Research article

Dealing with deviants: The effectiveness of rejection, denial, and apologies on protecting the public image of a group

ESTHER VAN LEEUWEN[1]*, MARIEKE VAN DEN BOSCH[1],
EMANUELE CASTANO[2] AND PETRA HOPMAN[1]
[1]*VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands*
[2]*New School University, USA*

Abstract

Public transgressions by group members threaten the public image of a group when outside observers perceive them as representative of the group in general. In three studies, we tested the effectiveness of rejection of a deviant group member who made a racist comment in public, and compared this to several other strategies the group could employ to protect their image. In Study 1 (N = 75) and Study 2 (N = 51), the group was judged less racist after rejecting the deviant than after claiming a non-racist position or not responding to the transgression. Perceived typicality of the deviant partially mediated this effect in Study 2. In Study 3 (N = 81), the group was judged least racist after forcing the deviant to apologize and as most racist after denying the severity of the transgression. Results also showed a negative side-effect of rejection. Perceived exclusion of the deviant contributed to a perception of the group as disloyal to its members, which resulted in a less favorable overall group evaluation. Potential benefits and risks of rejection, denial, and apologies are further discussed in the General Discussion. Copyright © 2009 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

How their group is perceived by others is important to people. Many intra-group indiscretions are kept hidden from the outside world to avoid contamination of the group's reputation. But what if a group member commits a serious transgression in public? For example, when a politician makes a racist statement on national television, will a ''no comment'' strategy by the politician's party be able to fend off a public inference that the racist comment represents the party's general point of view? Or would it be more effective to publicly distance the group from the transgressor? In the present paper, three studies are reported comparing the effectiveness of various strategies to deal with such deviants in an attempt to protect the group's public image.

When social identity needs are low, perceptions of outgroups are more homogeneous (Messick & Mackie, 1989; Mullen & Hu, 1989; Thompson, Kohles, Otsuki, & Kent, 1997), more stereotypical (Jones, Wood, & Quattrone, 1981; Linville, Fisher, & Yoon, 1996), less complex (Linville & Jones, 1980) and more evaluatively extreme than are perceptions of the ingroup (Branscombe, Wann, Noel, & Coleman, 1993; Linville & Jones, 1980). Consequently, negative information about an outgroup is known to result in more negative responses to that group (Wohl & Branscombe, 2005) and is more often internally attributed than negative information about the ingroup (Doosje & Branscombe, 2003). An important source of information about a group is the behavior of an individual group member. An individual group member who deviates from the group stereotype is particularly influential because his or her behavior stands out against a background of normative behavior, making it perceptually salient (Blanton & Christie, 2003). When perceivers are confronted with an individual group member whose behavior deviates from that of other members of the group, they can either modify the

*Correspondence to: Esther van Leeuwen, Department of Social Psychology at VU University Amsterdam, van der Boechorststraat 1, 1081 BT Amsterdam, The Netherlands. E-mail: EAC.van.Leeuwen@psy.vu.nl

group stereotype to include the deviant behavior, or create a separate subtype, leaving the group stereotype intact (Hewstone, Hopkins, & Routh, 1992a; Hewstone, Johnston, & Aird, 1992b; Kunda & Oleson, 1995, 1997; Park, Wolsko, & Judd, 2001; Richards & Hewstone, 2001). Contrary to ingroup stereotypes which contain more subgroups and subtypes to incorporate the deviant information (Park, Ryan, & Judd, 1992; Richards & Hewstone, 2001), outgroup stereotypes are found to rely more heavily on examplar knowledge (Marques, Robalo, & Rocha, 1992, Study 2; Park & Judd, 1990). Most influential in stereotype change are those group members who only moderately deviate from the group stereotype (Kunda & Oleson, 1997). Individual outgroup members whose characteristics or behavior moderately deviate from their group norm in a negative direction may thus have a relatively strong impact on the overall perception of the outgroup. Where ingroup members often discard a transgressor's behavior as being atypical, outsiders are more likely to perceive the transgressor's behavior as representative of that group, and accommodate this negative information into their perception of the group.[1] Groups that are concerned about their public image should thus be extra attentive to norm-violating behavior by an individual group member.

It is important at this stage to make a distinction between more general norms that transcend most group boundaries, such as "do not steal" or "do not discriminate," and specific norms that serve to define groups and stress their distinctiveness from other groups (*cf.* the model of subjective group dynamics; Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998; Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Henson, 2000). When an ingroup norm is group defining, deviance reduces the clarity of intergroup boundaries and deviants are evaluated less positively than normative members. This effect is qualified by the direction of the violation: Pro-norm deviance (that is, group members who hold an extreme position that is nonetheless in line with the group's ethos) is judged more favorably than anti-norm deviance (members with an extreme position that contrasts the group) as pro-norm deviants are more distant from the outgroup (Abrams et al., 2000). In contrast to a specific group defining norm, in the present research we focused on a more general prescriptive norm that is held by many (albeit not all) groups in society: The norm not to discriminate against others on the basis of their ethnic background. When this norm is held by both ingroup and outgroup, an individual outgroup member who is violating this general norm by displaying racist behaviour is not primarily threatening the clarity of the intergroup distinction. The primary threat in this case lies in the fact that the outgroup risks being associated with the norm violating-behavior. The desire to achieve and maintain positive intergroup distinctiveness would only fuel the motivation among non-outgroup members to associate the individual norm-violating behavior with the outgroup as a whole—that is, to see the outgroup as discriminatory, thus normatively distinct from the ingroup.

People seem to be aware of the fact that negative ingroup information can easily damage their group's image in the eyes of outsiders. Criticism of the ingroup, for example, is considered acceptable and constructive when expressed by ingroup members and "behind closed doors", but considered unacceptable and damaging when expressed in the presence of an outgroup audience (Hornsey, de Bruijn, Creed, Allen, Ariyanto, & Svensson, 2005; Elder, Sutton, & Douglas, 2005). In public, groups aim to present a positive and united front. Matheson, Cole, and Majka (2003) found that dissension of an ingroup member, while tolerated in an intragroup context, was rejected in an intergroup context. This finding supports Hornsey's argument that there is an implicit rule that group members aim to present the best possible face to the world—a rule that seems well embedded in common phrases such as "keep it in-house" and "Don't air your dirty laundry in public" (Hornsey et al., 2005).

When a group member commits a public transgression, outsiders could view the transgression as typical for the group and adjust their representation of the group accordingly. To prevent this type of assimilation, various strategies are available to the group to deal with their deviant. These strategies may range from public support of the deviant in the hope that the deviant's behavior itself will be re-evaluated, to openly condemning and punishing the deviant. The effectiveness of these strategies may be contingent on a range of factors—a full investigation of these is beyond the scope of this paper. However, drawing on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), one could argue that one of the most fundamental factors affecting the likelihood of adjusting the group stereotype to the behavior of a single deviant is the degree to which the deviant is categorized as a central member of the group. Modification of the stereotype should be most likely to occur when the deviant is perceived as firmly included within the group representation. On the other hand, modification should be least likely to occur when the deviant is perceived as rejected from the group, thereby perceptually excluded from the group representation.

---

[1]This argument specifically applies to negative outgroup information that is only moderately deviant from the group norm. This situation is different from the impact of positive outgroup deviants, where research has shown that positive change of outgroup stereotypes through positively deviant examplars is often difficult to achieve (e.g., Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999).

The central role of categorization processes is illustrated by research by Bless and colleagues. Bless and Schwarz (1998) presented their participants with a set of knowledge questions about a highly respected politician and subsequently had them evaluate the politician's party. The knowledge questions were phrased such that they elicited the politician's inclusion or his exclusion from the representation formed of his party. Across two studies, they found that when participants were induced to include the respected politician into their representation of his party, their evaluations of the party were more positive than when they were induced to exclude him from this representation, or when they evaluated the party without being reminded of the politician. Bless, Schwarz, Bodenhausen, and Thiel (2001) also manipulated categorization of a positively valenced, atypical exemplar, and measured evaluation of the group (Study 1). Supporting Bless and Schwarz's (1998) earlier finding, the group was evaluated less stereotypically by participants in the inclusion condition than by participants in the exclusion condition.

