



ACKOFF FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION FORM
Deadline: March 3, 2013 (midnight)

Name: Katrina Fincher

How did you learn about the Ackoff Fellowship:
 Ad in DP Ad in Almanac X E-mail

Address: 3720 Walnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19104

Telephone Number: (302) 562-0403 E-Mail: Katrinaf@sas.upenn.edu

Department/University of Pennsylvania: Psychology

Faculty Advisor Name: Phil Tetlock E-mail: Tetlock@wharton.upenn.edu

Faculty Department: Psychology and Management

Project Title:

Sacralization & Entification: Conscience, Cohesion, and Group Competence

Amount of Request: \$3,380

Other sources of Support for your research:

Travel \$300 Grants \$0 Other (Specify) \$

Sacralization & Entification: Conscience, Cohesion, and Group Competence

Russell Ackoff Doctoral Fellowship, 2013 Application

Katrina Fincher and S. Emlen Metz
Doctoral Students
Psychology Department

Mailing Address:
3720 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
Email: katrinaf@sas.upenn.edu

Faculty Advisor:

Phil Teitlock, Department of Psychology
& Wharton School of Business

Moral values enable us to live together in society. Shared value systems can facilitate social interactions in several ways. Evolutionary psychologists have long argued that moral norms like loyalty, fairness, and honesty are necessary for cooperative social processes like reciprocal altruism to work (Wilson, 1979). However, moral values can also result from the sacralization (making sacred) of social norms that are not directly linked to cooperation. It has repeatedly been theorized that a primary function of sacralization is to sustain and protect the solidarity of the society in which they are held (J. Baron & Spranca, 1997; Durkheim, 1933; Merton, 1949/1968; Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, & Lerner, 2000). In the proposed set of studies, we explore the effect of sacralization on in-group entification. Specifically, we suggest moral values lead to a more positive cognitive representation of the group, increased prosocial behavior, and greater cooperation.

Moral beliefs appear to be special. Moral arguments are powerful: morals often resist reason and persuasion (J. Baron, 1995; Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979) and are seen as similar to facts (Goodwin & Darley, 2008, 2010). Moral disagreement results in greater social and physical distance from attitudinally dissimilar others (Mullen & Skitka, 2006; Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005). Sacralization can lead to values which are considered absolute; that is, they are resistant to trade-offs, violating economic norms of rationality (Tetlock, et al., 2000). Although prior work has argued that sacralization is ultimately dysfunctional because the values cause difficulties for institutions and governments that try to satisfy the values of many people (J. Baron & Spranca, 1997), it may also benefit the group by increasing cooperation, prosocial behavior, and positivity towards the group.

Any social norm, moral or not moral, may increase group cohesion. Groups are powerful psychologically in and of themselves. The importance of groups is indicated by a pervasive tendency to form groups. Prior research finds strong evidence for “in-group favoritism” (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). We suggest that moral social norms increase cohesion and cooperation beyond conventional norms – norms lacking in moral content. The act of sacralization makes moral norms powerful group aphrodisiacs that increase group love and cooperation.

In our own prior work, we have found that increasing the salience of group values increases individuals’ reported desire to engage in prosocial group behavior (e.g., willingness to pay taxes; charitable donations to group related charities). This behavior may be a marker of group cohesion. Highly cohesive groups engage in more group-related helping behavior and often have higher collective outputs. Furthermore, preliminary results using a cognitive task indicate that making values salient, rather than conventions, alters individuals’ internal cognitive representations of the group.

We argue that morals are special to group functioning because they lead to cognitive changes in the internal representation of the group. These shifts in group-related attitudes should lead to specific behavioral changes. Through a series of studies, we will examine if values change individuals’ internal representation of a group and the resulting level of group cohesion. We suggest that a cognitive change in the representation of the group leads to prosocial group-directed behavior. Specifically, we suggest that: (1) values increase in-group directed

helping; (2) establishing group values leads to greater group cohesion and better performance on tasks requiring cooperation; (3) the group is cognitively represented as more related to the self; (4) the group is cognitively represented more positively and less negatively; (5) values lead to increased levels of oxytocin, the hormone most closely associated with love and trust*.

