



## Shared Perspectives: Can Common Interests Help Decrease Out-Group Derogation?

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**Abstract** The chapter takes a different approach by focusing primarily on the implications of the comparative investigations conducted in this text and beyond. Specifically, implications for future research and for practice are discussed. Additionally, the planned resource [www.SharedPerspectives.org](http://www.SharedPerspectives.org) is introduced and details are provided regarding its proposed contents. Finally, researchers, practitioners, and interested readers are given a call to action to continue the journey and help in researching and learning more about rivalry, group member behavior, and group member negativity.

**Keywords** Rivalry · Out-group derogation · Future research · Practice · Shared perspectives

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So far in this text, we have detailed how rivalry and member behavior can be influenced by group setting. As a follow-up to the first book on rivalry in and out of the sport setting (Havard, 2021), in this text we set out to include descriptions of additional comparisons of group member behavior by setting. Chapter 2 of this text detailed the differences in out-group derogation among sport fans and fans/members of political parties in the United States. Chapter 3 provided a comparison of derogation among sport fans and fans/members of religious groups. These comparisons among setting joined those of mobile phones (Havard, Hutchinson et al., 2021), streaming (Havard, Ryan, et al., 2021), theme parks (Havard, Baker, Wann, Grieve, & Ryan, 2023), comics (Havard, Grieve, et al., 2020), gaming using consoles (Havard, White, et al., 2021) and PC vs. consoles (Havard, Fuller, et al., 2021), science fiction (Havard, Wann, Fuller, et al., 2021), Disney Parks (Havard, Wann, et al., 2021), and athletic footwear (Havard, Reams, et al., 2022).

Chapter 4 of this text provided an update to the Hierarchy of Out-group Derogation (HOD) and Out-group Derogation Spectrum (ODS) from the original nine settings (Havard, Grieve, et al., 2021) to include a total of 12 group settings. The main focus of this chapter is to discuss ideas for further understanding group member behavior and out-group derogation, along with potential paths toward decreasing negativity and derogation among and between groups and group members. As such, this chapter very much resembles an extended implications and future directions discussion for the text. To that end, the traditional review of literature will be saved and relevant information covered when discussing ideas for future study and potential ideas for decreasing out-group negativity. The chapter will conclude with an idea meant to encompass many facets of existing and future research on group member behavior. All of

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the comparison studies conducted, and settings included in the original and updated HOD and ODS, provide important findings for researchers and practitioners.

## IMPLICATIONS

### *Implications for Research*

As each comparative study concludes, we discuss implications for research and practice. As a chapter meant to point interested stakeholders in directions for new research, this section will detail some ideas previously mentioned and some not before discussed. Further, additional details on potential research projects may be offered for those interested in furthering investigation in this important area.

First, interested researchers may find it fruitful to extend some of the existing comparison studies in an attempt to increase sample sizes and add robustness to findings while also potentially glean additional implications from the data. To that end, we welcome anyone interested in doing so to reach out and work with us on such endeavors. This topic of research is vast and very important, and therefore it is imperative that more researchers take up the topic to help us all gain more information on how group setting can influence behavior toward out-groups and out-group members. As previously written, great work in rivalry has been conducted by very talented researchers and any attentional attention to the phenomenon of rivalry and group behavior is welcomed for the purpose of better understanding.<sup>1</sup>

Second, new ideas for comparison studies are important. For example, we have discussed comparison studies among fans of sport teams and (1) United States Higher Education Greek Society organizations, (2) beer and alcohol brands, (3) soft drink brands, (4) hotel and resort brands, (5) clothing brands, (6) designer shoe brands, and (7) shopping brands in categories such as (a) grocery, (b) general, (c) department, (d) high-end, and (e) convenience. Each of these studies could be conducted using sport as one category to better understand the influence of group setting

<sup>1</sup> David Tyler (dtyler@isenberg.umass.edu) and Joe Cobbs (cobbsj1@nku.edu) do great work on the study of rivalry, and share their work on the resource [www.KnowRivalry.com](http://www.KnowRivalry.com).

by using a similar methodology to previous investigations. Additionally, including sport as a setting also helps researchers and practitioners to better understand the influence of sport fandom, which ranks as a *highly negative* setting on other fandoms by investigating the role of the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) and identity foreclosure (Beamon, 2012) in group member behavior.