The relationship between stereotype modification, social categorization, and exemplar typicality is circular. Exemplars that deviate too much from the group stereotype are unlikely to cause stereotype change because they are viewed as atypical, as a result of which they are mentally excluded from the stereotype (Kunda & Oleson, 1997). Conversely, because social categorization implies a grouping of people on the basis of within-group similarities and between-group differences (Turner et al., 1987), mentally excluding a deviant from the group induces a perception of the deviant as different from other members of his or her group—as an atypical group member. Park et al. (2001) found that perceived atypicality of a deviant outgroup exemplar was negatively related to change in observers' outgroup stereotype. Castano, Paladino, Coull, and Yzerbyt (2002) showed that perceived typicality of ingroup deviants mediated modification of the ingroup stereotype among highly identifying group members. Factors affecting the degree to which a negative deviant is perceptually included in the group representation should therefore affect the degree to which a negative deviant's transgression influences the group representation.

In the absence of additional information that could allow for subtyping, moderately extreme transgressions tend to result in adjustment of the group representation (Kunda & Oleson, 1995, 1997). The public response of the group to the transgression could influence the extent to which a negative deviant is perceptually included in the group representation. When the actions of a group member deviate from the group norm in a negative direction, but not to the extent that it clearly warrants subtyping, a group could protect its public image by openly distancing itself from the deviant and his or her transgression. One way of creating distance between the group and the transgression is by stressing the group norm. For example, when a group member is accused of gender-based discrimination, the group could attempt to protect its public image by claiming that it strongly believes in gender equality. This strategy of emphasizing a non-sexist norm works at a purely categorical level by imposing dissimilarity between the group and the deviant, thereby reducing comparative and normative fit. In other words, the deviant will be viewed as a less typical member of the group. A more active way of creating distance is through public rejection of the deviant. Rejecting the deviant may prevent adjustment of the group representation because the deviant is perceived as atypical for the group. The notion that openly rejecting an ingroup deviant may be a very effective way of protecting the group's public image is supported by the findings by Bless and Schwarz (Bless & Schwarz, 1998; Bless et al., 2001). However, it should be noted that those studies investigated the influence of an evaluatively *positive* exemplar. Since positive (pro-norm) deviance is viewed as less atypical for a group than negative (anti-norm) deviance (Abrams et al., 2000), we cannot automatically assume that these effects will generalize to the domain of negative deviants.

A more important difference between the present studies and those conducted by Bless and Schwarz (Bless & Schwarz, 1998; Bless et al., 2001) is that experimentally inducing a perception of a deviant as either included or excluded from a group differs from the use of rejection as a strategy employed by the group itself in a number of ways. First, openly rejecting a deviant not only keeps the deviant's negative influence at bay, but could also be interpreted as an active attempt to reinforce the group norm, making it potentially very effective in protecting the group's public image. On the other hand, social exclusion is considered a rather harsh strategy because it violates some of the most basic human needs, such as the need to belong (Williams, Forgas, & von Hippel, 2005; Warburton, Williams, & Cairns, 2006). Being psychologically excluded from a group evokes reactions that are similar to the experience of physical pain (Eisenberger, Lieberman, & Williams, 2003; MacDonald & Leary, 2005), and social rejection is known to result in depression, aggression, and a loss of self-regulation (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Twenge, 2005; Twenge & Campbell, 2003). The public rejection of a fellow group member could also be viewed as a violation of basic social norms of group loyalty (Hornsey et al., 2005; van Vugt & Hart, 2004). Rejection of a negative deviant as a strategy to protect the group image could therefore have an unexpected side-effect, because outsiders may view it as inappropriate and wrong in those circumstances. While groups do

indeed sometimes respond to negative ingroup deviants through social rejection (Birchmeier, Joinson, & Dietz-Uhler, 2005; Castano et al., 2002), little is known about the intended and unintended consequences of this strategy in terms of how the group is perceived by outsiders.

The main purpose of the present research was to investigate how a group's public response to a negative deviant influences non-ingroup members' evaluation of that group in terms of the negative deviant's characteristics. This research thus employed an outsiders' perspective on the effectiveness of rejection as a means of dealing with a negative deviant. In three studies, participants (British university students (Study 1), British voters outside a polling station (Study 2), or Dutch university students (Study 3)) read a news report about a group to which they did not belong (a conservative political party in Studies 1 and 2, or a rowing team associated with a conservative university in Study 3). The paper described how a member of that group had made a racist remark in public followed by a public response from the group. The main dependent variable in these studies was the extent to which the group was perceived as racist.

STUDY 1

In this study, British university students were presented with a news report of a member of the British Conservative party who had made a racist remark in public. Only participants who did not support the Conservative party were included in the final dataset. The reported reaction of the political party was manipulated between participants (three conditions). Public rejection was operationalized as openly distancing the group from the deviant and condemning the deviant's transgression. A response of public rejection was created by having the political party declare the politician's statements to be unacceptable and announce to take serious action against the transgressor (*deviant rejection condition*). In the second condition (*non-racist party condition*), the party did not comment on the politician's transgression other than claiming the party itself was not racist, thus only stressing a non-racist group norm. In the third condition (*no reaction condition*), the group did not comment on the event at all.

Active rejection not only induces a mental exclusion of the deviant but also implies that the group is openly claiming to be non-racist. Such a non-racist claim is also made in the second condition where the party stresses its non-racist stance, but here the distance is created solely at a categorical level and remains implicit. Neither action is implied by the third condition in which no reaction is given. The first and second conditions thus differ from the third condition in making a non-racist claim, and the first condition differs from both other condition in that it involves an active rejection of the deviant. We therefore expected that the political party would be viewed as least racist in the deviant rejection condition and most racist in the no reaction condition (Hypothesis 1). We also included an exploratory measure of the perceived appropriateness of the party's reaction.

Method

Participants and Design

Eighty-one students from the University of Kent participated in this study in exchange for a mini-candy bar. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions of the manipulated variable Reaction (deviant rejection, non-racist party, or no reaction). Upon completion of the questionnaire, they were asked to indicate their political preference (liberal-democrat, labor, conservative or other). After excluding six students who reported supporting the conservative party (which was used as the outgroup in this paradigm), the remaining dataset consisted of 75 participants (43 men, 32 women, $M_{age} = 22.41$, SD $= 4.02$).

Procedure

The questionnaire was run on a laptop which was set up in a public space at the campus. Participants were asked to read an alleged press paper about the Conservative party which had appeared on the World Socialist Website. The paper was a

modified version of an existing internet paper and described a situation in which one member of the Conservative party made racist comments in his public speech on immigration.[2] In the original text the leader of the party condemned the comments. For the experimental purpose of this study the ending of the paper was altered in three ways. In the *deviant rejection condition*, the paper stated that the party leader had held several press meetings and had commented upon the deviant party member's remarks by saying that his "...speech was very regretful," that "his remarks were unacceptable," and that the Conservative party was looking into what action should be taken against the deviant party member. In the *non-racist party condition*, the paper read that the leader had not commented upon the speech itself, but had stressed that the Conservative party is a non-racist party. In the *no-reaction condition*, the paper stated that although the party leader had held several press meetings, he had not said anything about the deviant party member's point of view.

After reading the paper a brief questionnaire was administered. *Perceived racism* of the political party was measured with four items. Two items asked participants to indicate on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 *(not at all)* to 7 *(very much)* to what extent they agreed with the statements that the Conservative party was racist, and that the Conservative party's position on immigration was motivated by racist beliefs. Two items asked participants to indicate on an 11-point scale what percentage $(1 = 0\%, 11 = 100\%)$ of the members of the Conservative party they believed were racist, and what percentage of the supporters of the Conservative party they believed were racist. Due to the use of different scales, these four items were first transformed into z-scores, after which they were averaged into one scale of perceived racism $(\alpha = .92)$. *Perceived appropriateness of the reaction* was measured with two items. Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they believed the reaction presented in the paper was appropriate, and right $(1 = not \ at \ all, 7 = very \ much)$. These items were averaged to form one scale $(\alpha = .94)$. Upon completion of the questionnaire, participants received their candy bar, were thanked for their participation, and debriefed.

Results and Conclusion

Perceived racism and appropriateness of the reaction were both analyzed in one-way analyses of variance, with Reaction as independent variable. An overview of the results is presented in Table 1. In addition to the overall *F* test and *post hoc* cell mean comparisons (both presented in Table 1), each analysis included a test for the linear contrast that is implied in Hypothesis 1 (coded −1 for deviant rejection, 0 for non-racist party, and 1 for no reaction) as well as a quadratic contrast $(-.5, 1, -.5)$ to examine the residual effect.

