Retaliation and Revenge

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Group-Based Retaliation and Revenge

• Vital to understand
  – To short-circuit budding conflicts
  – To build sustainable peace after conflict

• Tenacious
  – Rooted and sustained in some very basic aspects of human psychology and society

• Complex
  – Intertwined processes at the individual and group/society level
Why Do (Intergroup) Provocations Spread and Recur?

Lickel, Miller, Stenstrom, Denson, & Schmader, 2006, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*
Two Interconnected Levels of Analysis

• Individual level
  – Construal of events
  – Emotions
  – Actions and attitudes

• Group Level
  – Affiliation with others
    • Meaning-making (construal) and history
  – Group decision-making
  – Collective action
Why Do (Intergroup) Provocations Spread and Recur?

• Ingroup identity and historical memory
  – People who are (in a direct, literal sense) not harmed by events are drawn in because of a common ingroup identity with victims

• Collective blame of outgroup
  – People who are not direct provocateurs are targeted for retaliation

• Divergent construal and motivated cognition
  – Each side likely to view itself as victim
  – Construals justify retaliation
Perceptions of Outgroup Coordination and Collective Blame

• People’s judgments of collective blame are rooted in their assessments of social connections in the outgroup
  – Shared values and goals (wanting the same things)
  – Social coordination and collective action
  – Mutual social influence

• A “rational” basis for collective blame
  – But, open to motivational biases as well
Evidence About Outgroup Coordination: Impact on Group-Based Retaliation

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Experimental Manipulation of Evidence About Coordination

Perceptions Of Coordination

Support for Group-Based Retaliation

Ingroup Identification

Support for Group-Based Retaliation

Evidence About Outgroup Coordination: Impact on Group-Based Retaliation

Emotions and Group-Based Aggression

• Emotion research has focused on anger as the prototypical emotion of aggression and revenge
  – Including work on group based emotions
• Other emotions are likely to play an important role in conjunction with anger
  – Fear
  – Contempt
  – Humiliation
  – Envy
Emotions in Different Stages of Conflict

• When and why would other emotions play a role?
  – Fear?
  – Humiliation?
  – Envy?

• Contrasting fear and anger
  – Comparison of Serbian-Bosnian Muslim, and Serbian-Kosovar Albanian conflicts
Anger and Fear – Bosnian (Republika Srpska) Serb Emotions Toward Bosnian Muslims

Spanovic, Lickel, Denson, & Petrovic, In press, *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*
Anger and Fear – Serbian Emotions Toward Kosovar Albanians

Spanovic, Lickel, Denson, & Petrovic, In press, *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*
Anger and Fear – Serbian Emotions Toward Kosovar Albanians

Anger + Support for Aggression

Fear + Ingroup Affiliation Motives

Support for Aggression

Spanovic, Lickel, Denson, & Petrovic, In press, Group Processes and Intergroup Relations