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Emotions expressed in speeches by leaders of ideologically motivated groups predict aggression

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Anger, contempt, and disgust are emotions associated with violations of ethics and morality, and recent theoretical work has suggested that they are important drivers of group-based aggression and violence. We test this hypothesis by examining the emotions expressed by leaders of ideologically motivated groups when speaking about outgroups they oppose. We analyzed the content of their speeches at three points in time before an identified act of aggression or resistance. We provide initial evidence that leaders' expressions of anger, contempt, and disgust increase immediately before acts of violence, but not those of resistance, and suggest that these emotions are instrumental in inciting groups to commit violence.

Keywords: emotion; aggression; violence; intergroup relations

Introduction

Many ideologically motivated groups (e.g. pro- or anti-abortion groups, gun groups, death penalty groups, and religious groups) have outgroups who oppose their ideology, and some are even despised. Yet some groups become violent and some do not. What drives some to violence? One factor that should be considered is emotion. Emotions are rapid information-processing systems that aid individuals in making decisions and engaging in action with minimal conscious awareness (Tooby & Cosmides, 2008). They are immediate, unconscious, involuntary, and transient reactions that occur as a result of an appraisal of an event that has implications for the welfare of the organism and require immediate response (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Lazarus, 1991). They prime behaviors by initiating unique physiological signatures and mental structures (e.g. fleeing in fear and fighting in anger; see Levenson, 1999, 2003a); they aid in bonding memories and cognitions (Bower, 1981; Forgas & Bower, 1987); and they are a major source of motivation and action (Frijda, Kuipers, & ter Schure, 1989; Tomkins, 1962, 1963). Thus, understanding the roots of decisions and behaviors requires an understanding of emotions underlying them.

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Because aggression and violence are acts that occur across cultures and history, understanding their emotional bases by examining emotions that exist across cultures and history may make sense. Research over the past half century has demonstrated that a small set of emotions is universal, biologically innate, and part of our evolutionary heritage (Ekman, 1999; Izard, 2007; Panksepp, 2007). This set includes anger, contempt, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise. These emotions have universal antecedent events and elicitors (Scherer, 1997a, 1997b), recruit an organized and coordinated physiological response profile that prepares individuals for action (Levenson, 1999, 2003b; Matsumoto, Nezlek, & Koopmann, 2007), and produce universal expressive behaviors (Ekman, 1993; Izard, 2007; Sauter, Eisner, Ekman, & Scott, 2010).

Two of these emotions – anger and fear – have received considerable attention in the research literature on aggression and violence. Anger is considered a dangerous emotion (Averill, 1983; Berkowitz, 1990; Halperin & Gross, 2010), and state anger and offensive aggression activate the same brain areas (Harmon-Jones & Sigelman, 2001). Anger motivates violent responses to goal blockage, truncating ongoing transgressions by others and deterring additional ones (Fessler, 2010). Fear is also dangerous because it can be transformed into aggression in both humans and animals (Eibl-Eibesfeldt & Sutterlin, 1990; Lorenz, 2002; Moyer, 1968), especially when escape from the fear-eliciting stimulus is not possible or desirable.

But recent research has suggested a potential role of anger, contempt, and disgust in understanding aggression and violence because of their unique socio-moral and sociocultural functions. Rozin, Lowery, Imada, and Haidt (1999) suggested that these emotions are elicited by violations of moral codes originally proposed by Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, and Park (1997), including violations of individual rights and autonomy, communal codes and hierarchy, and purity and sanctity; across four studies, individuals in different cultures assessing different situations associated events that operationalized these violations with emotion words and facial expressions depicting anger, contempt, and disgust. Hutcherson and Gross (2011) demonstrated that these emotions were associated with appraisals related to other types of ethical and moral violations, including appraisals of self-relevance, others' incompetence or lack of intelligence, and others' moral untrustworthiness. Sternberg (2003) proposed that anger, contempt, and disgust comprised the three components of hate, which in turn may be a contributing cause of many acts of aggression (AoAs) and violence.