A test of the extent to which the political party was perceived as racist revealed a significant linear pattern, $t(72) = 4.11$, $p < .001$. This finding supports Hypothesis 1 in demonstrating that a public rejection of the deviant was most effective in reducing the extent to which the group itself was viewed in terms of the deviant's trait (racism). Not responding to the transgression was least effective. The quadratic contrast was not significant, $t(72) = .95$, ns. Inspection of the means shows that the party was perceived as being least racist by participants in the deviant rejection condition and most racist in the no reaction condition. While a no reaction strategy may have inadvertently been interpreted as a tacit approval of the deviant's transgression, making a strong public claim that the party is a non-racist party cannot be construed in the same manner. Nonetheless, even this strategy was not nearly as effective in protecting the group's public image as openly rejecting the deviant was.

Analysis of perceived appropriateness of the reaction also revealed a significant linear pattern $t(72) = -3.22, p < .01$, in addition to a significant test for the quadratic contrast, $t(72) = 20.42, p < .001$. Both the mere claim of being non-racist and providing no reaction were viewed as less appropriate than rejecting the deviant. These findings indicate that openly rejecting a deviant was viewed as the most appropriate strategy by far.

Together, these results show that openly rejecting a deviant's behavior is most effective in protecting the group's public image compared with merely making a non-racist claim or not responding at all.

STUDY 2

In order to replicate the findings from Study 1 in a more naturalistic setting, Study 2 was conducted outside a polling station, with a broader sample of British citizens (inhabitants of the city of Canterbury, UK) as participants. The design

---

[2]The paper we used contained the real names of the original paper. For privacy reasons, we will refer to these individuals as the party leader and the deviant party member.

Table 1. Perceived racism and appropriateness of reaction, Study 1

	Deviant rejection ($n = 25$)	Non-racist party ($n = 25$)	No reaction ($n = 25$)	$F(2, 72)$	η^2
Racism (z-scores)	$-.52_a$ (.62)	$.16_b$ (.90)	$.44_b$ (.91)	8.94^*	.20
Appropriateness	5.16_a (1.11)	3.36_b (1.78)	3.76_b (1.65)	9.42^*	.21

Note: Standard deviations in parentheses. Means with different subscripts differ significantly from each other in SIDAK *post hoc* tests at the 5% level.
$^*p < .001$.

was identical to that of Study 1. We included a measure of perceived typicality of the deviant in this study to test the assumption implicit in Hypothesis 1 that claiming a non-racist group norm creates some distance between the group and the deviant compared to a non-response control condition, but that publicly rejecting the deviant is a more active and more effective strategy of turning the deviant into an atypical representative of the group. We expected that the deviant in the rejection condition would be perceived as least typical than the deviant in the non-racist party condition and most typical in the no reaction control condition (Hypothesis 2a). Moreover, we expected that the effect of reaction on perceived racism would be mediated by perceived typicality (Hypothesis 2b).

Method

Participants and Design

Fifty-six citizens participated in this study. After excluding from the analyses those who considered themselves supporters of the Conservative party, 51 participants (37 men and 14 women) remained, ranging in age between 21 and 83 ($M = 57.25$, SD $= 14.23$). Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions of the manipulated variable Reaction (deviant rejection, non-racist party, or no reaction). Participants volunteered to join in the study and were recruited at a polling station in Canterbury during local elections.

Procedure

The material was identical to that used in the first study, with the exception that the source of the paper was changed into the CNN website (which we considered a somewhat more neutral source than the socialist website used in Study 1). After reading a printout of the paper, participants were asked to fill out a brief paper questionnaire. *Perceived typicality* was measured with three items. First, participants were asked to indicate how similar to the average party member they perceived the deviant party member to be ($1 = not\ at\ all$, $7 = very\ much$). Second, they were asked to report to what extent they thought the deviant party was a typical member of the Conservative party ($1 = not\ at\ all$, $7 = very\ much$). Third, participants were asked to place two marks on a continuous line (10 cm) with the labels "*not racist*" and "*racist*" on either end, to indicate the perceived positions of the deviant party member and the Conservative party's spokesperson on the racism dimension. Since the party's spokesperson acted as a representative of the group, the perceived distance between these two persons (measured in centimeters) can be construed as the perceived distance between the deviant party member and a core group member—the shorter the distance, the more typical the deviant party member is perceived to be. The scores on this measure ranged from 1.60 to 9.80 cm ($M = 5.33$, SD $= 1.18$). Due to the different scale endings, the three items measuring typicality were first transformed into z-scores, after which they were averaged and combined into a single reliable scale ($\alpha = .75$).

Following the measurement of typicality, *perceived racism* of the political party was assessed with the same four items used in the first study. After z-transformation, these items were averaged into one scale ($\alpha = .88$). *Perceived appropriateness of the reaction* was also measured with the same two items as in Study 1, and later averaged into one scale ($\alpha = .88$). Upon completing the questionnaire, participants were thanked for their participation and debriefed.

Table 2. Perceived racism, typicality, and appropriateness of reaction, Study 2

	Deviant rejection ($n = 19$)	Non-racist party ($n = 14$)	No reaction ($n = 18$)	$F(2, 48)$	η^2
Racism (z-scores)	$-.67_a$ (.43)	$.20_b$ (.89)	$.58_b$ (.66)	17.51^{**}	.42
Typicality (z-scores)	$-.35_a$ (.76)	$-.10_{ab}$ (.61)	$.45_b$ (.85)	5.34^*	.18
Appropriateness	5.63_a (.70)	3.75_b (.73)	3.11_b (.80)	56.97^{**}	.70

Note: Standard deviations in parentheses. Means with different subscripts differ significantly from each other in SIDAK *post hoc* tests at the 5% level.
$^*p < .01$; $^{**}p < .001$.

Results and Conclusion

Perceived racism, appropriateness of the reaction and typicality were all analyzed in separate one-way analyses of variance, with Reaction as independent variable. Tests for the linear contrast were also included (coded -1 for deviant rejection, 0 for non-racist party, and 1 for no reaction) as were tests for the quadratic contrast ($-.5, 1, -.5$). An overview of the results is presented in Table 2.

Supporting Hypothesis 1 and replicating the results from Study 1, the test of perceived racism revealed a significant linear pattern, $t(48) = 5.78, p < .001$. Participants in the deviant rejection condition viewed the political party as less racist compared to participants in the non-racist party condition, followed by participants in the no reaction condition. The quadratic contrast was not significant, $t(48) = .79$, ns.

Also replicating the findings from Study 1, rejecting the deviant was perceived as more appropriate than claiming the party is a non-racist party or not reacting to the transgression at all. The linear contrast was significant, $t(48) = -10.30$, $p < .001$, as was the quadratic contrast, $t(48) = -2.70, p < .05$. This latter effect demonstrates that rejecting the deviant was viewed as the most appropriate strategy by far, preferable to both claiming the party to be non-racist or not reacting at all to the transgression.

Analysis of perceived typicality confirms Hypothesis 2a in demonstrating a significant linear pattern, $t(48) = 3.22$, $p < .01$. The quadratic contrast was not significant, $t(48) = -.68$, ns. Inspection of the means shows that the deviant party member was perceived as least typical for the group in the deviant rejection condition and most typical in the no reaction condition.

Perceived typicality was positively correlated with perceived racism ($r = .51, p < .001$). We conducted a series of regression analyses to test for mediation (Hypothesis 2b). Following Aiken and West (1991), we first computed a linear contrast effect to test for the linear effect of reaction, and a quadratic contrast to test for possible deviations from the linear pattern. We then regressed perceived typicality on Reaction (the two contrasts entered simultaneously). This analysis confirms our previous finding that the effect of Reaction on typicality is linear ($\beta = .41, t = 3.22, p < .01$) and not curvelinear ($\beta = -.08, t = -.62$, ns). Next, we conducted a regression analysis in which, in Step 1, perceived racism was regressed on Reaction (the two contrasts entered simultaneously). This analysis too revealed a significant effect for the linear ($\beta = .63, t = 5.78, p < .001$) but not the quadratic ($\beta = .13, t = 1.19$, ns) contrast. However, after entering perceived typicality in Step 2, the linear effect of Reaction reduced in magnitude, although it remained significant ($\beta = .51, t = 4.43$, $p < .001$). Perceived typicality was also a significant predictor of racism in this analysis ($\beta = .31, t = 2.72, p < .01$). Moreover, a Sobel test for the partial mediation of the linear effect of Reaction on racism by typicality was significant (Sobel's $z = 2.08, p < .05$). Together, these results lend support to Hypothesis 2b in showing that public rejection of an ingroup member who made a racist comment in public reduced the extent to which the whole group was viewed as racist in part because it reduced the degree to which the deviant was perceived as typical for the group.

