

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Solidarity Effects in Social Movement Messaging: How Cueing Dominant Group Identity Can Increase Movement Support

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Despite the historical importance of dominant group solidarity with movements for social justice, little empirical work has examined how the social identity of movement supporters influences the persuasiveness of their social movement messages. Across two experiments, we manipulated the group identity (White, Black, or anonymous) of a speaker in a message supporting the #BlackLivesMatter movement to examine its effects on White Americans' perceptions of the speaker and their ultimate support for the movement. Results indicated that identity cues affected evaluations of the speaker (Study 1), and that these evaluations, in turn, mediated the effects of identity cues on attitudes toward the social movement (Study 2). Among White participants, White speakers were evaluated (a) more favorably in general than anonymous speakers, and (b) as less racist than both Black and anonymous speakers. Such evaluations were ultimately associated with increased support for #BlackLivesMatter. Implications of solidarity effects in social movement messaging are discussed.

Keywords: Social Movements, Persuasion, Anonymity, Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, Racism.

doi:10.1093/hcr/hqy011

Social justice movements have historically utilized persuasive messages as powerful tools for turning the injustices facing marginalized groups into the concerns of the dominant group. Activists have effectively used the mass media to influence the way the public thinks and feels about social inequalities (Edwards & Gillham, 2013). Yet in order to amass enough dominant group support for meaningful reform, marginalized groups must first convince the public not only of the legitimacy of their grievances, but also to stand in solidarity with them (Stern, Dietz, Abel, Guagnano, & Kalof, 1999). For example, the eventual passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would have been unlikely if some White Americans had not expressed solidarity by publicly voicing their support for civil rights (Lee, 2002).

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One theoretical explanation for why displays of solidarity play an important role in movements for social justice stems from the negative consequences faced by marginalized individuals who point out the injustices facing their groups. Minorities who call attention to discrimination are likely to be viewed by the majority as biased, self-serving, or even racist (Schultz & Maddox, 2013). In turn, such unfavorable evaluations may make marginalized individuals' arguments for social justice less persuasive (Lowery, Knowles, & Unzueta, 2007). This research suggests that social movement messages may, instead, be more effective when coming from dominant group members. Such messages of "solidarity," which explicitly identify the speaker as a dominant group member, may avoid threatening the social identity of fellow group members (Hornsey & Imani, 2004) and, in turn, provide a context in which the unifying moral appeals made by social movements can be better considered (Subašić, Reynolds, & Turner, 2008). This potential dominant group advantage in advocating for social change is both an under-researched communication phenomenon and an under-acknowledged form of dominant group power.

Yet few studies have empirically tested whether social movement messages from dominant group members are indeed more effective at garnering support for social movements. This question may be particularly relevant in the context of social media, where individuals are able to signal their identity in a variety of ways or remain anonymous entirely. As social movements have turned to social media to persuade the majority to support their reforms and join in collective action (e.g., The Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, #BlackLivesMatter), the way in which users reveal or obscure their identities may play an important role in determining the likelihood of their success.

We examined the possibility of solidarity effects in social movement messaging, in which dominant group members are able to more effectively advocate for a social movement, because they can avoid the unfavorable evaluations that marginalized group members face when pointing out injustice (Schultz & Maddox, 2013). Specifically, we predicted that dominant group members would be less likely to be perceived as racist when speaking in support of a social movement and that this perception would account for an important difference in their ability to persuade fellow group members to support the movement. We proposed and tested a theoretical model that helps explain the pathways through which such solidarity effects may occur in the context of social media (see Figure 1).

In two experimental studies, we manipulated a speaker's identity (via photo and name) in a message supporting #BlackLivesMatter, an influential, identity-based social justice movement dedicated to ending police brutality and the killing of unarmed Black people (Freelon, McIlwain, & Clark, 2016). In Study 1, we tested whether explicitly cueing a dominant group identity (White) improved evaluations of the speaker in comparison to either a marginalized group identity (Black) or including no identity cues at all (anonymity). Study 2 replicated and extended the effects found in Study 1 and further examined how perceptions of the speaker

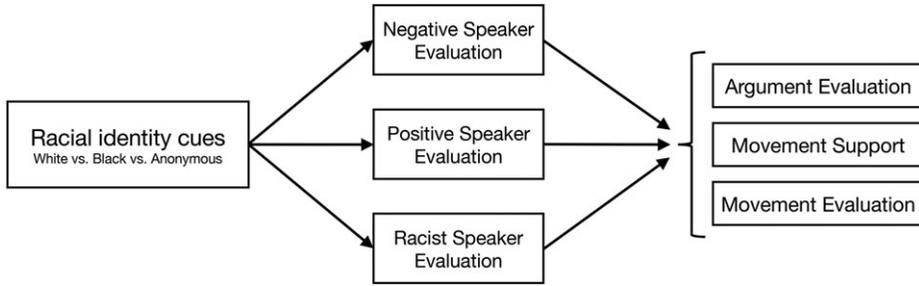


Figure 1 Theoretical model.

ultimately influenced attitudes toward the argument presented in the message and the social movement itself.

In testing our theoretical model, we made two important contributions to the literature. First, we extended previous work in psychology demonstrating that minorities are negatively evaluated for speaking out against discrimination (e.g., [Schultz & Maddox, 2013](#)) into the social movement context. We found that marginalized group identity, whether explicitly cued or implicitly assumed, led to less favorable evaluations of a social movement supporter. Conversely, cueing dominant group identity reduced such unfavorable evaluations. Second, we found that different dimensions of speaker evaluation could ultimately influence support for the social movement. Specifically, we found that the ability of White speakers to avoid being perceived as racist constituted a unique dominant group advantage in advocating for #BlackLivesMatter. By demonstrating that identity cues can influence support for a prominent movement for racial justice, we suggest that messages of solidarity have important implications for social movements in the age of social media.

Social identity and speaker evaluation

The left-hand side of our theoretical model (Figure 1) predicts that the identity cues embedded in a social movement message will influence how recipients evaluate the speaker featured in that message. As we have noted, Blacks and individuals from other marginalized groups are viewed negatively when they call out discrimination ([Schultz & Maddox, 2013](#)) and are likely to face social sanctions or be labeled as complainers ([Kaiser & Miller, 2001](#)). [Schultz and Maddox \(2013\)](#) found that individuals who claimed racial discrimination were perceived more negatively when they were identified as Black as compared to White. This research suggests that, by cueing dominant group social identity, individuals may be able to deliver arguments about social justice without facing the same unfavorable evaluations.

