Review Articles

Threats to Human Rights: A General Review

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Abstract

It has been seventy years since signing the Declaration of Human Rights, yet human right violations are still happening across the globe. This review asks the question – what is the impact of perceived threat on changing support for human rights into support for not-all-humans' rights? In approaching human rights violations with a four-level model – institutions, cultures, groups, and individuals –, issues of capabilities, historical emotions, connectedness, and personality emerge. At the heart of these is the impact perceived threat has at each level within each issue. Limitations of current work, disagreements across the literature, and future directions are discussed.

Keywords: human rights, civil liberties, perceived threat, individual differences, violations

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Non-Technical Summary

Background

Over seventy years ago, the United Nations passed a resolution containing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, even with this resolution, violations of human rights continue to happen across the globe.

Why was this study done?

I reviewed the current research on why violations of human rights and civil liberties continue to occur even when we have outward support for them. Specifically, I focused in on why in times of threat we are willing to forgo human rights. The psychological literature on support for human rights was well documented, but the literature on losing that support was less clear. Moreso, I wanted to bring together research from multiple different perspectives – political science, philosophy, psychology, and sociology – in order to tackle this pressing question of the effects of threat on support for human rights.

What did the researcher do and find?

I examined the relationship of threat and support for human rights and civil liberties on four different levels – how it operates on institutional levels (governments), cultural levels (our memories of past events), group levels (our citizenships, races, and identities), and individual levels (how we personally interpret threat and human rights). At all four levels, how we perceive external threats significantly impacts how we value human rights and civil liberties for both ourselves and for others.

What do these findings mean?

Taken together, this review highlighted a serious need for researchers to explore the relationship between perceived threat and human rights. Research is still divided on whether or not human rights are best served by promoting a global community mindset or by attempting to target and reduce feelings of threat in the first place. This review, however, leans towards the latter in favor of the former. By targeting the moments when threats are perceived, we can both understand what these threats are, and how they can be avoided. Policy makers should look to find ways to reduce feelings of threat while maintaining support for all individuals' civil liberties and human rights.

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In December 1948, the United Nations passed a resolution which contained the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights,* setting a standard of rights to be universally protected (UDHR; UN General Assembly, 1948). Yet, seventy years later, human rights violations continue to occur (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Denmark and France have been condemned for their burqa bans, restricting the movement of Muslim women in public spaces (Margolis, 2018). Individuals in Azerbaijan have been arrested and prosecuted for being critical of the government (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In the United States, families have been separated at the border, which has been called a cruel practice by the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights (Al Hussein, 2018). The Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, Kenneth Roth, states that a growing sentiment of xenophobia and populism from fears of terrorism results in "a frontal assault on the values of inclusivity, tolerance, and respect that lie at the heart of human rights" (Human Rights Watch, 2018, p. 2). In the face of terror, uncertainty, and change, we disregard our fundamental duties to protect and serve humanity as a whole. This review's aim is to tackle this question – how does threat impact our decisions – as groups, as countries, as individuals – to discard support for *all* human rights for support for *some* human*s* rights.

Recently, calls for a more synthetic approach to social psychological research with multiple methods and levels of analysis have been brought forward (Jaspal, Carriere, & Moghaddam, 2016; Power, Velez, Qadafi, & Tennant, 2018). Approaching human rights violations from multiple levels allows us to consider the wider societal context in which human rights violations occur. Therefore, to understand violations of human rights, we need to look not just at the governments that voted for the *UDHR*, but also the capabilities of the governments, the struggles and tribulations of the peoples, their unifications and divisions, and individual personality differences. While there has been a recent review of culture, individual differences, and support for human rights (McFarland, 2015), the aforementioned review did not focus on human right and civil liberty violations. Complex psychological phenomenon, such as supporting human rights, requires the integration of multiple perspectives and frames of reference. I extend the prior review by providing a four-level model of human rights and their violations (see Figure 1): the institution,

the culture, the group, and the individual. For the institution, the most important factor to consider is the capability of the state in handling threats. At the cultural level, we must consider what past master narratives are being socially constructed in order to justify and express feelings of injustice, persecution, and threat. At the group level, divisions of ingroups and outgroups invade the discussion of who deserves rights and who does not, and this may be due to how connected we feel towards other groups. And finally, the individual level, where individual differences in personality can contribute to deep rooted changes in how much one supports the restriction of human rights.