Discussion Study 1 and Study 2

It was predicted that the public rejection of a racist deviant would lower the extent to which the group was seen as racist. Results from both studies support this prediction. The fact that the group was publicly rejecting its deviant could affect perceived racism because it may have signaled that the group claimed a non-racist position. However, the comparison with a condition in which the group claimed to be non-racist without rejecting the deviant attested to the unique effect of

rejection: Upon rejection of the deviant, the group was viewed as less racist than after claiming to be non-racist without rejecting the deviant. Moreover, in Study 2, the effect of Reaction on group racism was partially mediated by the perceived typicality of the deviant. This finding confirms our argument that rejection is effective, in part, because it reduces the degree to which the deviant is viewed as a typical representative of the group.

The mediation, however, was only partial, leaving a large section of variance unexplained. Park et al. (2001), who in their own research observed a significant covariation between typicality and stereotype change but no evidence of mediation, point toward a potential methodological problem associated with explicit typicality ratings. A noted disadvantage of explicit typicality ratings is that they draw participants' attention to the (poor) fit between exemplar and the group. As a result, asking participants to indicate whether they viewed the deviant's expressed racism as typical for the group could have caused them to mentally exclude the deviant in response to the typicality rating task instead of in response to the observed group reaction. For example, the typicality task could evoke the following thought in a participant: "I see the deviant as racist, but I see the group as not racist, hence, the deviant must be an atypical group member." In contrast, our theoretical argument assumes people reason as follows: "I see the deviant as racist, and the group reaction leads me to conclude that he is a (non-)typical group member, hence, the group must be (non-)racist." A task that explicitly focuses people on comparing the deviant and the group *before* judging the group therefore runs the risk of influencing the group rating itself.

Perceived appropriateness of the reaction was included in these studies as an exploratory measure. In both studies, rejection of the deviant was seen as the most appropriate strategy. In fact, the pattern in both studies was curvilinear, meaning that although making a non-racist stance was viewed as somewhat more appropriate than not responding at all, both were viewed as much less appropriate than rejecting the deviant. Yet in terms of their effectiveness in protecting the group's public image, the strategies assumed a linear pattern only. It appears that a non-racist claim is more effective than it is viewed as appropriate. It is possible that publicly claiming the group to be non-racist without directly addressing the transgression itself is interpreted as a form of denying or downplaying the severity of the transgression. Although moderately effective in presenting the group as non-racist, this strategy is perhaps not as effective, or appropriate, in dealing with the transgression itself in a satisfactory manner.

The finding that public rejection of the deviant was viewed as most appropriate in both studies appears to go against the notion put forward in the introduction that rejection could be judged as inappropriate because it is considered too extreme, given the transgression. It appears that participants judged rejection as a "punishment that fits the crime." Another reason why we argued that rejection could be judged as inappropriate was that social rejection can be viewed as a violation of basic social norms of group loyalty (Hornsey et al., 2005; van Vugt & Hart, 2004). However, perceived loyalty and judgements of appropriateness of the reaction may in reality constitute separate constructs. A good illustration is the case of whistleblowing. Whistleblowing, defined within organizational contexts as "the disclosure by organizational members (former or current) of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organizations that may be able to affect action" (Near & Miceli, 1995), is often considered appropriate and just—yet, the whistleblowers themselves are condemned for violating basic principles of group loyalty (Ellis & Arieli, 1999; Near & Miceli, 1995; van der Lee, van Leeuwen, & Hopman, 2008). The rejection of the deviant in the previous studies could simultaneously have been viewed as appropriate and as a sign that the group is unsupportive of its members in times of trouble. In Study 3, we included measures of group loyalty and general group evaluations to test this assumption.

STUDY 3

The strategies that were under investigation in Studies 1 and 2 involved the group taking up a position *vis à vis* the deviant (rejection), or *vis à vis* the deviant's trait (claiming the group to be non-racist). In Study 3, we took these strategies one step further by translating them to the behavioral domain. Public rejection in the previous studies was operationalized as the public distancing by the group from the deviant and his transgression. In behavioral terms, rejection could involve a number of actions, including the explicit exclusion of the deviant from the group. Openly excluding the deviant should prevent the inclusion of the deviant's characteristics into the group representation (*cf*. Bless & Schwarz, 1998; Bless et al., 2001).

In addition to overt exclusion, a group could attempt to create distance between itself and the transgressor by forcing the deviant to apologize for his behavior. A racist comment is not just a violation of an ingroup norm, but a violation of a more

general social norm that speaks against discrimination. Apologizing and expressing remorse over a transgression is a form of accepting responsibility. Research has shown that accepting responsibility for a transgression is associated with greater forgiveness and more positive evaluations than the denial of responsibility (Gold & Weiner, 2000; Hodgins & Liebeskind, 2003; Pilpot & Hornsey, 2008). Apologizing for a transgression for which guilt is evident is also more effective in repairing trust compared with the denial of responsibility (Kim, Ferrin, Cooper, & Dirks, 2004). It has been argued that the power of apologies lies in the fact that while the offender admits blame, he or she simultaneously shows being worthy of a second chance (McPherson Frantz & Bennigson, 2005). Gold and Weiner (2000) showed that accepting responsibility affects the perceived stability of the cause of the transgressor's actions: Those who accept responsibility and express remorse are deemed less likely to repeat the offence compared to those who deny responsibility.

Forcing a deviant to apologize for his actions may be effective for two reasons. It distances the group from the deviant, and the transgression is less likely to be interpreted as reflecting a stable quality. An apology need not come from the deviant, however. When aiming to offer an apology in an attempt to repair the effects of a racist remark made in public, a group could also apologize *as a group* for the transgression committed by one of its members. Compared to when the group forces the deviant to apologize, a group apology more strongly implies that the deviant remains included within the group (albeit in a more peripheral position). By standing up and speaking for the deviant, the group aims to distance itself from the behavior for which it apologizes, while simultaneously sending out a signal that the deviant remains included within the group. A group apology therefore arguably involves a higher degree of inclusion of the deviant in the group compared with an apology from the deviant.

We investigated the effectiveness of four possible reactions in this study. These reactions are the exclusion of the deviant from the group (*deviant exclusion*), an apology offered either by the deviant (*deviant apology*) or by the group (*group apology*), and a denial of the severity of the transgression (*group denial*). The group denial condition was included to enhance comparability with literature on apologies, which often compares the effectiveness of apologies to that of denial of a transgression (e.g., Kim et al., 2004).[3] Not responding to a transgression (the control condition used in Studies 1 and 2) may imply that the group does not perceive the transgression serious enough to respond to, but is also open to other interpretations, for example an attempt to deal with the matter behind closed doors. Publicly denying the severity of the transgression leaves less room for such alternative explanations.

Both the deviant exclusion and the deviant apology condition involve strategies that focus explicitly on the deviant, and as such they can be viewed as a form of rejecting the deviant. In contrast, the group apology and group denial conditions can be viewed as more inclusive because they involve actions in which the group itself attempts to handle the situation, without putting the deviant on the foreground. However, between the two rejection strategies, we expected exclusion to be perceived as a more overt and extreme form of rejection than deviant apology. Between the two inclusion strategies, we expected group denial to be somewhat more inclusive than group apology, because a group apology suggests that the group is distancing itself from the transgression (but not so much from the person who committed the transgression).

As in Study 2, we also aimed to study the potential of a spillover of the deviant's racist comments to the group image, depending on the deviant's perceived position in the group. We assessed perceived racism of the deviant's comments directly before the measurement of perceived group racism. Given the extremity of the transgression, it was not expected that the group's reaction would affect the extent to which the deviant's comments were seen as racist. However, we did expect that after reactions that involved a higher degree of inclusiveness of the deviant within the group, perceived racism of the deviant's comments would be more strongly, and positively, associated with perceived group racism, thereby reflecting a spillover of the deviant's racist comment to the group (Hypothesis 3a). As a result, the group would be perceived as less racist following reactions that imply a rejection of the deviant (deviant exclusion or deviant apology) than following reactions that imply that the deviant remains included in the group (group apology or group denial). Simultaneously, in line with previous literature (Gold & Weiner, 2000; Hodgins & Liebeskind, 2003; Kim et al., 2004) we argued that an apology (offered by deviant or group), would be more effective than a non-repair strategy (exclusion or denial) in distancing the group from the racist transgression. Taken together, we thus predicted that the group was least likely to be perceived as racist in the deviant apology condition (where rejection and repair are combined), and most likely to be perceived as racist in the group denial condition, with group apology and deviant exclusion occupying an intermediate position (Hypothesis 3b).