It is also important to point out that while using sport as a setting is interesting-and we think important to an initial study for consistency and reliability, other existing settings can be compared in individual studies as well. While we provide such comparison of the Group Behavior Composite (GBC) in the last book and Chapter 4 of this one, future research focusing on group settings, especially highly negative ones, could help further enlighten the field regarding out-group behavior. Among potential implications of comparing settings beyond that of sport could highlight specific areas where group differences exist within the framework of the GBC such as the Rivalry Perception Scale (RPS; Havard, Gray, Gould, Sharp, & Schaffer, 2013) and Glory Out of Reflected Failure (GORFing; Havard & Hutchinson, 2017), or even describe differences among group settings in identity (James et al., 2019; Wann & Branscombe, 1993) and reported attitude toward brands (Spears & Singh, 2004).

Third, the comparative studies described in the book and others primarily used quantitative means. This is useful when trying to analyze and generalize findings to a group, and therefore met our overall goal of gaining initial understanding of behavior toward others. Qualitative means can also be used to glean further rich data regarding how people view in-group and out-group members. To date, qualitative analysis has helped us understand how mobile phone users view each other (Phillips-Melancon & Dalakas, 2014), how Disney fans view Disney and Universal (Havard, Baker, et al., 2023), how people dealt with the closures of the Disney Parks and Resorts amid the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic (Havard, Baker, Wann, Grieve, & Ryan, 2022), views of sport fans (Havard, 2014), and how conference realignment and loss of competition influence views of the out-group (Havard & Eddy, 2013). The use of qualitative methods could greatly enhance our understanding of how behavior is influenced by group membership, and is a ripe area for future investigation.

A fourth area of interest is extending what we know from the existing studies and literature and examining influence on planned and actual

behaviors. For instance, when creating the *Sport Rivalry Man* and *Adventures of Sport Rivalry Man* comics, we experimentally tested the influence of students using the comics to learn about rivalry and group behavior on their reported likelihood to help others in various situations of need; similar to the study of football fans conducted by Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005). In our experiment, students taking classes on marketing and rivalry were asked to report their likelihood to help others in various situations ranging from small to high need. Before they answered questions, some students were exposed to the comics while others were not. In our analysis, we found that students exposed to the comics reported higher likelihood of requesting someone stop verbally derogating an out-group member than students that did not read the comics (Havard & Workman, 2018).

Studies in this area could use similar methodology in analyzing group members' willingness to help out-group members in various situations. For example, asking members of religious groups, members of political parties, and fans of theme parks, phones, or athletic footwear, their willingness to help others in various situations could uncover interesting perspectives. Additionally, using means in which we can place participants in an experimental setting may also help further our understanding. One idea includes participants being exposed to simulated situations in which their help is requested, which would act to place people in more real-world environments.

Along with investigating the influence of group settings on willingness to help, it is also important to examine willingness to commit some form of negative act upon out-group members. We experimentally found that exposure to various types of promotional material (Havard, Wann, et al., 2018), media stories (Havard, Ferruci, et al., 2021), and negative news regarding rival indiscretions (Havard & Eddy, 2019) influenced the way people viewed the out-group. Further, researchers could use similar methodology design to measure the influence of external variables on group members in various sport and non-sport settings. Further, a portion of sport fans have repeatedly reported they would definitely be willing to consider heinous acts of anonymous aggression (Havard, Wann, et al., 2013, 2017; Wann & Waddill, 2013; Wann, Wann, et al., 2003; Wann, Peterson, et al., 1999a, 1999b) and instrumental aggression (Wann, Carlson, et al., 1999; Wann, Waddill, et al., 2017) toward rival groups and participants. With care as not to entice

negative behavior among participants, future research focusing on willingness to consider anonymous physical and instrumental aggression among group members would help further educate researchers, practitioners, and interested readers on group behavior. Using simulated methods as described above would also assist researchers in this area and potentially measure participant responses in simulated versus paper-and-pencil or online response design.

