



Apology and Reparation

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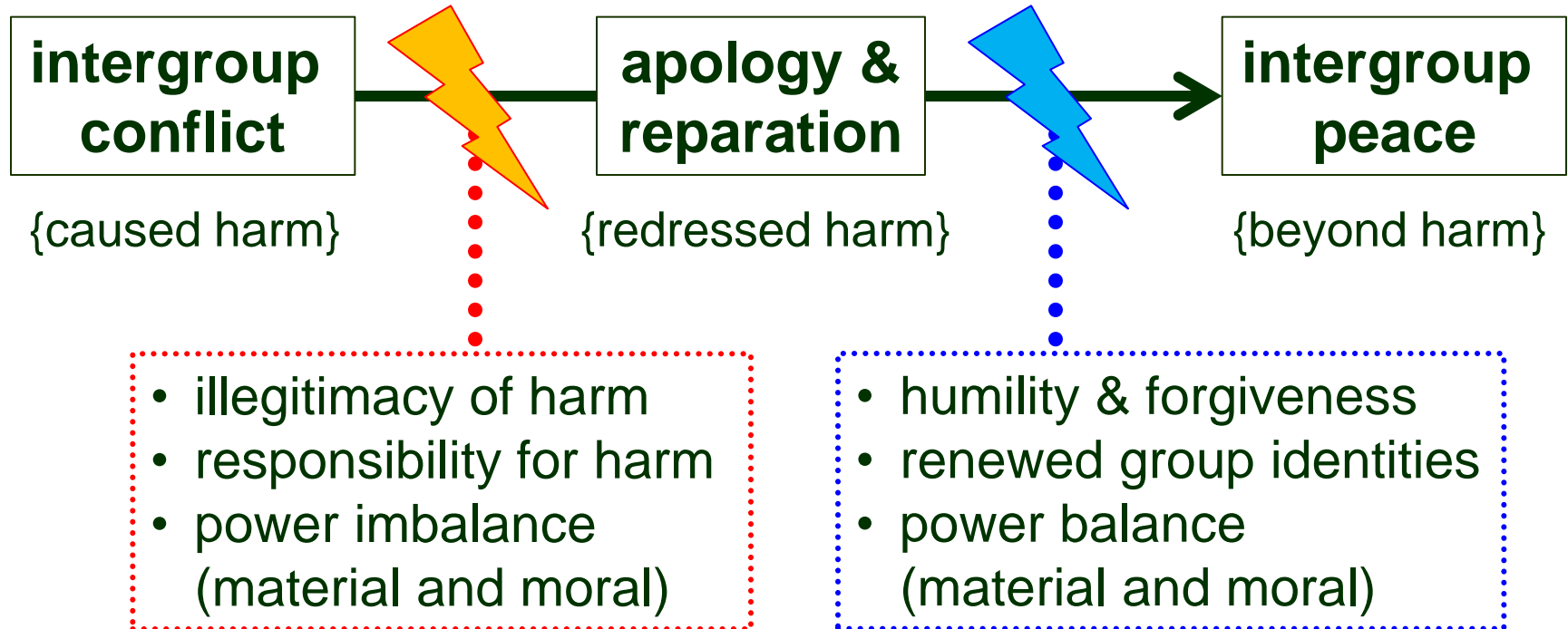
bystanders

perpetrator vs. victim groups

- material interests of group
- identity of group
- values & ideology
- group & societal processes

government representatives

- legal precedents:
identity and material interests
- public opinion (re-election...)
- values & ideology





focus of this talk

- perpetrator group's responses...
 - ...after an apology has been offered:
 - support for the apology
 - prejudice towards victim group
 - support for government policies re: victim group
- *simple illustration of the complexity involved...*