By applying both cognitive and behavioral tasks, we can gain a nuanced, process-based understanding of the effect of moralization on individuals' process of identification with the group. In order to capture the effect of values, rather than social norms generally, we use conventions as a control. We capture the effect of moral values in two ways: (1) by increasing the salience of the value (rather than the convention), and (2) by creating group values (rather than conventions) and observing the effect of the social norm. Additionally, by using multiple reference groups (e.g., Penn student, American), we can generalize the findings.

We intend to measure group cohesion using behavioral, cognitive, and hormonal measures. Drawing on work in cognitive psychology, we intend to use a go-no-go task to document the strength of the association between the salient group and various properties. Building on work in neuropsychology and neuroeconomics, we intend to measure the effect of moral values on oxytocin. By using cognitive measures of implicit associations and a hormonal measure, we avoid demand artifacts and capture a true internal change. However, in isolation, the cognitive measures lack real world validity. Therefore, we plan to use both a financial measure of giving and a behavioral measure of cooperation.

Study	Description	Variables	Null Hypothesis
Study 1: Charitable Giving	Explore the effects of value salience on the quantity and allocation in a charitable giving task.	IV - Between: Salient Norm (Value, Convention); Group (Penn, American) IV - Within: Charity (Penn, American, Other) DV: Charitable Giving.	Prior work has shown that group salience increases in-group bias. We suggest that values, relative to conventions, will increase in-group giving; however, will not decrease out-group giving.
Study 2: Cooperative Task	Explore the effects of values salience on group efficiency and cooperation.	IV: Established Group Norm (Value, Convention) DV: Performance on group task (e.g. hidden profile).	Establishing group values, rather than conventions, will lead to greater group cohesion and better performance on a task requiring cooperation.
Study 3: Group and Self	Explore the effects of values on the cognitive representations of self and group using the gnat.	IV-Between: Salient Norm (Value, Convention) IV-Within: Social Distance (us, them); Group (Penn campus, Suburb) DV: Response accuracy on go-no-go task.	Values, relative to conventions, will change the internal cognitive representation of the group: the group will be viewed as closer to the self.
Study 4: The Group and Goodness	Explore effects of values on group valence and salient in-group using the gnat.	IV-Between: Salient Norm (Value, Convention) IV-Within: Valence (good, bad); Group (US, World) DV: GNAT accuracy	Values, relative to conventions, change the in-group will be viewed more positively and less negatively while out-group views will remain the same.

*Oxytocin study funded by faculty sponsor.

Budget Description

The project intends to link the behavioral, cognitive, and hormonal effects of moralization on individuals' process of entification with the group. By providing data that crosses several level of analysis, we can gain a detailed understanding of the process underlying behavior rather than merely documenting a phenomenon.

The work is testing a core claim in moral psychology that has previously been overlooked. Therefore, our advisor has been extremely generous in funding work on this project. He has provided funding and resources to measure the hormonal correlates of sacralization and has generously provided licensing for the computer software required for the cognitive testing. However, because of the ambition of the project, it is expensive.

We are seeking your generous financial support to be used for two purposes with regards to this research project: (1) to fund data collection; and (2) to pay a programmer to develop a web based platform for study 2.

Data will be collected in a series of experiments in the Wharton Behavioral Lab, therefore all cost calculations are based upon 220 subjects at 15% of cost of subjects (15 % of \$10 per hour per subject).