Another way to experimentally examine willingness to consider physical aggression is to utilize the Voodoo Doll Task (VDT; DeWall et al., 2013). The VDT was developed to allow respondents to indicate where they would inflict physical pain on others. Using this or a similar design would again place participants in a more real-world setting when indicating their responses to prompts. Currently, such a study is being designed in the sport setting using a virtual doll in order to measure willingness to inflict pain—and location of pain—by sport fans against in-group members, and various out-group members by assigned level of importance to the in-group. A next step on this path of inquiry would be to use physical dolls, either created or purchased,<sup>2</sup> to measure participant willingness to engage in such acts. Further, adding time-specific experimental design to this and other studies could help determine how time of response (either during a contest or conflict or at another time) influences group member behavior and negativity. Comparison and individual setting design would help educate readers in each of these investigations. In other words, researchers could focus on a single fandom or group setting or compare participant responses and behavior in numerous settings.

An important note to make for researchers engaging in the study of rivalry and group member behavior is that we must show great care when designing and conducting studies as to keep from encouraging or enticing negative behavior among members of out-groups. It is very unfortunate when fans and members of various groups engage in negative and somewhat violent behavior toward each other, and media is unfortunately well-documented with such examples of this behavior. Previously, reasons why organizations must be aware of their promotion of competition and the consequences that can arise from negative group member behavior were as discussed (Havard 2020a, 2020b, Ch. 2, Ch. 5). It would be most unfortunate in our design of studies to further understand group behavior

<sup>2</sup> One example would be the popular *Damnit Dolls* previously sold that featured players from various sport teams.

and negativity if we inadvertently encouraged such actions, which is why we as researchers have to take great care in our design and implementation of data collection as well as discussion of findings.

### *Implications for Practice*

Along with the various avenues of future research that can be pursued to better understand group behavior, it is also vital that researchers and practitioners work together in an attempt to not only learn more but decrease negative behavior among out-group members. Currently in our society, we are in dire need of finding ways for people to exist together and learn ways to decrease animosity. One way of doing that may be by listening to each other and trying to understand background information explaining why people hold various ideas and exhibit types of behavior (Hibbing et al., 2008). This section will highlight some ideas that have been discussed among myself and colleagues on future paths to hopefully help decrease out-group animosity. While discussing potential ideas to decrease group member animosity and negativity, this section may also mention future study to accompany such ideas.

For practitioners working with individuals and group members, it is very important they continue to work with researchers in an attempt to better understand behavior and motivations. Several of the studies discussed above would benefit from the inclusion of practitioners' views and ideas for design and implementation. This is by no means a task for either researchers or practitioners; rather, they must work together if the goal is effective understanding of behavior and decrease of out-group animosity and negativity.

Among the ideas above, designing and conducting experiments regarding willingness to help others in various situations would be very beneficial to researchers and practitioners. Further, they may provide potential avenues for more ideas that could be implemented to better understand and influence group behavior to become more positive. This is where comparison studies could be of particular interest and importance, as they may help highlight which settings elicit the strongest negative and positive interactions among group members.

A very important endeavor of practitioners and researchers should be to coordinate efforts in the development of a program in which group behavior can be further studied, and potential ideas meant to decrease group member negativity be implemented. Ideally, a program

that engages with members of various groups that asks their perceptions of in-groups and out-groups would be very helpful to all involved. Further, through such a program, participants could also weigh in on ideas and strategies that could potentially alleviate or decrease out-group negativity. Engaging group members in various tasks is a strategy that has been used with success and doing so in the study of rivalry and group behavior could also yield encouraging results.

On this path, throughout the text, the common in-group (Gaertner et al., 1993) has been discussed and examined. This theory states that the more groups an individual is a member of influences the views of himself/herself, in-group members, and possible out-group members. We know that people tend to stereotype positive behavior to the in-group and negative behavior to the out-group (Maass et al., 1989), and therefore finding ways in which people are similar is important for future researchers and practitioners. In other words, if someone belongs to multiple groups, they may be less likely to react negativity toward others if an in-group experiences some form of perceived failure, which may be opposite of someone engaging in identity foreclosure (Beamon, 2012). Therefore, finding commonalities among people could provide useful paths toward more understanding and acceptance of out-groups. It is important to note that not all ideas and views of people we may consider members of an out-group are ones that potentially should be understood, as we have seen throughout history with some of the more heinous beliefs and views held by some. Rather, this idea extends to people that may hold different beliefs and ideology that do not rise to a general understanding of heinous and unacceptable ideas and/or behavior in our society.

