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**Rivalry and Group
Behavior Among
Consumers and Brands**
Comparisons In and Out
of the Sport Context

Cody T. Havard

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ISBN 978-3-030-85244-3 ISBN 978-3-030-85245-0 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-85245-0>

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*To my family, Kristin, Harrison, Lincoln, and Begley. Keep working,
dreaming, and singing. Never lose your imagination!*

PREFACE

In my last Palgrave Pivot book on rivalry, I identified five primary observations I believe about fandom, rivalry, group behavior, and research. The first three, that (1) fan behavior is an area worthy of investigation, (2) research on rivalry is relatively new and developing, and (3) reliable measures are needed to quality empirical investigations, drove the topics and purpose of the previous text. For this book, I leaned on observations four and five as guiding beacons. I will elaborate below.

First (4th original observation), I wrote about the fact that research and the attainment of knowledge is a never-ending pursuit, and that researchers, practitioners, and readers should always strive to understand more about a chosen area and its influence on people. This observation guides the current text, in that the chapters and investigations included in the book detail differences in group member behavior among various sport and non-sport settings.

Because sport provides an ideal setting to investigate group membership and group member behavior, people working or studying in other fields can learn valuable lessons from the sport context. The chapters included in this text continue to provide interested parties with important empirical findings and implications for better understanding how groups and group members relate to others.

Second, (5th original observation), I wrote that the investigation of rivalry and group behavior is to the overall benefit of society and progress toward creating a more-inclusive environment. Because the current text

compares group member behavior in various fandom settings, a total of nine settings in Chapter 6, the lessons and ideas for future study continue to add important information to academic literature and real-world understanding of individual and group relationships.

Finally, it is the hope that the information in this book is helpful to readers-academics, practitioners, students, and other interested parties, and that it fosters a desire to learn more about how rivalry, group membership, and group member behavior influence our greater society. When I started researching the rivalry phenomenon over a decade ago, I hoped that the work in which I and colleagues were engaged would help shape a more positive, and more-inclusive environment for others. I feel that this book is another important step in the direction of progressing people and society down this positive path.

I hope you enjoy and thank you for playing along!

Memphis, USA

Cody T. Havard, Ph.D.
Professor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people that I would like to thank for their help on this and other projects and for their collaboration and support in my career and life. I would like to start with my chapter co-authors and collaborators in this text, Timothy Ryan, Michael Hutchinson, Rhema Fuller, Daniel Wann, Frederick Grieve, Richard Irwin, Brady White, Brendan Dwyer, Jennifer Gellock, Ted Peetz, and Kimberley Bouchard. The help of these individuals has greatly enhanced the project. My colleagues at The University of Memphis whom did not contribute to this book, namely Brennan Berg have always been a sounding board for ideas, discussions, and collaboration.

I would like to thank colleagues Julie Partridge, Ryan Zapolac, and Joey Case for always lending their expertise in areas of fandom studies, their experiences in the academy, and their friendship. I would like to thank Dianna Gray and Linda Sharp for guiding me through my doctoral studies and providing support throughout my career. Thank you! Taking a class from Megan Babkes-Stellino as a doctoral student was instrumental in shaping my view of how the research I conduct impacts a larger audience, and how sport influences society on a larger level. Guidance from David Stotlar helped my research and career along the way, and for that I thank you. I want to thank colleagues Lamar Reams, Terry Eddy, and Stephen Shapiro for their support and collaboration. I also want to thank Yuhei Inoue for his help on and guidance throughout my career.

Family is a constant source of enjoyment and adventure for me, and I want to sincerely thank my mother Adella Havard, my sister Amy Havard and her family Dimitri (Meech), Edie, Simon, and Lola Vigushin, and Edith “Granny” Lambeth (posthumously), Clara “Mimi” Havard (posthumously), and Tommy Havard (posthumously). Finally, I want to thank my rock and foundation, my wife Kristin, our two boys Harrison and Lincoln, and our brave companion Begely for keeping my days fun, busy, and always fulfilling. Thank you and I love you all!

Thank you all for your support, collaboration, and inspiration!

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Acknowledgement Bad
AG	Acknowledgement Good
AN	Acknowledgement Neutral
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BIRGing	Basking In Reflected Glory
D1	Derogation 1—High
D2	Derogation 2—Moderate
D3	Derogation 3—Low
FTP	Favorite Team Pessimism
FTS	Favorite Team Support
GBC	Group Behavior Composite
GORFing	Glory Out of Reflected Failure
HOD	Hierarchy of Out-group Derogation
MANCOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Covariance
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
MTurk	Amazon Mechanical Turk
OAP	Out-group Academic Prestige
ODS	Out-group Derogation Spectrum
OIC	Out-group Indirect Competition
OP	Out-group Prestige
OS	Out-group Sportsmanship
RPS	Rivalry Perception Scale
SF	Statement of Faction
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SoS	Sense of Satisfaction
SR	Support Rival
SSIS-R	Sport Spectator Identification Scale-Revised

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Rivalry In and Out of Sport: The Need for Research and Comparison

Cody T. Havard

Abstract This introductory chapter provides a glimpse of previous investigations regarding rivalry in the sport setting, and discusses why the setting is ideal for the study of the phenomenon. The chapter then discusses the need for comparison of perceptions and likely behaviors regarding rival out-groups in and out of the sport setting. To do this, previous investigations are briefly discussed and the studies included in the current text are introduced. The chapter concludes with the author's advice on using the text for interested parties.

Keywords Rivalry · Group membership · Group behavior · Comparison · Fan groups · Fan settings

Fandom and group membership provides many positive outcomes for a person. For example, group membership allows people to feel like they are part of something larger than themselves. (Mullin et al., 2014), less lonely (Branscombe & Wann, 1991; Wann et al., 2008), and feelings of belonging (Festinger, 1954; Wann, 2006a, 2006b). People also use group membership to help make sense of the surrounding world (Tajfel, 1974), and socialization helps teach people how to behave in various situations (Coakley, 2009). For example, a sport fan learns what teams to support

(Wann et al., 2001; Wann & James, 2019), and which ones to root against (Havard, 2014) at an early age.

All of these outcomes are products of Social Identity Theory (SIT), in which someone chooses membership in groups that will positively reflect on the self (Tajfel, 1978, 1981). People can also choose membership in groups that possess desired attributes, thus providing personal goals to reach (Deci, 1975). For example, someone that wants to believe they are hard-working may identify with the Nebraska Cornhuskers because of the teams' perceived work ethic (Aden, 2008). Further, it is common for people to identify with a political party they believe exhibits traits most beneficial to society (Hibbing et al., 2008; Huddy & Bankert, 2017; Karnacki, 2018).

To further understand how SIT influences group membership, people have a tendency of publicly supporting and affiliating with successful groups and pushing away those perceived to be unsuccessful (Cialdini et al., 1976; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Snyder et al., 1986), all in an attempt to protect self-esteem and public image (Madrigal, 1995). This is typically on display with sport fans that choose to wear clothing or use associative language depending on the success or failure of a team (Cialdini et al., 1976; Kimble & Cooper, 1992). When a team experiences failure, in-group members tend to experience greater levels of negative outcomes because of their close ties to the group (Wann & Branscombe, 1990). However, some may choose to react by placing blame on cheating or nefarious actions by the competitor or officials (Cialdini et al., 1976; Leach & Spears, 2009), or otherwise finding non-sport characteristics that positively compare their in-group to the chosen out-group (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Havard, 2014; Havard et al., 2018).

The competitors and out-groups in the examples above are the focus of interest in the current text. Specifically, when a group rises to the level of rival (Tyler & Cobbs, 2015, 2017), members in those groups tend to display in-group bias and derogation (Turner, 1975, 1978) toward the out-group of focus. Those groups, and the ways in which group members interact within those relationships is the main focus of this text.

In 2020, the first book introducing rival in sport was published (Havard, 2020b), in which we discussed the phenomenon, its influence on sports fans, two scales used to measure perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival out-groups, and paths forward regarding research and practice to help decrease animosity between rival groups and group members. The current text continues the line of inquiry regarding group

behavior, this time focusing on comparisons of sport and non-sport fandom settings. In particular, this text includes four comparisons—three quantitative and one qualitative—of group member behavior and out-group derogation in sport and non-sport settings. Further, additional comparisons of sport and non-sport settings have been investigated in areas such as Disney Parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021), comics (Havard et al., 2020), online electronic gaming (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021), politics (Havard, Longo et al., 2021), and straight-to-consumer streaming entertainment platforms (Havard, Ryan et al., 2021).

This text, and the comparisons of group member behavior in sport and non-sport settings also extends previous discussion in which sport rivalry has been used to inform general business (Kilduff et al., 2010), sponsorship (Dalakas & Levin, 2005), strategic decision making (Havard, 2018b; Havard, 2020a; Kilduff, 2014; Kilduff et al., 2016; Spinda & Havard, 2016), and general fandom (Havard, 2018a). The sport setting, because of its ability to place groups in direct and indirect competition usually vicarious with each other, makes for an ideal setting to study presence and influence of the rivalry phenomenon.

This text discusses these studies, along with comparisons included in the text regarding sport and electronic gaming platforms (Chapter 2), political commentary (Chapter 3), mobile phone consumption (Chapter 4), and science fiction fandom (Chapter 5). At this point, I will leave additional review of relevant literature to the chapters that follow, and instead provide brief introductions of the included investigations and chapters. This includes the introduction of a new composite score that allows for the comparison of group member behavior among various settings, along with a preliminary hierarchy of out-group derogation and spectrum of group negativity. These introductions are followed by discussion regarding how this book can be used by researchers, practitioners, students, and interested readers in better understanding the influence of setting on group member behavior and out-group derogation. Finally, the current text is best consumed in coordination with the previous text (Havard, 2020b) or any forthcoming manuscripts, chapters, and articles that investigate the rivalry phenomenon in various sport and non-sport settings.

CHAPTER DESCRIPTIONS

The following section will provide brief introductions regarding comparisons of group behavior in sport and electronic gaming platforms (Chapter 2), politics (Chapter 3), mobile phones (Chapter 4), and science fiction (Chapter 5), along with a composite comparison of group behavior in various settings (Chapter 6) and potential future paths of investigation (Chapter 7). It is important to note that each chapter is written as a stand-alone article so that people choosing to read individual chapters can benefit from the individual investigations. Additionally, the chapters include different subsequent co-authors where appropriate.

Chapter 2 discusses a quantitative investigation of perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival out-groups in sport and among the Xbox and Playstation electronic gaming consoles. This chapter provides results regarding how the intensity and negativity of rivalry in the sport setting differs from that found between electronic gamers using the Xbox and Playstation consoles to play.

Chapter 3 is a qualitative examination of comments left in online chat-rooms during the three 2016 Presidential Debates and surrounding three high-profile college football rivalry games. These qualitative results indicate that the amount and intensity of negativity in online comments differ between the sport and political settings.

Chapter 4 includes another quantitative investigation of out-group derogation between a sport and non-sport setting. This time, the mobile phone brands of Apple and Samsung are used in the chapter to study how group member behavior and out-group derogation differ between fans of sport and fans of Apple and Samsung mobile phone products.

Chapter 5 is the final investigation of a sport and singular non-sport setting. This chapter uses the science fiction brands Star Wars and Star Trek to examine the differences in group member behavior and out-group derogation in the sport and science fiction settings.

Chapter 6 discusses a composite comparison of group member behavior among nine fandom settings. In particular, the three quantitative comparisons included in this text combine with five other investigations to form a composite score of group behavior in nine unique settings (e.g., sport, politics, straight-to-consumer streaming, electronic gaming consoles, online electronic gaming, Disney Parks, comics, science fiction, mobile phones). The chapter introduces the Group Behavior Composite (GBC) made from the four subscales of the Rivalry Perception Scale

(RPS, Havard et al., 2013) and the Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORFing) measure (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017) to compare behavior among various fan settings, along with the Hierarchy of Out-group Derogation (HOD) and Out-group Derogation Spectrum (ODS) to provide further information about group member behavior.

Chapter 7 concludes the text by reiterating the lessons learned from included chapters. The chapter also adds areas of future inquiry for researchers. Finally, the chapter provides a call for continued interest and study of group member behavior across fandom settings.

RECOMMENDED USES OF THIS TEXT

Researchers

Researchers, both new and seasoned, can find important findings and lessons from the chapters included in this text. Both from a background and methodology perspective, the current text provides insight regarding group behavior and out-group derogation. In particular, Chapters 2 through 6 discuss quantitative and qualitative comparisons of derogation among sport and non-sport settings. Further, researchers interested in continuing investigation into the rivalry phenomenon can find important study design examples that can be used, modified, or improved upon for future study of group member behavior.

Practitioners

Practitioners reading this text are provided with important implications at the end of each study. Further, Chapter 6 provides practitioners with paths forward to better understand how group membership influences the rivalry phenomenon and out-group derogation in various fan settings. Taking the lessons from the respective discussion sections in the text will help practitioners both understand and plan for future events in which competing or rival groups will be involved. For example, someone working with individuals to better understand and plan for relational interactions will find that various settings discussed in the text influence out-group derogation in different ways. Further, the inclusion of investigations of the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) and identify foreclosure (Beaman, 2012) can assist practitioners help individuals plan for future events in which they may encounter various out-groups.

In another example, knowing that various fan settings influence group member behavior in different ways can help practitioners plan future events that may help engage consumers and/or decrease deviant or violent group member behavior.

Students

The current text is relevant to students taking courses in various disciplines. First, the work and discussion in the included chapters builds on many psychological foundations of individual and group behavior. In particular, topics such as SIT, common in-group, and identity foreclosure are grounded in psychology research, as is the comparison investigations discussed in the following chapters. Additionally, the chapters discuss implications for group membership, group behavior, and group member relations in society, thus lending the reading potentially helpful for students studying sociology. Sport management students, along with those studying general business, consumer behavior, and/or strategic decision making will find the chapters of this text useful. Finally, students seeking to work with individuals or groups, either in clinical or field settings, may find the chapters beneficial as they provide more information and empirical evidence about group member behavior and out-group derogation.

WELCOME AND THANK YOU

To conclude this introductory chapter, the investigations included in this text provide readers with important background and empirical information regarding group member behavior. There are many challenges and opportunities facing our society as we progress toward more-inclusive environments. One very important area of many challenges and opportunities is group behavior treatment of out-group members. In particular, the need for increased inclusion and empathy in our society is imperative as we progress through future challenges and situations, both locally, nationally, and globally.

The increased understanding of group membership and how out-group derogation is influenced by various fandom settings is important for researchers, practitioners, and readers interested in creating an environment more inviting to individuals from similar and different backgrounds. The goal of this text is to provide a step for progressing our society and

fellow citizens toward a more accepting future. Further, please read this text with the goal of identifying areas of future inquiry and additional questions that should be asked, discussed, and studied. If you have questions and/or observations about group membership while reading this text, please do not hesitate to reach out. With that, welcome to the study of group member behavior and thank you for joining the journey!

Thank you for joining me on this journey and enjoy!

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The Games We Play: Investigating Rivalry in Sport and Gaming Console Brands

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Abstract The current study adds to the literature on rivalry and group member behavior by investigating the phenomenon in sport and electronic gaming. Comparisons were made regarding rival perceptions between fans of sport teams and people that participate in electronic gaming via Playstation or Xbox platforms. Results showed that fans of sport reported more positivity toward their favorite brands than did gamers, and were more negative of their rival teams than were gamers of their rival brands. Further, people who identified as both gamers and fans of sport were less negative toward their rival gaming brand. Finally, gamers using the Playstation platform were more negative toward Xbox than were Xbox users toward Playstation. Discussion focuses on implications and avenues for future inquiry.

Keywords Rivalry · Fan behavior · Electronic gaming · Sport · Out-group derogation · Group behavior

Within sport and consumer goods, and society on a larger scale, people identify with favorite brands and against competing or rival brands

(Tajfel, 1974). People identify with groups of others in which they share similarities, and use successful brands as a way to experience vicarious success. (Bandura, 1977). The sport and gaming settings allow people and group members to compare against others both through direct and indirect competition. In particular, sport participants compete with others directly, and fans are able to compare against a rival group using indirect means. People who participate in electronic gaming likewise compete directly against other players, and those that choose to watch gaming, either through live events or mediated ones on popular online sites like Twitch or television are able to garner the vicarious experience present in in-person sports.

The current study investigated the differences in perceptions of favorite and rival brands within the sport and electronic gaming settings. In particular, responses of those who identified as a fan of a sport team were compared with those of gamers. Further, responses from people who identified as fans of both sport and electronic gaming were analyzed to determine how multiple group identities influenced perceptions of rival brands, and finally, users of Playstation and Xbox were compared based on their views of their favorite and rival brands. The study and comparison of rivalry in the sport and gaming settings are important for researchers and practitioners. For researchers, the current study adds important empirical findings to the growing literature on rivalry and group behavior. As the popularity of electronic gaming grows, practitioners would be well-served in knowing how rivalry influences participants and fans of the ever-evolving entertainment product.

BACKGROUND

Social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel, 1974) influences the people and groups that individuals associate with and join. When someone joins a group, they begin to take on the identity and adopt characteristics of the group (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990), and therefore form stronger bonds with their in-group and in-group members (Turner, 1978). Consequently, when they are confronted with another group through competition or comparison, intergroup relations occurs (Sherif, 1966), and they tend to show bias toward their group and some form of derogation toward the out-group (Tajfel, 1978).

Rivalry is the study of competitive relationships among groups and group members. It builds from SIT, and helps explain how people view

and react to in-groups and out-groups. The study of rivalry has utilized the sport setting because participants are able to compete directly, and fans indirectly (Kilduff et al., 2010). The study of the phenomenon in sport has been used to shed light on management (Converse & Reinhard, 2016; Havard, 2018a; Havard, 2020a; Kilduff, 2016; Kilduff et al., 2016), marketing (Dalakas & Levin, 2005; Dalakas & Melancon, 2012; Kwak et al., 2015; Tyler & Cobbs, 2017), fandom (Havard, 2018b), and relationships in higher education (Havard, Ryan et al., 2019). More recently, in an effort to better understand how rivalry influences groups and group member behavior, the phenomenon in sport has been compared with consumer brands (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020), products and services (Havard, Wann et al., 2020), and politics (Havard, Dwyer et al., 2020). The current study adds to this line of research by comparing rivalry within sport and the electronic gaming setting.

Rivalry in sport has been defined as “a fluctuating adversarial relationship, existing between two teams, players, fans, or groups of fans, gaining significance through on-field competition, on-field or off-field incidences, proximity, demographic makeup, and/or historical occurrence(s)” (Havard, Grayet et al., 2013, p. 51). Further, rivalry is contingent on several key antecedents and characteristics such as proximity, historical competition, parity, and group similarities and differences (Havard, 2014; Havard, Ryan et al., 2020; Kilduff et al., 2010; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015). Rivalry in sport influences many aspects of fan behavior, including attending live games (Havard, Eddy et al., 2016), paying price premiums for tickets (Sanford & Scott, 2016), consuming favorite team merchandise (Havard, Shapiro et al., 2016; Kwak et al., 2015), and even watching rival teams playing neutral teams on television (Mahony & Moorman, 1999). In turn, rivalry can be influenced by factors such as favorite team perceived success (Havard, Reams et al., 2013), relative importance of rival (Havard & Reams, 2018), competition affiliation and realignment (Cobbs et al., 2017; Havard & Reams, 2016; Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2018), team identification (Havard, Eddy et al., 2016; Wann et al., 2016), mediated stories (Havard, Ferrucci et al., 2021), league messaging (Nichols et al., 2016), and promotional titles (Havard, Wann et al., 2018).