At a fundamental level, these findings are illustrative of two key insights from psychological theories of social identity. First, self-categorization theory posits that people create mental representations, known as prototypes, which capture a set of

attributes and perceptions that maximize the distinctiveness of a given group (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). When we encounter someone from another group, we often use our prototype of that group rather than the unique characteristics of the individual as a basis for evaluation. If the salience of group identity is high, as is the case when a Black person calls out racial bias, Whites should be more likely to use social identity as a basis for interpersonal evaluation (McGarty, Haslam, Hutchinson, & Turner, 1994). Given the negative stereotypes of Blacks held by many White Americans (Sigelman & Tuch, 1997), reliance on a prototype of Black people, rather than the unique characteristics of a Black individual, is likely to result in more negative evaluations.

Second, individuals often use group membership as a means of maintaining positive self-esteem or for reducing uncertainty about their place in the world (Hogg, 2014; Turner et al., 1987). When an individual's group is portrayed negatively, they often engage in out-group derogation to restore their positive sense of self (Lüders, Jonas, Fritsche, & Agroskin, 2016). One reason why Blacks and other marginalized groups are evaluated negatively when they speak out against discrimination is because doing so may threaten the social identity or status of Whites. Conversely, media scholars have found that White audiences evaluate media characters more favorably if they do not threaten a positive image of White identity (Coover, 2001).

In the context of the present studies, where the subject of the message was racial justice, it was likely that social identity processes would be at work whether or not a speaker's identity was explicitly cued. While the photo of a Black person explicitly signals Black identity, an anonymous speaker may also bring to mind the prototypical movement supporter. This is consistent with research finding that Whites categorize anonymous perpetrators of crime as Black, because their schema of crime is closely linked to African Americans (Dixon, 2006). Based on the racialized nature of the #BlackLivesMatter movement, anonymous supporters are similarly likely to evoke Black identity. Therefore, in our studies, both Black and anonymous speakers were expected to threaten Whites' social identities when they pointed out the need for racial justice, and would subsequently face unfavorable evaluations. In contrast, White speakers were predicted to be better able to express support for #BlackLivesMatter without threatening Whites' social identities, and therefore to be more favorably evaluated (Schultz & Maddox, 2013).

H1: Among White participants, a speaker featured in a message supporting the #BlackLivesMatter movement will be evaluated less negatively and more positively when they are identified as White as compared to Black or anonymous.

The role of perceived racism

Recent research has suggested that White Americans increasingly view racism as a zero-sum game, in which any attempt by Blacks to achieve equality is perceived as a racist assault against Whites (Norton & Sommers, 2011). This emergence of

perceived anti-White bias suggests that, in the context of a movement for racial justice (i.e., #BlackLivesMatter), the perception that the speaker is in fact racist might be particularly consequential. The very notion of collective action in support of racial justice might constitute a more severe threat to White social identity than individual complaints of bias or discrimination. Lowery et al. (2007) argued that when Whites are forced to think about their privileged position in the racial hierarchy, they are more likely to feel that their self-image has been threatened. Collective struggles for racial equality explicitly call out such structural inequities between groups, and therefore may be more likely to increase the perception that the out-group constitutes a realistic or symbolic threat (Stephan et al., 2002). This provides one explanation for why many White Americans have responded to #BlackLivesMatter's calls for racial justice by accusing Black activists themselves of being racist (e.g., Lim, 2016). Race scholars have argued that such claims of "reverse racism" serve to maintain a positive White social identity (Hughey, 2014). This raises the possibility that when a Black speaker voices support for #BlackLivesMatter, they risk being perceived as racist. As we have argued, an anonymous speaker may evoke the prototypical #BlackLivesMatter supporter and, therefore, similarly be construed as racist.

It is unlikely that a White speaker will face the same perception of racism in this context. On the one hand, there are occasions where individuals sanction fellow group members for threatening the reputation of the in-group (Marques & Paez, 1994). On the other hand, research on the intergroup sensitivity effect finds that individuals are more receptive to criticism from members of their own group (Hornsey & Imani, 2004). Discriminatory ideas are perceived as less offensive when they are expressed by an in-group member rather than an out-group member (Davidson, Czopp, & Mark, 2015). Viewed through the lens of social identity theory, in-group criticism is less likely to be psychologically processed in intergroup terms, and is therefore less likely to be threatening and perceived as racist.

H2: Among White participants, a speaker featured in a message supporting the #BlackLivesMatter movement will be evaluated as less racist when they are identified as White as compared to Black or anonymous.

From speaker evaluation to movement support

The right-hand side of our model (see Figure 1) examines the consequences of different dimensions of speaker evaluation from a social movement perspective. Each dimension is predicted to ultimately influence important indicators of the message's efficacy, including (a) argument evaluation, (b) movement evaluation, and (c) movement support. Literature related to each of these predictions is reviewed below.

General (negative and positive) speaker evaluation

First, several prominent theories of persuasion suggest that messages sent by unfavorable sources are generally less likely to be persuasive (e.g., Petty & Cacioppo,

1986). Speakers that are evaluated negatively are often less persuasive (Pornpitakpan, 2004), while those that are likable, attractive, or similar to the audience can increase their persuasiveness (Wilson & Sherrell, 1993). Research has also suggested that individuals are less likely to carefully process persuasive messages from members of an out-group (Mackie, Worth, & Asuncion, 1990), and therefore may rely more heavily upon heuristics, such as speaker evaluation, as a basis for opinion formation. In the context of our model, we expected that speakers who were unfavorably evaluated would be perceived as having weaker arguments and would be less effective at increasing support for the #BlackLivesMatter movement. We hypothesized the effects of general dimensions of speaker evaluation (i.e., negative and positive) on attitudes toward the argument and movement, as well as their mediating role in our model.

H3: Among White participants, increases in positive speaker evaluation and decreases in negative speaker evaluation will each be associated with increases in argument evaluation, movement support, and movement evaluation.

H4: Among White participants, identification of the speaker as White (vs. Black or anonymous) will increase argument evaluation, movement support, and movement evaluation indirectly, through positive and negative speaker evaluation.

Racist speaker evaluation

Our model also predicts that the perception that the speaker is racist will affect the success of #BlackLivesMatter messages above and beyond the influence of the general speaker evaluations hypothesized above. The theoretical basis for this prediction lies in the specific nature of social movement messages. Subašić et al. (2008) argued that for a majority group to take up the cause of the minority, it is necessary to make a higher-level, superordinate identity salient. Such superordinate identities encompass norms, values, and beliefs that are shared across group boundaries and may supersede lower-level group identities (Wenzel, Mummendey, & Waldzus, 2007). Movements for social justice explicitly appeal to such higher-level moral and ethical ideals (Nick, 2002). Subašić and colleagues (2008) noted that the presence of superordinate identities does not automatically render group identities meaningless, but rather one or the other becomes dominant, depending on the context. We argue that when a speaker is perceived as racist, it is difficult for a superordinate identity to become salient, and therefore less likely for a social movement message to be persuasive. The perception of racism explicitly frames social justice as a conflict between groups (Norton & Sommers, 2011) and is likely to threaten the self-image of Whites (Lowery et al., 2007). Because speakers who are perceived as racist constitute an identity threat to White audiences, their racial justice arguments are likely to prove less persuasive. Conversely, White speakers may avoid being perceived as racist and, therefore, be able to present the moral and ethical arguments made by the #BlackLivesMatter movement without threatening Whites' social identities.