These previous works suggest that anger, contempt, and disgust may play a role in providing the motivation for aggression and violence given their social functions vis-à-vis ethics and morality and their purported role as components of hatred. But how are they elicited in groups that engage in aggression? We believe that leaders set the tone for groups to interpret or reinterpret events in certain ways that then lead to group emotions that facilitate decisions and behaviors to aggress. Leaders do this by creating narratives based on their appraisals or reappraisals of critical events and situations (see Sternberg, 2003, for a discussion on the role of stories in inculcating hatred) and by communicating

emotions through these narratives. The communication occurs through the verbal expression of specific types of emotion-laden and emotion-related words, metaphors, images, and analogies, as well as the non-verbal expression of emotion through their faces, voices, gestures, and body language. Leaders' emotional expressions facilitate their followers' sharing of those emotions (cf., emotion contagion; see Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994) and allow subordinates to appraise events in the ways leaders appraise them; thus events can be viewed as acts of injustice or benevolence, and perpetrators of these acts can be seen as infidel dogs or as freedom fighters. Emotion-sharing allows leaders to motivate followers to engage in certain actions because emotions are a foundation for motivation. Followers who share their leader's anger, contempt, and disgust are more easily motivated toward the devaluation and destruction of others. Through the careful use of language and non-verbal behaviors, therefore, leaders are in a position to motivate, escalate, or defuse situations, and incite or suppress action, through emotion.

We tested this idea in a study examining the emotions expressed in the words used by world leaders and leaders of ideologically motivated groups talking about their archrival outgroups in their speeches. There has never been an analysis of the emotional content of such statements in the historical archives, and these archives serve as potentially rich sources of information that allow us to test the hypothesis that verbal expressions of anger, contempt, and disgust toward outgroups across time are associated with violence and hostility against the outgroup. (There has been, however, an analysis of emotions in words analyzed from digital text messages sent by laypersons; see Back, Kufner, & Egloff, 2010, 2011; Pury, 2011.) We scoured the archives for records of such speeches, anchoring them to an identified AoA, and selected for analysis those speeches that were available at three points in time prior to those acts. We also included for comparison a small group of acts and speeches of ideologically motivated groups that had despised opponent outgroups but did *not* result in violence. We analyzed the speeches for their emotional content and tested the differences in that content separately for groups that committed an AoA and those that did not, which we labeled acts of resistance (AoRs). We hypothesized that AoAs would be characterized by an increase in anger, contempt, and disgust as speeches toward the outgroups neared the AoA, whereas these emotions would not increase in AoRs.

Method

Source acquisition

We first identified AoAs committed by ideologically motivated groups. Although there are many such groups that are motivated by an ideology, it is also the case that some are not as clearly defined as a government or a political or religion-based group, such as al Qaeda or Hamas. In some cases, groups are defined by their affinity or disaffinity, such as cause-based groups like Operation Rescue, which opposes all types of abortions. AoAs were identified

using the following criteria: (1) the act was motivated by ideological motives, including racial and political; (2) the AoA was not an immediate response to an AoA committed by the other party, such as a surprise attack or immediate retaliation; (3) the AoA was a violent action against a defined outgroup, with the intention of causing physical harm, reduced quality of life, and/or denial of basic human rights; and (4) there was a clear leader of the group who made speeches across multiple points in time.

We were interested in obtaining a broad, representative spectrum of historical time frames and groups representing a diverse array of geographies, languages, and cultures. Many historical events, such as the start of the world wars, major acts of terrorism such as 9/11, the numerous Nazi AoAs, the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and others, were suggested automatically. We also consulted historical subject-matter experts; accessed numerous published resources with lists of historical and contemporary AoAs and AoRs; accessed web-based resources of governmental agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as non-governmental websites such as globalconflict.org; and contacted authors of books or papers on related subjects both to seek guidance about which subjects to consider and to learn of sources for textual data. We also used news of current events from US and international news media sources.

Even with these criteria, the identification of source material was not cut and dry, and readers are cautioned to interpret the findings with this caveat. For example, although we did not include battles that were part of an ongoing war, we did include the US bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as we considered these to be unique acts. There are also confusing lines of difference between aggression, defense, and resistance. Probably no group in world history has felt that their attacks were unprecedented, and labeling an act one of aggression or defense becomes somewhat a political judgment (e.g. the British declaring war on Germany in World War I, the Easter Rising, or the British entering World War II). Instead, our core definition of AoAs involves inflicting physical harm on an outgroup or harming their quality of life and basic human rights at that particular date, regardless of ideology.

For comparison purposes, we also identified non-violent AoRs committed by ideologically motivated groups using the following criteria: (1) the act was motivated by ideological motives, including racial and political and (2) the AoR was a non-violent action against a defined outgroup with the intention to NOT cause physical harm, reduced quality of life, and/or denial of basic human rights of others.