While rivalry can impact organizations in positive ways by encouraging consumption (Havard, 2020b), and the resulting competition creating a better product (Havard, 2020a), it can also influence negative feelings, deviant, and even violent behavior among rival groups (Lee, 1985). For example, people have reported reacting positively and celebrate failures

by rival teams (Cikara et al., 2011; Havard, 2014; Mahony & Howard, 1998), stereotyping negative behavior to rival fans and groups (Maass et al., 1989), perceiving rivalry games to be more violent than non-rivalry games (Raney & Kinally, 2009), and being likely to watch a rival game against a neutral team if the rival were likely to lose (Mahony Moorman, 1999). Rivalry can also influence decision-makers to act in unethical ways (Kilduff et al., 2016), fans likelihood to help others in emergency situations (Levine et al., 2005), fan evaluation of negative stories about rival teams (Havard & Eddy, 2019), and likelihood to consider anonymous aggression (Wann & Waddill, 2013; Wann et al., 1999, 2003). In fact, one to two percent of fans across multiple studies have reported they would definitely be willing to consider physically harming or murdering a rival participant or fan if there was no way they would get into trouble (Havard, 2019; Wann et al., 1999, 2003; Wann & Wadill, 2013). Therefore, rivalry is something that can help promote a product, but it can also be detrimental to fans and organizations if not properly monitored.

Because rivalry can be beneficial and detrimental to organizations, fans, and group members, it is important to investigate rivalry and rival behavior outside of the sport setting as well. A better understanding of rivalry and its influence on group members will help researchers provide more knowledge and literature on the phenomenon, which will ultimately have a positive impact on groups, group members, and society. More knowledge about how rivalry influences fans will also help practitioners provide a more-consumer friendly product in a responsible manner.

The Current Study

The current study focuses on the comparison of rivalry in sport with that in the electronic gaming setting. Whether called electronic gaming, eSports, or gaming, people playing videogames in a competitive nature is an ever-growing activity. The every-growing popularity of the activity can be seen in various forms. From the competitions held in front of large crowds (Hill, 2019), to universities offering athletics scholarships and academic programs (Kauwelo & Winter, 2019), electronic gaming is a popular cultural phenomenon that provides participants the ability to compete against others and consumers or fans the ability to watch others play and even engage in vicarious achievement (Bandura, 1977).

Electronic gaming encompasses the act of someone playing and competing with others in a videogame format. Esposito (2004) defined a

videogame as “a *game* which we *play* thanks to an audiovisual apparatus and which can be based on a *story*” (p. 2). The competition, and often consumption of watching others compete in a videogame format describes the term eSports, or electronic sport. Hamari and Sjoblom (2016) define eSports as “a form of sports where the primary aspects of the sport are facilitated by electronic systems; the input of players and teams as well as the output of the eSports system are mediated by human–computer interfaces” (p. 213). Participating in and consuming eSports allows viewers to watch competitions and compare against other competitors and fans, either directly or indirectly, much like in sport.

The popularity of eSports has reached a level in our contemporary consumer culture that professional leagues and organizations sponsor teams (e.g., the NBA Memphis Grizzlies’ Grizz Gaming team, which competes in the NBA’s NBA 2K League).¹ Additionally, when live sport entertainment was postponed during the COVID-19 pandemic, many leagues, teams, and fans took to playing and consuming sport content via electronic gaming. For example, teams, leagues, and media outlets simulated contests,² and even had eSports competitors and professional athletes play games, with live commentary, that was consumed on social media platforms.³ Therefore, possibly more than ever, eSports and electronic gaming is an important outlet for participants and fans, and could potentially be used to keep fans engaged during periods when in-person leagues and teams are not able to compete (i.e., the current COVID-19 pandemic, but also off-seasons).

Because both sport and eSports allow people to compete and consume a popular product, the current study investigated the way people perceived out-groups such as rival competitors and supporters to gain a better understanding into how the phenomenon influences group members. First, we compared perceptions of in-groups and out-groups among fans of either a sport team or eSports and electronic gaming. Based on previous comparisons of rival perceptions in sport and non-sport settings, we anticipated that fans of sport would report stronger negative perceptions of rival teams than would gamers.

¹ Grizz Gaming information—<https://grizzgaming.nba.com>.

² SOURCE simulated the outcome of the 2020 NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament.

³ MLB streams eSports competitors and professional athletes playing games on their popular social media platforms.

H1: Fans of sport will report more negative perceptions of their rival teams than will gamers who play on Playstation or Xbox.

Previous research in sport and non-sport rivalry (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard et al., 2021a) supports the common in-group theory that belonging to multiple groups will influence how people view those they consider to be members of an out-group (Gaertner et al., 1993). Further, increased exposure to an out-group, which can occur when people belong to a similar and different in-group, can influence people to view out-group members more positively. For these reasons, we expected that people who identified with a sport team and participated in gaming would differ in their reported perceptions of out-group members than someone that only identified as a fan of sport or gaming.

Finally, we also wanted to investigate group member perceptions within the gaming setting. Based on prior research comparing rivalry among brands (Havard, Ryan et al., 2018; 2020), we anticipated differences in perceptions of the out-group. Therefore, we developed the following hypothesis:

H2a: Fans of both sport and gaming will differ in their perceptions of their rival gaming brand than will fans of only gaming.

H2b: Fans of both sport and gaming will differ in their perceptions of their rival sport brand than will fans of only sport.

H3: Gamers will differ in their rival brand perceptions based on the platforms they use more frequently.

METHOD

An online survey constructed using Qualtrics software was distributed via Amazon MTurk. At the beginning of the survey instrument, respondents were asked if they identified as a (1) fan of a sport team, (2) a participant or fan of electronic gaming, or (3) both. Based on their response to this question, participants then completed questions focused toward sport, gaming, or both sport and gaming.⁴

⁴ Someone that identified as a sport fan completed the survey regarding their favorite and rival sport teams, whereas someone that identified as a participant or fan of gaming

Instrument and Participants

The instrument used in the current contained a total of seven sections, with participants completing a minimum of three sections to all seven, depending on if they identified as only a fan of sport, only a fan of gaming, or a fan of both sport and gaming.⁵ Upon identifying if they identified with a sport team, a gaming brand, or both, participants were asked to report their level of identification with their favorite brands. To report brand identification, respondents completed the Sport Spectator Identification Scale-Revised (SSIS-R), and/or a modified version of the scale regarding their gaming brand (James et al., 2019).⁶ The seven-item, eight-point scale (1 = *Little Identification* to 8 = *High Identification*) measures how identified someone is with a favorite brand.⁷ Initially developed by Wann and Branscombe (1993), the SSIS and SSIS-R has been used to measure fandom and identification in multiple settings (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard, Wann et al., 2021a; Wann & Dolan, 1994; Wann & Grieve, 2005). Items used in the current study are available in the Appendix.

The second section required that participants respond to questions regarding their perceptions of their favorite and rival brands, in either sport, gaming, or both. To measure attitude toward the favorite and rival brands, the Attitude Toward the Brand scale, a five-item semantic differential instrument (1 = *Negative Attitude* to 5 = *Positive Attitude*) was used (Spears & Singh, 2004). Then, participants completed the Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS, Havard, Gray et al., 2013) to assess their perceptions of rival brands. The RPS is a four facet, twelve-item scale that

completed the survey regarding the Playstation and Xbox brands. Respondents that indicated they were fans of both sport and gaming completed instruments regarding their favorite and rival brands in sport and gaming.

⁵ Sections: 1—Sport Favorite Team, 2—Perceptions of Sport Favorite and Rival Teams, 3—Favorite Gaming Brand, 4—Perceptions of Favorite and Rival Gaming Brands, 5—Sport/Gaming Favorite Brands (for those who identified as being a fan of sport and gaming), 6—Perceptions of Sport/Gaming Favorite and Rival Brands (for those who identified being a fan of sport and gaming), 7—Demographics.

⁶ If someone identified as a fan of gaming, they were asked if they played or preferred using the Playstation or Xbox platforms. Their response to this question was treated as their favorite brand, with the other treated as their rival brand.

⁷ The modified SSIS-R used for gaming utilized six items.

measures how a person views a rival or out-group. The Out-group Indirect Competition (OIC) factor measures the likelihood of someone to support their rival in indirect competition (e.g., a rival sport team playing a neutral team, a rival consumer product brand receiving positive news or reviews), while the Sense of Satisfaction (SoS) facet measures the satisfaction or excitement someone experiences when their in-group defeats or compares favorably to the out-group in a direct competitive situation. Both the OIC and SoS factors support assertions of fans to support and/or celebrate rival failure (Cikara et al., 2011; Cikara & Fiske, 2012; Havard, 2014). The Out-group Prestige (OP) facet measures how prestigious a person believes an out-group to be, which supports the findings of Cialdini and Richardson (1980). Finally, based on the notion that people perceive in-group members to exhibit more positive qualities (Maass et al., 1989), the Out-group Behavior (OB) factor measures the perceived behavior of out-group members.

The final instrument used in the second section asked participants to complete the Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORFing) scale to measure how likely they were to experience joy or celebrate when their rival brand fails in an indirect way. For example, someone may experience GORFing if their sport rival team loses to a neutral team, or in the case of gaming consoles, their rival gaming console receives poor reviews or experiencing technical problems/set-backs. GORFing is similar to *schadenfreude*, or taking pleasure from another's failure/demise (1958), which has been found in several setting including sport (Cikara et al., 2011; Dalakas et al., 2015) and consumer products (Ewing et al., 2013; Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014). The final section of the survey asked participants to complete demographic questions.

A total of 422 participants returned usable surveys. The majority of the sample was male (62.0%), and ranged from 18 to 78 years of age ($M = 34.58$, $SD = 17.94$). Regarding fandom, 49.8% of respondents indicated they were fans of both sport and gaming, with 28.7% being fans of only gaming, and 21.6% fans of only sport. Of respondents that indicated they were fans of gaming, 68.9% preferred the Playstation platform, compared to 31.1% of those that preferred using/playing Xbox.

RESULTS

Items for all scales used in the current study were averaged so that one data point represented a participant's response for each measure. Fans of sport teams were asked to self-identify a favorite and rival team,

which were then *piped* into questions throughout the rest of the survey. Rivalry was measured in the gaming setting using the Playstation and Xbox platforms. Therefore, to compare fandom and rivalry between sport and gaming, participant responses were compiled and averaged. In this, the favorite/rival teams and gaming brands were not as important as the rivalry phenomenon, instead, comparisons were made of Group A (Favorite Brand) and Group B (Rival Brand) regarding the sport and gaming settings. All measures used in the current study displayed reliability with α ranging from 0.812 to 0.965 (Table 2.1).

Testing the Hypotheses

First, we investigated the hypothesis that fans of sport would report stronger negative perceptions of rival teams than would fans of gaming toward their rival brands (H1). To examine this, data from respondents that identified as being fans of only sport ($n = 91$) with fans of only gaming ($n = 121$). A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis, and a significant Wilks' Lambda $0.508(8,203) = 25.18$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.498$ revealed main effects differences were

Table 2.1 Descriptives and reliability of scales used in study

<i>Item</i>	M	SD	α
Sport Favorite Team Identification (SSIS-R)	6.32	1.21	0.896
Sport Favorite Team Attitude	6.25	0.87	0.908
Sport Rival Team Attitude	3.07	1.64	0.956
Sport Rival Team Support (OIC)	2.64	1.59	0.862
Sport Rival Team Fan Behavior (OB)	4.01	1.67	0.910
Sport Rival Team Prestige (OP)	3.19	1.69	0.847
Sport Rival Team Sense of Satisfaction (SoS)	5.71	1.24	0.842
Sport Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORF)	4.21	1.47	0.815
Gaming Favorite Console Identification (SSIS-R)	4.67	1.49	0.812
Gaming Favorite Console Attitude	6.04	0.93	0.948
Gaming Rival Console Attitude	4.34	1.34	0.965
Gaming Rival Console Support (OIC)	4.39	1.25	0.823
Gaming Rival Console Fan Behavior (OB)	3.40	1.63	0.900
Gaming Rival Console Prestige (OP)	3.39	1.62	0.849
Gaming Rival Console Sense of Satisfaction (SoS)	4.24	1.60	0.897
Gaming Rival Console Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORF)	3.69	1.58	0.845
Gaming Rival Console Player Skill	3.33	1.53	0.832

present. Specifically, differences existed regarding Favorite Brand Identification ($F[1, 210] = 53.15, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.202$), Favorite Brand Attitude ($F[1, 210] = 12.48, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.056$), Rival Brand Attitude ($F[1, 210] = 45.94, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.180$), OIC ($F[1, 210] = 86.51, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.292$), OP ($F[1, 210] = 11.22, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.051$), and SoS ($F[1, 210] = 48.00, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.186$). Sport fans reported higher scores for favorite brand identification (i.e., Favorite Brand Identification and Favorite Brand Attitude), and more negative perceptions of their rival teams than fans of gaming regarding OIC and SoS. Fans of gaming reported more negative perceptions of rival brand prestige (OP) than fans of sport. H1 was partially supported (Table 2.2).

Second, H2a and H2b asserted that being a fan of both sport and gaming would influence participants to report more positive perceptions of rival brands than being a fan of only sport or gaming. For these analyses, responses from participants that identified as a fan of sport only ($n = 91$) and both sport and gaming ($n = 210$) were used for H2a and fans of gaming only ($n = 121$) and both sport and gaming ($n = 210$) used for H2b.

A MANOVA was used to examine the difference between fans of both gaming and sport with fans of only gaming (H2a), and significant differences were present (Wilk's Lambda $0.845(9, 310) = 6.31, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.155$). Univariate analysis revealed differences regarding Favorite Brand Identification ($F[1, 318] = 15.29, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.046$),

Table 2.2 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by sport vs. gaming

Item	Sport		Gaming	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	6.42#	1.07	5.07#	1.50
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.22^	0.89	5.75^	1.01
Attitude toward Rival Brand	3.09#	1.67	4.50#	1.35
Out-group Indirect Competition	2.62#	1.63	4.42#	1.28
Out-Group Prestige	3.18#	1.63	3.93#	1.58
Out-Group Behavior	3.18	1.63	3.93	1.58
Sense of Satisfaction	5.75#	1.19	4.48#	1.42
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.32	1.30	4.10	1.53

*Significant at 0.05 level

^Significant at 0.01 level

#Significant at 0.001 level

Table 2.3 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by fans of gaming vs. fans of gaming and sport

<i>Item</i>	<i>Gaming</i>		<i>Gaming and sport</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	5.09#	1.50	4.43#	1.43
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	5.78#	1.01	6.19#	0.93
Attitude toward Rival Brand	4.49	1.36	4.25	1.33
Out-group Indirect Competition	4.39	1.28	4.38	1.23
Out-Group Prestige	3.90#	1.59	3.10#	1.56
Out-Group Behavior	3.96	1.62	3.06	1.54
Sense of Satisfaction	4.47*	1.42	4.11*	1.68
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.08#	1.54	3.45#	1.56
Skill of Rival	3.76#	1.58	3.08#	1.45

*Significant at 0.05 level

^Significant at 0.01 level

#Significant at 0.001 level

Favorite Brand Attitude ($F[1, 318] = 15.35, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.046$), OS ($F[1, 318] = 24.45, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.071$), OP ($F[1, 318] = 19.48, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.058$), SoS ($F[1, 318] = 3.89, p = 0.049, \eta^2 = 0.012$), Skill ($F[1, 318] = 15.11, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.045$),⁸ and GORFing ($F[1, 318] = 1.39, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.038$). H2a was supported (Table 2.3). The MANOVA used to investigate differences between fans of both sport and gaming with fans of only sport (H2b) revealed no significant differences (Wilks' Lambda $0.987(8, 283) = 0.470, p = 0.877, \eta^2 = 0.013$). H2b was not supported (Table 2.3).

Focusing exclusively on the gaming setting, H4 expected that differences between between Playstation and Xbox users would exist regarding views of favorite and rival brands. For this analysis, users/fans of Playstation ($n = 228$) and Xbox ($n = 103$) were used. A significant MANOVA revealed differences were present (Wilks' Lambda $0.933(9, 310) = 2.49, p = 0.009, \eta^2 = 0.067$). Specifically, differences were present regarding Favorite Brand Identification ($F[1, 318] = 5.10, p = 0.025, \eta^2 = 0.016$), OS ($F[1, 318] = 5.21, p = 0.023, \eta^2 = 0.016$), OP ($F[1, 318] = 10.76, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.033$), and GORFing ($F[1, 318] = 6.50, p = 0.011,$

⁸ Questions to measure perceptions of rival skill level were included for participants that were fans of gaming.

Table 2.4 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by playstation users vs. xbox users

<i>Item</i>	<i>Playstation</i>		<i>Xbox</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	4.80*	1.50	4.43**	1.43
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.03	0.91	6.05	0.98
Attitude toward Rival Brand	4.32	1.40	4.38	1.22
Out-group Indirect Competition	4.46	1.22	4.23	1.29
Out-Group Prestige	3.59 [^]	1.61	2.96 [^]	1.56
Out-Group Behavior	3.54*	1.66	3.09*	1.50
Sense of Satisfaction	4.32	1.54	4.06	1.70
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	3.84*	1.57	3.36*	1.57
Skill of Rival	3.41	1.56	3.16	1.46

*Significant at 0.05 level

[^]Significant at 0.01 level

#Significant at 0.001 level

$\eta^2 = 0.020$), with users of Playstation reporting higher identification with their favorite brand and more negative perceptions of Xbox than did Xbox users toward Playstation (Table 2.4).

DISCUSSION

The current study investigated fandom and rivalry in the sport setting and electronic gaming setting. Based on the popularity of consumer sport and eSports, the results carry important and interesting lessons for researchers and practitioners. At this time, it is appropriate to point out a potential variable that can be seen as limitations to the current findings. First, data was collected using MTurk, which provides more people the opportunity to respond. However, the findings may be different if the survey were sent to a targeted group of sport and gaming fans. Even as the approach used in the current study was more appropriate in our view, using a more specific and targeted group could yield different, and important findings.

The results showed that fans of sport teams reported (1) higher identification and greater attitude toward their favorite teams than did fans in the gaming setting, and (2) stronger negative perceptions of their rival teams than gaming fans did toward their rival brands. This supports previous findings comparing fandom and rivalry in sport with comics

(Havard, Grieve et al., 2020) and theme parks (Havard et al., 2021b). The only exception was the prestige of the rival brand, in which gaming fans reported more negative perceptions of their rival than sport fans. Potential reasons gaming fans may view their rival brands as less prestigious could range from the direct competitive nature of gaming and eSports, prior experience consuming both platforms, or the nature of promotions and advertisements produced by Playstation and Xbox. This last potential reason would support findings that promotional messaging and mediated stories influence rival perceptions (Havard, Ferrucci et al., 2021; Havard, Wann et al., 2018).

The current study also found that being a fan of both sport and gaming influenced perceptions of the rival brand in the gaming setting. This supports the common in-group theory (Gaertner et al., 1993) and previous studies testing this relationship (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard, Wann et al., 2021a). It was interesting that being a fan of both sport and gaming did not influence rival perceptions for sport fans. This is contradictory to previous findings, and warrants further investigation to examine why such an outcome was reached. Possibly, the competitive nature of being a sport fan and a fan or participating in gaming is similar enough regarding competition that a significant difference in views of the rival would not be found between the two groups. Nonetheless, future investigation, potentially qualitative, could focus on what being a fan of both sport and gaming would influence more positive rival perceptions in the gaming setting yet not the sport setting.

Finally, the current study compared the ways users and fans of Playstation and Xbox platforms view each other. Results showed that Playstation users reported more negative perceptions of Xbox than Xbox users did of Playstation. These findings are interesting when considering antecedents and characteristics of rivalry. Important antecedents and characteristics of rivalry are historical competition and parity (Havard, 2014; Kilduff et al., 2010; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015). The Playstation console was first released in 1994 in Japan and 1995 in the United States, whereas the Xbox was released in the United States in 2001. Therefore, the two brands have been competing for consumers' attention for close to two decades.

Additionally, 68.9% of respondents who identified as a fan of gaming indicated Playstation was their favorite brand, which stands to reason based on their longer history with consumers. However, another interesting note on rivalry is that most brands with a smaller market share (e.g., state vs. flagship schools in college athletics; teams with a shorter history

in professional sport) typically report more negative perceptions of the brand with larger market share. Based on that, it would reason that Xbox users would report more negativity toward Playstation than vice versa. This finding points to a gap in brand rivalry that deserve future investigation to better understand the relationship with the two platforms. It should also be pointed out that for most measures, the average for gaming users/fans responses on the rivalry scales are below the mid-point line, which is consistent with prior research about consumer brands (Harvard et al., 2020b), and suggests that gamers may show preferences but do not hold overly negative views of rival brands.