---

[3]Since transgressions in the present research occurred in public, we expected that a denial of the transgression itself would not be a credible strategy. We therefore modified this strategy into a denial of the severity of the transgression. Literature shows that groups often downplay the severity of a transgression to avoid feelings of guilt (e.g., Branscombe & Miron, 2004).

An additional aim of this study was to investigate the consequences of the above-mentioned strategies in terms of a more encompassing evaluation of the group. We argued that excluding a deviant from the group could be perceived as an appropriate response to the deviant's transgression (i.e., some form of punishment or repair is required so make things right), while simultaneously the group itself could be condemned for the lack of loyalty and support it demonstrated toward one of its members. It was therefore predicted that the group would be perceived as less loyal in the deviant exclusion condition compared to the other three conditions (Hypothesis 4a). Moreover, we predicted that perceived loyalty would be a unique and positive predictor of observers' general evaluation of the group, in addition to a negative effect of perceived racism on general group evaluation (Hypothesis 4b).

Method

Participants and Design

Eighty-one students (31 men, 50 women, $M_{age} = 22.17$, SD $= 4.00$) from the VU University Amsterdam participated in this study on a voluntary basis. Participants were recruited across campus and randomly assigned to one of four conditions (Reaction: Deviant exclusion, deviant apology, group apology, and group denial).

Procedure

Participants were given a printout of a newspaper article that had ostensibly appeared on the website of a national newspaper a few months earlier. The paper described a national rowing contest between teams from various student associations (none of the teams mentioned in the story were associated with the VU University Amsterdam or another Amsterdam university, to ensure that participants were reading only about groups to which they did not belong). During the event, a member of the rowing team that represented a large student organization from Leiden University (an organization which is stereotypically associated with a more conservative and right wing student population) had shouted racist comments to another rowing team (described in the paper as "Given the nature of these comments they will not be repeated here, but it is very clear that they are discriminatory toward certain ethnic members of the rivalling team"). The paper first described how the receiving team felt offended and discriminated by these comments, after which it presented a response from a spokesperson of the offending team from Leiden. In the *deviant exclusion* condition, the spokesperson explained that the team member who had committed the transgression would be denied future membership in the team. In the *deviant apology* condition, the spokesperson explained that his team regretted the occurrence and the deviant had been made to send a written apology to the offended team. In the *group apology* condition, the spokesperson explained that his team regretted the occurrence and that he had sent a letter to the offended team to apologize on behalf of his entire team. In the *group denial* condition, the spokesperson explained that any comments made by his team were made in the heat of the moment and should not be interpreted as racist. The public outrage to these comments was not justified and had blown the entire issue out of proportion.

After carefully reading the paper, participants were asked to fill out a paper questionnaire. Perceived *group racism* was measured with six items, four of which were presented as statements (e.g., "I think the rowing team is racist," or "I think a large number of members of the rowing team has racists beliefs;" $1 = not\ at\ all$, $5 = very\ much$). In two additional questions participants were asked to write down their estimate of the percentage (any number between 0 and 100) of racist members in the rowing team, and their estimate of the percentage of non-white members in the rowing team (reversed coded). After transformation to z-scores these six items were averaged into a single reliable scale of group racism ($\alpha = .72$). Perceived racism of the deviant's comments was measured with four items (e.g., "The comments are racist," "The comments reflect racist beliefs;" $1 = not\ at\ all$, $5 = very\ much$) which were later averaged into one scale (*deviant racism*; $\alpha = .64$). To simplify the comparison between deviant racism and group racism, this scale was also transformed into z-scores.

In order to assess the perceived *position* of the deviant in relation to the group, participants were presented with three pictures in which the group was represented by a circle and the deviant by a cross. In the first picture, the cross was placed outside the circle (exclusion). In the second picture, the cross was placed inside the circle, but close to the border

Table 3.   Perceived racism and general evaluations, Study 3

	Deviant exclusion (n = 19)	Deviant apology (n = 22)	Group apology (n = 20)	Group denial (n = 20)	$F(3, 77)$	η^2
Perceived racism						
Group racism (z)	$-.01_{ab}$ (.63)	$-.40_a$ (.60)	$.03_{ab}$ (.59)	$.42_b$ (.49)	7.12^{***}	.22
Deviant racism (z)	$.15_a$ (.87)	$-.03_a$ (.66)	$-.05_a$ (.59)	$-.06_a$ (.68)	$.76^{ns}$	.00
Correlation (r)	$-.03^{ns}$ $_a$	$.29^{ns}$ $_{ab}$	$.51^*$ $_b$	$.58^{**}$ $_b$		
General evaluations						
Appropriateness	3.75_a (.63)	3.52_a (.86)	3.53_a (.73)	2.06_b (.80)	20.59^{***}	.45
Group evaluation	2.01_a (.62)	2.59_b (.60)	2.51_{ab} (.69)	2.03_a (.53)	5.18^{**}	.17
Loyalty	2.50_a (.88)	2.98_{ab} (.68)	3.28_b (.73)	3.00_{ab} (.93)	3.06^*	.11

Note: Standard deviations in parentheses. Means with different subscripts differ significantly from each other in SIDAK *post hoc* tests; Pearson correlations with different subscripts differ significantly from each other. $^*p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$.

(peripheral inclusion). In picture 3, the cross was placed close to the center of the circle (central inclusion). Participants were asked to circle the picture that, in their minds, best depicted the position of the deviant in relation to his group.

Loyalty was measured with two items (''I believe the members of the rowing team have strong ties together,'' and ''I believe the members of the rowing team support each other through thick and thin;'' $1 = not\ at\ all$, $5 = very\ much$), that were later averaged into one scale ($\alpha = .83$). General *group evaluation* was measured with four items (e.g., ''I have a positive impression of the rowing team,'' ''I think the members of the rowing team are nice people;'' $1 = not\ at\ all$, $5 = very\ much$), which were averaged into one scale ($\alpha = .63$). Perceived *appropriateness* of the reaction was assessed with four items (e.g., ''I believe the rowing team's response was correct,'' ''I believe the rowing team's response was insufficient [reverse coded]; $1 = not\ at\ all$, $5 = very\ much$), that were also averaged into a single scale ($\alpha = .87$). At the end of the study, participants were thanked for their participation and debriefed.

Results

Unless otherwise indicated, the dependent variables were analyzed in separate one-way analyses of variance, with Reaction as independent variable. An overview of these results is presented in Table 3.

Perceived Racism

The extent to which the group was viewed as racist differed significantly across conditions. As expected, the group was viewed as least racist in the deviant apology condition, and as most racist in the group denial condition. Hypothesis 3b was based on the assumption that perceived group racism would result from two added effects. First, it was supposed that strategies implying rejection would lower perceived racism in comparison to strategies implying inclusion. Second, it was assumed that the offer of an apology would be more effective in reducing racism than other strategies involving no apology. We therefore computed two contrasts to test these assumptions. The first contrast compared the mean of the deviant exclusion and deviant apology conditions to the mean of the group apology and group denial conditions (coded $-1, -1, 1, 1$). This contrast was significant, $t(77) = 3.38$, $p = .001$, demonstrating that reactions that imply a rejection of the deviant are more effective than reactions that do not imply such a rejection. The second contrast compared the mean of the deviant and group apology conditions to the mean of the deviant exclusion and group denial conditions (coded $-1, 1, 1, -1$). This contrast was also significant, $t(77) = -3.06$, $p < .01$, demonstrating that the offer of an apology has a unique and positive effect on reducing perceived group racism. A third contrast that was included to examine the residual effect (coded $1, -1, 1, -1$) was not significant, $t(77) = -.05$, ns. Together, these results lend full support to Hypothesis 3b.

The extent to which the deviant's comments were viewed as racist did not differ across conditions, as anticipated. Inspection of this variable before z-transformation revealed that, overall, the deviant's comments were perceived as rather racist ($M = 4.17$ on a five-point scale, SD = .62) and clearly above the scale midpoint of three, $t(80) = 17.07$, $p < .001$. After computing separate correlations between perceived deviant racism and group racism within each condition (see

Table 4. Frequency data of perceived position of the deviant in relation to the group, Study 3

	Deviant exclusion ($n = 18$)	Deviant apology ($n = 22$)	Group apology ($n = 20$)	Group denial ($n = 20$)	Total ($n = 80$)
Inclusion					
Central	2 (11%)	3 (14%)	3 (15%)	9 (45%)	17 (21%)
Peripheral	3 (17%)	8 (36%)	13 (65%)	6 (30%)	30 (38%)
Exclusion	13 (72%)	11 (50%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	33 (41%)
Total	18 (100%)	22 (100%)	20 (100%)	20 (100%)	80 (100%)

Note: Cell percentages within each level of Reaction in parentheses.