H5: Among White participants, decreases in racist speaker evaluations will be associated with increases in argument evaluation, movement support and movement evaluation.

H6: Among White participants, identification of the speaker as White (vs. Black or anonymous) will increase argument evaluation, movement support, and movement evaluation indirectly, through racist speaker evaluation.

Participant race

Finally, the predictions offered thus far have assumed that the recipient of the #BlackLivesMatter message possesses a White identity. In this paper, the responses of dominant (i.e., White) group members are our core interest, given that their group holds power and resources that are instrumental in addressing racial injustice. On a theoretical level, the self-categorization processes that we predicted would drive effects should only operate among individuals who identify as White. To formally examine this assumption, we posed the following research question regarding participant race:

RQ1: Do the effects hypothesized in H1-H6 vary between White and Black participants?

Overview of studies

The goal of our studies was to examine potential solidarity effects in the context of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. To do so, we used two experiments, each of which tested the hypotheses outlined in our theoretical model (Figure 1). In Study 1, we attempted to replicate and extend the positive influence of dominant group identity on speaker evaluation (H1 and H2) observed in previous studies of racial bias (Schultz & Maddox, 2013). We tested the extent to which racial identity cues in a social movement message influenced evaluations of the speaker. Study 2 sought to extend the effects found in Study 1 by addressing H3 through H6 and RQ1, while making methodological improvements and conducting a full test of our theoretical model.

Study 1

Study 1 used an experimental paradigm based on Schultz and Maddox (2013), where participants were randomly assigned to view an online news article in which a speaker expressed support for the #BlackLivesMatter movement's calls for racial justice. This allowed us to examine H1 and H2, which predicted that speaker identity would influence both general (negative and positive) and racist speaker evaluations. In our experiment, the speaker's identity was manipulated to either appear White or Black or to remain anonymous. Photos and names of individuals from

each racial group were used in the Black and White conditions to cue speaker identity (Lee & Park, 2011). The anonymous condition did not include any identifying information, thereby forcing participants to rely on their existing prototype of a #BlackLivesMatter supporter as a basis for judgement. By assessing different dimensions of speaker evaluations post-manipulation, we attempted to determine if the advantages of dominant group identity in the case of racial bias (i.e., Schultz & Maddox, 2013) could be replicated in the context of a social media-based movement for racial justice.

Methods

Participants

We recruited 501 U.S. adults using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk)¹ for a brief survey regarding their opinions on social issues. Given that our interest was in responses of dominant group members to social movement messages, we first limited our sample to complete responses from participants who self-identified as White (79.64%, $n = 403$). Participants who answered a simple attention check question incorrectly ($n = 8$) or who were suspected of poor-quality responses² ($n = 17$) were removed from the sample, resulting in a final sample of 378 ($M_{\text{age}} = 41.44$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 12.85$; 59.25% male). On average, participants identified as slightly liberal on a scale ranging from 1 = "extremely liberal" to 7 = "extremely conservative" ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.75$).

Procedure

After providing informed consent, participants were asked to report demographic information (sex, age, race, and political ideology). They were next randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions in which they viewed an online news article featuring an interview with a supporter of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. The article was from the Associated Press and presented against a white background without additional source information. The article text comprised an interview quote that was adapted from several actual #BlackLivesMatter messages circulated on social media, and contained an impassioned call for an end to police killings of unarmed Black people. To remain consistent with prior research on social movement framing, the message was formatted to include core social movement frames identified by previous literature as theoretically important (see Benford & Snow, 2000). The text of the message is provided in the Supplementary Appendix.

All participants saw an identical article, except that in the White condition, the article identified the speaker as "Adam Friedman" and included a photo of a White male, whereas in the Black condition, the speaker's name was changed to "Jerome Washington" and included a photo of a Black male. The names were selected based on prior work on stereotypically White and Black names (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) and on data from the U.S. Census Bureau on names used almost exclusively by each respective racial group (Comenetz, 2016).

To address the possibility that our results could be influenced by the physical appearances of specific individuals, photos of different Black and White men were rated on a range of interpersonal characteristics in a pre-test.³ We then sampled photos within each condition, such that participants were randomly assigned to see an article with either a higher- or lower-rated photo of an individual from the racial group denoted by the condition. The anonymous condition presented the article without a name or photo.

Post-experimental measures

Manipulation check

To examine perceptions of the speaker's race, we asked participants to recall the race of the speaker in the news article they reviewed, along with other speaker attributes (e.g., sex) to reduce suspicion. Participants were able to choose one of the five racial categories listed on the U.S. census, including "White," "Black or African American," "American Indian/Alaska Native," "Asian," or "Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander." Participants were not offered an "other" or "I don't know" option in order to assess their best judgement about the race of the speaker.

Speaker evaluation

Immediately after reviewing the news article, participants rated how well different terms described the speaker quoted in the news article, using a 7-point scale (ranging from 1 = "not at all" to 7 = "very much"). To remain consistent with prior research, items were taken from [Schultz and Maddox \(2013\)](#) and recoded into two indices, the first assessing positive speaker evaluation (likable, honest, intelligent, optimistic, respectable, made a good impression; $M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.49$, $\alpha = .94$) and the second assessing negative speaker evaluation (a complainer, hostile, argumentative, hypersensitive; $M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.72$, $\alpha = .87$).⁴ Finally, a single item (racist) was used to assess racist speaker evaluation ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 2.01$).

Results

Preliminary analysis

Participants in the White ($n = 127$), Black ($n = 126$), and anonymous ($n = 125$) conditions did not vary by sex, age, race, or political ideology (p -values $> .1$). The percentage of participants who correctly recalled the speaker's race was 98.43% ($n = 125$) in the White condition and 92.86% ($n = 117$) in the Black condition. In the anonymous condition, 71.77% ($n = 89$) recalled the speaker as Black and 28.23% ($n = 35$) recalled the speaker as White, indicating that in the absence of explicit identity cues, participants were more likely to identify the speaker as Black. To determine if there were differences in responses to higher- versus lower-rated photos within the Black and White conditions, a series of t -tests were conducted to compare messages with higher- and lower-rated photos within each condition on all outcome variables. No significant differences were found between participants

in the same condition who saw higher- versus lower-rated photos (all t -values < 2.0 , all p -values $> .05$). Therefore, all subsequent comparisons between conditions were made by collapsing results across higher- and lower-rated photos within each condition containing a photo.