Implications and Future Research

The current findings carry important implications for both researchers and practitioners working in the sport and eSports settings. First, the current study adds to the literature on rivalry and group member behavior in an important way. Namely, the findings both support and contradict portions of knowledge from prior studies of rivalry comparing sport and non-sport settings. The current study also suggests that eSports may more closely resemble consumer in-person sport in more ways than just name. Specifically, both direct and indirect competition aspect are present in the sport setting and the eSport setting. Another such setting where indirect competition may rise to or exceed the level of that in sport could be politics, and future investigation should focus on this area.

The current study also suggests that people maintaining multiple in-groups can help in the certain situations (Gaertner et al., 1993) but not all. Specifically, respondents in the current study that reported being fans of both sport and gaming showed less negativity toward their rival gaming brand, however this was not the case toward the sport rival. The idea behind identity foreclosure (Beamon, 2012) is that someone who only identifies with a single in-group does not have other areas in which to focus their attention and share their fandom if the in-group fails. As previously mentioned, the current finding somewhat contradicts previous findings in this area, and potentially the competition aspect of both sport and gaming play a role in an individual's views of the rival brand in sport even when they belong to multiple groups. Future inquiry should also focus on this area.

Another area for future investigation for researchers is to use qualitative methods to better understand the relationship between sport and

eSports, and how the products impact fans and consumers. For instance, interviews and content analysis could help researchers gain more information about how sport and eSports work in our consumer culture and society. In particular, interviews in combination with content analysis and quantitative measures could help shed light on the negative nature of online discourse found in eSports. Additionally, qualitative inquiry could help shed more light on the competition aspect present in both sport and eSports. In particular, future inquiry should focus on why being a fan of both sport and gaming would decrease negativity toward a rival gaming brand but not a rival sport team.

Additional notes on future inquiry for researchers include continued research and comparison of group member behavior and perceptions of out-groups in sport and other areas such as politics, religion, and consumer products. Doing so will provide more information about the rivalry phenomenon and can potentially lead to a better understanding of what products/services and settings influence more negative perceptions and behaviors toward out-group members. Specific to eSports, continued research into the emerging consumer product will help illuminate best practices for researchers and practitioners. Especially now that live in-person sport has been temporarily suspended, more information can be gained on the place of eSports in consumer culture and society. Finally, the current study investigated rivalry between eSports platforms Playstation and Xbox, and future study should replicate the methods using the PC and console platforms to determine if differences exist.

Practitioners working in sport and eSports can utilize the current findings to offer a more-consumer friendly product. For example, the popularity of eSports have been used as special promotions for in-person sporting events. The current study provides information to practitioners about how eSport or gaming consumers view rival brands. This can be utilized by leagues such as the National Basketball Association that runs an eSports league, and by teams using the popularity of eSports to promote the sport product. Additionally, leagues and organizations should also seek ways to promote their product to gaming consumers. Examples include leagues, sponsorship and promotion using the game such as in-game visuals and promotions, and organic grass-roots movements such as engaging stakeholders in messaging. Future coordination among researchers and practitioners could help determine the most efficient ways to reach gaming fans, including empirically identifying most popular and played games and platforms.

It is also important for practitioners to recognize that the current study did find that the common in-group can help alleviate negativity among gaming or eSports players and fans. Practitioners could utilize this principle and the current findings to identify common interests among gamers. As some may see the commentary shared during eSports and gaming events as *part of the game* or something that drives consumption, at some point the negativity surrounding eSports can prove detrimental to the product. This is especially important now that eSports is gaining more attention in popular culture in the absence of in-person sporting events. It is a natural progression in our society for something that reaches a level of popularity to be criticized, rightfully so, and products that do not rise to the challenge ultimately falter.

The current study investigated rivalry and group member behavior in the sport and gaming settings. Fans of sport report stronger negative perceptions of rival groups than in the gaming setting, and the common in-group works in some instances. Finally, fans and users of Playstation are more negative of Xbox than are fans of Xbox toward Playstation. The growing popularity of eSports warrants critical investigation and the current study took a step in adding literature in the area. Finally, the study of rivalry is one that deserves attention on a wide-ranging spectrum, and the current investigation takes a step in advancing knowledge on the phenomenon.

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They Said What? Investigating Fan Online Commentary in Politics and Sport

Cody T. Havard, Brendan Dwyer, and Jennifer L. Gellock

Abstract The study addressed the phenomenon of group membership and how group members engage in online commentary. Specifically, the paper investigated comments left in online chatrooms during the three presidential debates in 2016 and three prominent college football rivalry games. Findings showed that people choosing to leave comments in an online chatroom did so to (1) comment on the nature of the rivalry or relationship, (2) comment on the game itself, or (3) to derogate the out-group. Further, a higher proportion of comments left in the political chatrooms were negative toward the out-group compared to the sport setting. Implications are discussed, and the paper presents directions for future inquiry and ideas for addressing out-group negativity in political fandom.

Keywords Rivalry · Fandom · Politics · Sport · Group membership · Online communication

When groups of supporters, or fans of a chosen product or genre interact, we see intergroup relations (Sherif, 1966) which often leads to some form of in-group bias (Tajfel, 1978). In-group bias is the tendency of people

to show favoritism toward members of their chosen in-group and derogation toward members of a competing out-group. The prevalence of group member relations and in-group bias exists in almost all settings, whether it be politics, religion, social makeup, consumer goods, or sport team competition.

The current study set out to better understand how fans who participated in online chatrooms behaved toward an in-group and out-group. Specifically, the investigation carried two foci that will help investigate fan chatroom engagement with rival and/or favorite groups in two settings which allow rival supporters to directly or indirectly compare. First, the current study analyzed comments left in online chatrooms during the three 2016 presidential debates and three prominent rivalry games in college football during the 2016 season. Second, comments in politics and sport were compared to determine if differences existed regarding the prevalence of online comments.

Before proceeding further, it warrants identifying why we chose to focus on sport and politics in the current paper. Fans in both sport and politics like to express their public affiliation with a team or candidate (Bolce et al., 1996; Kimble & Cooper, 1992), celebrate when their favorite groups experience success (Cialdini et al., 1976; Dean, 2017), and some experience joy when their rivals experience failure (Havard, 2014; Miller & Conover, 2015). These behaviors can be found within consumer products as well (e.g., iPhone vs. Android, Coke vs. Pepsi). Whereas competition and rivalry present themselves in deciding which brand to purchase,¹ sport and politics is different in an important way. Both sport and politics affords fans the opportunity to compare directly with another group vicariously through their associations with a favored group (Bandura, 1977). For example, sport fans are awarded the opportunity to compare directly with rival supporters when their favorite teams play. Likewise, in the United States, the vast majority of political fans typically fall into one of two categories (e.g., Democrat/Republican, conservative/liberal), and therefore are able to compare directly with supporters of the rival candidate or ideology. This common characteristic makes the relationship unique and therefore makes the sport setting a good source to draw comparison to politics to explain fandom and ways

¹ Consumer purchasing decisions among rival brands may also represent one born more of convenience than loyal support (e.g., someone may prefer one brand over another, but will consume a competitors brand based on a number of factors).

to alleviate out-group negativity. As the findings from the study seek to illuminate the importance of comparing rivalry within the sport setting and political setting.

Therefore, the current study also offers an overview of how group relations, and specifically rivalry, influence fandom within sport and politics. Further, the authors seek to begin a dialogue regarding the ways that fans view and interact with rival groups and identify potential ways to decrease negativity among in-group and out-group members.

BACKGROUND

Fandom in Sport and Politics

Fandom is following a team, personality, product, or brand, and feeling some level of attachment with that group or individual (Hirt & Clarkson, 2011; Wann et al., 2001). In sport, fans can identify with a team, along with the athletes and coaches on that team, and with individual athletes in sports such as golf or tennis where team makeup is not readily present. Likewise, in politics, people can identify with a group or individual candidate. For example, someone in the United States may identify as a Democrat, Republican, or Independent, among many other classifications. Individuals also tend to identify with, assimilate into a group, and display positive behavior toward a specific candidate running for office (Ledgerwood & Chaiken, 2007). In this regard, a candidate can be viewed by fans similar to the way a team or individual personality is in the sport setting (e.g., team sport setting vs. individual sport setting).

In both the political and sport settings, people display their fandom through wearing identifying clothing or branding their vehicles with affiliated insignia. Identifying with a group or individual creates a way for people to display their identification as a fan, therefore garnering the important outcome associate with fandom such as being part of a group (Festinger, 1954; Wann, 2006), vicarious competition and achievement (Bandura, 1977), and feeling as though they are part of something *larger than oneself* (Mullin et al., 2014). For instance, when a sport team wins, fans of that team can experience joy and vicarious achievement from the victory, and the opposite is true when a sport team loses a contest. This behavior is present in politics as well when supporters display their affiliation with a campaign after a victory either through clothing, car stickers, or yard signs. This type of fan behavior is also an outcome of promotional

strategy for practitioners. For example, someone displaying a sticker or shirt of a team or political figure works as advertising helping to promote the favored product to potential consumers.

Investigations within sport show that individuals will choose to identify with a successful brand in order to garner vicarious achievement (Cialdini et al., 1976). People will use words such as *us* and *we* to describe positive outcomes involving a successful team. On the other hand, when a team experiences failure, people can distance from the brand, using words such as *they* to describe negative outcomes, in an attempt to protect their self and public image (Madrigal, 1995; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Snyder et al., 1986). In politics, this group of individuals seem to represent those that may vote for candidates and platforms based on the trends currently unfolding.

Sport and politics are also filled with what can be referred to as *highly identified* fans (James et al., 2019; Wann & Branscombe, 1990). These are fans that identify strongly with a favorite team or athlete, and multiple studies have asserted that such identification can influence feelings of acceptance and social-psychological health (Wann et al., 2008), likelihood of consumption (Funk, 2008), and evaluation of out-group fan behavior (Wann & Dolan, 1994; Wann & Grieve, 2005) and participant effort (Wann et al., 2006). An interesting note about highly identified political fans deals with situations when they are faced with failure, either because their chosen candidate lost or embroiled in controversy. In sport, a fan of a team that experiences failure can choose to either justify the loss by blaming/blasting officials and/or the opposing team (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980), or finding ways outside of direct athletic competition to derogate their rival, thereby making their favorite team appear favorable (Havard, 2014). It is not difficult to see that the same type of behavior exists for political fans of candidates that experience some form of failure (e.g., claiming elections are rigged). In fact, fans in the political setting will react in ways that protect their favored candidate or party when the group is faced with potentially negative outcomes (Westen et al., 2006). Finally, the vocal minority, or a group of dedicated users that tend to generate large amounts of conversation (Mustafaraj et al., 2011), exist in both sport and politics, and it can be argued that someone who participates in this type of behavior is highly identified with their favorite team or candidate. Because engaging with others online can carry benefits to individuals (Pendry & Salvatore, 2015), many people participate in online social networking, even if they choose not to create any

content (e.g., post, blog, vlog, etc.). The people that choose to create content online do so for many reasons, which can range from trying to provide information to persuading others of their views. These people can be considered members of the vocal minority. Finally, because they generate large amounts of conversation online, these individuals can influence perceptions of the silent majority (Bolce et al., 1996; Xie et al., 2011).

Rivalry in Spectator Sport and Politics

Rivalry within the context of sport and politics can resemble one another, and even blend together at times, because the two settings provide fans the ability to compare against the other online and offline, ultimately leading to a direct competition between identified favorite teams and politicians. In fact, Miller and Conover (2015) argue that elections resemble sport competitions for supporters of candidates and parties. Rivalry in sport has been defined as “a fluctuating adversarial relationship, existing between two teams, players, fans, or groups of fans, gaining significance through on-field competition, on-field or off-field incidences, proximity, demographic makeup, and/or historical occurrences” (Harvard, Gray et al., 2013, p. 51). Further, a rival group has been defined as a “highly salient out-group that poses an acute threat to the identity of the in-group or to the in-group members’ ability to make positive comparisons between their group and the out-group” (Tyler & Cobbs, 2015, p. 230).

Looking at these definitions, one can see numerous similarities between rivalry and rival groups in the sport and political settings. For example, the rival group presents a form of threat to in-group members, and the relationships are adversarial, at times more so than others. To this end, one can argue that we have grown accustomed to witnessing, and even celebrating stark contrasts between individuals that identify with opposing political parties or report different political views (Karnacki, 2018). In fact, the simple use of the colors red and blue to distinguish between Republicans and Democrats influenced study participants in one study to view the United States as more divided and stereotype group members (Rutchick et al., 2009). Further, antecedents and characteristics of rivalry in sport such as historical competition, perceived unfairness, along with cultural differences and similarities can also carry over to the political setting (Kilduff et al., 2010; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015).

Rivalry in sport influences many ways that fans view and react to their respective out-group. For example, the presence of rivalry influences fans' public displays of group affiliation (Kimble & Cooper, 1992), views of the out-group and out-group members (Havard, Gray et al., 2013), consumption of the sport product (Havard, Shapiro et al., 2016; Mahony & Moorman, 1999), views and support of league-wide messaging (Nichols et al., 2016; Nichols et al., 2019), and willingness to help others in emergency situations (Levine et al., 2005). Additionally, the presence of a rival encourages cohesion with ones in-group (Berendt & Uhrich, 2016; Delia, 2015; Smith & Schwartz, 2003). Rivalry in sport can be influenced by variables such as gender (Havard, Achen et al., 2020; Havard, Eddy et al., 2016), geographic location (Cobbs et al., 2019), changes in competition alignment (Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2017). Many of these findings would also be found related to rivalry of political fans. For instance, it should be expected that someone identifying as a Republican would react differently to television political ads than a self-identified Democrat.²

Delving into the darker side of rivalry in sport, mediated stories about fan fights before a rivalry game lead fans to report more negative perceptions of both favorite and rival brands (Havard, Ferrurri et al., 2021), and rivalry can influence the way that individuals evaluate the actions and indiscretions of rival groups (Havard & Eddy, 2019). The way rivalries are promoted through advertisements and messaging also lead to more negative views toward the rival team (Havard, Wann et al., 2018). Fans also experience joy or satisfaction when their rival team experiences some form of indirect failure (Cikara et al., 2012; Havard, 2014). Further, people tend to seek and hope for areas where an out-group experiences failure (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Finally, the presence of the phenomenon influences fans' likelihood to consider committing anonymous acts of aggression toward the out-group (Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2017; Wann et al., 1999, 2003; Wann & Waddill, 2013). In fact, over numerous samples collected using different collection methods (e.g., in-person, on-site, online), one to two percent of participants reported they *definitely would* consider committing the most heinous acts of anonymous aggression toward out-group members (e.g., either physical harm or murder). These three situations can also be

² Politics within the United States also differs based on geographic location (Longo, 2018).

present in political fandom, where we regularly see fans of political parties verbalizing and sharing negative views and stories of the out-group, take pleasure seeing a political rival or group fail, and some fans unfortunately displaying signs of aggression, deviance, and violence toward out-groups based on rivalry.

The Current Study

The current study investigated what types of comments group members leave in online chatrooms in the political and sport setting. Specifically, comments left in chatrooms during the three presidential debates during the 2016 election cycle and surrounding three college football rivalry games were analyzed. The following two research questions guided the investigation:

RQ1: What types of comments do group members leave in online chatrooms during the 2016 presidential debate schedule and college football season?

RQ2: Do the comments left in online chatrooms differ between group members in a political and sport setting?

METHOD

To examine how fans and supporters behaved toward in-group and out-group members, we collected and compared comments posted in online chat rooms during the three 2016 Presidential Debates (September 26, October 9, October 19) with three high-profile college football rivalry games (Ohio State vs. Wisconsin; October 15, Alabama vs. Auburn; November 26, Ohio State vs. Michigan; November 26). For the three presidential debates measured in the current study between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, we compiled comments from the *Yahoo! Politics* online discussion forums. The majority of comments were left during the televised debates, with some being left before and after the debates as well. To ensure we compiled a representative sample of comments, we randomly pulled approximately 600 comments from each debate. A total of 1,868 comments were compiled for the three presidential debates.

With comments from the three presidential debates compiled, we were next tasked with choosing three high-profile college football games

with which to analyze comments. To do so, we employed a three-step approach. Following the 2016 college football season, we first consulted with the list of 25 Most Intense Fan Rivalries in NCAA on www.sportrivalry.com³. From the 25 rivalries included in the list, we next consulted the Nielsen Rating in order to ensure that the chosen games were consumed by a large audience, similar to the presidential debates. Finally, we consulted the *Associated Press* Top 25 Ranking list. In particular, we considered games in which both teams were ranked at the time of the game. Taking this approach, we identified Ohio State vs. Wisconsin played on October 15th, Alabama vs. Auburn and Ohio State vs. Michigan, both played on November 26th. We then compiled comments from the *ESPN* game summaries and threads. If comments for any of the three college football rivalry games exceeded 600, we employed the same method used with the Presidential Debate comments to randomly compile 600 comments⁴.

Coding

Using nine themes from college football rivalries identified by Havard and Inoue (2012), we coded the compiled list of comments for first-order codes.⁵ The original codes were categorized into three main themes (Acknowledgment, Comment on Game; Rival Derogation) and nine codes (Acknowledgment: Good, Neutral, Bad; Comment on Game: Support Rival, Favorite Team Support, Favorite Team Pessimism; Rival Derogation: Low, Moderate, High). During the current study, we added one code based on comments left in both the political and sport settings. In particular, we added *Statement of Faction*, in which a commenter made a statement in a somewhat neutral manner⁶. The reliability of the

³ Top 25 Most Intense Fan Rivalries in NCAA available at <http://www.sportrivalry.com/research-on-rivalry/rivalry-in-ncaa-athletics/>.

⁴ However, within the college football setting, comments in any game did not exceed 600, therefore, all comments from each game were used for analysis.

⁵ Individual investigators analyzed comments for the overarching code(s) for chosen responses. In instances where more than one code was identified, the first author chose the code that best represented the sentiment of the commenters message. This approach was chosen to help provide more-parsimonious data.

⁶ Based on the amount of *misinformation* or incorrect statements in both settings, the work *Faction* was chosen to reflect the point that statements did not need to be verified as accurate.

comment is irrelevant, only the sentiment that the person leaving the comment believed they were stating a fact⁷. An overview of the identified codes are available in Table 3.1.

During coding, the authors each analyzed two presidential debates and two college football rivalry games⁸. We categorized a total of 3,416 comments left in online political and sport chatrooms (i.e., 1,848 comments during the 2016 Presidential Debates, 1,548 comments regarding the college rivalry games) into themes regarding how fans felt about the rivalry or competitive relationships, their support for favorite and rival teams or politicians, and the level of derogation they showed toward the relevant out-group.

FINDINGS

Our analysis of the ten comment codes found that participants in the political and college football rivalry game chatrooms were active in showing their support for their favorite candidates/teams, and finding ways to derogate the rival group. Research Question 1 investigated the types of comments fans left in online message boards regarding presidential politics and college football rivalry games. Our analysis revealed that comments left in online chatrooms during the three presidential debates and three college football rivalry games fell into three main themes and ten categories or codes. Table 3.2 displays the codes and *n* for each.

Regarding the Acknowledgment theme (College Football—10.09%; Presidential Debates—12.57%), most comments in college football fell into acknowledging the good or positive benefits of the rivalry (6.27%), followed by comments acknowledging the neutral (2.33%) and negative nature (1.49%) of the rivalry. Acknowledgment comments left during the presidential debates fell into those commenting on the negative nature of the rivalry (10.22%), followed by neutral comments (2.03%), and those discussing the positive nature of the competition (0.32%).

⁷ Many participants Statement of Factions showed support for one candidate/team over the other.

⁸ A system was used to ensure all researchers analyzed at least one debate and one rivalry game with the other two authors. (e.g., Debate/Rivalry Game #1—A&B, Debate/Rivalry Game #2—A&C, Debate/Rivalry Game—B&C).