On the outside of the model, threat impacts the relationship between each level of analysis and factor, as the levels need to mobilize the resources of each factor to engage in human rights support. The permeability of these factors is noted through the broken border lines – individuals act on their own felt emotions (Haidt, 2001) and require feelings of individual capacity (or efficacy) in order to take part in collective action (Caprara, Vecchione, Capanna, & Mebane, 2009). Therefore, this framework does not suggest that institutions do not evolve due to historical changes, nor that groups cannot form personalities of their own (on group personalities, see Halfhill, Sundstrom, Lahner, Calderone, & Nielsen, 2005). Instead, it provides a taxonomy under which we can approach the research of human right violations.
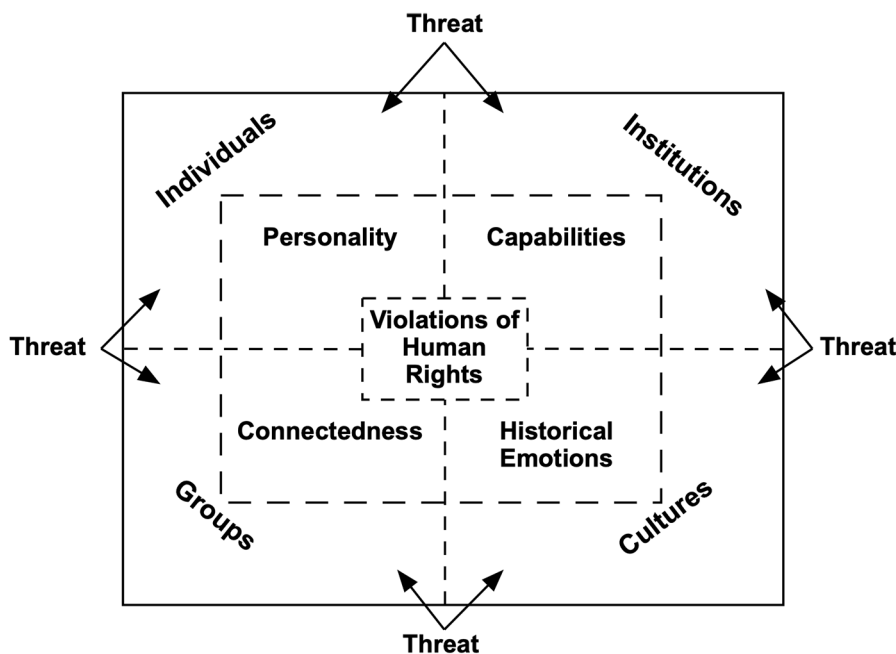

Figure 1. A proposed model of supporting human right violations.

In order to proceed, I will review the historical basis for a psychology of human rights and perceived threat. After having reviewed both the most internal and most external points of the model, I will proceed in a clockwise fashion, starting with Institutions and Capabilities, working my way to conclude with Individuals and Personality. I will conclude with some overarching future directions in areas of perceived threat and connectedness and a call for a greater diversity in samples.

The Historical Basis for a Psychology of Human Rights
and Perceived Threat

Defining Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was written through a collaboration within the United Nations after the end of World War II (for a review describing the drafting of the UDHR, see McFarland, 2017). The Declaration outlined four pillars of human rights: individual rights (Articles 3-11), collective rights (Articles 12-17, defined as rights relative to relations between the individual and other individuals), spiritual rights (Articles 18-21), and socioeconomic rights (Articles 22-27). Articles 1 and 2 proclaim the universality of human rights and Articles 28-30 provide instructions for international law and order (Waltz, 2001). International analyses of the Declaration have shown similar loadings on the proposed four factors (Doise, Spini, Jesuino, Ng, & Emler, 1994) with a follow-up study finding a two-factor cluster between individual and social rights (Doise, Spini, & Clémence, 1999). While there is cultural variation regarding human rights support and support for specific rights (Hoppe-Graff & Kim, 2005; Moghaddam & Riley, 2005; Moghaddam & Vuksanovic, 1990; Passini, 2014; Passini & Emiliani, 2009; Worchel, 2005), a general review of all human rights research confirmed strong international support for human rights (McFarland, 2015) and definitions of human rights violations (Clémence, Devos, & Doise, 2001; Spini & Doise, 1998, 2005).