Main results

Positive and negative speaker evaluation

To test the effects of the experimental condition, a series of analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted. Planned contrasts were also performed to test for differences between specific conditions. We first examined the index of positive speaker evaluation, and found an overall effect of condition ($F[2, 375] = 6.00$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .03$). Specifically, the speaker in the anonymous condition was evaluated less positively ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.51$) than those in either the White ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 1.48$) or Black conditions ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 1.41$; t -values $[375] = -3.07$, -2.93 , respectively; p -values = $.002$, $.004$, respectively; d -values = $-.38$, $-.36$, respectively). There was no significant difference between White and Black conditions for positive speaker evaluation. There was a similar effect of condition found for negative speaker evaluation ($F[2, 375] = 5.59$, $p = .004$, $\eta^2 = .03$), with the speaker in the anonymous condition evaluated more negatively ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.78$) than those in either the White ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.69$) or Black conditions ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.64$; t -values $[375] = 2.59$, 3.13 , respectively; p -values = $.01$, $.002$, respectively; d -values = $.32$, $.39$, respectively). There was no significant difference between the White and Black conditions for negative speaker evaluation. These findings indicate that speakers who were identified (White or Black) were, overall, more favorably evaluated than anonymous speakers. Although White speakers were evaluated more positively and less negatively than anonymous speakers, there was no evidence that they were rated differently on these dimensions than Black speakers, providing mixed support for H1.

Racist speaker evaluation

We also tested our prediction that White speakers would be perceived as less racist than either Black or anonymous speakers (H2). We found a significant effect of condition on the perception that the speaker was racist ($F[2, 375] = 5.52$, $p = .004$, $\eta^2 = .03$). The speaker in the White condition was evaluated as less racist ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.84$) than those in either the Black ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.97$) or anonymous conditions ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 2.15$; t -values $[375] = -2.59$, -3.10 , respectively; p -values = $.01$, $.002$, respectively; d -values = $-.32$, $-.39$, respectively). There was no significant difference between the Black and anonymous conditions for racist speaker evaluation. These results support H2 and suggest that White speakers are perceived as less racist than both Black and anonymous speakers.

Discussion

The results of Study 1 indicate that identity cues in a social movement message can influence different dimensions of speaker evaluation. First, when compared to the

anonymous condition, the White condition led to more favorable general speaker evaluations. This finding is consistent with research suggesting that anonymity in online environments can lead to negative impression formation (e.g., [Tanis & Postmes, 2003](#)). Interestingly, the anonymous speaker was predominantly identified as Black, yet was rated more negatively than the speaker who was explicitly identified as Black. Under conditions of anonymity, participants may have relied upon their more negatively valenced prototypes of #BlackLivesMatter supporters. There was no significant difference in general evaluations between White and Black speakers, suggesting that any type of individuating information was able to improve general evaluations.

On the other hand, the White speaker was perceived as less racist than both the anonymous and Black speakers, indicating that a marginalized identity, whether assumed or explicitly cued, led individuals to view calls for justice as discriminatory. This suggests that only Whites who explicitly signal their dominant group identity can avoid the perception that their arguments for racial justice originate from racial bias. Our findings provide preliminary evidence of a solidarity effect in social movement messaging, consistent with [Schultz and Maddox \(2013\)](#).

Study 2

The goal of Study 2 was to replicate and extend the effects observed in Study 1, while addressing several methodological issues. Using data from an additional experiment, we performed a test of parallel mediation to assess the degree to which each dimension of speaker evaluation mediated the effects of speaker identity on various indicators of message persuasiveness (i.e., argument evaluation, movement support, and movement evaluation). This allowed us to assess our full theoretical model and formally test H3 through H6 and examine RQ1 (see [Figure 1](#)). In Study 2, we also made several methodological improvements to strengthen the validity of our findings. First, there are potential weaknesses of experimental designs that use a single message as stimulus material ([Reeves, Yeykelis, & Cummings, 2016](#)). To address this issue, we used multiple messages in support of the #BlackLivesMatter movement and randomly sampled which one participants received. Second, we included participant race (White vs. Black) as a factor in our design to formally test whether the hypothesized effects were contingent upon White group identity (RQ1). Third, we changed the format of the message to a Facebook post in order to eliminate potential unintended source effects and to further improve external validity. Finally, Study 2 added additional items to the single-item measure of perceived racism used in Study 1, to provide a more robust assessment of this key mediator.

Methods

Participants

Using Amazon MTurk, 697 U.S. adults were recruited to participate in Study 2. Quotas were established to sample even numbers of White and Black participants

and exclude participants from other racial categories. Participants who answered a simple attention check question incorrectly ($n = 14$), who were suspected of poor-quality responses ($n = 10$), or who reported their gender as “other” ($n = 3$)⁵ were removed from the sample, resulting in a final sample of 670 ($M_{\text{age}} = 34.40$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 10.22$; 42.84% male).⁶ Our sample was roughly evenly divided between participants who identified as White or Caucasian (51.19%) and Black or African American (48.81%). On average, participants identified as slightly liberal ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 1.63$) and reported a median education level of “some college.”

Procedure

The procedure for Study 2 was identical to that used in Study 1, with the following modifications. As in Study 1, participants were randomly assigned to read a message featuring a #BlackLivesMatter supporter who was either identified as White,⁷ Black, or who remained anonymous. The same photos and photo randomization were used, but the actual text of the message was also randomized so that participants read one of four messages. The first message was identical to the one used in Study 1, and the other three were written to capture different social movement frames identified by previous research (e.g., diagnostic, prognostic, motivational; Benford & Snow, 2000).⁸ The medium was also modified, so instead of a news article (in which the speaker was interviewed), the message was formatted as a Facebook post from the speaker. In Study 2, the anonymous condition included the default Facebook profile avatar (a simple silhouette) in place of a photo and a set of initials (varied to be J. W. or A. M.) in place of a name. In making these changes to our experimental design, our intent was to 1) put the message in an explicitly social media context, and 2) address a limitation of Study 1: that the Black and White conditions had images, whereas the anonymous condition did not. Ultimately, these changes were made to improve ecological validity.

Post-experimental measures

Measures from Study 1 were used, including positive speaker evaluation ($M = 5.03$, $SD = 1.39$, $\alpha = .93$) and negative speaker evaluation ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.63$, $\alpha = .89$). We also attempted to strengthen our initial measure of racist speaker evaluation, by asking how much the following statements applied to the speaker on a 7-point scale (from 1 = “not at all” to 7 = “very much”): the person (a) is racist, (b) dislikes White people, and (c) treats Whites and Blacks equally (reverse scored). We combined these measure and the measure of perceived speaker racism used in Study 1 to form a mean index of racist speaker evaluation ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.64$, $\alpha = .91$).⁹ In addition, argument evaluation and attitudes toward and support for the #BlackLivesMatter movement were assessed using the items described below.