Table 3.1 Codes of comments

<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Acknowledgment Good	AG	Stating enjoyment or positive aspect of rivalry/relationship	“Fun, energizing, stimulating, symbiotic”
Acknowledgment Neutral	AN	Simply acknowledging the rivalry without mentioning positive or negative attributes of relationship	“It isn’t what it used to be” “Same as any other rivalry”
Acknowledgment Bad	AB	See the rivalry as too intense/inappropriate fan/supporter behavior on both sides	“The rivalry has become increasingly acrimonious over the past few years, with fans on both sides using victories as a springboard to denigrate fans of the others school’s base. This has taken a lot of the wind out of the rivalry (for me at least)”
Support Rival	SR	Fan displaying a form of support for the rival team	“When we played in the same conference I felt some desire for the Utes to do well for the good of the conference. I never wanted them to beat BYU, but having them win added prestige to the conference, which in turn helped BYU”
Favorite Team Support	FTS	Choose to cheer for favorite team rather than derogate rival or acknowledge the relationship	“Go BYU”
Favorite Team Pessimism	FTP	Showing some form of pessimism about the favorite team’s performance	“Gig ‘em” – We are doing well now, but I am sure they will find a way to lose

<i>Category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Statement of Faction	SF	Fan trying to state a fact in a somewhat neutral manner. The reliability is irrelevant. What is important is that the fan believes they are stating a fact	– The other team/candidate cheated to win their last game/election
Derogation 3—Low	D3	Mostly playful jokes at rival team	“Saw Varsity’s Horns Off” “USC Trojan fans are obnoxious” “Alabama is a bunch of cheaters” “Utes suck!”
Derogation 2—Moderate	D2	Use of stronger language or curse words to describe rival team, allege rival of inappropriate behavior	
Derogation 1—High	D1	Use of threatening words (e.g., hate) or wishing physical harm (e.g., death) to describe the rival and fan/supporter base	“I would don a turban if the (rival team) were playing the Taliban” “If an atomic bomb went off and destroyed the entire university and killed everyone enrolled in it as well as their coaches, I would rejoice”

Table 3.2 Comparison between college football fans and presidential debate commenters

<i>Category</i>	<i>College football</i> (n = 1,548 ^a)		<i>Presidential debates</i> (n = 1,868 ^a)	
	n	%	n	%
<i>Acknowledge theme*</i> $z = -2.28, p = 0.023$	136	10.09	235	12.57
Acknowledgment good (AG) ^{***} $z = 10.20, p < 0.001$	97	6.27	6	0.32
Acknowledgement neutral (AN) $z = 0.60, p = 0.54$	36	2.33	38	2.03
Acknowledgment Bad (AB) ^{***} $z = -0.45, p < 0.001$	23	1.49	191	10.22
<i>Game theme***</i> $z = 6.22, p < 0.001$	1,070	69.12	1,098	58.78
Support Rival (SR) $z = 6.34, p < 0.001$	42	2.71	3	0.16
Favorite Team Support (FTS) ^{***} $z = 3.82, p < 0.001$	204	13.18	169	9.05
Favorite Team Pessimism (FTP) ^{***} $z = 6.70, p < 0.001$	50	3.23	5	0.27
Statement of Faction (SF) $z = 0.41, p = 0.68$	774	50	921	49.3
<i>Derogation***</i> $z = -5.24, p < 0.001$	322	20.80	535	28.64
Derogation 3—Low (D3) ^{**} $z = 2.57, p < 0.01$	230	14.86	222	11.88
Derogation 2—Moderate (D2) ^{***} $z = -6.73, p < 0.001$	68	4.39	197	10.55
Derogation 1—High (D1) ^{***} $z = 9.52, p < 0.001$	24	1.55	116	6.21

^aCodes Used in Analysis

*Significant at 0.05 level

**Significant at 0.01 level

***Significant at 0.001 level

Source <https://www.socscistatistics.com/tests/ztest/default2.aspx>

Regarding the Game theme, most comments in both college football and the presidential debates were coded into what was known as a Statement of Faction (College Football—50%; Presidential Debates (49.3%). By far the most frequently identified code, it seems about half of all comments were believe to be facts by the individual posting. Regarding college football rivalry games, other Game theme comments fell into supporting the favorite team (13.18%), favorite team pessimism (3.23%), and support for the rival (2.71%). Regarding the presidential debates, other Game theme comments were coded into being supportive for the favorite candidate (9.05%), followed by displaying pessimism for the favorite candidate (0.27%), and support for the rival (0.16%).

Finally, college football comments coded into the Derogation theme fell into low derogation or making funny jokes about the rival team (14.86%), moderate derogation or making stronger statements about the rival team (4.39%), and those that were highly derogative of the rival team (e.g., making threatening statements about the rival team (1.55%). Derogatory comments made during the presidential debates fell into low derogation (11.88%), moderate derogation (10.55%), and high derogation (6.21%).

Research Question 2 investigated whether the comments left in online chatrooms regarding college football rivalry games or presidential debates differed in frequency, and if so, which group of commenters left significantly more comment types. To analyze this question, a test of two population proportions was run for each comment and theme type. Regarding the Acknowledge theme, there were a significantly larger proportion left in political chatrooms (12.57%) than in college football chatrooms (10.09%). Regarding comments falling into the Game theme, there were significantly more left in chatrooms surrounding college football games (69.12%) than during the presidential debates (58.78%). Considering the Derogation theme, comments left during the presidential debates (28.64%) were proportionally higher than in college football games (20.80%).

Looking at individual comment codes, there were significant differences regarding seven categories. Comments left in college football chatrooms were of significantly higher proportion when acknowledging

the good nature of the rivalry (College Football—6.27%; Presidential Debates—0.32%), along with showing support (College Football—2.71%; Presidential Debates—0.16%) and pessimism (College Football—3.23%; Presidential Debates—0.27%) about the favorite team, and playfully derogating (Low D3) the rival team (College Football—14.86%; Presidential Debates—11.88%). Comments left during the presidential debates were significantly higher when acknowledging the negative nature of the rivalry (Presidential Debates—10.22%; College Football—1.49%); moderate (D2) derogation (Presidential Debates—10.55%; College Football—4.39%), and highly derogating (High D1) the rival or opponent (Presidential Debates—6.21%; College Football—1.55%).

DISCUSSION

The current study investigated the types of comments left in online chatrooms during the three presidential debates and three college football rivalry games. Results showed that comments either acknowledged the nature of the rivalry, commented on the contest (i.e., game/rivalry or debate/political rivalry), or found a way to derogate the rival group—ranging from playful jokes to wishing harm on out-group members.

The current study also found that the proportion of types of comments significantly differed between the political and sport setting. Specifically, a higher proportion of comments left in the sport setting tended to be more positive than in the political setting. For example, the comments more likely to show up in a chatroom about a college football game either acknowledged the good nature of the rivalry, expressed support or concern about the favorite team, or made playful jokes at the rival team's expense. On the other hand, comments left during the three presidential debates tended to be more negative in nature, either through discussing the negative nature of the competition or rivalry, or using strong language to derogate a rival, and even wishing ill will or harm upon out-group members.

To recap, fans in both the sport and political setting are in a position where they can directly compare to another group vicariously through their favorite teams or political candidates and parties. Further, the comparison of chat room comments left in both sport and politics point to a willingness of fans to engage in comparison by highlighting their in-groups positive attributes and their out-groups perceived failures. Finally, people participating in chatrooms during the three presidential debates

tended to leave more negative comments about the competition/rivalry, or the out-group than people participating in chatrooms about college football.

The online comments posted in chatrooms surrounding the 2016 Presidential Debates and three college football rivalry games indicates that the amount of negativity toward a rival group may be more negative in the political spectrum than the sport setting. These findings suggest that future inquiry and analysis be conducted regarding fan negativity toward rival groups in various settings. For instance, based on findings to this point, one could hypothesize that rivalry in sport is associated with more negativity toward out-groups than in other popular culture settings. However, one area where rivalry could lead to more negativity toward out-groups than the sport setting is the political spectrum. Therefore, we call for researchers to pursue this thread of inquiry. Doing so can not only add to our knowledge of rivalry, but also suggest potential ways to decrease negativity between rival group members.

Implications and Future Directions for Investigation

The current study carries important implications and areas for researchers engaged in investigating group members and competing group dynamics. First, of paramount importance is gaining further understanding and attempting to decrease negativity among groups. The findings first illustrated what types of comments people leave in online chatrooms when they are competing with or being compared to a rival group. People choose to provide commentary on the nature of the competition, on the competition itself, or find ways to derogate the rival group. This extends literature in both the sport and political settings, especially considering the types of comments about the nature of competition and rivalry. In the current landscape within sport and politics, it is important to know that some people choosing to engage in online commentary are not necessarily *only* choosing one side over the other; instead leaving comments about the general nature of the competition in focus. This finding also provides practitioners better understand group members, and provides respite to beliefs that people participate in online communication to voice derogatory information about and out-group. In fact, the comments most frequently left in both setting (50% in sport, 49.3% in politics) voiced support for their in-group. However, this does not necessarily suggest that these commenters chose not to derogate a rival group, as the current

analysis pulled first-order themes and categories⁹. This provides areas for future investigation to better understand whether people choose to praise an in-group over derogating and out-group, or if in fact people do both simultaneously. Additionally, in this vein, future research could focus on understanding what type of people leave comments focused on supporting a favorite group, derogating a rival group, or participating in both practices.

The current study added to the literature on social media's role in group member discourse (Wojcieszak & Mutz, 2009), and negativity among rival groups (Dalakas et al., 2015; Ewing et al., 2013; Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014; Tucker, 2017), by comparing the sport context to the political context. Doing so, the current study illustrated that comments left in online chatrooms were proportionally more negative to overall comments made than in the sport setting. This important finding may suggest that political discourse has the ability to foster more negativity among supporters and participants than sport does. One potential reason for this could be the divisive nature of political new sources (e.g., right-leaning Fox News, left-leaning MSNBC vs. more-neutral CNN). While contrary to research involving sport and other entertainment options (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard, Wann et al., 2020), it is understandable considering the importance people assign to politics.

People also vote for their chosen candidates in politics, so they build a strong affiliation with the individual that represents their group, and that individual becomes *Our Choice*. Because of the voting process, and the strong affiliation with a chosen candidate, people may feel more of need to even responsibility to show derogation toward their political candidate to help their chosen individual elected. This is not present in the sport setting, as people do not weigh in on personnel decisions to the same extent as in the political landscape (e.g., at the ballot box). Further, as previously discussed, the people posting in online chatrooms, or the vocal minority (Bolce et al., 1996), are highly engaged supporting their candidate or team, and because social media plays a significant role in society, the messages they leave and items they share can go a long way to further promoting ideas and views to other consumers of online content (Xie, et al., 2011). For this reason, people who would otherwise not post or share stories online may choose to do so in politics because they see the

⁹ Comments were coded into a single category that represented the overall sentiment perceived by the investigators.

stakes as high. Further, as the 2020 United States election cycle ramps up in intensity, and with the current knowledge that content shared during the 2016, 2018, *and now* 2020 elections were not all accurate, the current studies' findings are very important in (1) understanding how the vocal minority, and therefore, agents hoping to spread messages supporting certain positions can influence the general public, and (2) appreciating the need for disseminating accurate information via the Internet, chat rooms, and social networking in the public sphere.

When considering steps to decrease negativity among rival group members, theories and hypotheses from social psychology can provide potential avenues. First, identity foreclosure, or identifying with one group, can lead fans to exhibit more negativity toward an out-group (Beamon, 2012). This occurs because when a person only has one group or interest in which to derive vicarious experiences, when that group is unsuccessful, the individual has little other outlets he/she can look to in order to feel better. Therefore, when experiencing a form of failure, someone that experiences identity foreclosure may take out their disappointment through negativity toward an out-group, which is a common human practice (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980). It is recommended that individuals diversify the groups in which they seek membership or identity. To help with this endeavor, practitioners can implement promotions that highlight the need for individuals to identify with multiple groups. For example, an advertisement featuring political candidates and supporters participating in multiple activities could help relay a message that people should have multiple interests and groups in which they belong. Doing so not only attracts more supporters based on interests and activities, but also suggests supporters diversify their group memberships, which can help group members cope with vicarious perceived failure without having to explicitly stating this point.

On this note, a potential avenue for decreasing out-group negativity is to use the common in-group model (Gaertner et al., 1993). This in turn asserts that the more groups in which someone has membership, the more positive their interactions with out-group members can be. Recent comparisons of rivalry in sport and other popular culture settings revealed that people identified as fans of multiple genres reported more positive views toward all relevant rival groups. This further supports the need for individuals to seek membership in multiple groups, and practices should be implemented to encourage them to do so. Additionally, organizing events where opposing group memberships are found supporting the

same cause, such as athletic events honoring the military, cancer research, and other worthy causes can help decrease out-group derogation and negativity, even if only momentarily. Doing this in message boards, home to many members of the vocal minority, could potentially carry positive ramifications for others online and the larger society.

Extended contact hypothesis states that an individual seeing someone he/she likes or admires with an out-group member may increase empathy toward the relevant out-group (Zhou et al., 2018). Further, the more someone spends time with an out-group member, the more likely they are to build a rapport with, understand, and seek to find common ground with said out-group member. Hibbing et al. (2008) argue that attempting to understand what influences someone from a differing political party or persuasion, or a different view may not entirely bring an end to negativity toward the out-group member, but may at least allow people from different ends of a political spectrum or view to interact in more positive ways. Therefore, practitioners and the general public should seek opportunities to identify common interests between rival groups in an effort to encourage more positive interactions between group members. One example of such an opportunity is illustrating that people whom identify as Republicans/conservatives and Democrats/liberals support the same sport team. Doing so allows group members to see that even though they may find themselves in different groups in the political setting, they in fact belong to the same in-group where their favorite team is involved. The more these fans gather to support their favorite teams, the more likely they are to find other similarities, even if they will never agree on political ideology. In this way, employing the extended contact hypothesis seeks to build community within and among groups, which is the frame in which Peter Longo discusses politics in his book *Great Plains Politics* (2018).

The current study investigated the comments participants left in online sport and political chatrooms. The paper and findings suggest that people choosing to communicate their feelings about sport and political rivals online typically acknowledge the nature of the relationship, individual contests or competitions, and derogate out-group members. Further, a higher proportion of negative comments about an out-group appear in the political setting than in the sport setting. Further, the current study offers several potential avenues for decreasing negativity among rival groups and their members, and therefore our final call to action is for researchers from political science and popular culture to seek new avenues

of inquiry in an attempt to address in-group bias and out-group derogation and negativity. In conclusion, we currently sit at an important point in our culture where the steps taken to either bring together or further separate group members, whether in sport, politics, or other settings, will play a very important role in shaping the future of society and interactions among group members. The current study is meant to be a call to action for researchers and practitioners from various fields to address such a challenge, and provide further support to those interested in the endeavor.

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Are You Team Apple or Team Samsung? Investigating Rivalry in Sport and Mobile Phone Brands

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Abstract The current study investigated rival perceptions and likely behaviors in the sport and mobile phone settings. In particular, perceptions and likely behaviors of relevant out-groups were compared in the sport setting with users of Apple and Samsung mobile phones. Findings indicate that fans of sport teams reported higher identification with their favorite brands and more negativity toward the out-group than did users/fans of Apple and Samsung mobile phones. Additionally, being a fan of *both* a sport team and either Apple or Samsung mobile phones was correlated with more positive perceptions of the in-group and out-group. Finally, users of Samsung phones reported more satisfaction when their favorite brand compares favorably to Apple than vice versa. Implications and future research are discussed.

Keywords Rivalry · Sport · Mobile phones · Out-group derogation · Fan behavior

In a contemporary consumer culture, people typically seek to derive favorable outcomes from the products they purchase (Zaichowsky, 1985). This occurs because social identity theory (SIT) influences the way people associate with other individuals and groups (Rubin & Hewstone, 1998; Tajfel, 1978). Therefore, based on what people believe the consumption of products will relay about them to others, they will purchase and use products they believe will illustrate a positive impression to others (Zaichowsky, 1994) and enhance their self-esteem in the process (Madrigal, 1995). In this way, SIT impacts the sport teams we follow and the products we consume, including mobile phones (Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014).

One way to ensure that people experience high self-esteem and gain positive perceptions from others is to compare favorably to another individual or group (Turner, 1975, 1982). One can achieve this by identifying with a victorious individual or group, thereby garnering the vicarious success of another (Bandura, 1977), and by comparing favorably to another (Cialdini & De Nicholas, 1989). If someone cannot experience success either through direct or vicarious competition (Cialdini et al., 1976; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Snyder et al., 1986), they can also attempt to experience favorable comparisons by derogating others (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980).

The current study investigated the influence of the presence and competition of a rival brand on fan and consumer perceptions and likely behaviors. The current study also extends previous research about the rivalry phenomenon by examining its impact in a sport and non-sport setting (Havard, 2020b). To do that, fans of sport and fans/users of the Apple and Samsung mobile phone brands reported their perceptions and likely behaviors toward relevant out-groups. The continual investigation of the rivalry phenomenon and group member behavior in sport and non-sport settings is important to further understand the human condition and also carries implications for marketers and managers.

BACKGROUND

SIT states that people will associate with others and consume products based on what those actions will say about the individual (Tajfel, 1978; Zaichowsky, 1994). For example, someone can join a group they believe represents themselves or illustrates desired attributes and characteristics (Aden, 2008). Further, SIT can influence someone to join a group of

others that share similar interests (Rubin & Hewstone, 1998; Tajfel, 1981), and in cases adopt the characteristics of that group (Ashmore et al., 2004; Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). However, when two groups meet and competition ensues (Sherif, 1966), group members can begin to display bias toward their in-group, and derogation toward the out-group (Turner, 1982). Further, the competition that rises to the level of rivalry can increase positive outcomes such as group member effort (Kilduff et al., 2010) and influence strategy (Converse & Reinhard, 2016; Spinda & Havard, 2016). However, there also exists negative behaviors such as out-group derogation (Turner, 1982), biased evaluations of group members (Wann & Dolan, 1994; Wann & Grieve, 2005), and stereotyping (Maass et al., 1989).

Rivalry

Rivalry occurs when competition between groups rises to the point in which each views the other as a threat to the in-group and in-group members (Tyler Cobbs, 2015). Rivalry is present between groups on a continuous basis, but can be increased when the two meet in direct competition (Converse & Reinhard, 2016) and indirect competition (Havard, 2014). Much academic research on the rivalry phenomenon has been conducted in the sport setting because of the competitive nature of groups and teams (Havard, 2018), with authors offering insights that can be used in non-sport settings (Havard, 2018; 2020a; Kilduff, 2014; Kilduff et al., 2016).

Rivalry has been defined as a “a fluctuating adversarial relationship between two teams, players, fans, or groups of fans, gaining significance through on-field or off-field incidences, proximity, demographic makeup, and/or historical occurrence(s)” (Havard, Gray et al., 2013, p. 51). Other characteristics and antecedents contributing to rivalry are perceived fairness, similarities and dissimilarities of groups, competition for personnel, and parity (Kilduff et al., 2010; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015). This definition and antecedents of rivalry can be applied to the relationship between Apple and Samsung as both are competing at the top of their product segments, compete over the latest technology, and have often compared or been compared by others regarding their business models, latest versions of hardware, and advertising messaging (Cain, 2020).

Rivalry can be influenced by competition level and setting (Cobbs et al., 2017; Havard & Hutchinson, 2017; Havard, 2016; Havard & Reams, 2016; Havard, Ryan et al., 2019), geography (Cobbs et al., 2019), importance of competitor (Havard & Reams, 2018; Havard, Ryan et al., 2018; Tyler & Cobbs, 2017), competition outcomes (Havard, Reams et al., 2013), promotional messages and advertisements (Nichols et al., 2020; Havard, Ferrucci et al., 2021; Havard, Wann et al., 2018), gender (Havard, Achen et al., 2020; Havard, Eddy et al., 2016), ethnicity (Havard, Fuller et al., 2020), and change in competition (Havard & Eddy, 2013; Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2017; Havard, Wann, Ryan et al., 2017). In turn, rivalry can influence consumption via a willingness to pay price premiums (Sanford & Scott, 2016), wearing branded merchandise (Kwak et al., 2015), watching on television (Havard, Shapiro et al., 2016; Mahony & Moorman, 1999), sponsorships (Angell et al., 2016; Bee & Dalakas, 2013; Bee et al., 2019; Dalakas & Levin, 2005; Davies et al., 2006), feelings of uniqueness (Berendt & Uhrich, 2016; Berendt et al., 2018; Delia, 2015; Smith & Schwartz, 2003), displays of group affiliation (Kimble & Cooper, 1992), and the way news stories are cognitively evaluated about the rival (Havard & Eddy, 2019).