Perceived Threat

Even with global support of human rights, there can be tradeoffs between freedoms and security. At the beginning of the 'war on terror', 64% of Americans believed the Patriot Act either did not go far enough or went just far enough in terms of warrantless wiretapping of its own citizens (Saad, 2004). In France, a state of emergency lasted two years after the Paris attacks in 2015, granting the French government the authority to disband groups, close privately-owned venues such as bars and theaters, restrict access to any webpage, search any home at any time, and place any individual under house arrest, requiring them to check in with police regarding their location three times a day, and only allowing them to leave their house under police escort (Loi n°2015-1501, 2015). Both American and French citizens perceived threats from external dangers, and were willing to revoke their human rights in hopes of alleviating these concerns (Carriere, Garney, & Moghaddam, 2018).

Therefore, to properly understand support for human rights, the model needs to account for perceived threat. There are many ways in which perceived threat has been defined. Some have called it safety threat (Abrams, Van de Vyver, Houston, & Vasiljevic, 2017), value differences (Hunt, 2011), security threat (Lahav & Courtemanche, 2012), economic threat (Levin, Pratto, Matthews, Sidanius, & Kteily, 2013), intergroup threat (Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009), cultural threat (Pehrson, Gheorghiu, & Ireland, 2012), and outgroup threat (Verkuyten, 2009). For brevity, I will classify these threats into two main categories of threat – realistic (tangible dangers)– and symbolic (threats to one's culture and values; Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999).

Realistic Threat

The effects of realistic threat are international in scope – experienced by white South Africans (Dixon et al., 2010), Europeans (Dhont & van Hiel, 2011; McLaren, 2003; Pereira, Vala, & Costa-Lopes, 2010), Americans (Huddy, Feldman, & Weber, 2007), and Israelis (David, Rosler, Ellis, & Maoz, 2016). The threat creators can be quite vast – from migrants (McLaren, 2003) to the financial crisis (Becker, Wagner, & Christ, 2011). Yet, no matter the source

or the target, individuals who perceive threat increase their prejudice and react with violence and restrictions of freedom and resources (Abrams et al., 2017; Bozzoli & Müller, 2011; Thörner, 2014). When individuals were led to believe there is a high probability of a terrorist attack, they supported harsher punishments for petty crimes (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Kastenmüller, Frey, & Oßwald, 2007) and higher measures of surveillance (Cohrs, Kielmann, Maes, & Moschner, 2005). Related studies showed that fear of a loved one becoming a victim of a terrorist attack was positively associated with support for harsh methods to punish terrorism, including withdrawing of rights (Huddy, Feldman, & Weber, 2007; Welch, 2016).

Symbolic Threat

In comparison to realistic threat, symbolic threat is felt when one's values or morals are threatened. Whether this is with Irish Protestants fearing an increase of Catholic immigrants (Pehrson, Gheorghiu, & Ireland, 2012) or Singaporean attitudes towards Chinese immigrants (Ramsay & Pang, 2017), fears of change from the status quo in terms of power and cultural norms illicit negative reactions from differing parties. After September 11th, Arab immigrants were associated with higher levels of symbolic threat than were Mexican immigrants, which accounted for negative attitudes toward immigrants from Arab countries (Hitlan, Carrillo, Zárate, & Aikman, 2007). Those who are asked to recall an act of terrorism were more supportive of negative policies against Muslims due to their perceived symbolic threat (White, Duck, & Newcombe, 2012). Personality characteristics that are highly correlated with measures of threat and civil liberty restrictions – right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation - predict terrorism being seen as a symbolic threat, not a realistic threat (Crowson, 2009).