Table 3), we see that perceived deviant racism and group racism are unrelated in the deviant exclusion condition and the deviant apology condition. However, there was a significant and positive relationship in the group apology condition, which was even more pronounced in the group denial condition. In support of Hypothesis 3a, the group tended to be viewed more strongly in terms of the deviant's racist transgression as the group's reaction to the transgression implied a higher degree of inclusiveness of the deviant in the group.

Perceived Position of the Deviant

A χ^2 analysis of the frequency data of the measure of the perceived position of the deviant in relation to the group (presented in Table 4) showed a significant relationship between reaction and position $\chi^2(6) = 21.64, p = .001$. More often than expected by the model, participants in the group denial condition viewed the deviant as occupying a central position within his group. Participants in the group apology condition viewed the deviant most often as included in the group in a peripheral position. More often than expected by the model, participants in the deviant exclusion condition viewed the deviant as located outside the group boundaries. Overall, these data support the underlying assumption that the four strategies can be rank ordered in terms of their consequences for perceived in- or exclusion of the deviant.

General Evaluations

Overall, the reaction of the group to the transgressing deviant was judged more appropriate in the deviant exclusion, deviant apology, and group apology conditions than in the group denial condition (see Table 3). Analysis of general group evaluation showed that the group was evaluated more positively in the deviant apology and group apology conditions than in the deviant exclusion and group denial conditions. A similar pattern, although less pronounced, was found with respect to group loyalty. The group was perceived to be less loyal in the deviant exclusion condition compared with the group apology condition, with the deviant apology and group denial conditions occupying intermediate levels. In Hypothesis 4a, it was predicted that the least amount of loyalty would be observed in the deviant exclusion condition compared with the three other conditions. We therefore computed a contrast comparing the deviant exclusion condition with the mean of the other conditions (coded -3, 1, 1, 1). This contrast was significant, $t(77) = 2.75, p < .01$, supporting Hypothesis 4a. Two other contrasts were included to examine the residual effect. The first contrast (coded 0, -1, 0, 1) was not significant, $t(77) = .09$ ns, and neither was the second contrast (coded 0, -1, 2, -1), $t(77) = 1.30$, ns.

Our predictions are based on the assumption that exclusion of a racist deviant will result in the group itself being perceived as less racist but also as less loyal. To test these assumptions, the perceived position of the deviant was transformed into a dummy variable that reflects the extent to which the deviant was viewed as located outside the group boundaries or as located within the group boundaries (coded as 1 for perceived exclusion and 0 for perceived [central or peripheral] inclusion). This dummy variable was entered as a predictor of group racism and group loyalty in two separate regression analyses. Results showed that perceived exclusion was negatively related to group racism, $\beta = -.26; R^2_{adj} = .07$, $F(1, 79) = 5.52, p < .05$; as well as to group loyalty, $\beta = -.26; R^2_{adj} = .07, F(1, 79) = 5.76, p < .05$. When the deviant was
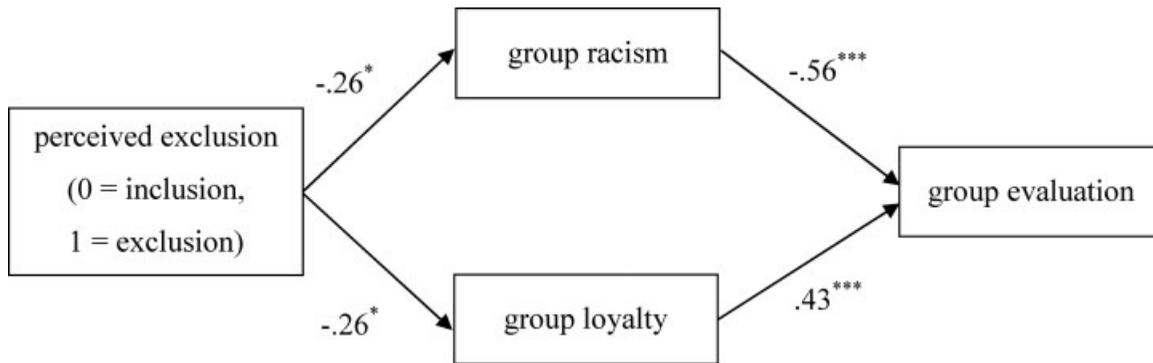
Figure 1.   Relationship between perceived exclusion, group racism, group loyalty, and general group evaluation, Study 3

perceived to be excluded from the group, the group was viewed as less racist, but also (and to an equally strong extent) as less loyal.

To test the presumed unique relationships between group racism, loyalty, and general group evaluation (as predicted in Hypothesis 4b), we conducted a regression analysis with group evaluation as the dependent variable, in which group racism and group loyalty were entered simultaneously as predictors. Confirming Hypothesis 4b, both variables were found to be unique predictors of group evaluation, explaining 51% of the variance in group evaluation ($F(2, 78) = 40.12$, $p < .001$). Figure 1 presents the β weights for loyalty and group racism from this analysis, as well as the β weights that depict their relationship with perceived exclusion.

Interestingly, perceived exclusion did not have a direct relationship with group evaluation ($\beta = .01$, $R_{adj}^2 = -.01$, $F(1, 79) = .01$, ns), as could be expected in a situation where two potential mediators have an opposite sign and the indirect effects are of similar magnitude (Kenny, Kashy, & Bolger, 1998). In that case, it is still possible to test for the mediation of "no effect" (Kenny et al., 1998). A Sobel test for the mediation of the effect of exclusion on group evaluation by perceived group racism shows that group racism is indeed a significant mediator (Sobel's $z = 2.21$, $p < .05$). A test for the mediation of the effect of exclusion on group evaluation by perceived group loyalty shows that loyalty is also a significant mediator (Sobel's $z = -2.11$, $p < .05$). Together these findings demonstrate that any positive influence perceived exclusion might have had on overall group evaluation through reducing perceived racism was simultaneously counteracted by a negative influence through reducing perceived group loyalty.

Conclusion

The results from Study 3 support the predictions in showing that the extent to which a negative transgression results in an adjustment of the group perception was moderated by the response of the group to the transgression. These responses varied in the degree to which they implied a rejection of the deviant, with deviant exclusion and deviant apology being viewed as less inclusive than group apology and group denial. This pattern of inclusion is clearly reflected in the pattern of correlations between perceived deviant racism and group racism: Strategies implying a higher degree of inclusion also produced stronger associations between perceived racism of the deviant and the group. Interestingly, group racism itself displayed a different pattern. The pattern of means of this variable confirm the hypothesized strength of offering an apology. This finding is in line with literature that shows how apologies affect the attributions people make for the transgression: Transgressions for which an apology is given are less likely to be viewed as reflecting enduring, stable qualities than transgressions that are not followed by an apology (Gold & Weiner, 2000; McPherson Frantz & Bennigson, 2005).

While deviant exclusion, deviant apology and group apology were considered equally appropriate reactions, and more appropriate than group denial, deviant exclusion was also perceived as the least loyal. Moreover, deviant exclusion and group denial resulted in less favorable group evaluations than deviant and group apology. This finding shows that the appropriateness of a reaction may not automatically translate into more positive group evaluations. Indeed, reactions that

could be viewed as perfectly appropriate and right in a given situation, could nonetheless backfire because they suggest a negative group characteristic in another domain, such as the degree to which the group is loyal to its members and supports them in times of trouble. Loyalty and group racism were unique predictors of general group evaluations, demonstrating that both are important contributors in people's overall assessment of a group. The results from this study present social exclusion as a double-edged sword. Although only correlational, the findings suggest that exclusion of an ingroup transgressor can protect the group's public image by preventing a spillover of the transgression to the group, but simultaneously damage the group's image by portraying the group as unsupportive and disloyal.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Previous researchers have studied how people handle ingroup members who threaten the positive distinctiveness of their group (e.g., Birchmeier et al., 2005; Castano et al., 2002; Marques, Abrams, & Serôdio, 2001; Matheson et al., 2003; Scheepers, Branscombe, Spears, & Doosje, 2002; Wellen & Neale, 2006). The present research is the first to examine the effectiveness of some of these strategies in terms of protecting the group's public image. To this end, we adopted an outsiders' perspective: Participants were evaluating groups to which they did not belong themselves. By virtue of the fact that these groups were associated with a conservative belief system, a racist transgression by one member of the group could be construed as deviating in a negative direction, but not to the extent that it becomes exceptional and atypical. Moderately deviant examplars are most influential in altering stereotypes (Kunda & Oleson, 1997), putting the group at serious risk of being associated with the racist transgression and viewed as racist itself.