perpetrator group's support for apology

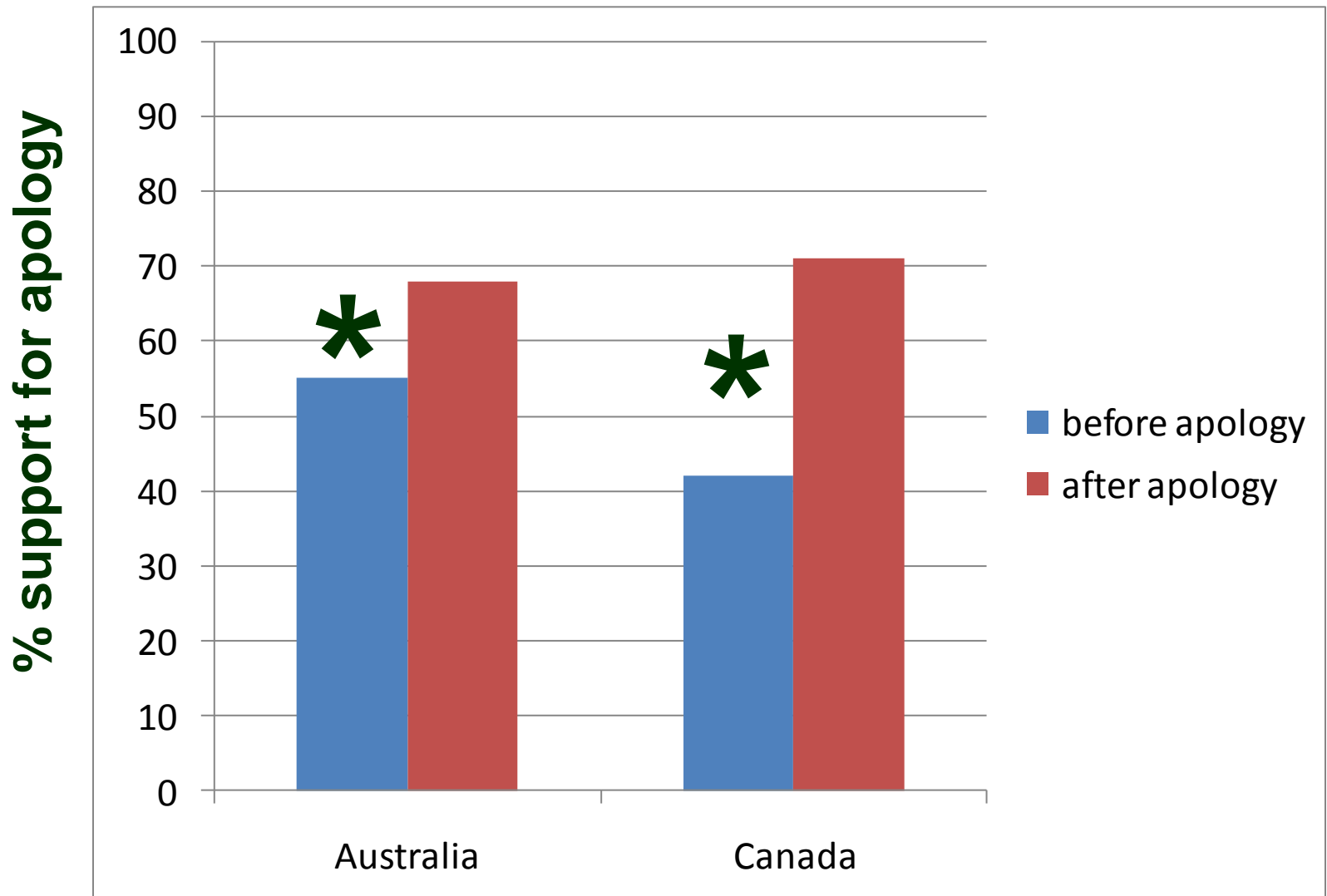
- **some predict decreased support after apology (backlash)**
 - threat to group's moral identity
 - threat to group's material interest
- **others predict increased support after apology**
 - upholding moral values & ideology
 - justifying actions of government (Kay, Jost, et al., 2007)
 - people value their own side's offer in negotiations... (Cohen, 2003; Curhan, Neale, & Ross, 2004)
 - ...in part to maintain psychological balance (Heider, 1958)