There is a general impact of threat upon human right violations, with threat being generally divided between realistic and symbolic threat. It is worth noting the duality of terrorism – while a realistic threat of death, terrorism has stronger correlations with symbolic threats. To further explore where threat can be seen in human right support, I will review the literature of the four levels found in Figure 1, starting with the countries that pass exclusionary and restricting policies.

The Four Levels of Analysis

Threats at the Institutional Level: Capability

Collective Capability

The first defense in protecting human rights is the nation states that created the rights – and we dutifully defer to them as citizens (Tyler, 2005). State-level actors' support for human rights can be quantified by their attempts to ensure individual capabilities (Sen, 1979). Capability is defined as one's ability to do certain actions and for those actions be deemed as valuable to society (Nussbaum, 1997). Many attempts have been made to assess instrumental variables that represent the capability of a given state.

Some research shows that impartiality of the legal system, respect of law, lack of corruption, and tax as a function of GDP are all strong instrumental variables predicting nations' capability, and all protect from extrajudicial killings (Englehart, 2009). As a nation's reliance on taxes as revenue increases, protection against human right violations increase as well (Cingranelli, Fajardo-Heyward, & Filippov, 2014). Others have used transaction costs of policies as measures of capacity, where higher populations and more mountainous terrain are associated with more human rights violations (Ruhs, 2012; Young, 2009). Countries that have right-leaning political views or do not have strong

labor unions show no increase in protection for worker's rights when growing in their capacity as a state (Berliner, Greenleaf, Lake, & Noveck, 2015).

Backlash effects can increase the rates of human right abuses if protection of human rights is too heavy-handed or too broadly applied (Hafner-Burton, 2014). Other measures of accountability, such as joining international organizations, have shown powerful effects in promoting human rights (Greenhill, 2010). States that violated human rights in order to guard against terrorism were more likely to be targeted by terrorism (Thoms & Ron, 2007; Walsh & Piazza, 2010), although this result is non-significant when examining the violation of a human right to not be tortured (Piazza & Walsh, 2010). Democratic societies do support the right to dissent and to oppose government policies but the level of democracy required for this effect to emerge is still under debate (c.f. Davenport & Armstrong, 2004 for only high-ordered democracies; Poe & Tate, 1994 for all levels of democracy).

A criticism of these studies has been that the tracking human right violations is increasing over time due to better oversight, easier communication, and increasingly stringent definition of human rights (Clark & Sikkink, 2013; Fariss, 2014). If this is the case, many relationships – either positive, negative, or non-significant – are failing to control for time, and increases in abuses may simply be measurement artefacts. Fariss (2014) notes that the word counts in defining torture in the Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset had increased from 329 words in 1981 to 3,669 words in 2001, broadening the scope under which torture was identified. Amnesty International, from which CIRI drew a large part of its data, did not track the killing and disappearances of opposition party members in Guatemala until 1976, even though tracking of human rights abuses in the country (including political killings) began in the 1960s (Fariss, 2014).

Individual Capability

Capability is not simply a state-level issue. As Nussbaum notes, education is a critical component of providing individuals with capabilities (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 287, Point 4). Children who experience more democratic classrooms are more likely to support human rights and have more knowledge of human rights (Torney-Purta, Wilkenfeld, & Barber, 2008). Education on human rights increases positive attitudes and commitment to human rights (Stellmacher & Sommer, 2008), reduces feeling threatened by out-groups (Green & Waxman, 1987), and improves social attitudes towards threatening outgroups (Theriault, Krause, & Young, 2017). Cohrs, Maes, Moschner, and Kielmann (2007) reported that a knowledge of being able to list the rights outlined by the UDHR was positively correlated with support for and the rated importance of human rights (also see Stellmacher, Sommer, & Brahler, 2005). Education correlated positively with granting equal rights to foreigners on both an individual and country level (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2009; Jenssen & Engesbak, 1994; Schmuck & Matthes, 2015). Finally, individuals with higher levels of political efficacy feel less threatened by outgroups (Giles & Evans, 1985), are significantly less fearful (Jabeen, 2013), and when there is no perceived threat, are willing to spend less on defense than their peers with less political efficacy (Mondak & Hurwitz, 2012).