Rival Perceptions and Behaviors

We have seen that the way people view and discuss actions of the in-group and out-group is influenced by rivalry (Maass et al., 1989). More striking, rivalry can also influence the trust someone sees in others (MacDonald et al., 2013), descriptions of in-group and out-group member behavior and performance (Wann & Dolan, 1994; Wann et al., 2006; Wann & Greive, 2005), stereotyping behavior (Bruneau & Saxe, 2010; Maass et al., 1989; Partridge & Wann, 2015; Wenger & Brown, 2014; Westen et al., 2006), willingness to engage in verbal aggression (Wann et al., 2017), and willingness to consider committing anonymous aggression toward out-group members (Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2017; Wann et al., 2003; Wann et al., 1999; Wann & Waddill, 2013).

The Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS) was developed and validated to measure the way people perceive their relevant out-group (Havard, Gray et al., 2013; Havard et al., 2021a). In particular, the RPS measures fan (1) likelihood to support a rival through indirect competition, (2) the satisfaction experienced when an in-group defeats or compares favorably to an out-group, (3) perceptions of the behavior out-group members, and

(4) perceptions of out-group prestige. In that manner, the RPS focuses on both likely behaviors (#1 and #2) and perceptions (#3 and #4) of the out-group, and also on competitive (#1 and #2) and non-competitive (#3 and #4) factors. The RPS has been utilized to compare out-group perceptions and likely behaviors in sport with settings such as comics (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020), theme parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021a), online gaming (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021), and politics (Havard & Longo et al., 2021).

Rivalry can also influence people to celebrate failure by an out-group. Schadenfreude (Heider, 1958) is the action of someone taking pleasure in the demise of someone else. This has been seen in the sport setting (Boecker, 2021; Cikara et al., 2011; Cikara & Fiske, 2012; Dalakas et al., 2015; Lalonde, 1992; Leach et al., 2003; Zillman et al., 1989), and consumer products (Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014; Zillman & Cantor, 1976). Whereas rivalry does not have to be present for schadenfreude to be activated, Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORFing) is activated when a group considered a rival experience some sort of indirect failure (Havard, 2014; Havard, Inoue et al., 2018). Therefore, the GORFing measure was developed to gage the likelihood of people to experience the outcome when a rival group experiences indirect failure (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017). Finally, regarding negativity, research suggests that people who identify with multiple groups indicate less negativity toward out-groups than those that identify with only one group (Beamon, 2012; Gaertner et al., 1993).

Apple vs. Samsung Rivalry

Samsung is the older company, being founded in 1938 as a trading company and transitioning to the manufacture of electronic devices in the 1960s (Burriss, 2020), whereas Apple was founded in 1976 as an alternative computer company to the stalwarts at the time. After struggling as a company, Jobs was re-established as CEO of Apple and introduced the iPod. When faced with uncertainty regarding flash memory in the iPod, Jobs met with Samsung executives in which they pitched a memory solution for the device (Apple vs Samsung, n.d.). This agreement between the two companies was seemingly an effort to assist Apple with memory while allowing Samsung to make a profit from their new technology. However, a few years later the true intentions of the relationship would be revealed (Cain, 2020) as Samsung purchased a company to gain control of and sell Android phones.

In 2007, Apple introduced the first iPhone which set the company as the standard bearer in the mobile phone market (Weinberger & Hartmans, 2020). In 2011, Samsung would acquire companies that would allow them to release their Galaxy phone models (Burris, 2020). It was the 2005 meeting and agreement that provided Samsung the ability to compete with Apple in the mobile phone market (Cain, 2020). Since 2012, Samsung has consistently owned more share of the mobile phone market, with each company performing best in their respective home countries (Apple vs Samsung, n.d.).

The relationship between the two companies, which started amicably and devolved to all-out rivalrous, also carries over to consumers. Since the first Samsung advertisement poking fun at Apple (Cain, 2020), consumers have consistently been faced with the decision of which product they want to purchase. In fact, focus groups sponsored by Samsung about consumer behavior had to separate users of the two companies because people would argue rather than provide useful interview information (Cain, 2020). Surrounding each release of a new product, fans of both companies go online to praise their favorite brand, and derogate the rival brand. In fact, consumers of Apple and Samsung take to the Internet to exhibit their in-group bias, out-group derogation, and willingness to celebrate failure by the rival company (Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014).

The Current Study

The current study compared perceptions and likely behaviors toward out-groups among fans of sport and mobile phone consumers. First, the brand identification, brand attitude, and out-group perceptions and likely behaviors were compared between participants that reported being a fan of *only* sport or mobile phone brands. Based on prior research (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard, Wann et al., 2021a), we expected differences in mean scores between the sport and mobile phone setting. The following hypothesis is offered:

H1: Significant differences in identification, attitudes, perceptions, and likely behaviors toward favorite and rival brands will exist between fans of sport and consumers of mobile phones.

Second, in order to investigate the presence of the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993), we compared perceptions and likely behaviors of the out-group among participants that reported being *only* a fan of sport

or mobile phones or being a fan of *both* sport and mobile phones. The following hypotheses were developed:

H2: Perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups will significantly differ between fans of *only* sport and fans of *both* sport and mobile phones.

H3: Perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups will significantly differ between fans of *only* mobile phone and fans of *both* mobile phones and sport.

Finally, the current study also investigated differences in rival perceptions and likely behaviors among fans of Apple and Samsung mobile phone brands. The following research question is offered:

RQ1: Perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups will significantly differ between fans of Apple and Samsung.

METHOD

An online survey was built using Qualtrics software and distributed via Amazon MTurk. The survey began by asking participants to identify if they were a fan of a sport team, a mobile phone brand, or both a sport team and a mobile phone brand. Based on this response, participants were then instructed to complete the instrument on questions about their favorite and rival sport brands, mobile phone brands, or both sport and mobile phone brands.

Instrument and Participants

After participants responded to the first branching question,¹ the instrument contained five distinct sections, with participants completing a minimum of three and maximum of seven sections. The first section asked participants to identify their favorite sport team, the team they consider their biggest rival, and a team that is comparable to their biggest rival

¹ A branch question is one that dictates what questions participants will answer throughout the survey based on their responses.

other than the favorite team.² For sport fans, responses for the identified favorite, rival, and comparable teams were piped through the rest of the survey to provide context. For mobile phone fans, the brand they identified as a favorite was piped through the rest of the survey, and the brand *not chosen* as favorite was treated as the rival brand and piped through the survey. Participants then completed questions regarding identification and attitude toward their favorite team.

In the second section, participants reported attitudes, perceptions, and likely behaviors toward the rival sport team. Sections three and four required participants to identify and report their attitudes, perceptions, and likely behaviors toward their (3) favorite and (4) rival mobile phone brands. The final Section (5) contained demographic questions. Based on responses to the initial branching question, sport fans completed sections #1, #2, and #5, mobile phone fans complete sections #3, #4, and #5, and fans of *both* a sport team and a mobile phone brand completed all sections.

Favorite brand identification in sport was measured using the Sport Spectator Identification Scale-Revised (SSIS-R) and a modified version was used for mobile phone brands (James et al., 2019). All eight items were used in the sport setting (1 = *Little Identification* to 8 = *High Identification*) and six were used in the mobile phone setting. Participant attitudes toward favorite and rival were measured using a five-item semantic differential scale (1 = *Negative Attitude* to 5 = *Positive Attitude*) (Spears & Singh, 2004).

Next, participant perceptions and likely behaviors toward the rival sport and mobile phone brand were measured using the RPS (Havard, Gray et al., 2013) described above. The four facet, twelve-item scale utilizes a seven-point likert scale. Higher scores on the RPS indicate more negative perceptions and likely behaviors toward the rival group with the exception of willingness to support the rival in indirect competition. Participant likelihood to celebrate indirect failure by the rival group was measured using the four-item, seven-point GORFing scale (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017).

² Participants identified a comparable team to their biggest rival in order to (1) ensure data integrity (people who did not identify or named a team that did not compete against the favorite or rival team were removed), and (2) as a primer for GORFing questions later in the survey.

A total of 205 participants provided useable results. Participant gender was male (61.5%), followed by female (38.5%), and Caucasian (56.5%), followed by Asian (18.8%), African American (12.4%), and Hispanic (8.6%), with 3.8% choosing not to disclose. Regarding fandom, most respondents were fans of *both* a sport team and mobile phone brand (47.3%), followed by fans of *only* mobile phones (43.4%) and fans of *only* a sport team (9.3%). Finally, among mobile phone brands, a slim majority of participants reported being a fan/consumer of Samsung (51.1%) versus Apple (48.9%).

RESULTS

All items for the scales utilized in the current study were averaged so that one data point was available for each participant measure. Scales used in analysis displayed reliability (Table 4.1) with alpha ranging from 0.719 to 0.976. Overall, participants were highly identified with their favorite sport teams and mobile phone brands and reported positive attitudes respectively. Regarding rival brands, sport fans reported negative attitudes, perceptions, and likely behaviors toward the rival team. Mobile phone fans generally reported more positive attitudes and perceptions of the rival brand.

Investigating the Hypotheses and Research Question

Hypothesis 1 stated that significant differences would exist regarding perceptions and likely behaviors among fans of *only* sport and fans of *only* mobile phone brands. A Multivariate Analysis was used to test the hypothesis, and a significant Wilk's Lambda was present 0.091 (6, 101) = 167.83, $p < 0.001$. Further, univariate analysis revealed that significant differences were present regarding identification with the brand ($F[1, 106] = 492.33, p < 0.001$), attitude toward the rival brand ($F[1, 106] = 5.68, p = 0.019$), willingness to support the rival brand in indirect competition ($F[1, 106] = 29.30, p < 0.001$), and satisfaction experienced when the favorite brand defeats or compares favorably to the rival brand ($F[1, 106] = 34.82, p < 0.001$). Descriptives are available in Table 4.2. Sport fans reported higher identification with their favorite brand and more satisfaction when defeating the rival than did fans of mobile phones. However, sport fans were also more likely to support their rival brand in indirect competition. Sport fans also reported more negative attitudes of the rival brand than did fans of mobile phones. Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 4.1 Descriptives and reliability of scales used in study

<i>Item</i>	M	SD	α
Sport Favorite Team Identification (SSIS-R)	6.28	1.54	0.927
Sport Favorite Team Attitude	6.29	0.89	0.913
Sport Rival Team Attitude	3.37	1.85	0.976
Sport Rival Team Support (OIC)	3.08	1.73	0.860
Sport Rival Team Fan Behavior (OB)	4.16	1.54	0.905
Sport Rival Team Prestige (OP)	3.66	1.69	0.831
Sport Rival Team Sense of Satisfaction (SoS)	5.54	1.39	0.861
Sport Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORF)	4.60	1.59	0.912
Mobile Phone Favorite Brand Identification (SSIS-R)	5.34	1.61	0.872
Mobile Phone Favorite Brand Attitude	6.15	0.96	0.930
Mobile Phone Rival Brand Attitude	4.42	1.54	0.951
Mobile Phone Rival Brand Support (OIC)	4.18	1.27	0.719
Mobile Phone Rival Brand Fan Behavior (OB)	3.75	1.74	0.893
Mobile Phone Rival Brand Prestige (OP)	3.64	1.66	0.845
Mobile Phone Rival Brand Sense of Satisfaction (SoS)	4.60	1.56	0.860
Mobile Phone Rival Brand Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORF)	4.21	1.56	0.829

Table 4.2 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by sport vs. mobile phones

<i>Item</i>	<i>Sport</i>		<i>Mobile</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand identification	5.62 [^]	1.60	1.72 [^]	0.25
Attitude toward Favorite brand	5.70	1.18	6.07	0.90
Attitude toward Rival Brand	3.74 [*]	1.85	4.62 [*]	1.37
Out-group Indirect Competition	5.02 [^]	0.82	4.14 [^]	0.61
Out-Group Prestige	4.82	0.78	4.94	0.80
Out-Group Behavior	4.32	1.31	4.56	0.89
Sense of Satisfaction	5.81 [^]	1.18	4.55 [^]	0.76
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.17	1.36	4.55	0.76

^{*}Significant at 0.05 level

[^]Significant at 0.01 level

To test the presence of the common in-group, Hypotheses 2 and 3 stated that significant differences would be present regarding people that report being a fan of *only* sport (H2) and *only* mobile phones (H3)

and those that reported being a fan of *both* sport and mobile phones. A significant Wilk's Lambda $0.818(8,107) = 2.99, p = 0.005$ indicated significant differences were present between fans of *only* sport and *both* sport and mobile phones. Specifically, being a fan of *both* sport and mobile phones was correlated to higher identification with the favorite team ($F[1, 114] = 4.23, p = 0.042$) and more positive attitudes toward the rival brand ($F[1, 114] = 10.62, p = 0.001$) (Table 4.3). The significant Wilk's Lambda in Hypothesis 3 ($0.916[8, 177] = 2.03, p = 0.046$) indicated differences between fans of *only* mobile phones and fans of *both* mobile phones and a sport team. Specifically, being a fan of *both* a mobile phone brand and a sport team was correlated with more positivity toward the rival mobile phone brand regarding out-group member behavior ($F[1, 184] = 8.50, p = 0.004$), prestige of the out-group ($F[1, 184] = 7.81, p = 0.006$), and willingness to celebrate rival indirect failure ($F[1, 184] = 7.39, p = 0.007$). However, being a fan of *both* a mobile phone brand and a sport team was correlated to less willingness to support a rival in indirect competition ($F[1, 184] = 5.28, p = 0.023$) Table 4.4). Hypotheses 3 and 4 were supported.

Finally, Research Question 1 investigated whether fans of Apple and Samsung would differ in their perceptions and likely behaviors toward each other. A significant Wilk's Lambda ($0.818[8, 80] = 2.22, p = 0.034$) indicated differences were present. Namely, Samsung fans reported

Table 4.3 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by fans of sport vs. fans of sport and mobile phones

Item	Sport		Sport & Mobile	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	5.62*	1.60	6.41*	1.50
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	5.70*	1.18	6.40*	0.78
Attitude toward Rival Brand	3.74	1.85	3.30	1.85
Out-group Indirect Competition	3.30	1.95	3.04	1.69
Out-Group Prestige	3.51	1.63	3.69	1.71
Out-Group Behavior	4.32	1.31	4.13	1.58
Sense of Satisfaction	5.81	1.18	5.49	1.43
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.17	1.36	4.68	1.63

*Significant at 0.05 level

^Significant at 0.01 level

Table 4.4 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by fans of mobile phones vs. fans of mobile phones and sport

<i>Item</i>	<i>Mobile</i>		<i>Mobile & Sport</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	5.52	1.51	5.18	1.68
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.07	0.90	6.23	1.04
Attitude toward Rival Brand	4.62	1.37	4.25	1.67
Out-group Indirect Competition	4.40*	1.25	3.98*	1.27
Out-Group Prestige	3.99*	1.57	3.32*	1.69
Out-Group Behavior	4.13*	1.65	3.40*	1.75
Sense of Satisfaction	4.79	1.34	4.42	1.73
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.52*	1.44	3.91*	1.61

*Significant at 0.05 level

^Significant at 0.01 level

Table 4.5 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by fans of Apple and Samsung

<i>Item</i>	<i>Apple</i>		<i>Samsung</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	5.81	1.20	5.23	1.72
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.09	0.84	6.06	0.96
Attitude toward Rival Brand	4.68	1.21	4.55	1.51
Out-group Indirect Competition	4.30	1.15	3.97	1.35
Out-Group Prestige	4.02	1.38	3.97	1.74
Out-Group Behavior	3.84	1.74	4.40	1.52
Sense of Satisfaction	4.45*	1.35	5.13*	1.25
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.42	1.40	4.63	1.49

*Significant at 0.05 level

^Significant at 0.01 level

experiencing more satisfaction when defeating or comparing favorably to Apple than vice versa ($F[1, 87] = 5.93, p = 0.017$). Descriptive statistics are available in Table 4.5.

DISCUSSION

The current study investigated perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival out-groups in the sport and mobile phone setting. Before proceeding, it is appropriate to address a potential limitation to the findings. While collecting data using Amazon MTurk allows for more people to participate in the current study, focusing specifically on groups of identified fans of sports teams and avid mobile phone fans/users may have yielded different results. Even with the potential limitation, the findings of the current study carry important implications for both academics and practitioners, which will be discussed below.

First, fans of sport were more positive toward their favorite brand and more negative toward their rival out-group than were fans of mobile phone brands with the exception of reporting a higher likelihood of supporting the out-group in indirect competition. This is mostly consistent with previous findings that rivalry and out-group negativity is greater in the sport setting than a non-sport setting (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard, Wann et al., 2021a). The finding that mobile fans were less likely to support the rival brand in indirect competition is somewhat contradictory to previous studies and points to an important aspect of mobile phone fandom. Namely, rivalry within the mobile phone setting, and the need for the favorite brand to compare favorably to the rival brand, is intense for fans and consumers. This behavior in particular is consistent with online behavior among mobile phone fans (Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014).

Findings in the current study also supported previous research that people whom belong to multiple groups report more positive perceptions and likely behaviors toward out-groups than those that belong to *only* one group (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard, Wann et al., 2021a). This suggests that practicing the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) correlates with more positivity toward rival out-groups than identity foreclosure. This is potentially due to the fact that many people own a mobile phone and, if they are a fan of sport, probably use it to follow their favorite teams and keep up with rival teams. Additionally, the advertisements produced in the mobile phone market many times place Samsung and Apple products in competition with each other. Therefore, one who is a fan of *both* a sport team and mobile phone brand has multiple settings to compare favorably to an out-group, thus increasing their feelings of self-esteem (Madrigal, 1995).

The current study also investigated differences in rival group perceptions and likely behaviors among users of Apple and Samsung mobile phone brands. Similar comparisons have been made using fans of Disney Parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021b; Havard, Wann et al., 2021), online and platform gamers (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021), and politics (Havard & Longo, 2021). The finding that Samsung users experience more satisfaction when their favorite brand compares favorably to Apple is similar to Playstation users reporting more negativity toward Xbox discussed in chapter 2.

Implications and Future Research

The current study joins other investigations of rivalry group member behavior in and out of sport in framing future understanding of group membership and the human condition. For academics, the current study provides further support that sport fans report more negativity toward rival out-groups in most settings. It also joins previous research (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020; Havard, Wann et al., 2021a) in supporting the positive outcomes of the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993). To this end, future investigations of rivalry and group member behavior in and out of the sport setting are needed to better understand our greater society.

Practitioners working within the sport and mobile phone settings can also find important conclusions from the current study. Namely, practitioners working with mobile phone brands may find it interesting that the competition between Apple and Samsung is intense, potentially due to the commercials typically produced by Samsung comparing their products to Apple. It may be for this reason that Samsung users experience greater satisfaction when comparing favorably to Apple than vice versa. Future qualitative investigation of Apple and Samsung fans may help shed more light on the relationship between the two brands.

The current study also sheds light on the behaviors of people online regarding in-groups and out-groups. Specifically, the prevalence of people to participate in bullying activity, especially in the online environment (Beran, 2019), is of major consequence to academic, practitioners, and our greater society (Smith, 2011). Future research should focus on the impact of promotional messages and advertisements not only in the sport setting, but also the mobile phone setting. For example, rivalry in the United States is something that is celebrated and promoted (Havard,

2020b; Havard, Wann et al., 2018), whereas it has often been downplayed in international football (Berendt & Uhrich, 2017).³ Practitioners in turn should be cognizant of how the potential for advertisements and messaging surrounding an individual's choice of mobile phone brand can also influence others to engage in negative ways online. Future collaboration between academics and practitioners is necessary to better understand online behavior and diminish bullying behavior. Additionally, future qualitative research on the Apple and Samsung brands could focus on the competition and forced cooperation of the two companies. Samsung still exists as a supplier for Apple, adding a wrinkle to the relationship between the rivals. Further, some may consider Google to be a rival to Samsung or Apple, and future investigation could focus on these relationships.