Argument evaluation

To remain consistent with prior research, we used the same items as Schultz and Maddox (2013) to assess participants' evaluations of the argument presented in the #BlackLivesMatter message: six bipolar items, each measured on a 7-point scale

(fair/unfair, reasonable/unreasonable, convincing/unconvincing, persuasive/unpersuasive, high quality/low quality, inoffensive/offensive). All items were reverse coded and combined into an index of argument evaluation ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.64$, $\alpha = .95$), where higher values represented more favorable evaluations of the argument.

Movement support and evaluation

Adapting an item from Pew Research Center's public opinion poll on support for the #BlackLivesMatter movement (Horowitz & Livingston, 2016), participants were asked to indicate their support for the movement on a 7-point scale (from 1 = "strongly oppose" to 7 = "strongly support"). This was used as the primary measure of movement support, where higher values indicate greater support ($M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.85$). Five additional items assessed opinions of and personal connection to the movement. They included: (a) "I identify with the #BlackLivesMatter movement," (b) "I agree with the grievances raised by the #BlackLivesMatter movement," (c) "I agree with the tactics of the #BlackLivesMatter movement," (d) "I feel like I can participate in the #BlackLivesMatter movement," and (e) "I believe the #BlackLivesMatter movement will create change in our country." Each item was measured on a 7-point scale (from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree"). To tap into general positive evaluations of the movement, all items were combined into a mean index of movement evaluation ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.76$, $\alpha = .93$), where higher values indicate more positive evaluation.

Results

Preliminary analysis

Participants in the White ($n = 223$), Black ($n = 224$), and anonymous ($n = 223$) conditions did not vary by sex, age, race, or political ideology (all p -values $>.1$). In the manipulation check for Study 2, we explicitly asked participants to recall the race of the speaker "based on the information provided in the post" and added "no information was provided" as a response option. The percentage of participants who correctly recalled the speaker's race was 86.54% ($n = 193$) in the White condition and 89.73% ($n = 201$) in the Black condition. In the anonymous condition, 44.84% ($n = 100$) of participants recalled the speaker as Black, 11.70% ($n = 26$) recalled the speaker as White, and 43.50% ($n = 97$) indicated that no information was provided. This confirmed that our manipulation of race in the White and Black conditions was successful, and again suggested that in the absence of explicit identity cues, a large number of participants identified the speaker as Black. As in Study 1, pairwise t -tests found no effects of either photo type (i.e., higher- vs. lower-rated) or message type on any outcome variables (all t -values <2.0 , all p -values $>.05$). Subsequent comparisons between conditions were made by collapsing scores across photo and message types within each condition.

Main results

Positive and negative speaker evaluation

Full factorial ANOVAs were performed with condition, participant race, and the interaction between the two included as independent variables. For positive speaker evaluation, there was a significant effect of condition ($F[2,664] = 3.89, p = .02, \eta^2 = .01$), with White speakers rated more positively ($M = 5.21, SD = 1.35$) than both anonymous speakers ($M = 4.90, SD = 1.41$) and Black speakers ($M = 4.97, SD = 1.39; t\text{-values}[664] = 2.68, 2.02$, respectively; $p\text{-values} = .01, .04$, respectively; $d\text{-values} = .24, .18$, respectively). There was no significant difference between Black and anonymous speakers. There was also a main effect of participant race ($F[1,664] = 69.04, p < .001, \eta^2 = .09$), with Black participants rating speakers more positively ($M = 5.46, SD = 1.26$) than White participants ($M = 4.62, SD = 1.39$). No significant interaction was found.

For negative speaker evaluation, there was a significant effect of condition ($F[2,664] = 3.33, p = .04, \eta^2 = .01$), with White speakers rated significantly less negatively ($M = 2.79, SD = 1.51$) than anonymous speakers ($M = 3.14, SD = 1.70; t[664] = -2.46, p = .01, d = -.23$) and marginally less negatively than Black speakers ($M = 3.06, SD = 1.66; t[664] = -1.90, p = .06, d = -.18$). There was no significant difference between the Black and anonymous conditions. There was also a main effect of participant race ($F[1,664] = 21.08, p < .001, \eta^2 = .03$), with Black participants rating speakers less negatively ($M = 2.71, SD = 1.54$) than White participants ($M = 3.27, SD = 1.67$). There was no significant interaction found. The results for positive and negative speaker evaluations largely support H1, which predicted that White speakers would be more favorably evaluated than both Black and anonymous speakers.

Racist speaker evaluation

For racist speaker evaluation, there was a significant effect of condition ($F[2,664] = 22.46, p < .001, \eta^2 = .6$), with White speakers rated as significantly less racist ($M = 1.81, SD = 1.27$) than both anonymous ($M = 2.56, SD = 1.69$) and Black speakers ($M = 2.69, SD = 1.69; t\text{-values}[664] = -5.36, -6.17$, respectively; both $p\text{-values} < .001; d\text{-values} = -.48, -.55$, respectively). There was no significant difference between the Black and anonymous conditions. There was also a main effect of participant race ($F[1,664] = 40.89, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06$), with Black participants rating speakers as less racist ($M = 1.98, SD = 1.34$) than White participants ($M = 2.71, SD = 1.76$). Finally, there was a significant interaction between condition and participant race found ($F[2,664] = 3.06, p = .05, \eta^2 = .01$). An examination of the interaction (plotted in Figure 2) revealed that among White participants, the condition differences in racist speaker evaluation were consistent with those reported above; however, among Black participants, speaker racism was low across conditions, with only a significant difference between the White and Black conditions. These results suggest that the effect of our manipulation on the perception that the speaker was racist was more pronounced among Whites. Overall, we found

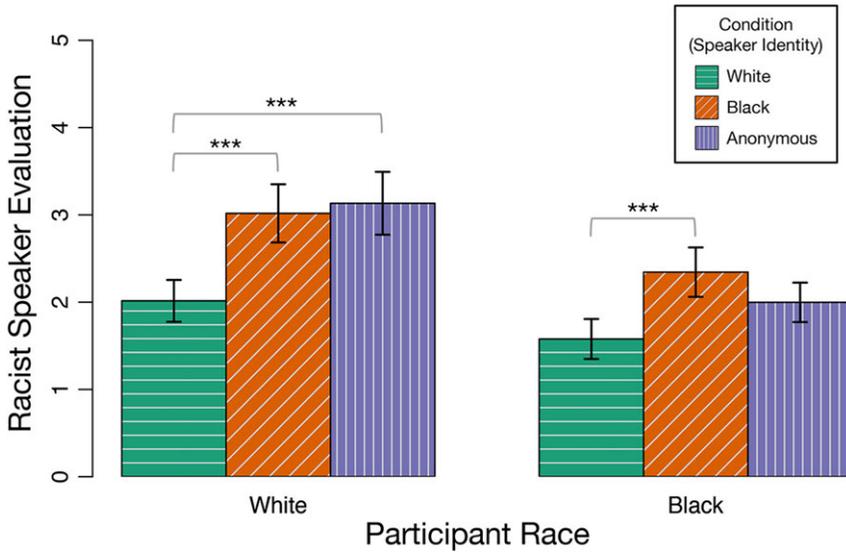


Figure 2 Interaction between condition and participant race in Study 2.