Beyond the classroom, individuals educate themselves about the importance of human rights in many ways – including interactions with family members (Carriere, 2018a; Moghaddam & Riley, 2005; Molinari, 2001; Molinari, Melotti, & Emiliani, 2002) turn taking (Moghaddam, 2009), literature (Carriere, 2018b; Manderson, 2003; Todres & Higinbotham, 2016), and the media. While free, independent media improves government's respect for human rights in democratic societies, independent news agencies can have a detrimental effect on human rights in extreme autocracies (Whitten-Woodring, 2009). The effect of having a media 'watch dog' with no political incentive to alleviate the concerns of the marginalized leads to further repressive actions and increases in violations of physical

integrity rights. However, the proportion of autocracies with free media is relatively low at about 8% of all governments (Whitten-Woodring, 2009, Table 1). Instead, governments with more autocratic rule have state-controlled media (60% of all governments, Whitten-Woodring, 2009, Table 1) and employ various measures of censorship (Lehr, 2010; Lin, 2016; Mooney, 2014; Sova, 2006; Weber & Fan, 2016).

There can be negative effects of a free media, and some contend that the overemphasis of terrorism increases moral panic in potentially disastrous ways (Rothe & Muzzatti, 2004). Those who both heavily rely on media and perceive higher symbolic threat from Muslims were less tolerant than those who do not rely on media as much (White, Duck, & Newcombe, 2012). Being educated of the potential reasons – historical, cultural, economic – for a terrorist attack reduced the amount of perceived terrorist threat and increased emotional well-being, compared to those who were not provided the information (Fischer, Postmes, Koeppl, Conway, & Fredriksson, 2011), though this effect was only found for those with high terror salience.

Threat from the media comes in its ability to frame issues one way or another. Subjects reported lower levels of danger when told of terrorist attacks of "homegrown terrorists" compared to "radical Islamic groups" (Woods, 2011). Perceiving the threatening out-group as having feminine traits was related to reduced threat perceptions and reduced support for violating their human rights (David & Maoz, 2015; David, Rosler, Ellis, & Maoz, 2016). Individuals were less supportive of policies assisting outgroups when policies were framed in terms of rights (Shnabel, Dovidio, & Levin, 2016). However, other results about rights-based framing suggest results counter to Shnabel and colleagues. Djupe, Lewis, and Jelen (2016) found that being primed to consider rights by an in-group leader increased political tolerance for least liked out-groups. Rights-based framing has also been associated with increased political tolerance for hate groups (Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997) and perceptions that a political candidate is more moderate in their views (Djupe, Lewis, Jelen, & Dahan, 2014). If individuals are primed to think in absolutist terms, such as "Land selling to foreign investors cannot go above 5%", they were more likely to engage in collective action and show solidarity with the victims of the violations, compared to individuals who considered the situation in gradual, 'This should be reduced as much as possible' terms (Barth, Jugert, Wutzler, & Fritsche, 2015). Further research needs to be done to uncover if media and priming truly have the threatening effects proposed by Rothe and Muzzatti (2004).

Threats at the Cultural Level: History and Emotion

As our society enters a 'post-truth' era, one needs to account for the socially constructed memories that guide cultures in relation to intergroup conflicts (de Saint-Laurent, Brescó de Luna, Awad, & Wagoner, 2017; Wagoner & Brescó de Luna, 2016). The importance of the historical roots of our culture can be seen when analyzing status-quo bias (Eidelman & Crandall, 2012), or the assumption of goodness due to existence and longevity. Being told that torture was a long-standing practice led to more support and perceived effectiveness than when told that it was a new practice (Crandall, Eidelman, Skitka, & Morgan, 2009).