The current study investigated rivalry and group member behavior in the sport and mobile phone settings. Results indicate that sport fans report stronger negative perceptions and likely behaviors than mobile phone users with the exception of being more likely to support the rival team in indirect competition. The common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) influences more positivity toward the out-group, and Samsung users experience more satisfaction from a positive direct comparison than do Apple users. As investigation of rivalry and group behavior expands into other non-sport settings, the current study adds to a growing body of work that suggests group behavior in sport is more negative than in the mobile phone setting.

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³ Acknowledging rivalry worked better to diminish out-group negativity than ignoring or attempting to downplay its significance.

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Rebels or Star Fleet? Investigating Rivalry in Sport and Star Wars/Star Trek Fandom

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Abstract The current study further investigated rivalry and group behavior by comparing the perceptions and likely behaviors of sport fans regarding their biggest rival teams to that of Star Wars and Star Trek fans. Results showed that sport fandom was correlated with more negativity toward the relevant rival than among science fiction fans. Further, being a fan of *both* a sport team and a science fiction brand was correlated with more negativity toward the sport rival but more positivity toward the relevant science fiction rival brand. Finally, fans of the Star Wars brand reported greater positivity toward their in-group and more negativity toward the Star Trek brand than the other way around. Discussion focuses on academic and practical implications, along with future avenues of research.

Keywords Rivalry · Out-group derogation · Sport · Science fiction · Star Wars · Star Trek

Group behavior and negativity toward relevant out-groups is a topic of great importance to collective society (Havard, 2020b). Gaining more

information about how groups interact, and especially how negative they can be toward each other, is imperative in finding a path forward for our society. To this point, the chapters of this book combined with other investigations have added a great deal of understanding to the literature on group behavior and rivalry. This chapter adds to previous studies by comparing the sport setting to an additional consumer setting, namely, fandom for science fiction.

Science fiction fandom encompasses many different brands and sub-genres. These sub-genres and fandom appeal are aptly summarized in the song *Science Fiction Double Feature* from *Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975). From the influence of popular characters like Flash Gordon and the Invisible Man to adventures in space, time, and monster invasions, the science fiction genre has entertained, brought people with similar interests together, and even caused friction between and among fans of popular brands and franchises. The current study targeted the science fiction franchises Star Wars and Star Trek to investigate and compare fandom, rivalry, and group member behavior with that of the sport setting. As we continue to gather more information about group member behavior and group negativity, the current study is important as it investigates the phenomena in consumer entertainment preferences.

BACKGROUND

Social identity theory (SIT) explains much of what happens regarding group affiliation, identification, and competition in our society (Tajfel, 1978). SIT states that people will join groups they believe will benefit them (Rubin & Hewstone, 1998; Tajfel, 1981). For example, someone may choose to identify a group in which they believe they share characteristics. In sport, someone believing they are hard-working may choose to affiliate with the Nebraska Huskers based on the perceptions of the athletics teams' work ethic (Aden, 2008). This is also seen in politics, where supporters of both major political parties in the United States view their identification with a group or brand as a product of what they believe to be important to society (Hibbing et al., 2008; Karnacki, 2018).

SIT can positively impact people through feeling of belongingness (Festinger, 1954; Mullin et al., 2014), affiliation or identification (Wann, 2006a; Wann, 2006b; Wann & Branscombe, 1993), and other positive benefits that come with group membership. Further, SIT and group affiliation also allows people to experience vicarious achievement when the

in-group is successful (Bandura, 1977), which is important to the human condition (Crocker & Park, 2004). While investigating this phenomenon, Cialdini et al. (1976) found that college students were more likely to wear clothing affiliated with their school's team following a victory than following a loss or a tie, and describe the outcome using words like *us* and *we*. SIT also influences people to experience feelings of loss when their favorite groups are unsuccessful (Bizman & Yinon, 2002; Wann & Branscombe, 1990). As a result, people are likely to distance from a group that experiences a form of failure (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Snyder et al., 1986) to protect their self and public image (Campbell et al., 2010; Kimble & Cooper, 1992; Madrigal, 1995).

A less positive outcome of SIT is that it can also influence people to show favoritism toward in-groups and in-group members over others (Turner, 1982). Examples of such favoritism is out-group stereotyping (Maass et al., 1989), negative views of out-group behavior (Wann & Dolan, 1995; Wann & Grieve, 2005), and out-group derogation (Havard, 2014; Havard, Reams et al., 2013). Out-group derogation occurs when two groups meet in a situation that allows for competition and comparison between the two (Sherif, 1966). Because comparison is one way for an individual to improve their self- and public image (Campbell et al., 2010; Turner, 1975), finding ways to prove better than someone else or another group is important for the human condition (Cialdini & De Nicholas, 1989; Festinger, 1954).

It is these comparisons and the competition that comes with them that leads to rivalry. Although rivalry has been defined many times in academia, with slight differences present, two will be used to inform the current study. First, from the sport context, rivalry is “a fluctuating adversarial relationship, existing between two teams, players, fans, or groups of fans, gaining significance through on-field competition, on-field or off-field incidences, proximity, demographic makeup, and/or historical occurrence(s)” (Havard, Gray et al., 2013, p. 51). Further, a rival group is “a highly salient out-group that poses an acute threat to the identity of the in-group or to the in-group members’ ability to make positive comparisons between their group and the out-group” (Tyler & Cobbs, 2015, p. 230). In addition to the characteristics discussed in these two definitions, variables leading to and/or contributing to rivalry include parity, memories, competition for personnel, and perceived group similarities and differences (Converse & Reinhard, 2016; Kilduff et al., 2010; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015).

As competition and comparison influences many aspects of society, rivalry has been used to inform many different settings. Sport provides an ideal setting for researchers to study competition, comparison, and group member behavior (Havard, 2019). Specifically, rivalry in the sport setting has been used to inform general business (Havard, 2018a; Kilduff, 2014; Killdfuff et al., 2010; Kilduff et al., 2016), strategic management (Havard, 2020a), consumer streaming entertainment (Havard, 2021), and fandom (Havard, 2018b).

Rival Group Behavior

When an individual chooses a group in which to seek membership, he/she can begin to take on characteristics of the collective (Ashmore et al., 2004; Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990), and take ownership and pride in the chosen in-group. When the in-group is challenged (Converse & Reinhard, 2016; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015), members have to find ways to display their superiority over relevant out-groups (Turner, 1975, 1982). As discussed, this can occur through direct and vicarious competition (Bandura, 1977), but behaviors such as derogation and in-group sympathy (e.g., assigning blame for in-group poor performance on cheating or unfair ruling by officials) can be used as well (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Sherif et al., 1961).

Specific to the rivalry phenomenon, it can be influenced by variables such as competition outcomes (Havard, Reams et al., 2013), composition, and change in competition situations (Cobbs et al., 2019; Cobbs et al., 2017; Havard & Eddy, 2013; Havard, 2016; Havard, & Reams, 2016; Havard et al., 2019; Havard, Wann, & Ryan, 2013, 2017; Havard, Wann, Ryan, & O'Neal, 2017; Tyler et al., 2017), and importance of rival groups (Tyler & Cobbs, 2017; Havard & Reams, 2018; Havard & Hutchinson, 2017; Havard, Ryan et al., 2018; Wann et al., 2016). Rivalry can also be influenced by mediated news stories (Havard, Ferrucci et al., 2021), along with advertisements and promotional messaging (Havard, Wann et al., 2018; Nichols et al., 2016; Nichols, Cobbs, & Tyler, 2019). In turn, the presence of rivalry can influence consumers regarding likelihood of watching live or mediated contests (Havard et al., 2016; Mahony & Moorman, 1999), paying price premiums (Sanford & Scott, 2016), wearing team-affiliated merchandise (Kwak et al., 2015), feelings of uniqueness from an out-group (Berendt & Uhrich, 2016;

Berendt et al., 2018), and closer bonding to an in-group (Delia, 2015; Leach et al., 2008; Smith & Schwartz, 2003).

Rivalry can also influence negativity among group members (Lee, 1985). For example, contests between rival teams were rated as more negative and violent than those between non-rival teams (Raney & Kinally, 2009). Along with stereotyping (Maass et al., 1989), the phenomenon can influence group members to rate behavior of out-group negatively (Havard & Eddy, 2019), the performance of out-group participants negatively (Wann et al., 2006), be more willing to engage in verbal abuse (Wann et al., 2017), and greater willingness to consider acts of anonymous aggression (Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2017; Wann et al., 1999, 2003; Wann & Waddill, 2013).

The way people perceive a relevant out-group has often been measured by the Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS), a four facet, twelve-item scale that addresses group member perceptions and likely behaviors toward groups (Havard, Gray et al., 2013). Specifically, the RPS measures how people (1) perceive prestige of the out-group and (2) behavior of out-group members. Regarding likely behaviors, the scale measures (3) how likely someone is to support an out-group in indirect competition, and (4) the satisfaction experienced when the in-group defeats or compares favorably to the out-group in direct competition.

Group members not only celebrate a victory or success by their favorite group, but also a failure, whether direct (Havard, Gray et al., 2013) or indirect (Cikara et al., 2011; Cikara & Fiske, 2012; Zillmann et al., 1989; Zillmann & Cantor, 1976) by a relevant rival group. *Schadenfreude* (Heider, 1958; Smith & van Dijk, 2018), or taking pleasure in the demise of another, has been found in sport (Leach & Spears, 2009; Leach et al., 2003) and non-sport settings (Berndsen & Feather, 2016; Berndsen et al., 2017; Dalakas et al., 2015; Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014). Where *schadenfreude* can be experienced without the direct presence of the rivalry phenomenon, Glory Out of Reflected Failure (Havard, 2014) is the likelihood of fans to experience joy and excitement, and feel better about their in-group and personal image when a rival group experiences some sort of failure (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017; Havard, Inoue et al., 2018; Havard, Ryan et al., 2020). It is the perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups that help uncover similarities and differences in-group member behavior in sport and non-sport setting used in the current study.

Star Trek vs. Star Wars

Star Trek first aired on television in 1966 (Howell, 2018). Created by Gene Roddenberry, a World War II veteran, Star Trek was set in the distant future and told an on-going story about a world war fought in space (Pruitt, 2019). The show broke many barriers in television entertainment, such as using a multicultural cast, and touching on subjects such as the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and interracial relationships (Pruitt, 2019). Since its beginning, Star Trek has enjoyed numerous television runs featuring different casts and timelines, along with movies and traveling exhibits. Because the mythos of Star Trek is set in the distant future (Kleinhenz, 2016), it has been used at various times to both teach about society's past, but also glean lessons for the future.

The Star Wars franchise on the other hand, is set *a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away*. The first *Star Wars* movie premiered in 1977 to public and critical acclaim. George Lucas, known due to his success with *American Graffiti* (1973), created a vast universe of characters constantly at the struggle for control of the galaxy (Klein, 2018). The franchise also dealt with real-world topics such as the Vietnam War, historical regimes, and George Lucas even revealed that the Star Wars story and the controlling empire was created as a reaction to the Richard Nixon presidency (Klein, 2018). Since its introduction, Star Wars has experienced longer gaps in story telling than Star Trek, but has found success through movies, animated television, toys, and most recently through live action television with the *Mandalorian* (2019, 2020).

Both Star Trek and Star Wars have experienced states of success and perceived failure. For example, when LucasFilm was purchased by the Walt Disney Company in 2012 (Krantz et al., 2012), many fans expressed excitement while some bemoaned the acquisition. Further, both franchises contain loyal fans—some or many shared between the two—which has at times garnered excitement, and even toxic fandom behavior (Proctor & Kies, 2018). Toxic fandom occurs when fans of a particular franchise choose to negatively evaluate the franchise and stories being told as a way to illustrate their *true* fandom to the original content, which can carry very negative outcomes (Beran, 2019).¹

¹ One such example is Kelly Marie Tran, who was featured in Star Wars Episodes 8 and 9 deleting social media accounts because of bullying by fans of the franchise (Romano, 2021).

The Current Investigation

The current study investigated perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival out-groups in sport and science fiction fandom. Specifically, participant responses to the RPS and GORFing scales were compared between sport fans and fans of either Star Wars or Star Trek². Along with the comparisons already discussed in this book, the current study joins previous investigations comparing rivalry in sport with that in Disney theme parks (Havard, et al., 2021a), comics (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020), and online electronic gaming (Havard et al., 2021). First, we hypothesized that fans of sport and science fiction would differ in their perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups.

H1: Perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups will significantly differ between fans of sport and science fiction.

Second, in order to examine the presence of the common in-group (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993), we expected that being a fan of *only* sport or science fiction would influence reactions toward the relevant rival group than being a fan of *both* sport and science fiction. Therefore:

H2: Perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups will significantly differ between fans of *only* sport and fans of *both* sport and science fiction.

H3: Perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups will significantly differ between fans of *only* science fiction and fans of *both* science fiction and sport.

Finally, we investigated whether fans of Star Wars and Star Trek would differ in their views and reactions toward each other.

RQ1: Perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups will significantly differ between fans of Star Wars and Star Trek.

² For analysis purposes, the specific sport team a participant identifies is not as important-other than ensuring data integrity-as measuring rivalry toward a sport out-group.

METHOD

The current study was constructed using Qualtrics software and distributed using Amazon MTurk. As with previous investigations, the current study started by asking participants to indicate if they considered themselves a fan of sport, science fiction, or *both* sport and science fiction. Depending on participant responses to the first question, individuals were branched to complete the survey regarding *either* sport or science fiction, or *both* sport and science fiction.

Instrument and Participants

Once participants indicated whether they were a fan of *only* sport or science fiction, or *both* sport and science fiction, they were then branched to complete survey sections specific to their fandom. Specifically, fans responded to questions about their favorite brands, rival brands, and demographic information. Participants in the study completed a minimum of three sections (if a fan of *only* sport or science fiction) and a maximum of seven sections (if a fan of *both* sport and science fiction). Favorite, rival, and comparable brands were piped throughout the survey as appropriate to provide context for participants.

In the first section, fans responded to questions about their favorite sport, and/or science fiction brands. In particular, sport fans indicated (section #1) their favorite sport team, rival sport team, and a team comparable to their rival sport team other than their favorite team. In this section, (#2) fans of science fiction were asked to indicate if they identified Star Wars or Star Trek as their favorite brand. Identification with the favorite brand was measured using the Sport Spectator Identification Scale-Revised (SSIS-R), a seven-item, eight-point scale (1 = *Low Identification* to 8 = *High Identification*). After completing the SSIS-R, participants were asked to report their attitude toward their favorite brand using a five-question semantic differential scale in the sport and science fiction settings (Spears & Singh, 2004).

Next (sections #3, and #4) participants responded to questions about their rival brand³. In particular participants reported their attitudes toward the rival brand using the semantic differential scale (Spears &

³ Whereas sport fans identified a team they believed to be rival to their favorite team, for science fiction fans, the brand *not* identified as favorite was treated as rival.

Singh, 2004). Then, participants completed the RPS (Havard, Gray et al., 2013) to measure their perceptions and likely behaviors as explained in the background section. Finally, participants indicated their willingness to celebrate rival indirect failure by completing the GORFing measure (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017). Participants completed the survey by responding to demographic questions (section #5). Participants that identified as sport fans completed sections #1, #3, and #5, science fiction fans sections #2, #4, and #5, and fans of *both* sport and science fiction completed all sections #1 through #5.

A total of 260 usable responses were returned for analysis. Participant age ranged from 19 to 75 ($M = 36.73$, $SD = 11.64$), and identified as Caucasian (68.1%), Asian (15.4%), African American (7.3%), Hispanic (6.2%), and Pacific Islander (0.8%), with 2.3% choosing not to disclose. Gender breakdown for the participants was majority male (61.5%), to female (37.7%) with 0.8% not disclosing. Participants identified as being a fan of *only* science fiction (44.6%), *both* sport and science fiction (44.2%), and *only* sport (11.2%). Of science fiction fans, most identified Star Wars as their favorite brand (76.6%), 23.4% identifying Star Trek as their favorite.

RESULTS

Items for all scales used in the current study were averaged so that one data point represented a participant. The scales used in the analysis displayed reliability, with alpha ranging from 0.803 to 0.974 (Table 5.1). Overall, sport fans were highly identified with their favorite team, reported very positive attitudes of their favorite team, and negativity toward their rival with the exception of their perception of rival prestige, in which they rated somewhat positive. Participants also reported high identification and positive attitudes toward their favorite science fiction brand, and somewhat positive to slightly negative perceptions of their relevant rival brand.

Investigating the Hypotheses and Research Question

Hypothesis 1 stated that fans of sport and science fiction would differ in their perceptions and likely behaviors toward their relevant rival groups. To test the hypothesis, a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted using brand identified (SSIS-R), attitudes toward favorite

Table 5.1 Descriptives and reliability of scales used in study

<i>Item</i>	M	SD	α
Sport Favorite Team Identification (SSIS-R)	6.36	1.43	0.879
Sport Favorite Team Attitude	6.32	0.87	0.918
Sport Rival Team Attitude	3.00	1.82	0.970
Sport Rival Team Support (OIC)	2.78	1.83	0.803
Sport Rival Team Fan Behavior (OB)	4.54	1.80	0.934
Sport Rival Team Prestige (OP)	3.53	1.79	0.857
Sport Rival Team Sense of Satisfaction (SoS)	5.57	1.39	0.886
Sport Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORF)	4.60	1.69	0.902
SciFi Favorite Brand Identification (SSIS-R)	5.17	1.54	0.930
SciFi Favorite Brand Attitude	6.29	0.81	0.939
SciFi Rival Brand Attitude	4.66	1.59	0.974
SciFi Rival Brand Support (OIC)	4.72	1.33	0.915
SciFi Rival Brand Fan Behavior (OB)	3.15	1.78	0.931
SciFi Rival Brand Prestige (OP)	3.38	1.74	0.878
SciFi Rival Brand Sense of Satisfaction (SoS)	4.24	1.70	0.868
SciFi Rival Brand Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORF)	3.78	1.87	0.872

and rival brands, four subscales of the RPS, and the GORFing scale as dependent variables. A significant Wilk's Lambda $0.368(8, 136) = 26.99$, $p < 0.001$ revealed differences were present between fans of *only* sport and *only* science fiction. Univariate analysis revealed that differences existed regarding (1) brand identification ($F[1, 143] = 13.44$, $p < 0.001$), (2) attitude toward the rival brand ($F[1, 143] = 20.42$, $p < 0.001$), (3) willingness to support the rival in indirect competition ($F[1, 143] = 77.19$, $p < 0.001$), and (4) behavior of out-group members ($F[1, 143] = 4.84$, $p = 0.029$). In all cases, sport fans reported more positivity toward the favorite brand and negativity toward the rival brand than did science fiction fans. Hypothesis 1 was supported (Table 5.2).