Note: Significant differences between conditions within participant racial groups noted:

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, (using Tukey HSD). Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

evidence in support of H2, which predicted that White speakers would be perceived as less racist than other speakers.

Argument evaluation

For argument evaluation, there was a significant effect of condition ($F[2,664] = 4.09$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .01$), with arguments made by White speakers rated more positively ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.49$) than those made by both anonymous ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.11$) and Black speakers ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.70$; t -values[664] = 2.69, 2.18, respectively; p -values = .01, .03, respectively; d -values = .24, .20, respectively). There was no significant difference between Black and anonymous speakers. There was also a main effect of participant race ($F[1,664] = 67.4$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .09$), with Black participants rating the arguments more positively ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 1.38$) than White participants ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.38$). There was no significant interaction found.

Movement support and evaluation

Next, we examined effects on attitudes toward the #BlackLivesMatter movement. For movement support, there was a significant effect of condition ($F[2,664] = 4.46$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2 = .01$), with posts from White speakers leading to higher movement support ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 1.67$) than posts from both anonymous ($M = 4.91$, $SD = 2$) and Black speakers ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 1.84$; t -values[664] = 2.20, 2.85, respectively; p -values = .03, .005, respectively; d -values = .20, .26, respectively). There was no

significant difference between Black and anonymous speakers. There was also a main effect of participant race ($F[1,664] = 72.08, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$), with Black participants reporting higher movement support ($M = 5.57, SD = 1.59$) than White participants ($M = 4.42, SD = 1.91$). There was no significant interaction found.

For movement evaluation, there was no significant effect of condition ($F[2,664] = 1.90, p = .15, \eta^2 = .01$); however, planned contrasts showed that posts from White speakers led to marginally higher positive evaluations of the #BlackLivesMatter movement ($M = 4.35, SD = 1.72$) than posts from Black speakers ($M = 4.08, SD = 1.72; t[664] = 1.91, p = .06, d = .16$). The anonymous condition did not significantly differ from other conditions ($M = 4.29, SD = 1.84$). There was also a main effect of participant race ($F[1,664] = 154.59, p < .001, \eta^2 = .19$), with Black participants evaluating the movement more positively ($M = 5.02, SD = 1.54$) than White participants ($M = 3.50, SD = 1.63$). There was no significant interaction found.

Overall, these findings indicate that the presence of a White speaker in a #BlackLivesMatter message led to more positive argument evaluations and more movement support when compared to both Black and anonymous speakers. White speakers led to more positive movement evaluation in comparison to Black speakers; however, this effect was only marginal. These results supported a formal test of the mediated pathways outlined in our model.

Mediation analyses

To test the possibility that the identification of the speaker as White (vs. Black or anonymous) indirectly increased favorable attitudes toward the argument and #BlackLivesMatter movement through different dimensions of speaker evaluation (H3–H6), we tested a parallel mediation model. This strategy allowed us to calculate indirect effects through each mediating variable, while controlling for the others as recommended by Hayes (2013) in cases where a test of the unique effects of highly-correlated mediators are required. To test for indirect effects, we used the R package *Mediation*, which performs ordinary least squares (OLS) path analysis and a 10,000 simulation non-parametric bootstrapping technique to generate point estimates of indirect effects and 95% confidence intervals (Tingley, Yamamoto, Hirose, Keele, & Imai, 2014). All three speaker evaluation variables (positive, negative, and racist) were entered as mediators simultaneously in the model (as in Figure 1). It is important to note that this analysis assumed a casual order based on theory and therefore could not conclusively demonstrate causality. All mediation analyses were performed separately for White and Black participants¹⁰ and included participant age, sex, and political identification as control variables.¹¹ Given the lack of significant differences between Black and anonymous speakers in the ANOVA models, the results reported are for two condition contrasts: White versus anonymous and White versus Black.¹² Because our primary interest was in solidarity effects among dominant (White) group members, we focused on the results of mediation analyses for White participants. Results for Black participants

are briefly summarized at the end of this section and provided in full in the Supplementary Appendix.

Path analyses

We first ran OLS path analyses to test the effects of condition on each of the three mediating speaker evaluation variables among White participants (see Table S1; columns 1:3; Supplementary Appendix). The White versus anonymous condition contrast significantly predicted positive speaker evaluation ($b = .41$, $SE = .16$, $p < .001$), negative speaker evaluation ($b = -.46$, $SE = .19$, $p = .02$), and racist speaker evaluation ($b = -1.15$, $SE = .19$, $p < .001$). However, the White versus Black condition contrast only significantly predicted racist speaker evaluation ($b = -.93$, $SE = .19$, $p < .001$).

The next set of path analyses examined the extent to which each mediator predicted argument evaluation, movement support, and movement evaluation, while controlling for the condition contrast variables (see Table S1; columns 4:6; Supplementary Appendix). Among White participants, argument evaluation was significantly predicted by positive speaker evaluation ($b = .50$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$), negative speaker evaluation ($b = -.32$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$), and racist speaker evaluations ($b = -.21$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$). Similarly, movement support was significantly predicted by positive speaker evaluation ($b = .33$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$), negative speaker evaluation ($b = -.18$, $SE = .07$, $p = .007$), and racist speaker evaluation ($b = -.27$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$). Movement evaluation was significantly predicted by positive speaker evaluation ($b = .44$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$) and negative speaker evaluation ($b = -.14$, $SE = .06$, $p = .02$), but not racist speaker evaluation ($b = -.10$, $SE = .06$, $p = .13$). Our findings partially supported the predicted relationships between the dependent variables and general (positive & negative) speaker evaluation (H3 supported) and racist speaker evaluation (H5 partially supported).

Indirect effects

Point estimates and 95% confidence intervals for all pathways in our model are reported in Table 1. We first examined the indirect effects for argument evaluation. When compared to the anonymous condition, the White condition led to more favorable argument evaluation indirectly through positive speaker evaluation (Point Estimate [PE] = .206, 95% CI = [.049, .371]), negative speaker evaluation (PE = .144, 95% CI = [.026, .276]), and racist speaker evaluation (PE = .237, 95% CI = [.096, .412]; no CI cross zero). However, when the White condition was compared to the Black condition, the only significant indirect effect on argument evaluation was through racist speaker evaluation (PE = .192, 95% CI = [.074, .343]).