Cultural narratives ensure the status quo is understood and agreed upon across society (Bamberg & Andrews, 2004), and thus, the narratives that permeate different cultures can create vastly different outlooks on rights and duties. Cultural memories of victimhood often ensure protection of ingroup rights and disregard for the rights of the outgroup (Vollhardt, 2012). In many cases, perceptions of violations of the ingroups' human rights can lead to a felt right for retribution and retaliation (Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Hai, Schori, & Gundar, 2009; Huddy & Feldman, 2011) creating a cycle of violence and mutual radicalization of both groups involved (Moghaddam, 2018; Peffley, Hutchison, & Shamir, 2015).

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Cycles of violence – such as the Tutsis and the Hutus – involves the use of dehumanization (Staub, 1989), or the process by which we assign animal-like characteristics to others. While some researchers have found that perceived threat mediates the relationship between dehumanization and willingness to torture (Viki, Osgood, & Phillips, 2013), others argue that dehumanization mediates perceived threat (Louis, Esses, & Lalonde, 2013), and others find that these constructs independently predict concrete support for human rights violations against outgroups (Maoz & McCauley, 2008, Study 2). Since the theoretical justification for a mediator is that there is no misspecification of casual order (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007), researchers should theoretically justify the order which they believe dehumanization operates with perceived threat.

Beyond dehumanization of outgroups, other emotions can encourage restrictions of human rights. Collectively felt guilt, when one acknowledges their group's responsibility in mistreating others, predicts increased collective action against human rights violations (Mallett, Huntsinger, Sinclair, & Swim, 2008), support of war reparations (Brown & Cehajic, 2008) and higher feelings of shame (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007). On the other hand, Israeli-Jews who felt high levels of injustice from others against their ingroup were more likely to support extreme restrictive policies against Palestinians (Maoz & Eidelson, 2007) and felt less guilt towards current transgressions against Palestinians if thinking about their own past victimhood (Wohl & Branscombe, 2008). The impact of these emotions could be tapping into the construct of moral outrage (e.g., disgust, anger, and contempt), which is a key predictor in activism (Thomas & McGarty, 2009).

Threats at the Group Level: Connectedness

Human rights are mainly couched in terms of groups. We restrict the rights of migrants, asylum seekers, terrorists, and Americans. We approach these questions of who *deserves* rights by placing individuals into 'good people' (and therefore deserve) and 'bad people' (and therefore can be restricted). This division of good and bad is the foundation of the just world hypothesis (Hafer & Bègue, 2005) – that we have an innate drive to see good people receive good things, and bad people receive their "just deserts" (Darley, 2009). In manipulating how morally reprehensible a suspected terrorist was, Drolet, Hafer, and Heuer (2016) found that the more participants believed the terrorist deserved severe treatment, the more they were willing to support torturing them. This effect remained even when individuals felt guilty and were faced with the cognitive dissonance of their support for human rights and their support for torture (Drolet, 2014). Further, support for torture increases as people desire retribution (Liberman, 2014), but decreases as moral convictions against torture increase (Aramovich, Lytle, & Skitka, 2012).

In creating 'good groups' versus 'bad groups', support for the in-group is tantamount (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) – and any threats to the idea that 'our ingroup is good' and 'that outgroup is bad' require immediate remedies. When individuals learn that the group they identify with is acting in a way that is procedurally unjust, they react by increasing their own group-serving behavior in order to address the procedural failings of the group (Barry & Tyler, 2009). Individuals who glorify the idea that 'our ingroup is good' – e.g. "The U.S. is better than other nations in all respects" demand less justice (Leidner, Castano, Zaiser, & Giner-Sorolla, 2010) and feel less guilt (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006) when faced with human rights violations by their in-group. Nationalism – a related, but conceptually distinct term from glorification (c.f. Leidner, Castano, Zaiser, & Giner-Sorolla, 2010, p. 1126) that focuses purely on nation-states, increased as perceptions of terroristic threat increased, which was associated with greater support for restrictions of civil liberties for one's ingroup (Sekerdej & Kossowska, 2011). Individuals justify torture when it is their own in-group members preforming the torture due to reduced empathetic concern for targets (Tarrant, Branscombe, Warner, & Weston, 2012). Not only do we support our ingroup more, but we are willing to take steps

to protect it at all costs. Individuals are more willing to support torture and are more likely to believe that the torture will be effective when it is to save someone they love (Houck & Conway, 2013; Houck, Conway, & Repke, 2014).