When potential AoAs or AoRs committed by ideologically motivated groups were identified, we searched for texts of speeches at three different points in time: 3, 6, and 12 months before the event. These time periods were chosen as we considered 1 year an adequate range of time to see changes in expressed emotions. For the purposes of this study, we included only those acts and groups for which a speech text was found for all points in time. This resulted in the following list of acts and events:

AOAs:

1830-05-26	US Indian Removal Act
1914-08-04	Britain declares war on Germany (World War I)
1916-04-24	Easter Rising (Irish Rebellion against British Government in Ireland)
1917-10-25	Bolshevik Russian October Revolution against Tsar Government
1922-10-22	March on Rome by dictator Benito Mussolini and Fascist Party
1937-12-30	Great Purge – Height of mass internal purge of government
1938-11-09 to 10	“Kristallnacht” – Night of Broken Glass – anti-Jewish pogrom in Nazi Germany
1939-09-01	Nazi Invasion of Poland
1939-09-17	Britain declares war on Germany (World War II)
1945-08-09	US Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
1960-05-01	US U-2 plane shot down by Soviet military
1962-10-28	Cuban Missile Crisis empowers Castro/ends counter-revolutionary movements
1966-08-18	China’s Cultural Revolution: Mao deploys the Red Guard
1980-05-17	Shining Path declaration of war against Peruvian State
1990-08-02	US Persian Gulf War
1998-08-07	Bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania
2003-01-27	Renewed Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan
2003-03-20	US Invasion of Iraq
2006-12-28	Fall of Mogadishu – Government forces oust Islamic Courts Union
2009-05-31	Assassination of Dr George Tiller (doctor who performed late-term abortions)

AoRs:

1930-03-12	Salt Satyagraha (first campaign of non-violent protest against British rule in India)
1932-01-01	Mahatma Gandhi authors Civil Disobedience Congress resolution
1968-05-12	Poor People’s Campaign 2-week protest in Washington, DC
1972-09-23	Leaders oppose Marcos regime’s declaration of martial law
2008-08-09	Pro-Tibet supporters 2008 Olympics opening day protest against China

Segment identification

Once the basic source material was identified, it was necessary to identify the specific segments of each speech that were related to the outgroup because many speeches were about various issues, much of which had nothing to do with the outgroup. In order to determine that a text contained references to the outgroup and to mark what those references were, coders were trained in the background of the events and how to identify instances when the speaker was referring to the outgroup. In doing so, it was important to capture not only direct nominal references to the outgroup – such as Osama bin Laden using the words United States, America, or Zionists – but also more subtle, categorical references such as “infidel”, “imperialist”, or “enemies of freedom”. Coders were also trained in identifying oblique references that more sophisticated modern politicians might make when referring to an outgroup, including references to a group according to a problem they create for the ingroup (e.g. when a Russian prime minister refers to “threats to the safety and well-being of former citizens of the Soviet Union in the Caucasus” when referring to Chechen rebels or when a Chinese leader talks about the “territorial integrity of China”, which may refer to dissent in one of a number of regions, such as Tibet and Taiwan).

Two coders independently read each obtained document, annotating the start and end points of text passages in which the outgroup was mentioned. The coders then compared annotations and produced an arbitrated listing of them. Texts in which both coders agreed on the outgroup identification were then selected for further analysis. These text extractions ranged from several sentences to more than 10 pages in length. The total across all speeches and events included 7800 sentences and 191,763 total words (1682 sentences and 45,061 words came from AoRs). Appendix provides excerpts from two speeches, one for an AoA (by Mao Tse Dong) and the other for an AoR (by Martin Luther King, Jr.). Portions of both excerpts were rated highly in anger, contempt, and disgust (see Appendix for coding procedures).

Emotion annotation

Although emotion-related content analysis coding schemes and software exist, most are based on simple word counts, such as the *Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count* (Pennebaker, Francis, & Booth, 2001) or *Leximancer* (Smith & Humphreys, 2006). The speeches that we obtained included many indirect emotion references that were not analyzable according to current technologies. Thus, we created a unique coding scheme specifically for this study.