A similar pattern emerged for movement support. When compared to the anonymous condition, the White condition led to greater movement support indirectly through positive speaker evaluation (PE = .136, 95% CI = [.029, .270]), negative speaker evaluation (PE = .08, 95% CI = [.004, .198]), and racist speaker evaluation (PE = .316, 95% CI = [.129, .535]; no CI cross zero). When the White

Table 1 Indirect Effects Among White Participants in Study 2

Condition Contrast	Mediator	Argument Evaluation			Movement Support			Movement Evaluation		
		PE	LCI	UCI	PE	LCI	UCI	PE	LCI	UCI
White vs. anonymous	Positive speaker evaluation	.206	.049	.371	.136	.029	.270	.182	.041	.340
	Negative speaker evaluation	.144	.026	.276	.080	.004	.198	.063	.001	.161
	Racist speaker evaluation	.237	.096	.412	.316	.129	.535	.113	-.028	.264
White vs. Black	Positive speaker evaluation	.056	-.103	.217	.037	-.060	.159	.050	-.086	.198
	Negative speaker evaluation	.002	-.112	.115	.001	-.067	.075	.001	-.055	.058
	Racist speaker evaluation	.192	.074	.343	.256	.094	.456	.092	-.021	.224

Note: Confidence intervals for significant effects did not cross zero. Only White participants were included ($n = 343$). Analyses controlled for age, sex, and political identification. LCI = lower bound of 95% confidence interval; PE = Point estimate; UCI = upper bound of 95% confidence interval.

condition was compared to the Black condition, the only indirect effect on movement support was through racist speaker evaluation ($PE = .256$, 95% CI = [.094, .456]).

Finally, we examined indirect effects for movement evaluation. When compared to the anonymous condition, the White condition led to more positive evaluation of the movement indirectly through positive speaker evaluation ($PE = .182$, 95% CI = [.041, .340]) and negative speaker evaluation ($PE = .63$, 95% CI = [.001, .161]), but not racist speaker evaluation ($PE = .113$, 95% CI = [-.028, .264]; CI cross zero). When the White condition was compared to the Black condition, there were no significant indirect effects on movement evaluation through any of the mediators. Taken together, the results of these parallel mediation tests suggested that, in comparison to anonymous speakers, White speakers improved attitudes toward the argument and movement through all dimensions of speaker evaluations; however, the effects found when White speakers were compared to Black speakers were mediated exclusively through the perception that the speaker was racist. These results provide mixed support for H4 and H6.

Indirect effects for Black participants

OLS path analyses and indirect effects for Black participants are reported in the Supplementary Appendix (see Tables S2 & S3). Explicitly cueing White identity

did not lead to indirect effects among Black participants for any dependent variables, with the exception of argument evaluation (mediated by negative and racist speaker evaluations). In general, indirect effects found for White participants were not replicated (RQ1).

Discussion

Study 2 provided additional support for the advantages of explicitly cueing White identity that were observed in Study 1. When compared to the anonymous condition, White speakers were viewed more favorably across all dimensions, which in turn was associated with increases in argument evaluation and movement support. As in Study 1, a large number of participants in the anonymous condition identified the speaker as Black despite the fact that Study 2 included a “no information was provided” response option. This offered further evidence that Black identity is implicitly cued by messages supporting racial justice. Even if #BlackLivesMatter supporters wish to remain anonymous, they are likely to be presumed by some to be Black, simply based on the racialized nature of the movement. A post hoc test revealed no significant differences in any outcome variable between those within the anonymous condition who recalled the speaker as Black and those who said “no information was provided.” We therefore can only speculate that the anonymous condition was best evaluated as participants’ unique, de-individuated prototype of a #BlackLivesMatter supporter. Relatedly, the differences between the Black and anonymous conditions found in Study 1 were not observed in Study 2. After improvements in our methodology (e.g., use of multiple messages), the means for all speaker evaluation items for those in the Black condition shifted closer to those in the anonymous condition, such that they were indistinguishable from each other. This further suggested that anonymity does not present any observable advantage for social movement supporters in the context of our model.

Consistent with Study 1, in Study 2 White speakers did not face the same perceptions of racism that other speakers did. Reductions in the perception of the speaker as racist were, in turn, associated with increases in argument evaluation and movement support. When the White condition was compared to the Black condition, the perception of racism was the only mediator that led to significant indirect effects. This supported our contention that perhaps the most important advantage of messages of solidarity is that they present arguments for social justice without being perceived as racist assaults on dominant group social identities. It is important to note that movement evaluation was not influenced by racist speaker evaluation in the same way. This suggested that more nuanced attitudes toward the movement may depend on other factors (e.g., self-efficacy, political interest) or require a more powerful dose of exposure.

Finally, in Study 2 the majority of the indirect effects we observed occurred exclusively among White participants, and not Black participants. The exception was that among Black participants, the White condition (as compared to other

conditions) improved argument evaluation by influencing negative and racist speaker evaluations. We speculate that Black participants may have felt more favorably toward the White speaker precisely because they were standing in solidarity with their group. Being evaluated favorably or as unbiased in turn made White speakers' arguments appear stronger. However, even if Blacks viewed White speakers and their arguments more favorably, it appeared to have no bearing on their already high level of movement support. Overall, these findings provided evidence that messages of solidarity are especially effective in motivating dominant group members (i.e., Whites) to support racial justice movements.

General discussion

Our results suggest that identity cues can play an important role in the processing of social movement messages, commonly circulated on social media. Across two studies, we found support for our theoretical model, in which racial identity cues affected different dimensions of speaker evaluation, which in turn were associated with more favorable evaluation of the argument and increased support for the social movement. In doing so, we identified two routes through which messages of solidarity might have important implications for social movements.

First, White speakers were perceived as making more persuasive arguments for the #BlackLivesMatter movement than anonymous speakers, because they were evaluated more favorably across all dimensions. It may be that the negative impression formation processes known to occur under conditions of anonymity (Tanis & Postmes, 2003) were compounded when White participants used their existing prototypes of #BlackLivesMatter supporters as the exclusive basis for processing the message. Although our data only allow us to speculate on these points, anonymity appears to have had the worst outcomes from a social movement perspective. Second, White speakers were perceived to have delivered more persuasive #BlackLivesMatter messages than Black speakers, because they were specifically evaluated as less racist. This suggests that a significant obstacle facing Blacks who fight for racial justice is that, in doing so, they may threaten the social identity of Whites. This perceived social identity threat appeared significant enough that it may influence Whites' support for the #BlackLivesMatter movement. If the goal is to persuade the dominant group to support minority racial justice, it may be that only fellow dominant group members can deliver persuasive messages without appearing racially biased.