Together, Hypotheses 2 and 3 tested the presence of the common in-group and its influence of group member behavior. First, a significant Wilk's Lambda $877(8, 135) = 2.36$, $p = 0.021$, revealed significant differences between fans of *only* sport and *both* sport and science fiction. Univariate analysis revealed that being a fan of *both* sport and science fiction was correlated with stronger negativity toward the rival sport team than being a fan of *only* sport. The second significant MANCOVA ($890(8, 229) = 3.44$, $p < 0.001$) revealed that significant differences were present between fans of *only* science fiction and fans of *both* science fiction

Table 5.2 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by sport vs. science fiction

<i>Item</i>	<i>Sport</i>		<i>SciFi</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	6.47 [^]	1.16	5.36 [^]	1.53
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.22	0.88	6.10	0.94
Attitude toward Rival Brand	3.37 [^]	1.80	4.81 [^]	1.48
Out-group Indirect Competition	3.49 [^]	1.50	5.42 [^]	0.92
Out-Group Prestige	3.62	1.66	3.54	1.76
Out-Group Behavior	4.26 [*]	1.63	3.41 [*]	1.93
Sense of Satisfaction	4.83	1.59	4.45	1.65
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.63	1.60	3.99	1.80

*Significant at 0.05 level

[^]Significant at 0.01 level**Table 5.3** Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by fans of sport vs. fans of sport and science fiction

<i>Item</i>	<i>Sport</i>		<i>Sport & SciFi</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	6.47	1.16	6.33	1.49
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.22	0.88	6.34	0.87
Attitude toward Rival Brand	3.37	1.80	2.90	1.82
Out-group Indirect Competition	3.49 [*]	1.50	2.61 [*]	1.87
Out-Group Prestige	3.62	1.66	3.51	1.83
Out-Group Behavior	4.26	1.63	4.61	1.84
Sense of Satisfaction	4.83 [^]	1.59	5.76 [^]	1.28
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.63	1.60	4.59	1.71

*Significant at 0.05 level

[^]Significant at 0.01 level

and sport. In this case, univariate analysis revealed that being a fan of *both* science fiction and sport was correlated with higher attitudes toward the rival brand and more positive perceptions of rival science fiction brand supporters. Hypothesis 2 (Table 5.3) and Hypothesis 3 (Table 5.4) were both supported.

Finally, Research Question 1 investigated whether fans of Star Wars and Star Trek would differ in their perceptions and likely behaviors toward

Table 5.4 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by fans of science fiction vs. fans of science fiction and sport

<i>Item</i>	<i>SciFi</i>		<i>SciFi & Sport</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	5.36	1.53	4.98	1.54
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.10 [^]	0.94	6.47 [^]	0.61
Attitude toward Rival Brand	4.81	1.48	4.51	1.68
Out-group Indirect Competition	4.82	1.32	4.61	1.33
Out-Group Prestige	3.54	1.76	3.22	1.71
Out-Group Behavior	3.41 [*]	1.93	2.89 [*]	1.59
Sense of Satisfaction	4.45	1.65	4.04	1.72
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	3.99	1.80	3.57	1.92

^{*}Significant at 0.05 level

[^]Significant at 0.01 level

each other. A significant Wilk's Lambda $0.830(8, 222) = 5.69, p < 0.001$ revealed differences were present. Univariate analysis revealed that differences were present regarding (1) identification ($F[1, 229] = 20.71, p < 0.001$), (2) attitude toward the rival brand ($F[1, 229] = 5.55, p = 0.019$), (3) perceptions of rival prestige ($F[1, 229] = 8.52, p = 0.004$), (4) willingness to support the rival brand in indirect competition ($F[1, 229] = 8.31, p = 0.004$), and (5) likelihood of celebrating rival brand indirect failure ($F[1, 229] = 12.57, p < 0.001$). Fans of the Star Wars brand reported higher identification, and greater negativity toward the Star Trek brand and vice versa (Table 5.5).

DISCUSSION

The current study extended the understanding of group member behavior in sport and non-sport settings. In particular, perceptions and likely behaviors toward a rival group were compared among fans of a sport team and fans of the Star Wars and Star Trek science fiction brands. As with all empirical investigations, decisions made either in study design or data collection can influence outcomes. One such potential influence was that of collecting data using Amazon MTurk. As with previous investigations, using MTurk allowed more people to participate in the study, however, it is also appropriate to point out this potential influence on study outcomes. Additionally, the current study did not ask participants to identify if there

Table 5.5 Fan identification, attitudes, RPS, and GORFing by fans of Star Wars vs. Fans of Star Trek

<i>Item</i>	<i>Star Wars</i>		<i>Star Trek</i>	
	M	SD	M	SD
Brand Identification	5.42 [^]	1.46	4.37 [^]	1.56
Attitude toward Favorite Brand	6.25	0.85	6.40	0.66
Attitude toward Rival Brand	4.53 [*]	1.56	5.10 [*]	1.59
Out-group Indirect Competition	4.58 [*]	1.36	5.17 [*]	1.12
Out-Group Prestige	3.56 [*]	1.75	2.78 [*]	1.57
Out-Group Behavior	3.27	1.76	2.75	1.80
Sense of Satisfaction	4.36	1.67	3.86	1.72
Glory Out of Reflected Failure	4.02 [^]	1.85	3.01 [^]	1.87

*Significant at 0.05 level

[^]Significant at 0.01 level

were a fan of *both* the Star Wars and Star Trek brands, and doing so may have provided further insight regarding science fiction fandom. Future investigations can help address the potential limitations. Even with potential limitations, the current study provides important findings for research and practice, which will be discussed below.

Results showed that fans of sport tended to report more positivity toward their in-groups and more negativity toward their relevant out-groups than did fans of science fiction. Further, being a fan of *both* sport and science fiction was correlated with more negativity toward the rival *sport team*, whereas being a fan of *both* sport and science fiction was correlated with more positivity toward the rival *science fiction brand*. Finally, comparisons between the two science fiction brands showed that fans of Star Wars reported stronger identification with the favorite brand and more negativity toward the Star Trek brand that vice versa. Because SIT helps people associate with others and find value in-group memberships (Rubin & Hewstone, 1998; Tajfel, 1981), their affiliation with a team or science fiction brand can also help them find validation.

Sport fans reporting more negativity toward relevant rival groups than in non-sport settings is consistent with previous comparisons of sport and theme parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021a), comics (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020), in addition to the quantitative investigations included in this book (i.e., gaming platforms, and mobile phones). The finding further suggests that sport is one setting that encourages out-group negativity more so

than some other consumer and entertainment genres. The findings from Hypothesis 2 that being a fan of *both* sport and science fiction was correlated with greater negativity toward the rival sport team contradicts that in the theme parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021a) and comics genre (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020), but lends some support to previous investigation regarding sport and online gaming (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021). Further, the finding that being a fan of *both* science fiction and sport was correlated with more positivity toward the relevant science fiction brand is consistent with previous comparisons, and lends support to the common in-group theory (Gaertner et al., 1993) suggesting that identifying with multiple groups is perhaps a more positive influence on group member behavior than identity foreclosure (Beamon, 2012). Future investigation is needed to fully examine the influence of the common in-group and identify foreclosure in various settings.

Finally, the finding that there were differences in group evaluations in the science fiction domain is consistent with group differences found in other realms, including fandom for Disney theme parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021b), online gaming (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021), and political affiliations (Havard, Longo et al., 2021). Further, it also suggests that fans identify with their favorite brands can lead to enhanced views of the in-group and more negative views of the out-group as seen in the qualitative study described in Chapter 3 of this text.

Implications and Future Research

As with previous investigations and comparisons of group member behavior in sport and non-sport settings, the current study provides further insight for researchers seeking deeper understanding about the human condition and the influence of SIT and group membership. Future investigations and comparisons of sport and non-sport settings should be conducted to provide additional findings, which can help people better understand human and group behavior, and societal implications. Further, future studies should also continue to add additional comparisons that will allow researchers to better investigate the influence of the common in-group and identity foreclosure on behavior and group membership.

Practitioners can also glean important lessons from the current findings. Specifically, it is helpful for practitioners to know that fans of science fiction brands display less negativity toward relevant rival groups than do

fans of sport teams. It is also important to understand the overall influence of sport fandom. Whereas being a fan of *both* settings was correlated with more positivity toward science fiction rival brands, identifying as a fan of *both* setting actually influence more negativity toward sport rival teams. This is an interesting finding that deserves more attention from future researchers, but it also can be used by practitioners working with people from rival groups. In particular, the current study joins with previous investigations to give practitioners a better understanding of how group membership influences perceptions and likely behaviors.

As with previous investigations, the current study would also benefit from additional qualitative investigation that could provide specific information regarding the influence of science fiction and sport fandom on a more individual level. Additionally, longitudinal investigation can help trace and better understand the impact of fandom of both settings over time. Finally, as mentioned previously, investigating fans that identified with the Star Wars and Star Trek brands can also shed light onto group member behavior in this particular setting.

The current investigation compared perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups in sport and science fiction fandom. The findings joined previous such investigations in providing more understanding of group member behavior and relationships with relevant out-groups. As further understanding of group behavior and the human condition are sought, the current study provides important findings and insight to assist future researchers and readers on this topic.

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Introduction of a Hierarchy of Out-Group Derogation

Cody T. Havard, Frederick G. Grieve, and Ted B. Peetz

Abstract The current study introduces a hierarchy and spectrum of group member behavior and out-group derogation. Specifically, perceptions and likely behaviors among fans of: sport, politics, online electronic gaming, electronic platform gaming, science fiction, mobile phones, Disney theme parks, comics, and straight-to-consumer streaming entertainment platforms are compared to examine how various settings influence negativity toward relevant out-groups. To accomplish this, the Group Behavior Composite (GBC) is introduced, made up of the four facets of the Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS) and the Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORFing) scale, to introduce a hierarchy of rival negativity and group member behavior. Discussion focuses on theoretical and practical implications of the GBC and hierarchy, while also calling for future areas of research.

Keywords Group membership · Group member behavior · Group Behavior Composite (GBC) · Hierarchy of Out-group Derogation (HOD) · Out-group Derogation Spectrum (ODS)

As we have seen throughout this book, and through other comparisons of perceptions and likely behaviors toward relevant rival groups, setting significantly influences participant responses and outcomes. To this point, eight quantitative comparisons—three discussed in this text—have been conducted with the purpose of shedding light onto the ways people interact with their relevant in-groups and out-groups. The current study combines participant data from the various fandom settings investigated thus far in order to compare outcomes and introduce a hierarchy of out-group derogation.

In this text, we have discussed comparisons among fans of sport and electronic gaming platforms, mobile phones, and science fiction brands. Other investigations include comparisons in sport and Disney theme parks (Havard et al., 2021b), comics (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020), online gaming (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021), politics (Havard, Longo et al., 2021), and straight-to-consumer streaming services (Havard, Ryan et al., 2021). That means that, to this point, data about fan perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival out-groups is available in nine settings. Therefore, the nine settings are used in the current study to compare participant data in order to further inform academics, practitioners, and readers about group member behavior.

In order to quantitatively compare participant responses and views regarding rival groups, the four facets of the Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS, Havard, Gray et al., 2013) are combined with the Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORFing) measure (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017) to form the Group Behavior Composite (GBC). The GBC allows researchers to objectively compare participant perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups and introduce a hierarchy of out-group derogation toward rival groups. Gaining more understanding of out-group derogation is important to providing insight that can benefit researchers and practitioners navigating group member behavior in society. The analysis in the current study will focus on the GBC and relevant outcomes, and therefore will not follow the same format found in previous chapters of this text.

BACKGROUND

Group membership is important to individuals as it allows one to find a place or grounding (Wann, 2006), to find others who share similar characteristics (Noel et al., 1995), experience feelings of belonging (Festinger,

1954), and helps provide structure allowing someone to make sense of the surrounding world (Wann & James, 2019; Wann et al., 2001). Social identity theory (SIT) lies at the center of group membership, and states that individuals choose groups to belong to they believe will positively represent him/her self and public image (Tajfel, 1974, 1978). For this reason, individuals will select groups that present desired outcomes (Aden, 2008; Huddy & Bankert, 2017), usually experienced vicariously through their membership (Bandura, 1977).

People will also behave in ways that protect their self-esteem (Madrigal, 1995), either through identifying or distancing from chosen groups (Campbell et al., 2004; Cialdini et al., 1976; Kimble & Cooper, 1992; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Snyder et al., 1986; Wann & Branscombe, 1990). This protection of the self-esteem is one reason why people choose activities in which they can display mastery (Crocker & Park, 2004; Deci, 1975). Of the ways that people choose to behave according to SIT and vicarious achievement/experience, group membership is very important, signaled by the fact that individuals belonging to a group may begin to adopt the identity of the collective (Ashmore et al., 2004). Individuals joining groups and further identifying with the collective means that they now have multiple options for gaining the achievement and positive benefits they seek.

When someone joins an in-group, they are inevitably confronted with a competing out-group (Sherif, 1966). The competition and comparison with an out-group provide individuals with additional options for experiencing success (Bandura, 1977). One way to experience the positive benefits of group membership is defeating the out-group in direct competition (Havard, Gray et al., 2013). However, if an in-group is not successful in direct competition, individuals may still be able to draw favorable comparisons to an out-group, many times through derogation methods (Cialdini & Richardson, 1980; Golec de Zavala et al., 2019; Turner, 1975). It is these comparisons between groups that are the focus of this text in general and the current chapter specifically.

Rivalry

Competition allows group members to compare against each other either directly or indirectly (Turner, 1975), usually vicariously through the pursuits of the target group (Bandura, 1977; Cialdini & De Nicholas,

1989; Cialdini et al., 1976). Competitors who rise in relative importance to group members become rivals (Havard & Reams, 2018; Tyler & Cobbs, 2017; Wann et al., 2016), and rival groups tend to find ways in which the in-group performs favorably to the out-group (Turner, 1978). For example, people tend to view out-group member behavior negatively (Wann & Dolan, 1995; Wann & Grieve, 2005), stereotype negative behaviors with out-group members (Maass et al., 1989), do not trust out-group members (MacDonald et al., 2013), and evaluate out-group member performance more poorly (Wann et al., 2006).

For the purposes of this chapter and text, rivalry has been defined using the sport context as a “fluctuating adversarial relationship between two teams, players, fans, or groups of fans, gaining significance through on-field or off-field incidences, proximity, demographic makeup, and/or historical occurrence(s)” (Havard, Gray et al., 2013, p. 51). Additionally, an out-group that rises to the level of a rival is a “highly salient out-group that poses an acute threat to the identity of the in-group or to the in-group members’ ability to make positive comparisons between their group and the out-group” (Tyler & Cobbs, 2015, p. 230). Rivalry as a phenomenon is something that is constant between groups that experience peaks when direct or indirect competition is present (Converse & Reinhard, 2016). Additionally, characteristics such as closeness of competition or parity, perceived group similarities and dissimilarities, and competition for personnel contribute to the formation and longevity of a rivalry (Kilduff et al., 2010; Tyler & Cobbs, 2015). Some benefits associated with rivalry are feelings of uniqueness (Berendt & Uhrich, 2016; Berendt et al., 2018; Delia, 2015), in-group cohesion (Smith & Schwartz, 2003), and the ability to display affiliation with a comparatively successful brand (Kimble & Cooper, 1992).

As previous chapters have discussed, the phenomenon of rivalry can be influenced by competition setting and change of setting (Cobbs et al., 2017, 2019; Havard, 2016; Havard & Eddy, 2013; Havard & Reams, 2016; Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2017; Havard, Wann, Ryan, & O’Neal, 2017), gender (Havard, Achen et al., 2020; Havard, Eddy et al., 2016; Havard, Wann et al., 2021a), ethnicity (Havard, Fuller et al., 2020), level and importance of competition (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017; Havard & Reams, 2018; Havard, Ryan et al., 2018; Tyler & Cobbs, 2017; Wann et al., 2016), competition outcomes (Havard, Reams et al., 2013), previous consumption (Havard, Wann et al., 2021), group member self-esteem (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019), and perceived deservedness of the

out-group (Bernsden & Feather, 2016; Bernsden, Tiggeman et al., 2017; Brambilla & Rival, 2017). In turn, the presence of rivalry can influence participant output (Kilduff, 2014; Kilduff et al., 2010), decision making (Havard, 2018; Havard, 2020; Kilduff, 2014; Spinda & Havard, 2016), physical reactions (Hillman et al., 2004), willingness to engage in unethical behavior (Kilduff et al., 2016), inclination to help others in emergency situations (Havard & Workman, 2018; Levine et al., 2005), and group member willingness to engage in verbal and anonymous physical aggression (Havard, Wann et al., 2013, 2017; Wann et al., 1999, 2003; Wann & Waddill, 2013).

Regarding consumption behavior, the presence of rivalry can influence live attendance (Havard, Shapiro et al., 2016), price premiums (Sanford & Scott, 2016); sponsorships (Angell et al., 2016; Bee & Dalakas, 2013; Bee et al., 2019; Dalakas & Levin, 2005; Davies et al., 2006), purchase of merchandise (Kwak et al., 2015), and televised viewership (Mahony & Moorman, 1999). It is important to note that competitions between rival groups are perceived as more negative than competitions between non-rivals (Raney & Kinnally, 2009), and people are more willing to post negative comments about out-group members if considered a rival (Rathje et al., 2021). Out-group derogation regarding rivals can be influenced by mediated stories (Havard & Eddy, 2019; Havard, Ferrucci, et al., 2021), acknowledgment of past rivalrous behavior (Berendt & Uhrich, 2017), and promotional messaging and advertisements (Havard, Wann et al., 2018; Nichols et al., 2016), which provides a path forward to further understanding and attempt to diminish out-group derogation.

Group membership also influences individuals' reactions when direct competition is not present. In particular, group members can experience joy and excitement when their rival out-group experiences failure (Heider, 1958; Smith & van Dijk, 2018). This outcome is present in sport (Cikara et al., 2011; Cikara & Fiske, 2012; Leach & Spears, 2009; Leach et al., 2003) and non-sport settings (Dalakas et al., 2015; Ewing et al., 2013; Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014). Further, Glory Out of Reflected Failure (Havard, 2014) helps to explain how group members behave when their identified rival experiences perceived failure. Present regardless of in-group success (Havard et al., 2018), GORFing is another outcome that allows people to favorably compare their in-group to an out-group (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017; Havard, Ryan et al., 2020).

The Current Study

The focus of the current study is the comparison of out-group behavior and derogation between rivals in the sport and non-sport settings. To this point, eight such comparisons have been analyzed, three in and five outside of this text. The purpose of the current study was to quantitatively compare perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups in each setting (e.g., nine total settings). For a brief review, negativity in sport fandom is significantly higher than among electronic gaming platforms (Chapter 2), mobile phone consumption (Chapter 4), science fiction (Chapter 5), streaming services (Havard et al., 2021), Disney parks (Havard et al., 2021a), and comics (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020). The two settings of politics (Havard, Longo et al., 2021) and online electronic gaming (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021) provided results that suggest negativity in these areas is on-par or are more intense than in sport.

Each of these comparisons were made using the four facets/subscales of the Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS), which identifies group members' perceptions of (1) out-group prestige and (2) out-group member behavior and likely behaviors of (3) supporting the rival in indirect competition, and (4) satisfaction experienced when defeating the rival, and the GORFing scale to measure willingness to celebrate out-group indirect failure (Havard, Gray et al., 2013; Havard & Hutchinson, 2017).

The purpose of the current study is to provide one representation of group member behavior and negativity toward rivals in various settings. In order to accomplish this, the current study combines the five facets/scales to provide one measure of group member behavior and negativity, labeled the Group Behavior Composite (GBC). GBC scores can then allow for quantitative comparison between the nine settings of earlier investigations. Drawing from previous findings, we expected for significant differences to be present regarding GBC scores among settings. However, we wanted to take an extra step and identify a hierarchy of out-group derogation. Therefore, we used the following research question to guide the analysis.

RQ1: What settings influence the strongest negative perceptions and likely behaviors toward out-group members?

METHOD

Items

To measure GBC scores and compare out-group derogation among various group member settings, we first had to combine the four facets of the RPS (Havard, Gray et al., 2013) with the GORFing measure (Havard & Hutchinson, 2017).¹ The five measures included in the GBC are appropriate because, together, they provide insight regarding an individual's perceptions (e.g., of prestige and out-group member behavior) along with likely behaviors (e.g., willingness to support rival in indirect competition, satisfaction from defeating the out-group in direct competition, and likelihood of celebrating out-group indirect failure). Further, the GBC score provides a rounded view of group member behavior by combining the five measures and 16 items. This is important as it allows researchers, practitioners, and readers an objective view regarding perceptions and likely behaviors toward out-groups. Finally, the GBC can be used with various settings, and will be as more investigation occurs, which will help add more literature regarding group member behavior to the benefit of academics, practitioners, and our broader society.

Each RPS facet contains three questions, and the GORFing measure contains four questions, for a total of 16 questions or prompts. Of the RPS and GORFing facets and scales, all but one are consistent in their wording, with higher scores indicating greater negativity toward out-groups. Questions in the willingness to support the rival in indirect competition are worded so that higher scores indicate greater positivity toward relevant out-groups. Therefore, we first had to reverse code the three items that measure this facet before combining with the other facets/scales to form a GBC score for each participant and group.