We selected for coding the seven emotions that research has demonstrated to be universally expressed and recognized non-verbally: anger, contempt, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002; Matsumoto, Keltner, Shiota, O’Sullivan, & Frank, 2008). We opted to code the entire set of emotions that research has shown to share the same characteristics in terms of universality of expression and evolutionary heritage,

consistent with the notion that these emotions may serve as a basis for aggression and violence across cultures and history. Coding of anger, contempt, and disgust allowed us to test directly our hypotheses concerning these emotions; coding of fear allowed us to examine whether this emotion also differentiated AoAs from AoRs, as might be suggested in the literature; coding of joy, sadness, and surprise allowed us to examine whether these emotions functioned differently than the others, such as a “control” condition for negative emotions in general, which is important in order to document the unique function of anger, contempt, and disgust.

For each sentence, the coders were instructed to score how much the writer of the sentence felt each of the seven emotions using an 11-point scale anchored 0 – “not at all” – to 10 – “maximum emotion”. The coders were instructed to score the emotions from the writer’s perspective, not from theirs; for example, if a certain statement elicited anger in the coders (e.g. “abortion”) but the writer was neutral about the topic, the coders were instructed to code anger as 0. The coders were instructed that writers had strong feelings about the out-groups they were talking about; that each sentence should be read and interpreted in context (i.e. it is important to read and understand the entire text); and that a sentence can contain no, one, or multiple emotions. Because there often is ambiguity in the difference between anger, contempt, and disgust, the coders were also instructed to pay particular attention to the distinction between these emotions and were given the following definitions:

- Anger is an emotion about an act that a person or a group did. Anger is often triggered by perceived injustice, goal obstruction, or norm violations. If a person or a group does something bad, anger is focused on the act but the person or the group may or may not be bad.
- Contempt, or disdain, is an emotion about a person or a group. The function of contempt is to make a statement about status and moral superiority. Contempt is often the result of some form of reasoning and has to do with the devaluation and diminution of others.
- Disgust is an emotion about contaminated, rotten, or offensive objects. It can be about people, groups, or objects. The function of disgust is to eliminate or repulse the contaminated objects. Disgust implies that the person or the group or the objects are inherently bad, with no chance for rehabilitation. The feeling of disgust overcomes any reasoning and has its roots in animal instincts.

To perform the annotations, a web-based annotation interface was created, which displayed all the sentences in a speech set with one sentence per line. Each sentence was followed by seven fields, where the annotators rated the intensity of each of the seven emotions for that sentence. Agreement scores were computed for each coder, measured by the Pearson correlation between the emotion values assigned by the coder and the average of the emotion values assigned by all other coders. Three coders with agreement rates below

0.40 were removed as this showed that compared with the other coders they had difficulty in understanding the coding scheme. The average reliability among the remaining seven coders was 0.84. Seven emotion scores for each sentence were computed by taking the mean of each coded emotion across the seven coders within each sentence. In order to avoid violating assumptions of independence in the data, each of the emotions averaged across coders within each sentence was then averaged across sentences within each speech and time frame to generate a single set of codes for each speech at each point in time for each event. Thus, the final codes used in the analyses below are the codes for each of the seven emotions averaged across coders and sentences for each speech separately for each of the three time periods.

Results

Because our hypotheses focused on anger, contempt, and disgust, we computed a Time (3) by Emotion (3) by Group (2) mixed ANOVA on these emotions (see Table 1 for descriptives for all emotions). The Time by Group interaction was significant, $F(2, 46) = 4.33, p < 0.05, \eta_p^2 = 0.16$, and the three-way interaction was marginally significant, $F(4, 92) = 2.21, p < 0.08, \eta_p^2 = 0.09$. We computed planned comparisons of the simple effects of time for each of the three emotions separately for AoAs and AoRs. Because of the small sample sizes, we computed both Wilcoxon signed-rank tests and bootstrapped paired t-tests. All findings reported here were consistent across tests. For both AoAs and AoRs, there were no changes in anger, contempt, and disgust from 12 to 6 months prior to the event. From 6 to 3 months prior to the event, however, there was a significant *increase* in all three for AoAs (p 's < 0.05 , d 's = 0.39, 0.36, and 0.34, for anger, contempt, and disgust, respectively), as predicted. For AoRs, disgust *decreased* from 6 to 3 months prior to the event, $p < 0.05, d = -1.74$ (anger and contempt also non-significantly decreased).

The significant Time by Group interaction justified examining changes across time using an aggregate score averaging anger, contempt, and disgust.

Table 1. Means (and standard deviations) for all emotion variables at three time periods.