A program that asks participants to indicate various interests and discuss such interests could help introduce people from various groups and possibly allow them to engage with each other in a less-animus manner. This is the overall goal of the GBC, HOD, and ODS, as they may be used to help researchers and practitioners accomplish such means. For example, one person indicates that he/she identifies as a Christian, Republican, and fan of the New York Yankees who is also a fan of Disney Theme Parks, comics, and science fiction. A second individual identifies as a Non-Christian, Democrat, and fan of the Boston Red Sox who is also a fan of Disney Theme Parks, comics, and science fiction. Within the relationship of these two individuals, perhaps religion, politics, and sport are not topics which they should begin their conversations; rather,



focusing on their shared interest of Disney Theme Parks, comics, and science fiction may produce more productive dialogue.<sup>3</sup>

Further, the extended contact hypothesis (Zhou et al., 2018) states that the more people engage with each other, the more likelihood they may have trying to understand or even coexist with each other even considering their differences. This is not a suggestion that individuals should ignore differences in views and perceptions, rather that initial focus on commonalities may help to increase the likelihood of group members finding positive interactions with each other. Through repeated positive interactions, perhaps then the individuals could broach the topics in which they disagree with a series of rules and/or understanding to guide more difficult conversations.

For implementation of such a program, we are including again the HOD and ODS as figures in this chapter (also available in Chapter 4). To recap the HOD and ODS, the four settings that fall into *High Negativity* are (1) religion ( $M = 5.03$ ,  $SD = 0.41$ ), (2) online gaming ( $M = 4.78$ ,  $SD = 0.60$ ), (3) politics ( $M = 4.75$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ), and (4) sport ( $M = 4.51$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ ). The settings labeled *High/Medium Negativity* are (5) athletic footwear ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ) and (6) mobile phones ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ), while (7) streaming ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ) and (8) theme parks ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ) are labeled *Medium Negativity*. The more-positive settings labeled *Low Negativity* are (9) gaming console ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ), (10) Disney Parks ( $M = 4.01$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ), (11) science fiction ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ), and (12) comics ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ). Therefore, when developing such a program, researchers and practitioners should focus on item and instrument development that would allow them to gather important information regarding interests. After experimental examination, they should also perhaps focus on highlighting participant commonalities in interests lower on the HOD or at the more positive end of the ODS and not immediately engage in discussions on settings at the higher or more negative end of the figures (Figs. 5.1 and 5.2).

<sup>3</sup> In the case that two individuals share interest in comics, but one likes Marvel while the other likes DC, or one likes Star Wars science fiction while the other prefers Star Trek, these two settings rank near the bottom of the HOD and positive end of the ODS, which may mean these topics are less animus for the individuals to engage.

<b>High Negativity</b>	
1)	Religion
2)	Online Gaming
3)	Politics
4)	Sport
<b>Medium/High Negativity</b>	
5)	Athletic Footwear
6)	Mobile Phones
<b>Medium Negativity</b>	
7)	Streaming
8)	Theme Parks
<b>Low Negativity</b>	
9)	Gaming Console
10)	Disney Parks
11)	Science Fiction
12)	Comics

Fig. 5.1 Hierarchy of Out-group Derogation

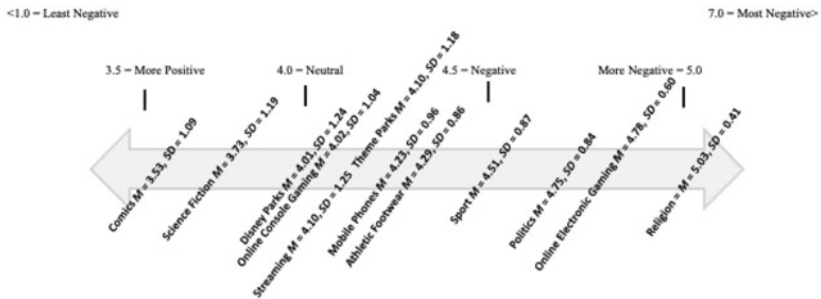


Fig. 5.2 Out-group Derogation Spectrum

## SHARED PERSPECTIVES

We will conclude the chapter, and discussion of finding implications, by introducing a long-time idea that encompasses the research and practical applications discussed in this and the previous book. For more than