→ empirical evidence?

study 1: background

- **Australian Stolen Generation (1910 → 1970)**
 - government policy to “civilize” biracial Indigenous children
 - 10 to 30% of Indigenous children (up to 50,000) forcibly placed in White foster homes or Christian boarding houses
 - **Canadian Residential Schools (1800’s → 1996)**
 - government policy to “aggressively assimilate” native children
 - 150,000 Inuit, First Nation, and Métis children forcibly placed in Christian boarding schools
 - **harm was done**
 - trauma of familial separation
 - trauma of cultural discontinuity (Chandler & Proulx, 2008)
 - in some cases, neglect and abuse in new homes / schools
- **2008: federal apologies to both groups**

study 1: results - polling data



lingering question

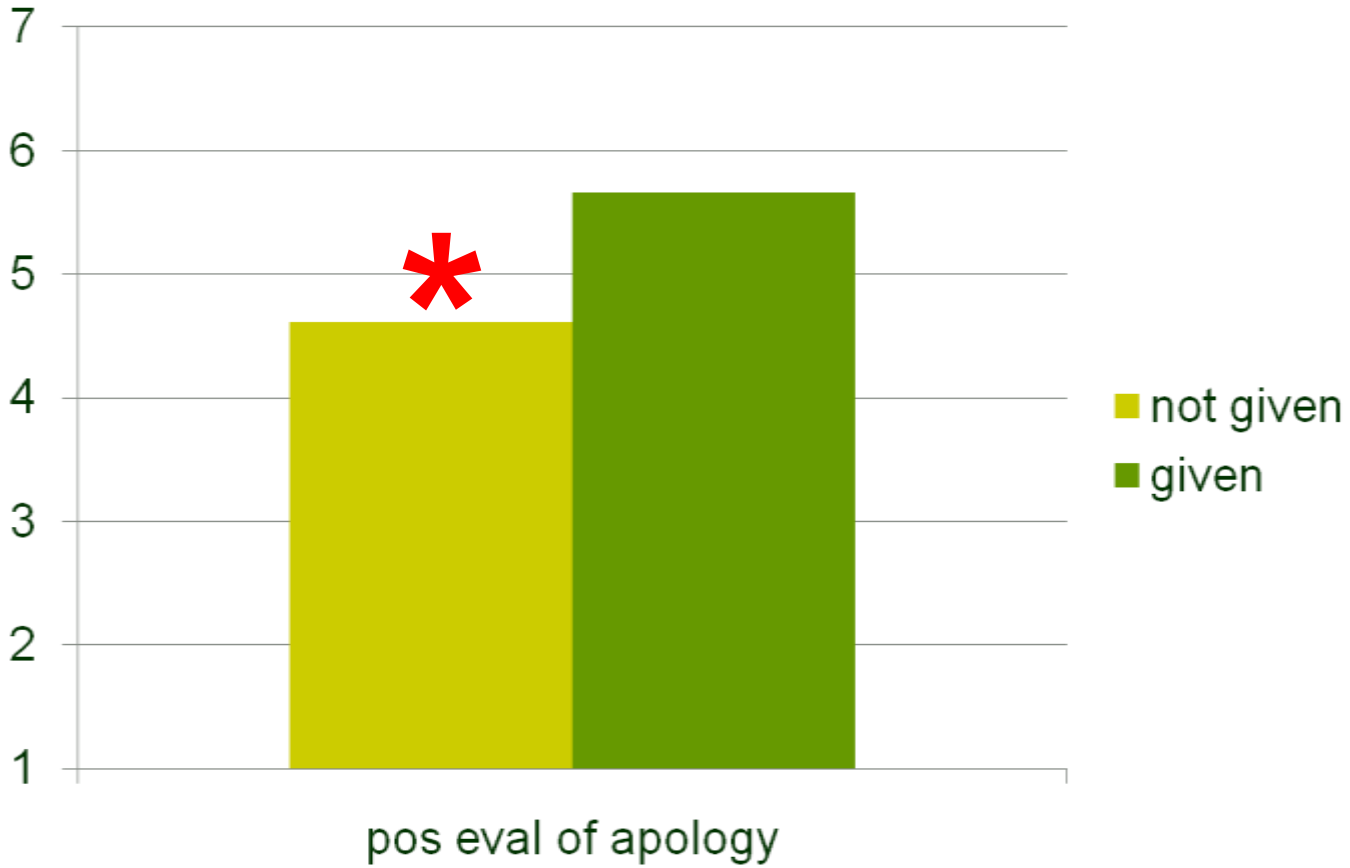
→ how do we know that the increased support was due to the apology per se?