Emotion	AoAs			AoRs		
	12 months prior	6 months prior	3 months prior	12 months prior	6 months prior	3 months prior
Anger	2.16 (1.10)	1.84 (0.82)	2.37 (1.42)	1.28 (0.94)	2.12 (1.60)	1.68 (1.14)
Contempt	1.90 (1.11)	1.90 (0.84)	2.45 (1.55)	1.36 (0.80)	2.44 (1.70)	1.88 (1.48)
Disgust	1.71 (1.07)	1.66 (0.82)	2.16 (1.55)	1.22 (0.79)	2.66 (1.68)	2.10 (1.36)
Fear	1.15 (1.28)	1.11 (0.81)	1.06 (1.02)	0.82 (0.70)	1.64 (0.95)	1.56 (1.08)
Happiness	1.43 (1.04)	0.83 (0.58)	1.10 (1.04)	0.86 (0.47)	0.54 (0.52)	0.66 (0.40)
Sadness	1.33 (1.03)	1.25 (0.57)	1.26 (0.88)	1.10 (0.56)	2.36 (0.87)	1.84 (0.69)
Surprise	0.88 (0.79)	0.75 (0.50)	0.83 (0.73)	0.46 (0.42)	1.18 (0.71)	1.18 (1.35)

There were no differences from 12 to 6 months prior to the event for both AoAs and AoRs. There was a significant increase in aggregate anger, contempt, and disgust from 6 to 3 months prior to the event for AoAs, $t(19) = 1.70, p < 0.05, d = 0.38$, but a significant decrease from 6 to 3 months for AoRs, $t(4) = 2.57, p < 0.05, d = 1.15$.

To directly compare the between-group differences in the changes in anger, contempt, and disgust, we computed change scores from 6 to 3 months prior to the event and compared AoAs and AoRs on the change scores. We focused on the change from 6 to 3 months as these were the time periods closest to the event. As predicted, the changes in anger, contempt, disgust, and the aggregate score were significantly different between AoAs and AoRs, $t(23) = 2.44, p < 0.05, d = 0.80$; $t(23) = 2.59, p < 0.05, d = 0.84$; $t(23) = 2.99, p < 0.05, d = 2.42$; and $t(23) = 2.81, p < 0.01, d = .87$, respectively; note the large effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). None of the same tests on fear, happiness, sadness, or surprise was significant.

For comparison, we computed a Time (3) by Group (2) by Emotion (4) ANOVA on fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise. Neither the Time by Group nor the three-way interaction was significant, $F(2, 46) = 2.02, ns, \eta_p^2 = 0.08$; $F(6, 138) = 0.60, ns, \eta_p^2 = 0.03$, respectively. Regardless of this, we compared the simple effects of time for these emotions. For AoAs, happiness decreased from 12 to 6 months prior to the event, $p < 0.05, d = 0.51$. For AoRs, fear, sadness, and surprise increased from 12 to 6 months prior to the event (all p 's $< 0.05, d$'s = 1.25, 0.99, and 1.35, respectively). There were no differences in any of these emotions from 6 to 3 months prior to the event for either AoAs or AoRs. Thus, the pattern of changes reported above for anger, contempt, and disgust was specific to those emotions.

Researchers of the history of the English language have long noted that different aspects of the language have changed across time (Aitchison, 1991; Romaine, 1999), and given the fairly large time span of events in our sample, it may have been possible that the language reflecting emotion may have differed across the events studied. Although many changes in a language occur across centuries, a natural division in our data set would delineate events before and after World War II. This point in history produced geopolitical, population, and industrial changes around the world that coincided with changes in the spread and use of English (Baugh & Cable, 2002). Luckily in our sample, this point in time also produced an even distribution of events. Thus, we recomputed the analyses reported above separately for events occurring before and after the end of World War II. The same findings were obtained.

To gauge the interrelationships among the seven coded emotions, we computed an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on them, averaged across the three time periods so that the resulting factor structure was not affected by the time period. (We acknowledge the low participant-to-variable ratio, and readers are cautioned to interpret the findings with this caveat.) Multiple R^2 was used as communalities. The Kaiser criterion produced three factors that accounted for 88.15% of the cumulative variance. Varimax rotation indicated that

anger, contempt, and disgust loaded on the first factor; fear, surprise, and sadness loaded on the second; and happiness loaded on the third. These results suggest that the coded emotions could not be explained by simple positive–negative valence, as fear and sadness are both negative along with anger, contempt, and disgust, and fear and sadness loaded on the same factor as surprise and did not load with anger, contempt, and disgust. The coded emotions could also not be explained by an active–passive dimension (Russell & Fehr, 1987) because anger and fear are both considered active, but loaded on different factors and functioned quite differently here. The structure better fit models that suggest that emotional expressions signal dominance *vs.* submissiveness or approach *vs.* avoidance (see discussion by Vigil, 2009). The EFA also suggested that anger, contempt, and disgust could not be distinguished from each other, at least in this data set. The pooled, within-group (AoA and AoR) correlations between anger and contempt, anger and disgust, and contempt and disgust were all high, r 's = 0.86, 0.88, and 0.95, respectively.