10 years, [www.SportRivalry.com](http://www.SportRivalry.com) has provided visitors with a qualitative review of rivalry using comics, lesson plans, videos, and podcasts to teach people more about the phenomenon of rivalry in the sport setting. With the inclusion of non-sport settings, along with work on projects revolving around fandom in general entertainment, themed entertainment, and consumer brands, the breadth of work extends well beyond the sport setting. For this reason, [www.SharedPerspectives.org](http://www.SharedPerspectives.org) is being introduced as a new resource for those interested to learn more about group behavior and how external variables such as setting influence such behavior.

The site will feature different facets of fandom, group membership, and the influences of setting on in-group and out-group relations. Currently, the proposed site will be made up of seven sections, including (1) information found on [www.SportRivalry.com](http://www.SportRivalry.com), (2) data and information on existing and future group setting comparison studies, (3) information on working with individuals and groups while attempting to find commonalities, (4) a section on research and information surrounding fandom of the Walt Disney Company, (5) consulting and research opportunities, (6) information on the books available about rivalry, competition, and fandom, and (7) an about us section.

The first section on [www.SportRivalry.com](http://www.SportRivalry.com) will highlight the beginning of the current research on group behavior and the importance of learning more about rivalry and competition using the sport setting. This section will include the comics and videos regarding the history of various rivalries in sport, videos, and podcast of the *This Week in Rivalry* series, along with the podcast *Rivalry Ranked*, the *Adventures with Sport Rivalry Man* comics and videos, and the Sport Rivalry Man Curriculum. Research into sport rivalry began this endeavor into understanding group behavior, so it is appropriate that it be the first section included on the site.

Second, a section devoted to the current and future studies of rivalry, competition, and fan behavior in and out of the sport setting will be included. In particular, the section will provide details regarding the projects already conducted along with planned and potential research design. Information on the GBC, HOD, and ODS will be found in the section to help visitors learn more about the phenomenon. Ideally, a team of students and creative personnel would also be able to create comic representations of the information regarding group behavior in various fandom settings.

In a third section, information meant to help those researching and working with group membership would be available. Specifically, the

information previously discussed about tactics to working with different groups would be available to visitors, along with the planned program based on investigating individual interests and ways to find commonalities among groups and group members. Again, the use of comics, videos, and audio podcasts would assist in dissemination of this information.

Fourth, as a way to highlight a fandom that elicits less negative-or more positive views among fans and group members, information about work regarding fandom of the Walt Disney Company would be provided in a section. This information includes studies, projects, and writings on the company, its fans, and company competitors, along with access to the *Being a Fan of Disney* Podcast and a planned book on the topic of fandom. As Disney acts as a topic that potentially provides many visitors with common interests, information on the influence of positive group settings will be provided in the proposed section.

A fifth section would provide information on the consulting and research opportunities that can be provided by individuals working with the site and research group. This includes research services, current and planned research projects, and potential grant writing opportunities for site personnel. The sixth section will include information about the various texts that have produced in an attempt to teach readers about rivalry and group behavior. Finally, an about us section will be provided to help visitors learn more about the vision of the site, and individuals working on projects on the topic of competition, rivalry, and group membership/behavior.

The website will be part of a larger effort to better understand group membership, group member behavior, and the decrease of animosity among individuals and groups. To this, the foundation of a proposed research group/center/consortium will be explored. Purposes of the research group/center/consortium include conducting new research on the topic, the production of informational comics, videos, and curriculum about group membership and group member behavior, the production of books and audio podcasts on the topic, as well as establishing and seeking funding for graduate and faculty research through internal and external means.

This chapter provides a glimpse behind the curtain at some of the ideas that have been discussed, planned, and/or explored regarding future research and implications for practice. The study of group membership and group member behavior is vital to the future of society as we strive

for a more inclusive environment. It is our hope that this chapter, along with the preceding ones, provide useful information, spark interest, and encourage engagement with the information, researchers, and practitioners.

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