- respondents to pre-apology polls had no idea what the apology would look like
- experimental study with more control...

study 2: method

- 238 undergraduate students at urban Canadian university
- scenario:
 - Canadian Government complicit in doping scandal involving Olympic speed skaters
 - the Netherlands lost medals accordingly
- all participants read text for a Canadian Gov't apology
 - manipulation: apology actually provided or not
- DV: positive evaluation of apology

study 2: results



more lingering questions

- Studies 1 & 2 suggest that perpetrator groups are more open to intergroup peace after an apology is made
- BUT other research has shown evidence of prejudice toward victim groups:
increased dehumanization of outgroup when victimized by the ingroup (Castano & Giner-Sorolla, 2006)
 - efforts to defend ingroup's identity and material interests
- *what is the response to the victim group when an apology has been made?*
- *is this response affected by the way in which the apology frames / explains the conflict?*

emotional responses to victim group

perpetrator groups may express prejudice towards victim groups with distinct emotions

- harm-doing can be framed in different ways, with emphasis placed on distinct explanations for the transgression
- appraisal theories (Scherer, Schorr, & Johnston, 2002): people's interpretations of events can elicit distinct emotions

contempt: victims are incompetent

disgust: victims represent unpalatable values / character

- **justified anger:** victim group poses obstacle to group's desired outcome

(Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2002)

study 3: method

- study conducted 3 months after Australian federal apology to Stolen Generation
- 82 undergraduate students at urban Australian university
- all self-identified as non-Indigenous
- p's read excerpts from apology speech by Prime Minister or Opposition Leader
 - manipulated explanation: racism or harsh conditions
- measures:
 - support for apology
 - emotions toward victim group: anger, disgust, contempt
 - support for three government policies: punitive, disengagement, infantilizing

study 3: materials

explanation of harm-doing I

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd — clear racism:

direct threat to ingroup identity & interests

“...Children were forcibly taken from their families; [and] this was the product of the **deliberate, calculated policies** of the state...For some in administrative authority, the forced extractions of children of so-called ‘mixed lineage’ were seen as part of a broader policy of dealing with the **‘problem of the Aboriginal population.’**”