Discussion

As predicted, AoAs were associated with increases in anger, contempt, and disgust in the time periods preceding the AoA. Contrastingly, AoRs were associated with decreases in the same emotions and there were no differences in any other emotions for either AoAs or AoRs during the same time period. These findings were obtained using both non-parametric statistics and bootstrapped parametric statistics and when separate analyses of the events before and after World War II were conducted.

These findings were not produced without limitations, perhaps the biggest of which concerned the selection of the events analyzed and the small sample sizes of AoAs and AoRs. Although there definitely were many other events from which to potentially sample, our requirement of obtaining texts of speeches at three points in time reduced the number of events that were usable for the study. In fact, the entire corpus that we dealt with included a considerable number of speeches and text; but in order to not violate assumptions of independence, the codes were averaged across coders, sentences, and speeches. Also, we were limited by our coding systems to analyzing English language texts, which required us to find translations of some speeches. It is possible that the exact emotional content of the non-English speeches was not conveyed validly in the translations, which may have confounded the results. Future studies of non-English texts conducted in the target language without translation can address this important issue.

That anger, contempt, and disgust were the emotions to increase before AoAs is meaningful as it directly links these emotions to ideologically motivated aggression or violence, a linkage that was hinted at by previous literature (reviewed above) but not directly examined. These emotions allow groups and individuals to not only appraise the actions of others, but also to make evaluations of the nature of the actors – especially their moral character – and

what should be done about them. When people feel these emotions, it is easier to make an evaluation that the target of their emotions is inherently bad or contaminated and that there is no chance for rehabilitation, thus making a permanent assessment of the moral worthiness of the opponent group rather than a temporary judgment about an act committed by that group. When felt, these emotions can only be ameliorated through elimination. Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, and the Dalai Lama may all have been angry, contemptuous, and disgusted toward their outgroups at some point, but not as frequently or as intensely as Hitler or Bin Laden, and did not escalate these three emotions to the point that it culminated in violence.

Although changes in anger, contempt, and disgust were associated with aggression, it was not clear from our data whether these emotions underlie decisions of leaders or the behaviors of followers who carry out their leader's decisions. Some aggression may in fact occur through leaders inciting emotions directly in their subordinates, with those emotions serving as the motivational bases for the subordinates' AoAs. Other aggression may occur where subordinates are the relatively less emotional instruments of their leader's decisions, such as when military personnel carry out the orders of their superiors and enact the decisions of politicians. Still, in the latter case, military personnel often go through an emotional indoctrination that involves dehumanization of the enemy (based on disgust) and evaluations of ethical or moral superiority (based on contempt). History is replete with examples of the military feeling bonds with citizens and refusing to fire upon them (e.g. Tahir Square in Egypt in 2011 and the first and local Chinese army group in Tiananmen Square in 1989). Future research will need to examine how anger, contempt, and disgust affect different types of aggression and different levels of aggressors in the chain of command.

Also, the degree to which the emotions expressed in the speeches were part of a strategic rhetoric that may not have been genuinely felt by the speechmakers was not entirely clear from our data. It may very well be the case, for example, that speechmakers genuinely felt the emotions they expressed (or at least came to feel them), which in turn drove their choice of words and actions. Or speechmakers may have carefully crafted their choice of words to portray a certain picture associated with certain emotions to justify an action. These are not mutually exclusive of each other and future research may examine this issue further.