In the general introduction of this paper, we argued that outgroup deviants are more influential in modifying their group stereotype than are ingroup deviants. This is not because people are somehow more strongly offended by outgroup members' transgressions than by ingroup members' transgressions, on the contrary, because negative ingroup deviants threaten the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup, they are often judged more harshly than comparable outgroup deviants (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988; Marques & Paez, 1994). However, ingroup stereotypes are more complex than outgroup stereotypes, and typically contain a number of subtypes to capture the deviant's behaviour without causing modification of the stereotype in general (Park et al., 1992; Richards & Hewstone, 2001). In the event that no such subtype exists, the general motivation to preserve the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup causes group members to mentally exclude the negative deviant from their group, classifying him or her as atypical and exceptional (Castano et al., 2002; Hutchison & Abrams, 2003). No such motivation, nor sufficient detailed knowledge of available subtypes, exists when people evaluate other groups to which they do not belong, thus enhancing the likelihood that a negative outgroup deviant is included into the outgroup representation (Marques & Paez, 1994; Marques et al., 1992).

The strive toward positive distinctiveness that typifies intergroup relations implies that negative ingroup deviants are particularly harmful when they are publicly visible. Indeed, research shows that ingroup dissent that is tolerated in an intragroup context, is rejected in an intergroup context (Matheson et al., 2003). When a group member commits a transgression in public, the group faces a number of choices with regards to how to handle the situation. One option is to minimize response, in the hopes that it will all "blow over." Although this strategy may seem naïve at first glance, other, more active strategies, in contrast, easily run the risk of drawing too much attention to the transgression, thereby contributing to the harm rather than controlling it. One could argue that not responding to a very mild transgression might, for this reason, be the wisest solution. In the present research, however, the transgression could not be construed as very mild, and respondents did indeed judge the "no reaction" strategy employed by the political party in Studies 1 and 2 as inappropriate, and wrong. Moreover, this strategy was ineffective in protecting the group's image. Equally ineffective and inappropriate was a denial of the severity of the transgression as employed by the rowing team in Study 3. People sometimes downplay the harshness of transgressions committed by other members of their group to avoid feelings of collective guilt (Branscombe & Miron, 2004). However, results from the present research suggest that this type of response actually strengthens the association between the group and the transgression. In other words, it appears that a denial of the harshness of the transgression, while possibly effective in inhibiting *feelings* of guilt, simultaneously promotes *judgements* of collective guilt by outsiders. With moderate to severe transgressions, downplaying, denying, or simply not responding to the transgression is not just ineffective, but potentially harmful with respect to how the group is viewed by outsiders.

The main focus of this research was on social rejection of the deviant. The results from three studies attest to the effectiveness of rejection as a strategy to deal with an ingroup deviant and protect the group's public image. After publicly condemning the deviant's racist comments, forcing the deviant to apologize, or expelling him from the group, the group itself was viewed to be less racist compared with other strategies that do not involve a rejection of the deviant. Moreover, following social rejection, the deviant was viewed as a less typical group member (Study 2), and less included in the group (Study 3), and his racist transgression was less likely to affect the group representation.

Effective as it may be, social rejection also comes at a great cost. Rejection is costly for the deviant himself, who is likely to experience it as a threat to self-esteem and the need to belong (Williams et al., 2005). Rejection is also costly for the group, in more than one way. If the deviant was in other ways a valuable contributor to the group, his or her exclusion can drain the group's resources (a problem also known as the "exit problem"; van Vugt & Hart, 2004). Moreover, rejection can damage the very image the group aimed to protect: The rejection of a group member, even one that committed a serious transgression and whose expulsion is considered appropriate and right, could result in the public belief that the group is unsupportive of its members, and quick to drop them in times of trouble. Although the majority of literature on group loyalty focuses on the sacrifices made by individual members on behalf of their group (e.g., van Vugt & Hart, 2004), loyalty arguable goes both ways. Just as loyal group members are expected to stay with their group "when the going gets tough" (Ouwerkerk, de Gilder, & de Vries, 2000), the group should support its individual members when they find themselves in a similar situation. The importance of group support is illustrated by research conducted in organizational contexts, which shows that organizational support contributes to commitment (Naumann, Bennett, Bies, & Martin, 1999) and organizational citizenship behavior (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005). In Study 3 of the present research, exclusion of the deviant was viewed as the least loyal strategy, and perceived group loyalty contributed to more negative evaluations of the group in general. Future research might examine the role of group loyalty in handling deviants more closely.

In the present studies, we used conservative target groups to examine the impact of their responses to a transgressing group member. Although these were the British Conservative Party in Studies 1 and 2, and a rowing club from a conservative student association in Study 3, they all arguably represent somewhat homogeneous and clearly defined groups, as conservatives tend to be seen. Research has shown that stereotypes change more rapidly in the case of disconfirming evidence stemming from homogeneous groups as opposed to heterogeneous groups (Hewstone et al., 1992b). Future research could therefore include the perceived homogeneity of groups as an important factor influencing the ease with which single outgroup transgressions influence the outgroup stereotype. From a more practical perspective, it appears that groups often already use this knowledge in their attempts to fend off the damaging influence of transgressors. Whether it is the English who are confronted with cases of binge-drinking by other English people on holidays, or the Dutch who are confronted with an instance of an ill-mannered Dutch politician, the response is often "we aren't all like that, we are very diverse people."

Future research might also focus on the role of apologies in protecting a group's public image. Research shows that apologies are powerful, in part, because they signal that the transgressor (or another party on the transgressor's behalf) accepts responsibility and admits blame (Gold & Weiner, 2000; Hodgins & Liebeskind, 2003). In doing so, however, the group puts itself in a vulnerable position. Admitting blame contributes to feelings of collective guilt (McGarty, Pedersen, Leach, Mansell, Waller, & Bliuc, 2005). Moreover, admitting blame is often followed by some form of financial compensation, making it more difficult for many groups to apologize for wrongdoings committed in the past (Schmitt, Branscombe, & Brehm, 2004). An argument that frequently surfaces in discussions on the desirability of a national apology for historical harmdoings is that those actions were committed by other members of the group—people that no longer are alive today (McGarty et al., 2005). Efforts toward restitution can stem from feelings of collective guilt (Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003), but for feelings of collective guilt to arise and contribute to a group apology one needs to have a sense of identity that includes the perpetrators, as opposed to one from which they are excluded as a "past generation" (McGarty et al., 2005). As demonstrated by the results from Study 3 in the present research, an apology offered by the group was also perceived by outsiders as reflecting a higher level of inclusion. But the results also underline the risk of inclusion, as inclusion was associated with a stronger influence of the deviant's racist characteristic on the group representation. The difficulty of most historical harmdoings is of course that the perpetrators, assuming that they can indeed be viewed as primary responsible, are no longer alive to apologize themselves. Under such circumstances, groups need to walk a fine line between assuming responsibility and admitting blame, and creating sufficient distance between the harmdoing and the group. Future research could investigate alternative ways through which this distance might be established.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

REFERENCES

Abrams, D., Marques, J. M., Bown, N., & Henson, M. (2000). Pro-norm and anti-norm deviance within and between groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *78*, 906–912.

Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. New York, US: Sage.

Baumeister, R. F., DeWall, C. N., Ciarocco, N. J., & Twenge, J. M. (2005). Social exclusion impairs self-regulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*, 598–604.

Birchmeier, Z., Joinson, A. N., & Dietz-Uhler, B. (2005). Storming and forming a normative response to a deception Revealed online. *Social Science Computer Review*, *23*, 108–121.

Blanton, H., & Christie, C. (2003). Deviance regulation: A theory of action and identity. *Review of General Psychology*, *2*, 115–149.

Bless, H., & Schwarz, N. (1998). Context effects in political judgement: Assimilation and contrast as a function of categorization processes. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *28*, 159–172.

Bless, H., Schwarz, N., Bodenhausen, G. V., & Thiel, L. (2001). Personalized versus generalized benefits of stereotype disconfirmation: Trade-offs in the evaluation of atypical examplars and their social groups. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *37*, 386–397.

Branscombe, N. R., & Miron, A. M. (2004). Interpreting the ingroup's negative actions toward another group: Emotional reactions to appraised harm. In L. Z. Tiedens, & C. W. Leach (Eds.), *The social life of emotions: Studies in emotion and social interaction* (pp. 314–335). New York, US: Cambridge University Press.