Once all items were consistently worded, so that higher scores indicated more negativity toward out-groups, data from each study from participants that indicated being a fan of *either* sport or a non-sport setting were included in a new data set. A variable was created to provide a unique label for each setting. This was treated as the independent variable in analysis. Group identification was also included in the new data set to

¹ Modified versions of the RPS and GORFing measures were used for non-sport settings.

determine the influence such affiliation had on group behavior. Identification was measured using the Sport Spectator Identification Scale-Revised (SSIS-R; James et al., 2019),² a seven-item, eight-point Likert scale that provides insight regarding how important group affiliation is to an individual. Gender was also included as a variable in the new dataset to measure its influence of scores.

Data

Spanning eight comparison studies, the current study included nine fandom settings. A total of 1,421 participant data points were included in the analysis. The majority of participants were male (62.4%), with 37.2% identifying as female, and 0.2% choosing not to disclose. The sport setting, which was included in all eight investigations, had the largest number of data points (35.5%), followed by politics (22.7%), electronic gaming consoles (8.5%), Star Wars/Star Trek science fiction (8.2%), electronic online gaming (6.7%), Apple/Samsung mobile phones (6.3%), Disney parks (5.7%), Marvel/DC comics (3.9%), and direct-to-consumer streaming platforms (2.6%).

RESULTS

As previously discussed, the GBC was created by averaging responses from the five measures and 16 items used in previous comparison investigations. Additionally, as disclosed in previous investigations, the items displayed reliability, therefore making it appropriate to continue analysis. Before answering the research question, two separate Analysis of Variance (ANOVAs) were run to determine in gender and group identity influenced GBC scores. Because the influence of both variables was significant on portions of the data set,³ the two variables were included as covariates in the main analysis.

² Modified versions of the SSIS-R were utilized for non-sport settings.

³ Analysis available upon request.

Research Question 1

To answer the research question, the decision as made to include the overall GBC score for each setting, along with the relevant four RPS measures and GORFing scale. This decision was made to allow for follow-up comparison analysis and treat for correlations among items. Because the main focus of the current chapter was the GBC score comparison, that analysis will be discussed in depth, while relevant comparisons regarding the RPS and GORFing measures are available upon request.

A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANCOVA) was used to answer the research question, while controlling for the influence of gender and group identity. A significant Wilk's Lambda $0.367(48, 6,912) = 32.57, p < 0.001$ revealed significant differences were available for GBC scores ($F[8, 1,409] = 43.50, p < 0.001$), and all RPS and GORFing measures. Post-hoc analysis with bonferoni adjustment was used to determine where significant differences existed regarding GBC scores among settings. Significant differences and descriptive data are available in Table 6.1. Specifically, GBC scores for electronic online gaming ($M = 4.78, SD = 0.84$) were significantly higher than all other settings included in the analysis. This was followed by the political setting ($M = 4.75, SD = 0.88$), in which out-group derogation was more negative than in all settings except electronic online gaming. The sport setting ($M = 4.47, SD = 0.88$) was less negative than electronic online gaming and politics, but more negative than mobile phones, Disney parks, science fiction, and comics. Mobile phones ($M = 4.23, SD = 0.96$) was also less negative than electronic online gaming and politics, but was more negative than direct-to-consumer streaming platform, electronic gaming console, Disney parks, science fiction, and comics.

Direct-to-consumer streaming platforms ($M = 4.10, SD = 1.25$) were significantly less negative than electronic gaming, politics, and mobile phones. This was followed by electronic gaming consoles ($M = 4.02, SD = 1.04$), which was also significantly less negative than electronic online gaming, politics, and mobile phones, but more negative than science fiction. GBC scores for Disney Park fandom ($M = 4.01, SD = 1.24$) were less negative than electronic online gaming, politics, sport, and mobile phones. Science fiction ($M = 3.73, SD = 1.19$) was one of two settings that yielded a GBC score below the mid-point of 4.0, and was less negative than electronic online gaming, politics, sport, mobile phones, and electronic gaming consoles. Finally, comics fans reported the lowest GBC

scores ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.09$), which was significantly less negative than electronic online gaming, politics, sport, and mobile phones. Differences among specific RPS and GORFing measures available upon request.

DISCUSSION

The current study compared out-group derogation among nine fan and consumer settings using the GBC measure. Results revealed that significant differences were present among the nine settings, with electronic online gaming, politics, and sport fans reporting the most negativity toward relevant out-groups. The main purpose of the investigation was the introduction of a hierarchy of out-group derogation; this section will discuss the construction of the Hierarchy of Out-group Derogation (HOD) and the Out-group Derogation Spectrum (ODS).

Hierarchy of Out-Group Derogation

To develop the HOD, we examined the data to determine if and where groupings of fan or consumer settings were present. First, three settings stood out where participant GBC scores were highest, and significantly higher than three or more other settings. Therefore, electronic online gaming, politics, and sport made up the first echelon of the hierarchy or *highly negative* on the spectrum. Next, the mobile phone setting stood apart from most others in that GBC scores were significantly lower than most top tier setting (e.g., electronic online gaming and sport), but were more negative than all other settings except politics. For this reason, the decision was made to label the mobile phone setting as *medium/highly negative* on the hierarchy or spectrum.

The *medium negative* tier contained two settings in which GBC scores were either next in hierarchy order or were significantly higher than at least one other setting. Therefore, straight-to-consumer streaming platforms and electronic gaming platforms were placed in this category. The final category included in the hierarchy and on the spectrum was labeled *low negativity*, and contained settings in which GBC scores were significantly lower than at least four other settings. Disney parks, science fiction, and comics fandom were placed into this category. Figure 6.1 provides the HOD.

Fig. 6.1 Hierarchy of out-group derogation

Highly Negative	
1)	Online Gaming
2)	Politics
3)	Sport
Medium/Highly Negative	
4)	Mobile Phones
Medium Negative	
5)	Streaming
6)	Gaming Console
Low Negativity	
7)	Disney Parks
8)	Science Fiction
9)	Comics

Out-Group Derogation Spectrum

We also used the results to create a spectrum of out-group derogation that can be used by academics and practitioners (i.e., ODS). The items used in the GBC are scored on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *Very Positive toward Rival* to 7 = *Very Negative toward Rival*). Further, the GBC is an average score of participant responses to the four RPS subscales and the GORFing measure. Therefore, naturally, a spectrum showcasing behavior toward rival groups would range from 1 (*Very Positive*) to 7 (*Very Negative*).

In the current study, mean scores of behaviors toward a rival out-group ranged from 4.78 at the high end to 3.53 at the low end. Therefore, Fig. 6.2 provides a spectrum view of GBC scores and behavior toward rival out-groups. For purposes of the current study, we feature a range from 3.5 to 5 on the spectrum. In particular, online gaming falls at the high end of the spectrum, and comics at the low end of the spectrum, with the seven other settings falling between the two.

General Discussion

It is not unexpected that GBC score of electronic online gaming, politics, and sport were significantly higher than other settings because of the direct and vicarious competition present to group members in each (Bandura, 1977). Further, they are also experiences that regularly place

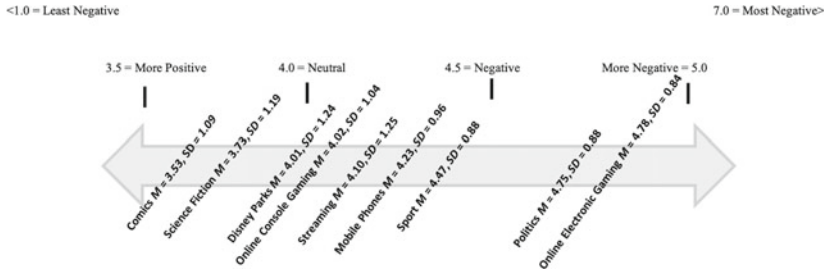


Fig. 6.2 Out-group derogation spectrum

individuals and groups in intense situations of comparison and derogation. The only other setting that could be categorized as an experience is the Disney Parks where fans reported perceptions of Universal Parks; however, those settings also do not place people in a direct competition. In fact, it is not uncommon for people both local to Florida and Southern California and visiting the areas to consume both parks during their travels.

The current study provides an interesting finding that electronic online gaming was significantly more negative than both politics and sport. However, to participants and observers of electronic online gaming, these findings are perhaps not surprising. The amount of negativity, out-group derogation, and bullying present in gaming is a potential reason for this finding. It is important to note that the GBC scores for this setting measured participants of online versus console gaming; however, the competition of the setting still stands as a potential influence on out-group derogation. Further, findings of the current study also indicate that rivalry and out-group derogation is significantly more negative among gaming participants using online versus consoles than among users of the Xbox and Playstation consoles.

It is also interesting to see that fandom regarding Disney Parks/Universal Parks, Star Wars/Star Trek science fiction, and Marvel/DC comics has the least amount of derogation. Potential explanations for these findings could be that all three settings are viewed as entertainment and diversion among consumers and fans. For example, someone chooses to visit a theme park, watch a science fiction movie, or read comics as a way to divert from daily activities. Further, each setting may also contain fans that participate in activities that some adults may

view slightly negatively. For instance, adults that identify as a fans of the three brands may experience slight derogation from non-fans, which could assist in building a stronger relevant in-group. Finally, in all three areas, people regularly consume both options. That is, a Star Wars fan likely has consumed Star Trek (and vice versa); therefore, the fan likely has some connection with both options. Having such a connection makes out-group derogation difficult because fans could see themselves in the out-group.

Implications and Future Study

The current study carries important implications for both academics and practitioners. First, the current study is a culmination of eight comparisons of out-group behavior in various settings. As such, the current investigation introduced a new measure of group member behavior. The GBC is a measure that can be used to compare group member behavior among different settings to determine where out-group derogation is more intense. Researchers have a measure to continue investigations of behavior to better understand group relationships.

Further, the findings present researchers with a hierarchy of out-group derogation along with a spectrum that can be used to discuss group member behavior and help plan future investigations and areas of inquiry. Second, adding more to the literature on rivalry and group member behavior is important for researchers seeking more understanding of behavior and societal relationships. The current study, along with the preceding eight investigations, further provides practitioners with helpful information that can be used when working with individuals and groups. For example, practitioners can utilize the ODH and/or SOD to discuss, learn, and educate people about different fandom and consumer settings influence on behavior.

Along with the avenues of future research mentioned above, researchers should continue to compare rivalry and out-group behavior between various settings. The sport setting is an ideal setting to continue comparisons, and additional areas warrant study. For example, comparing settings with political or online electronic gaming fandom would provide important insight regarding some of the more intense group behavior settings. Therefore, future research should focus on individual studies of group behavior in non-sport settings for specific differences between relevant group members. Additional settings of inquiry include consumer

genres such as hospitality and travel, food and beverage, and additional entertainment options. Another group setting worthy of both quantitative and qualitative investigation is religious affiliation. As investigation of group member behavior continues, the current hierarchy and spectrum will be amended in order to assist academics, practitioners, and interested parties.

Another avenue for future investigation regarding group member behavior is the comparison of the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) present in various settings versus identity foreclosure (Beamon, 2012). In the previous investigations of group behavior in and out of the sport setting, comparisons have been analyzed among people who identify as a fan of *only* one group or *both* focus groups. Future research should also investigate the cross-sectional nature of group identity and the presence of the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) and identity foreclosure (Beamon, 2012) among non-sport settings.

As with all exploratory investigation into a new area of inquiry, the current findings and understanding of group member identity, and benefits of group membership would benefit from qualitative investigation. The ability to qualitatively investigate the phenomenon of group member behavior and rivalry through interviews, focus groups, and document analysis provides researchers important paths toward better understanding. Finally, as previously mentioned, the current comparison investigation should be replicated as more group member settings are included to further refine our understanding of the GBC, ODH, SOD, and the influence of membership on perceptions and likely behaviors toward out-groups.

The current study compared out-group derogation across nine different fan settings using the newly introduced GBC measure. The online electronic gaming, politics, and sport settings displayed significantly more intense negativity than other settings, and fans in the Disney Parks, science fiction, and comics settings reported the lowest amount of out-group derogation. More information about group behavior is needed to provide insight regarding out-group derogation, and the current study provides interested parties with a measure that can be used in future inquiries.

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Here We Are, There We Go

Cody T. Havard

Abstract This chapter offers conclusions from the studies included in this text and reiterates ideas for future investigation to further understand how rivalry and group member behavior is influenced by fandom setting. First, the current chapter offers a recap for the studies included in the text. Then, the chapter reiterates how the content in the text could be used by researchers and practitioners attempting to learn more about group behavior. The chapter concludes with ideas for future investigations and avenues that researchers can purpose to further our understanding of individual and group behavior.

Keywords Rivalry · Out-group derogation · Group member derogation

The chapters included in the current text investigated how fan setting influenced perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival out-groups. Specifically, Chapter 2 discussed how rivalry perceptions and likely behaviors differed among fans of sport and users of the electronic gaming platforms Xbox and Playstation. Chapter 3 offered a qualitative investigation of comments left in online chatrooms during the 2016 Presidential Debates and the 2016 College Football Season. Next, Chapters 4 and 5 quantitatively investigated how perceptions and likely behaviors differed among fans of sport and Apple/Samsung mobile phones and Star

Wars/Star Trek science fiction brands respectively. Chapter 6 then introduced the Group Behavior Composite (GBC) to allow for comparison among nine sport and non-sport settings to determine how group derogation differed among group members. The following sections provide a brief recap of the chapters in this text, along with ways the findings can be used by academics and practitioners, and ideas for future research in the area of group member behavior.

CHAPTER RECAPS

Chapter 2 compared perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival out-groups in sport and among electronic gaming players using the Xbox and Playstation platforms. Sport fans reported significantly higher identification and attitudes toward their favorite sport team than did gamers toward their chosen platform. Additionally, sport fans reported more negative attitudes toward their relevant rival teams, and more negative perceptions toward their rival teams than gamers toward their relevant rival brands. Examining the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993), being a fan of *both* gaming and sport was correlated with more positive views of the relevant gaming rival brand than being a fan of *only* gaming. No such correlation was present regarding sport fandom (i.e., being a fan of *only* sport versus *both* sport and gaming). Finally, comparisons between gamers users revealed that those using the Playstation platform reported more negativity perceptions and likely behaviors toward the Xbox brand than vice versa.

Chapter 3 discussed a qualitative examination of comments left in online chatrooms by sport fans and political supporters. In particular, comments left during the three 2016 Presidential Debates were compared with the comments left surrounding three high-profile college football games. Results found that sport fans tended to show more positivity toward their favorite teams and rival teams than did political commenters. Regarding negativity, sport fans tended to leave more playful jabs at rival teams than did people leaving political comments, however, political commenters left more intense negative comments about their rival groups than did sport fans toward their rival teams.

Chapter 4 compared fans of sport and fans/users of Apple and Samsung mobile phone brands. Comparison showed that fans of sport reported more identification with their favorite team than did mobile phone users. Further, while sport fans reported higher likelihood of

supporting a rival sport team in indirect competition than did mobile phone users, they also reported more negative attitudes toward the rival team and likelihood of experiencing greater satisfaction from defeating a rival than in the mobile phone setting. The study also showed that the common in-group influenced some perceptions and likely behaviors toward relevant rival groups among people that were fans of *only* sport or mobile phone and those that were fans of *both* sport and mobile phones. Finally, Samsung users reported experiencing greater satisfaction from comparing favorably to Apple than vice versa.

In Chapter 5, we investigated perceptions and likely behaviors toward rival groups among fans of sport and fans of the Star Wars/Star Trek science fiction brands. Following other investigations in the text, sport fans reported greater identification with their favorite brand and more negative perceptions of the rival brand than in the science fiction setting. Again, the common in-group influenced more positive perceptions of the rival science fiction brand (i.e., being a fan of *both* science fiction and sport), however, being a fan of *both* sport and science fiction was correlated with more negativity toward the rival team than being a fan of *only* sport. Finally, fans of the Star Wars brand reported greater identification with their favorite brand and more negativity toward the Star Trek brand than vice versa.

Chapter 6 culminated the investigation portion of the text by comparing group member behavior among nine sport and non-sport settings. Specifically, the three quantitative studies included in the current text were combined with data from investigations about group behavior in sport and Disney Parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021), comics (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020), politics (Havard, Longo et al., 2021), online electronic gaming (Havard, Fuller et al., 2021), and direct-to-consumer streaming platforms (Havard, Ryan et al., 2021) to provide insight regarding out-group derogation. The chapter introduced the GBC, which combined the four subscales of the Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS, Havard, Gray et al., 2013) and Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORFing) measure (Havard, 2014; Havard & Hutchinson, 2017)-in order to compare group behavior, along with a hierarchy and spectrum of behavior and out-group derogation. Results indicated that out-group derogation in the online electronic gaming setting was most intense, followed by politics, sport, mobile phones, direct-to-consumer streaming, electronic gaming consoles, Disney Parks, and comics.

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As discussed in each investigative chapter throughout the text, the collective findings carry important implications for academics, practitioners, and readers. Specifically, people interested in understanding more about group behavior and out-group derogation can point to the chapters in the text and accompanying comparison investigations for empirical evidence about what setting influence varying amounts of group negativity. For example, researchers and academics can utilize the chapters as an educational text for further insight regarding out-group derogation and group member behavior. Knowing which settings influence more intense out-group derogation also provides researchers with ideas for future investigations that may not be discussed in this text.

For practitioners, it is imperative to understand which fan settings are correlated with more intense out-group derogation and negativity. It is important because practitioners want to engage consumers and brand supporters, something that competition and rivalry can assist with, but they do not want to encourage overly negative, deviant, or violent behavior toward out-groups. Doing so can negatively impact both fans/supporters and brands in a number of ways (Havard, 2020).

Both researchers and practitioners will find importance in the findings regarding the influence of the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) and identify foreclosure (Beaman, 2012). Over the course of the text, and accompanying investigations not included as chapters in the book, being a fan of *only* one group or *both* groups of comparison influenced out-group negativity in various ways. For example, being a fan of *both* brands of comparison was correlated with more positive views of the relevant rival in investigations on Disney Parks (Havard, Wann et al., 2021) and comics (Havard, Grieve et al., 2020). However, being a fan of *both* sport and a non-sport brand either did not influence significant differences or was correlated with more out-group negativity regarding electronic gaming platforms (Chapter 2) and science fiction (Chapter 5). Using that data, future research should focus on the use of the common fandom settings to examine the extended contact hypothesis, which states that the more interaction someone has with another, the less negativity they may begin to show against the person (Zhou et al., 2018).

A goal of the current text is also to engage readers and encourage continued interest and investigation regarding group member behavior and out-group derogation. As discussed throughout the chapters, more

study of group behavior differences is needed to better understand how group relations are impacted by fandom setting. Some ideas for future comparison investigations include religion, alcohol brands, hospitality or travel, and hotel brands. It is a hope that readers of this text will expand this list and add to our understanding of group behavior. Further, as Chapter 6 provided a measure to use when comparing fandom settings, along with a hierarchy and spectrum to add to, future research will continue to enlighten our understanding in the area.

Finally, as Chapter 3 pointed out, qualitative investigation about group behavior is vital to providing more understanding of behavior and out-group derogation. In that vein, qualitative researchers could conduct interviews, focus groups, and document analyses for each study included or discussed in this text, the future suggested investigations mentioned above, and new avenues of group comparison. Engaging in the important work of qualitatively investigating individual stories about how fandom setting impacts group behavior will add to our understanding and lead us in new impactful directions.

This text discussed group behavior and out-group derogation in various sport and non-sport settings. As a society, we continue to strive for better understanding regarding the human condition and group relationships. This is an important task that has the ability to shape the future of our society, hopefully in positive ways. Further, we as a society should always be striving to better understand those similar and different from us, as doing so will also enlighten us on how to treat others, both in-group and out-group members, with respect and compassion. This text provides important findings in this area, along with potential steps to help in the collective pursuit, and if reading this book provides a spark for others to join in this journey, then the author has accomplished his goal.

Thank you for coming on this adventure with me!

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