Outgroup relations is of critical importance when dealing with rights. Support for violations of human rights increases as distrust of outgroup members increase (Maoz & McCauley, 2011) and discrimination increases as a minority group's size increases (Quillian, 1995). The perceived size of an out-group mediates the relationship between the perceived threat of the out-group and support for exclusionary policies, such that the larger threat one perceives, the larger size of the out-group they perceive, and the more support they state for limiting economic, political, and human rights (Semyonov, Raijman, Tov, & Schmidt, 2004). In other studies, even though participants reported high agreement in support of human rights, they did not apply equal access to human rights when targeting specific minority groups (Abrams, Houston, Van de Vyver, & Vasiljevic, 2015; McClosky, 1964; Zellman & Sears, 1971). While some minority groups did receive equal treatment (women, the disabled, and the elderly) other groups (Blacks, Muslims, and homosexuals) were condemned as being given unfair advantages (Abrams, Houston, Van de Vyver, & Vasiljevic, 2015). Perceived outgroup threat predicts lower support for multiculturalism and toleration of other views (Verkuyten, 2009).

There has been work in bridging the gap between ingroups and outgroups by examining the connectedness we feel towards the given outgroup. Formulating one's ingroup as the global community has been shown to be a strong predictor of solidarity with victims of human rights violations (Barth et al., 2015; McFarland & Mathews, 2005a) and concern for human rights (Hackett, Omoto, & Matthews, 2015; McFarland, 2010; McFarland, Brown, & Webb, 2013; McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012). Indicators of global community include statements such as "I feel a sense of connection to people all over the world, even if I don't know them personally" (Hackett, Omoto, & Matthews, 2015, p. 52). Other global-based measures, such as concern for global issues, are also correlated with support for human rights (McFarland & Mathews, 2005b), as is general knowledge about the political world (Grace & Van Velzer, 1951).

There is debate between the feasibility of a global community ingroup. Some individuals argue that a true identity as a global community could not be created that could afford protection for all, since the just world hypothesis demands a bifurcation of "good people" and "bad people" (Hafer, 2012). However, Maslow (1971), in discussing the most mature (i.e., self-actualized) individuals, noted that "self-actualizing people have to a large extent transcended the values of their culture. They are not so much merely Americans as they are world citizens, members of the human species first and foremost" (p. 177). It may be this minority of individuals – those who are self-actualized – that support a global community.

Regardless, the connectedness of such groups seems to be an interesting avenue for further research in human rights violations. For example, individuals were shown to care less about concepts of justice when faced with individuals whom they felt were very close to themselves (a twin) and for those who were very different from themselves (a chicken) (Hafer, Conway, Cheung, Malyk, & Olson, 2012). This quadratic relation of connectedness and justice may be a useful adaptation to understand why we are willing to restrict rights of both ourselves (something close) and outgroups (something far away) while promoting human rights for a global community (something close but not too close).

Threats at the Individual Level: Personality

In looking at human rights support from the individual level of analysis, the mechanism under which we can most readily identify research comes from individual differences in personality traits, particularly one's right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and political ideology. This is not to discount other individual differences that may predict human rights support – including, but not limited to: optimism about creating a better world (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, & Fu, 1997; McFarland & Mathews, 2005b); identification with all of humanity (McFarland, 2010; McFarland, Brown, & Webb, 2013; McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012); gender (Avery, 1988; Golebiowska, 1999; Parker, 2010; Wemlinger, 2014); and dispositional empathy (McFarland, 2010; McFarland & Mathews, 2005b; McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012). However, since no work has explored how threat moderates or mediates their relationship with human rights support, they will not be explored (for a full review, c.f. McFarland, 2015).