study 3: materials

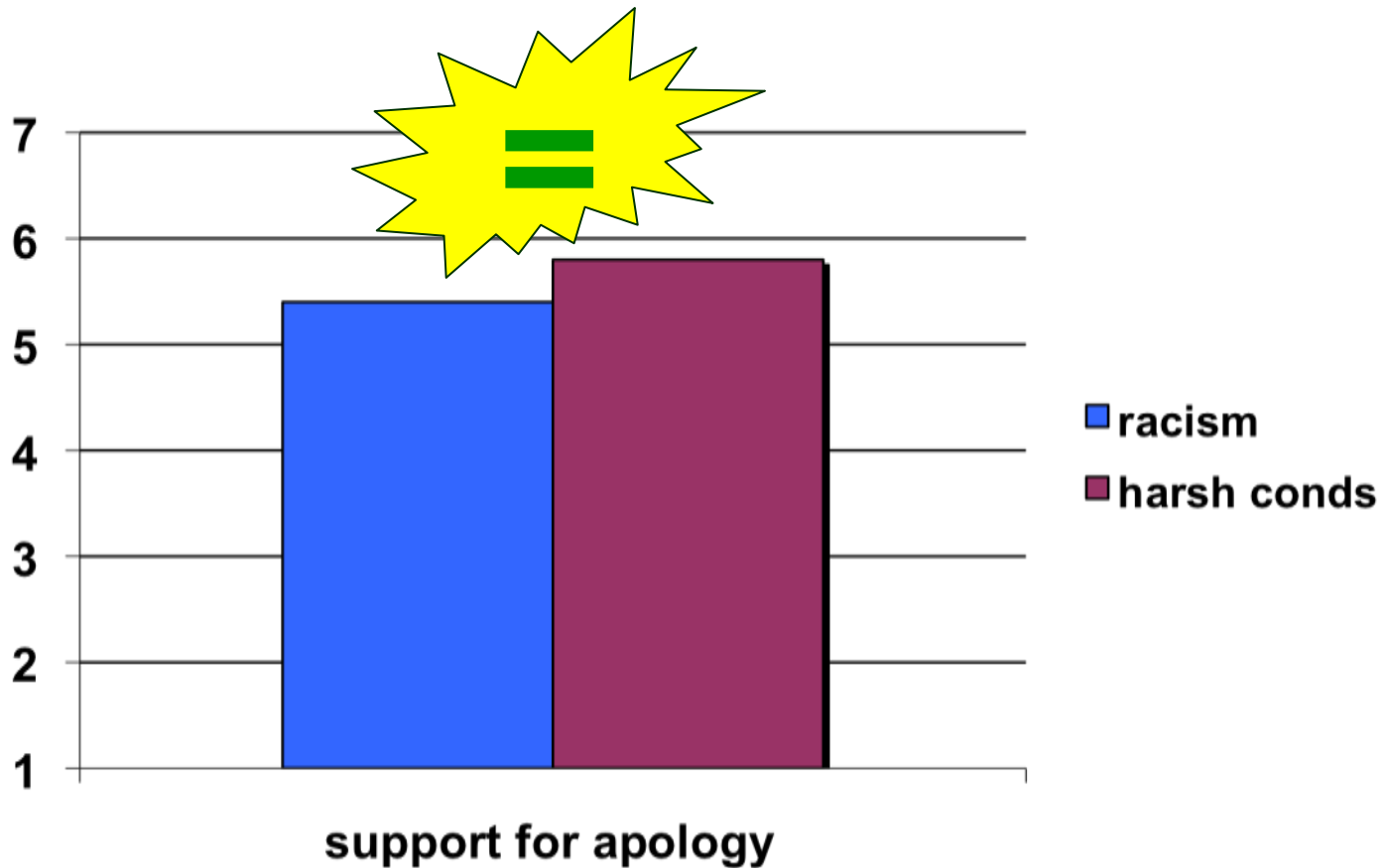
explanation of harm-doing II

Opposition Leader Brendan Nelson — harsh conditions:

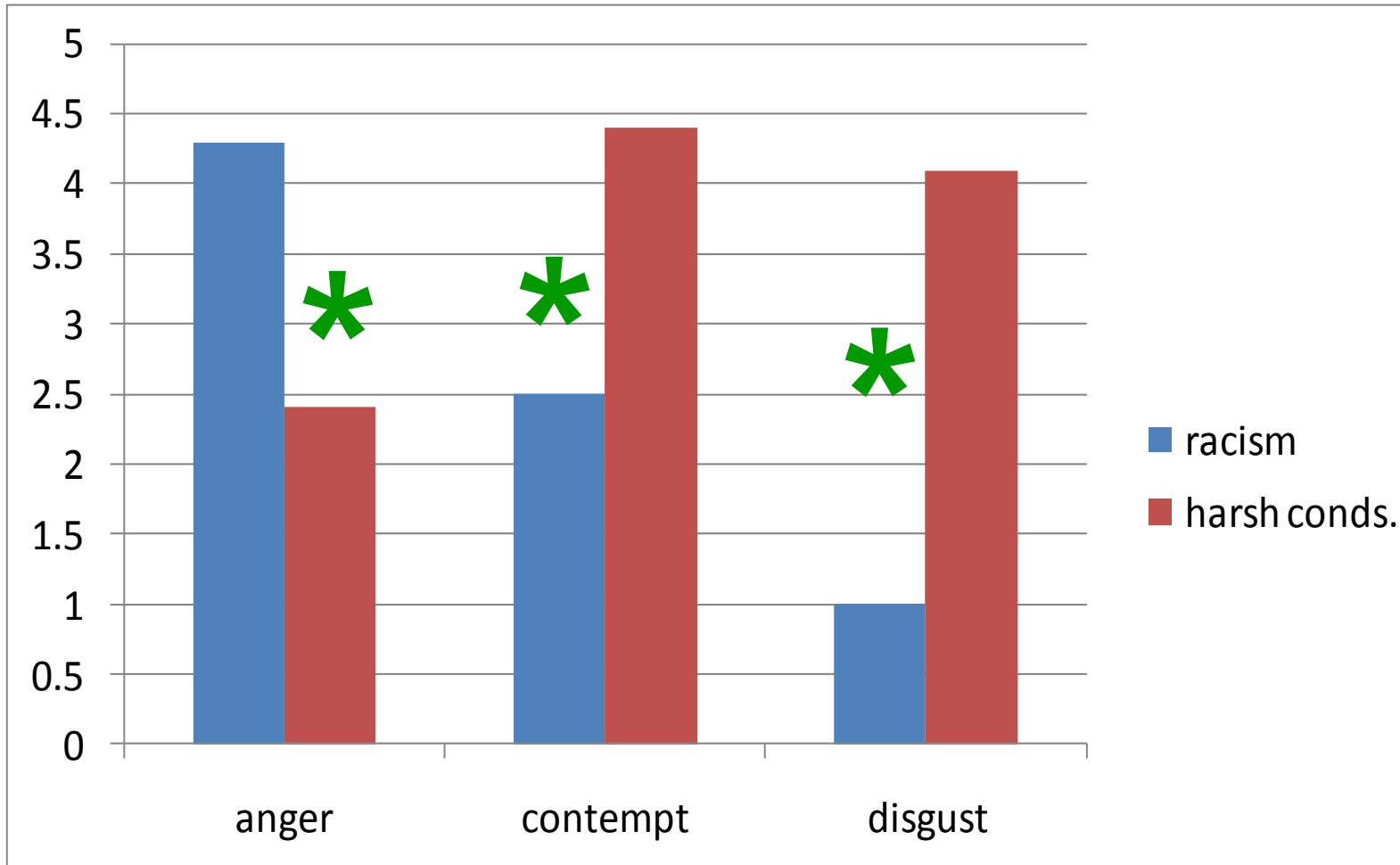
“We cannot, from the comfort of the 21st century, begin to imagine **what they overcame—Indigenous and non-Indigenous**—to give us what we have and make us who we are. **there was racism, but it was understandable, as...** good intentions, well-meaning purposes, and a technological chasm combined to deliver a **harshness exceeded only by the land over which each sought to prevail.**”

...there were harsh conditions for both groups to overcome
IMPLICATION: the ingroup overcame hardships more effectively, suggesting superior values and character