	Subject Payment	Other Cost	Justification of additional cost	Total Cost
Study 1: Charitable Giving	\$1.00 per subject	\$6 per subject for donation task	To establish real world validity, it is important because to links the phenomena to real (incentivized) behavior.	\$1,400
Study 2: Cooperative Task	\$1.00 per subject	\$700 web programmer	Qualtics and other online survey platforms do not allow interactions between subjects, requires paying a programmer to develop an appropriate platform	\$920
Study 3: group and self	\$1.50 per subject	\$200 for extra WBL RA	Because of the complexities of using e-prime to collect data an additional RA is necessary.	\$530
Study 4: The group and goodness	\$1.50 per subject	\$200 for extra WBL RA	Because of the complexities of using e-prime to collect data an additional RA is necessary.	\$530

The total cost of subjects, programmers and other additional expenses is \$3,380.

2012 Ackoff Fellowship Results

Early work indicated my initial research question on power and punishment did not yield easily interpretable results. Therefore my research question was modified slightly. The funding from my 2012 Ackoff was used to investigate the role of objectification in punishment.

Integrating research and theory on objectification and facial versus object recognition (configural and analytic process), I examined whether perpetrators of crimes are recognized in the same way as objects and if objectification predicts enjoyment of punishment. Configural processing, depends on perceiving relations and configurations among the constitutive parts of a stimulus, is related to person recognition and is involved in face recognition (Maurer, Le Grand, & Mondloch, 2002) unlike object recognition relies on analytic processing. An indicator of configural processing is the inversion effect, faces are more difficult to recognize when inverted than when upright, whereas object recognition is not affected by inversion (e.g., Reed, Stone, Bozova, & Tanaka, 2003; Reed, Stone, Grubb, & McGoldrick, 2006).

Results of three studies found that configural processing of perpetrators was reduced. In other words, perpetrators were literally seen as objects. Results of Study 1 indicated conservatives show significantly greater objectification of actors with negative moral histories (perpetrators of crimes as well as significantly less objectification of actors with positive moral histories. Results of study 2 indicate that the objectification of perpetrators predicts enjoyment and consumption of corporal punishment. Results of study 3 indicate that unattributed retributive desires increase the objectification of bad actors.

2012 funding was used to (1) to fund data collection; and (2) to share the results of my research at a conference. My committee and my advisor believed that it would be best to submit the paper to a general science journal. Consequently the quality and thoroughness of the investigation need to be extremely high. I am in the process of running two additional studies. I aim to submit the paper by June 1st, 2013.

Bibliography

- Baron, J. (1995). Myside bias in thinking about abortion. *Thinking & Reasoning*, 1(3), 221-235.
- Baron, J., & Spranca, M. (1997). Protected values. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 70(1), 1-16.
- Durkheim, E. (1933). *The division of labor in society* (G. Simpson, Trans.). New York: The Free Press.
- Goodwin, G. P., & Darley, J. M. (2008). The psychology of meta-ethics: Exploring objectivism. *Cognition*, 106(3), 1339-1366.
- Goodwin, G. P., & Darley, J. M. (2010). The perceived objectivity of ethical beliefs: psychological findings and implications for public policy. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 1(2), 161-188.
- Lord, C. G., Ross, L., & Lepper, M. R. (1979). Biased assimilation and attitude polarization: The effects of prior theories on subsequently considered evidence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37(11), 2098.
- Merton, R. K. (1949/1968). *Social theory and social structure*: Free Pr.
- Mullen, E., & Skitka, L. J. (2006). Exploring the psychological underpinnings of the moral mandate effect: Motivated reasoning, group differentiation, or anger? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(4), 629.
- Skitka, L. J., Bauman, C. W., & Sargis, E. G. (2005). Moral conviction: another contributor to attitude strength or something more? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88(6), 895.
- Tetlock, P. E., Kristel, O. V., Elson, S. B., Green, M. C., & Lerner, J. S. (2000). The psychology of the unthinkable: Taboo trade-offs, forbidden base rates, and heretical counterfactuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78(5), 853-870.
- Wilson, E. O. (1979). *Sociobiology: The new synthesis*: ABC.