Branscombe, N. R., Wann, D. L., Noel, J. G., & Coleman, J. (1993). In-group or out-group extremity: Importance of the threatened social identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *19*, 381–388.

Castano, E., Paladino, M. P., Coull, A., & Yzerbyt, V. Y. (2002). Protecting the ingroup stereotype: Ingroup identification and the management of deviant ingroup members. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *41*, 365–385.

Coyle-Shapiro, J. A. M., & Conway, N. (2005). Exchange relationships: Examining psychological contracts and perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *90*, 774–781.

Doosje, B., & Branscombe, N. R. (2003). Attributions for the negative historical actions of a group. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *33*, 235–248.

Eisenberger, N. I., Lieberman, M. D., & Williams, K. D. (2003). Does rejection hurt? An fMRI study of social exclusion. *Science*, *302*, 290–292.

Elder, T. J., Sutton, R. M., & Douglas, K. M. (2005). Keeping it to ourselves: Effects of audience size and composition on reactions to criticisms of the ingroup. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, *8*, 231–244.

Ellis, S., & Arieli, S. (1999). Predicting intentions to report administrative and disciplinary infractions: Applying the reasoned action model. *Human Relations*, *52*, 947–967.

Gold, G. J., & Weiner, B. (2000). Remorse, confession, group identity, and expectancies about repeating a transgression. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *22*, 291–300.

Hewstone, M., Hopkins, N., & Routh, D. (1992a). Cognitive models of stereotype change: (1) Generalization and subtyping in young people's views of the police. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *22*, 219–234.

Hewstone, M., Johnston, L., & Aird, P. (1992b). Cognitive models of stereotype change: (2) Perceptions of homogeneous and heterogeneous groups. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *22*, 235–249.

Hodgins, H. S., & Liebeskind, E. (2003). Apology versus defense: Antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *39*, 297–316.

Hornsey, M. J., de Bruijn, P., Creed, J., Allen, J. H., Ariyanto, A., & Svensson, A. (2005). Keeping it in-house: How audience affects responses to group criticism. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *35*, 291–312.

Hutchison, P., & Abrams, D. (2003). Ingroup identification moderates stereotype change in reaction to ingroup deviance. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *33*, 497–506.

Iyer, A., Leach, C. W., & Crosby, F. J. (2003). White guilt and racial compensation: The benefits and limits of self-focus. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *29*, 117–129.

Jones, E. E., Wood, G. C., & Quattrone, G. A. (1981). Perceived variability of personal characteristics in in-groups and out-groups: The role of knowledge and evaluation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *7*, 523–528.

Kim, P. H., Ferrin, D. L., Cooper, C. D., & Dirks, K. T. (2004). Removing the shadow of suspicion: The effects of apology versus denial for repairing competence versus integrity-based trust violations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*, 104–118.

Kenny, D. A., Kashy, D. A., & Bolger, N. (1998). Data analysis in social psychology. In D. Gilbert, S. Fiske, & G. Lindzey< (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (pp. 233–265). Boston, US: McGraw-Hill.

Kunda, Z., & Oleson, L. C. (1995). Maintaining stereotypes in the face of disconfirmation: Constructing grounds for subtyping deviants. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *68*, 565–579.

Kunda, Z., & Oleson, L. C. (1997). When exceptions prove the rule: How extremity of deviance determines the impact of deviant examples on stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *72*, 965–979.

Linville, P. W., & Jones, E. E. (1980). Polarized appraisals of out-group members. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *38*, 689–703.

Linville, P. W., Fisher, G. W., & Yoon, C. (1996). Perceived covariation among the features of ingroup and outgroup members: The outgroup covariation effect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *70*, 421–436.

MacDonald, G., & Leary, M. R. (2005). Why does social exclusion hurt? The relationship between social and physical pain. *Psychological Bulletin*, *131*, 202–223.

Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., Paez, D., & Martinez-Taboada, C. (1998). The role of categorization and in-group norms in judgments of groups and their members. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *75*, 976–988.

Marques, J. M., & Paez, D. (1994). The 'black sheep effect': Social categorization, rejection of ingroup deviates, and perception of group variability. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *5*, 37–68.

Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., & Serôdio, R. G. (2001). Being better by being right: Subjective group dynamics and derogation of in-group deviants when generic norms are undermined. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *81*, 436–447.

Marques, J. M., Robalo, E. M., & Rocha, S. A. (1992). Ingroup bias and the 'black sheep' effect: Assessing the impact of social identification and perceived variability on group judgements. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *22*, 331–352.

Marques, J. M., Yzerbyt, V. Y., & Leyens, J. P. (1988). The ''Black Sheep Effect'': Extremity of judgments towards ingroup members as a function of group identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *18*, 1–16.

Matheson, K., Cole, B., & Majka, K. (2003). Dissidence from within: Examining the effects of intergroup context on group members' reactions to attitudinal opposition. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *39*, 161–169.

McGarty, G., Pedersen, A., Leach, C. W., Mansell, T., Waller, J., & Bliuc, A. M. (2005). Group-based guilt as a predictor of commitment to apology. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *44*, 659–680.

McPherson Frantz, C., & Bennigson, C. (2005). Better late than early: The influence of timing on apology effectiveness. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *41*, 201–207.

Messick, D. M., & Mackie, D. M. (1989). Intergroup relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *40*, 45–81.

Moreno, K. N., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (1999). Resisting stereotype change: The role of motivation and attentional capacity in defending social beliefs. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, *2*, 5–16.

Mullen, B., & Hu, L. (1989). Perceptions of ingroup and outgroup variability: A meta-analytic integration. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *10*, 233–252.

Naumann, S. E., Bennett, N. B., Bies, R. J., & Martin, C. L. (1999). Laid off, but still loyal: The influence of perceived justice and organizational support. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, *9*, 356–368.

Near, J. P., & Miceli, M. P. (1995). Effective whistle-blowing. *Academy of Management Review*, *20*, 679–708.

Ouwerkerk, J. W., de Gilder, D., & de Vries, N. K. (2000). When the going gets tough, the tough get going: Social identification and individual effort in intergroup competition. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *26*, 1550–1559.

Park, B., & Judd, C. M. (1990). Measures and models of perceived group variability. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*, 171–191.

Park, B., Ryan, C. S., & Judd, C. M. (1992). Role of meaningful subgroups in explaining differences in perceived variability for in-groups and out-groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *63*, 553–567.

Park, B., Wolsko, C., & Judd, C. M. (2001). Measurement of subtyping in stereotype change. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *37*, 325–332.

Pilpot, C. R., & Hornsey, M. J. (2008). What happens when groups say sorry: The effect of intergroup apologies on their recipients. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *34*, 474–487.

Richards, Z., & Hewstone, M. (2001). Subtyping and subgrouping: Processes for the prevention and promotion of stereotype change. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *5*, 52–73.

Scheepers, D., Branscombe, N. R., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (2002). The emergence and effects of deviants in low and high status groups. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *38*, 611–617.

Schmitt, M. T., Branscombe, N. R., & Brehm, J. W. (2004). Determinants of the intensity of gender-based guilt in men. In N. R. Branscombe, & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Collective guilt: International perspectives* (pp. 75–92). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin, & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47). Monterey, US: Brooks/Cole.

Thompson, S. C., Kohles, J. C., Otsuki, T. A., & Kent, D. R. (1997). Perceptions of attitudinal similarity in ethnic groups in the US: Ingroup and outgroup homogeneity effects. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *27*, 209–220.

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, W. K. (2003). ''Isn't it fun to get the respect that we're going to deserve?'' Narcissism, social rejection, and aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *29*, 261–272.

van der Lee, R., van Leeuwen, E., & Hopman, P. (2008). When exposing a transgression is a transgression in itself: Responses to whistle-blowing. submitted.

van Vugt, M., & Hart, C. M. (2004). Social identity as social glue: The origins of group loyalty. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *68*, 585–598.

Warburton, W. A., Williams, K. D., & Cairns, D. R. (2006). When ostracism leads to aggression: The moderating effects of control deprivation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *42*, 213–220.

Wellen, J. M., & Neale, M. (2006). Deviance, self-typicality, and group cohesion: The corrosive effects of the bad apples on the barrel. *Small Group Research*, *37*, 165–186.

K. D. Williams, J. P. Forgas, & W. von Hippel (Eds.), (2005). *The social outcast: Ostracism, social exclusion, rejection, and bullying*. New York, US: Psychology Press.

Wohl, M. J. A., & Branscombe, N. R. (2005). Forgiveness and collective guilt assignment to historical perpetrator groups depend on level of social category inclusiveness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*, 288–303.