Both pathways outlined above provide evidence of social movement solidarity effects, in which the dominant group identity of a movement supporter improves the likelihood that social movement messages will be persuasive to other dominant group members. Our findings highlight the importance of incorporating social identity into theoretical models of social movement communication. While past literature has focused on how social movements strategically frame their struggles (Benford & Snow, 2000), we demonstrated that the social identities of activists can

also influence message reception. As social media becomes an increasingly important way in which the public develops attitudes toward social movements, our results suggest that how social media activists signal their identities is likely to influence the impact of their advocacy. Further, we demonstrated that dominant group members have the unique power to use their identities to support marginalized groups advocating for justice.

Limitations and future directions

To our knowledge, our studies are the first to experimentally test the effects of identity cues on the reception of social movement messages; however, they are limited in a number of ways. First, we used a single-exposure design to examine short-term effects. Future research should employ repeated-exposure and longitudinal designs to better assess the aggregate effects of identity cues in social movement messages. Observational studies of social media trace data may likewise clarify how solidarity effects occur in the real world. Second, the effects we observed were undoubtedly influenced by the unique dynamics of racial injustice in the United States and by the politics of #BlackLivesMatter itself. It is unclear whether solidarity effects might emerge in contexts where social movements do not involve such strongly-held social identities, with legacies of intense identity conflict (e.g., environmental or animal rights movements). Nevertheless, our findings suggest that whenever a specific identity group receives calls for justice that threaten their own social identity, the message may be more effective coming from a fellow in-group member. Further work in this area should examine solidarity effects in other social movements. Third, our findings suggest that the perception of speaker racism serves as an important mechanism for solidarity effects. Given that there are likely numerous perceptual processes at work, future research should examine other variables (e.g., partisan identity) that may facilitate or moderate solidarity effects. Relatedly, it is important to consider that our results may be influenced by demand characteristics. Given that race is a highly-sensitive issue in the American context, it is possible that the reason anonymous speakers received the most unfavorable evaluations was because they cued Black identity implicitly, thereby allowing participants to respond with less restraint. Although our findings did not change when we controlled for social desirability (see footnote 13), future research should employ implicit measures to address this potential issue. Finally, future work should attempt to clarify the effects of anonymous social movement messages. In our studies, there appears to be heterogeneity in how participants interpreted the absence of identity cues. Explicating the factors that shape such interpretations would add value to the application of our model on social media, where anonymity remains an important affordance for activists.

Conclusion

Although the solidarity effects we observed may help activists craft more persuasive communication strategies, they also highlighted the presence of yet another layer of inequality present in struggles for social justice. Our findings pose a significant dilemma for activists from marginalized communities, who are likely to be viewed as bigots whether they reveal their racial identity or hide it. This conundrum echoes claims long made by marginalized groups that social change is impossible unless dominant group members speak up in the face of injustice. Many have arrived at this conclusion after repeated experiences of having their calls for justice dismissed as self-serving or racist (e.g., [Capehart, 2016](#)). Our results do not suggest that marginalized groups somehow lack the agency or right to engage in movements for social justice—indeed, social change is often driven by those living in the margins—rather, they highlight the unequal way in which groups are able to present arguments for justice. From this point of view, solidarity is not simply an expression of moral or ethical ideals, but an exercise of the social and communicative power that accompanies dominant group membership. Given the promise of messages of solidarity suggested by our findings, the challenge for those concerned with issues of social justice is to use the communicative power of dominant group identity to render its advantages obsolete.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material are available at *Human Communication Research* online.

Notes

- 1 Research has indicated that MTurk can be used as a source for high-quality experimental work. However, as with many participant pools, MTurk samples are limited in their diversity, attention, and naivety. See [Paolacci and Chandler \(2014\)](#) for information on the strengths and weaknesses of MTurk samples.
- 2 Participants who completed the study in <3 minutes were removed from the sample, given that this amount of time was far below both the median completion time ($Mdn = 7$ min) and the time in which quality responses could be provided to the number of items per pre-testing. The same procedure was used in Study 2.
- 3 Photos were matched on interpersonal traits identified as theoretically relevant by previous research ([Kervyn, Fiske, & Yzerbyt, 2013](#)). Details of the photo pre-test are reported in the Supplementary Appendix. In selecting lower- and higher-rated photos from within each racial group, our goal was to ensure that effects did not arise from any particular photo being extremely negatively or positively rated in comparison to other photos from within the same racial group.
- 4 Although “emotional” was included in Schultz and Maddox’s (2013) negative evaluation index, it was not included in ours because of poor reliability.

- 5 In removing participants who reported a gender other than Male or Female, our intent was not to exclude them from our study; rather, the small number of individuals in this category made it difficult to meaningfully compare them to other genders.
- 6 ANOVA models were not significantly different when excluded participants were included.
- 7 In Study 2, the name of the White speaker was changed to “Adam Miller” out of concern that the name “Adam Friedman” might have introduced an unintended Jewish identity cue and that subsequent anti-Semitic or other outgroup perceptions could confound the results.
- 8 All four messages were 83 words long and had a Flesch Kincaid grade of <10.
- 9 A confirmatory factor analysis of all speaker evaluation variables supported a three-factor solution. Items related to positive speaker evaluation loaded on the first factor (loadings >.6), items related to negative evaluation loaded on the second factor (loadings >.5), and items related to racist speaker evaluation loaded on the third factor (loadings >.7). The only cross-loading was for the item, “treats Whites and Blacks equally,” which was reverse coded. Given issues with reverse-coded items in factor analysis, this item was retained in racist speaker evaluation.
- 10 An alternative approach would be to perform a moderated-parallel mediation analysis, using participant race as a moderator. Unfortunately, the number of interaction terms necessary to test such a model introduced a high degree of multicollinearity (variance inflation factors > 70). When mediation analyses were re-run using this approach, only one difference was found: the indirect effect of the Black vs. White condition contrast on argument evaluation through negative speaker evaluation became non-significant (*Point Estimate* = -.067, 95% CI = -.016, .002).
- 11 Given that our sample was non-probabilistic and collected using quotas for participant race, we deemed it appropriate to control for age, sex, and political identification. In controlling for these variables, we provided effect estimates above and beyond any demographic variation that might exist in our sample. When regression analyses were re-run without these control variables, there was no change in the significance of any coefficients. There were also no significant differences found when we controlled for social desirability using the Crowne-Marlowe Short-Form Social Desirability Scale.
- 12 We confirmed that there were no indirect effects for the Black vs. Anonymous contrast.

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