The degree to which the emotive rhetoric of the leaders is indicative of a group-level behavioral strategy in general or more of a predictor of a group-level state of mind is also an open question. Understanding the potential role of emotions in AoRs may shed light on this issue. For them, emotions (except for happiness) appeared to increase from 12 to 6 months prior to the event; fear, sadness, and surprise were significant, and anger, contempt, and disgust were also relatively elevated 6 months prior to the event. Then emotions tended to decrease from 6 to 3 months prior to the event. These patterns suggest that AoRs were also being primed to do *something* against their opponent

outgroups because they were becoming increasingly emotional, but the subsequent decrease from 6 to 3 months allowed for a cooling-off period during which alternative solutions could be entertained. Because emotions such as fear, sadness, and surprise were also relatively elevated as well as anger, contempt, and disgust suggests that those solutions could also include non-aggressive acts of resistance. If true, these patterns suggest that the emotive rhetoric of the leaders is a predictor of a group-level state of mind that primes the group for some kind of behavior; the specific behavior (i.e. aggression or resistance), however, may be based on the specific profile of emotions expressed and felt; the timing of the ramping up or down of emotions, especially anger, contempt, and disgust; and the solutions proposed.

One question that arises about anger, contempt, and disgust is whether or not they are three different emotions or indicative of a single, underlying state. On the one hand, there is considerable evidence for their differentiation in antecedent events (Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley, 1999; Scherer, 1997a), physiologies (Levenson, 2003a), self-reported experiences (Scherer & Wallbott, 1994), mental state changes (Levenson, 1999), non-verbal expressions (Ekman, 1999; Matsumoto & Ekman, 2004; Rozin et al., 1999; Simon-Thomas, Keltner, Sauter, Sinicropi-Yao, & Abramson, 2009), appraisals (Curtis & Biran, 2001; Fischer, 2011; Hutcherson & Gross, 2011; Lazarus, 1991; Rozin et al., 1999), action potentials (Frijda et al., 1989; Moretti & di Pellegrino, 2010), and relationship markers (Gottman & Levenson, 2002; Gottman, Levenson, & Woodin, 2001). On the other hand, there is evidence for overlap between them linguistically (Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Connor, 1987), when judging faces (Matsumoto, 2005) or evaluating groups (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007) and when labeling sociomoral violations (Marziller & Davey, 2004; Nabi, 2002; Simpson, Carter, Anthony, & Overton, 2006). In our study, anger, contempt, and disgust functioned very similarly, loaded on the same factor in an EFA, had similar mean scores, and were highly correlated. It may very well be that these emotions function similarly along a dimension of dominance *vs.* submission (Vigil, 2009). It may also mean that some situations draw for these three emotions as some element of a higher order feeling state such as hatred (Sternberg, 2003). Future studies designed to directly address the relative independence of these emotions are necessary. For example, examining the interrelationships among these emotions when leaders speak about something other than their despised outgroups may be illuminating.

Our findings are related to research on integrative complexity, which refers to the degree to which verbal output reflects the recognition that more than one legitimate viewpoint exists with regard to a particular topic and that the differing viewpoints are related to each other (Suedfeld & Bluck, 1988; Suedfeld & Tetlock, 1977; Suedfeld, Tetlock, & Ramirez, 1977). When integrative complexity is measured in speeches across time, there is a reliable decrease in it from 2 to 6 months prior to the outbreak of war, conflict, or surprise attacks. This period of time maps well with the points of time that we studied. Future

research may examine the relationship between integrative complexity and expressed emotion.

Our findings are also related to recent research on the effects of participation in collective action on emotion. Becker, Tausch, and Wagner (2011) demonstrated that individuals who engaged in group actions against their government experienced more anger, contempt, and disgust toward the outgroups against which they protested and more positive affect about themselves. Our findings mirror theirs. One major difference between the Becker et al. (2011) study and ours, however, is that theirs measured emotions as a result of collective action participation, whereas ours measured emotions expressed by the leadership that subsequently resulted in group action or inaction.

That there were no changes in expressed fear for AoAs was somewhat surprising, given the fairly long-standing literature documenting the relationship between fear and aggression in both humans and animals (Eibl-Eibesfeldt & Sutterlin, 1990; Lorenz, 2002; Moyer, 1968). These non-findings may be related to the fact that fear leads to defensive aggression, which is typically more immediate and reactive than the events we studied. Although many may claim that the acts we studied were “defensive reactions”, in reality most were not immediate reactions to a prior event and most required time, planning, and relatively more deliberate decision-making (at least over the course of the year that we examined). Future research will need to examine the role of anger, contempt, and disgust in different types of aggression, including more fear-based, defensive aggression, and whether anger, contempt, and disgust mediate the transformation of fear to aggression.

