned by outgroup members). It remains to be seen whether more severe forms of outgroup bias can be licensed by entitativity.

Future research should investigate the interplay between collective blame and the bias license granted to members of entitative groups. One implication of our research is that an individual may receive less blame for prejudice (from others and from herself) when her ingroup is more entitative. The group as a whole, however, may receive *more* blame for her acts when it is more entitative, in part because entitative groups may be assumed to have desired and implicitly encouraged these acts (Denson et al., 2006; Lickel, Hamilton, & Sherman, 2001; Lickel, Schmader, & Hamilton, 2003). Our research suggests that entitative groups do bear more responsibility for an individual's prejudiced acts, in the sense that entitativity allows an individual to more easily point to collective interests or desires as a license. This shifting of blame from the individual to the group could further embolden individuals to express prejudice (cf. Darley & Latané, 1968).

## Implications for the Effects of Demographic Changes

An ongoing demographic shift will render non-Hispanic Whites a minority of Americans by 2042 (Ortman & Guarneri, 2009). Whites may associate their new minority status with economic and psychological threat, which could increase feelings of intergroup hostility (Blumer, 1958; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996; Craig & Richeson, 2014a, 2014b; Fossett & Kiecolt, 1989; Giles & Evans, 1985; Outten, Schmitt, Miller, & Garcia, 2012; Quillian, 1995, 1996). And as the proportion of non-Whites in their social environment grows, they may also come to see their own racial group as more distinctive, concrete, and, thus, entitative (Voci, 2006). Our research therefore raises the concern that as the nation continues to diversify, Whites not only may develop greater hostility toward other racial groups but also

may increasingly regard themselves as possessing a license to express it.

## Conclusion

The present research identifies a novel way in which perceptions of ingroup entitativity can stoke intergroup conflict: by providing a license to express and act on private prejudices. We may not only tolerate the biases of a group that seems highly cohesive, but also be more willing to express our personal prejudices when that cohesive group is our own.

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