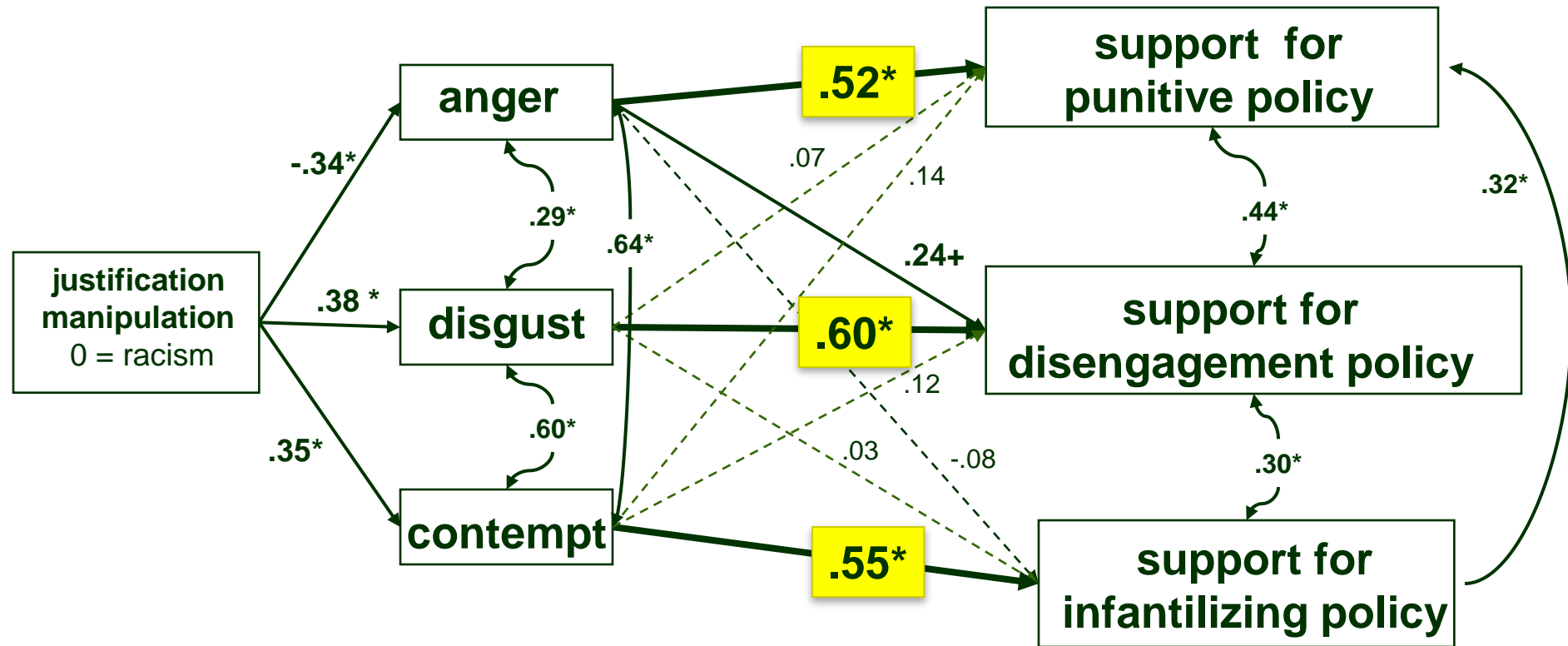
study 3: results - support for apology



study 3: results - felt emotion



study 3: results - support for policies



model fit: χ^2 (3 d.f.) = 1.093, $p = .78$, CFI = .99, IFI = .96, GFI = .98, Std. RMR = .04, RMSEA = .05

so what do we know?

- mixed evidence for utility of apology on the road to peace:
 - Studies 1 & 2 suggest that an apology paves the way for perpetrator groups to acknowledge illegitimate harm
 - Study 3 indicates that the way the apology is framed can increase prejudice toward members of victim group
 - ***whether the group takes responsibility for the transgression or not***
- possible explanations:
 - salient threats (e.g. in Australian apology speeches) more easily elicit prejudice?
 - abstract versus concrete responses to conflict?
- implications for efforts at redress after conflict...

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