Our findings may have practical applications. Monitoring the expression of emotions by group leaders may provide not only early warning mechanisms of impending possible aggression, but also a method to gauge the effects of the actions one’s own group on other groups. Developing systems to assess emotions among members of groups, and at different levels within the groups, may provide a way to gain insights about the degree to which emotion-sharing may occur within groups, which may be important for political justification of leaders’ decisions. Such systems may be akin to rumor-monitoring systems that are useful in assessing counter-insurgency operations in many areas of the world, where the battle concerning knowledge and information is as important as kinetic operations.

Emotions expressed in words may only be part of the overall emotional message delivered. Non-verbal behaviors such as facial expressions and tone of voice that accompany the emotionally laden language may amplify or deamplify the overall emotional messages delivered. It is quite possible, therefore, that when emotionally laden language is imbedded within a rich repertoire of non-verbal behaviors that also portray emotions, the overall emotional message to listeners may be substantially more powerful than just the words alone. Future studies examining the combined emotional signals portrayed in verbal and non-verbal behaviors will address this important issue. Our internal analysis of data for the last 50 years – in which mediated forms of

communication that could reflect the non-verbal content of speeches were more readily available – suggests that non-verbal behaviors will certainly not hinder this phenomenon.

Finally, demonstrating that leaders of ideologically motivated groups express emotions in their speeches does not imply that members of these groups hearing those speeches accurately perceive those emotions as intended. And even if they do, it is an open question as to whether those perceived emotions in turn spur them on to aggression or not. There are many links to the puzzle of how emotions from leaders contribute to group action that need to be addressed in future research. Documenting the emotions expressed by the leaders of those groups, which we have done, is the first link in an emotional chain of events that may turn out to be a helpful predictor of imminent terrorist acts.

Notes on Contributors

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Appendix. Text excerpts from an AoA and an AoR speech

(Note: sentences with codings on anger, contempt, or disgust ≥ 5.0 are boldfaced.)

Event: 1966 Chinese Cultural Revolution (AoA)
 Speaker: Mao Tse Dong
 Date: 21 July 1966
 Source: Mao (1966)

“I say to you all: youth is the great army of the Great Cultural Revolution! It must be mobilized to the full. After my return to Peking I felt very unhappy and desolate. Some colleges even had their gates shut. **There were even some which suppressed the student movement. Who is it who suppressed the student movement? Only the Pei-yang Warlords.** It is anti-Marxist for communists to fear the student movement. **Some people talk daily about the mass line and serving the people, but instead they follow the bourgeois line and serve the bourgeoisie.** The Central Committee of the Youth League should stand on the side of the student movement. **But instead it stands on the side of suppression of the student movement.** Who opposes the great Cultural Revolution? **The American imperialists, the Soviet revisionists, the Japanese revisionists and the reactionaries.**

To use the excuse of distinguishing between ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ is to fear revolution. To cover over big-character posters which have been put up, such things cannot be allowed. This is a basic error of orientation. They must immediately change direction, and smash all the old conventions. We believe in the masses. To become teachers of the masses we must first be the students of the masses. The present great Cultural Revolution is a heaven-and-earth-shaking event. Can we, dare we, cross the pass into socialism? **This pass leads to the final destruction of classes, and the reduction of the three great differences”.**

Event: 1968 Poor People's Campaign (AoR)
Speaker: Martin Luther King, Jr.
Date: 31 March 1968
Source: King (1968)

“They never stop to realize that no other ethnic group has been a slave on American soil. The people who say this never stop to realize that the nation made the black man’s color a stigma. But beyond this they never stop to realize the debt that they owe a people who were kept in slavery two hundred and forty-four years.

In 1863 the Negro was told that he was free as a result of the Emancipation Proclamation being signed by Abraham Lincoln. **But he was not given any land to make that freedom meaningful. It was something like keeping a person in prison for a number of years and suddenly discovering that that person is not guilty of the crime for which he was convicted. And you just go up to him and say, ‘Now you are free’, but you don’t give him any bus fare to get to town. You don’t give him any money to get some clothes to put on his back or to get on his feet again in life.**

Every court of jurisprudence would rise up against this, and yet this is the very thing that our nation did to the black man. It simply said, ‘You’re free’, and it left him there penniless, illiterate, not knowing what to do. And the irony of it all is that at the same time the nation failed to do anything for the black man, though an act of Congress was giving away millions of acres of land in the West and the Midwest, which meant that it was willing to undergird its white peasants from Europe with an economic floor”.