Right-Wing Authoritarianism

Individuals who are high in right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) are submissive to authorities, show aggressiveness to norm-deviant individuals, and adhere to traditional values (Altemeyer, 1981). RWA significantly predicts support for a variety of civil liberty restrictions, including support for warrantless wiretapping, video cameras in public places, media censorship, torture, national ID cards, and opposition to criticizing the president (Hetherington & Suhay, 2011). Scores on measures of RWA were negatively associated with pro-human right attitudes (Moghaddam & Vuksanovic, 1990; Swami et al., 2012) and positively associated with human right restrictions (Cohrs et al., 2007; Crowson, 2007, 2009) and support for torture (Benjamin, 2016). While right-wing authoritarians were less willing to spend money and sign petitions in support of human rights (Stellmacher, Sommer, & Brahler, 2005), some students found that German students' RWA scores positively correlated with military-led based interventions to ensure human right protection (Cohrs, Maes, Moschner, & Kielmann, 2007; Fetchenhauer & Bierhoff, 2004). This result is thought to be due to the war-hawkishness of high RWA individuals, who are willing to go to war as long as the state sponsors it (Altemeyer, 1998). However, this result contradicts McFarland and Mathews (2005b)'s finding that RWA predicts less support of military interventions. This discrepancy of results has been shown to be potentially due to differences in measurement (McFarland, 2012), where a single sample confirmed both a positive relationship of RWA when the measurement focuses on military force (using the measure in Fetchenhauer & Bierhoff, 2004), and a negative relationship when the measurement of military interventions focuses on genocides (using the measure of McFarland & Mathews, 2005b).

RWA is mediated by both realistic and symbolic threat for prejudice against international students (Charles-Toussaint & Crowson, 2010; Dhont & van Hiel, 2011), anti-immigration attitudes (Canetti, Halperin, Hobfoll, Shapira, & Hirsch-Hoefler, 2009; Craig & Richeson, 2014), and both moderate and extreme Anti-Muslim policies (Dunwoody & McFarland, 2018). In each, the results showed that those higher in right-wing authoritarianism perceive greater threat, and in turn that higher levels of threat produce stronger exclusionary attitudes, extreme policies, and prejudice.

However, there is a secondary view of right-wing authoritarianism – that threat moderates, not mediates the relationship between right-wing authoritarianism and human rights support (Hetherington & Suhay, 2011; Kossowska et al., 2011). In so far as perceived threat can vary by culture, and that feeling threatened can enhance pre-existing beliefs (Duckitt, 2001; Nyhan & Reifler, 2010), threat may strengthen the relationship between right-wing authoritarianism and restrictions for human rights. When approaching from a moderation standpoint, the literature is divided. Hetherington and Suhay (2011) show that RWA and threat negatively interact, such that those low in RWA

are less supportive of restrictions when threat is low, but increase support to match the higher authoritarians when threat is high (see also Davis & Silver, 2004). This contradicts research that finds a decrease in support of restrictions from low right-wing authoritarians when threat was high (Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009; Cohrs, Kielmann, Maes, & Moschner, 2005) and in countries that have experienced terrorism (Kossowska et al., 2011). In this case, as threat increases, those who are low in right-wing authoritarianism 'double down' by reaffirming their commitment to their values.

However, research in leadership studies has shown that individuals support leaders with authoritative leadership styles during times of crisis and uncertainty (Gaffney, Rast, & Hogg, 2018; Rast, Hackett, Alabastro, & Hogg, 2015). Threat can be one way in which individuals experience crisis and uncertainty because it involves the perceived instability of one's tangible and intangible resources (Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999). During these periods, individuals are attracted to supporting authoritarian leaders, not leaders who fit their own personal values. If threat moderates, not mediates, the relationship of right-wing authoritarianism and human rights, this moderation would be in the negative, not positive direction. Dunwoody and McFarland (2018) found evidence, albeit weak, for both threat as a moderator and mediator of RWA effects upon anti-Muslim policies; the main effects of threat and RWA upon anti-Muslim policies were stronger. More research is needed to clarify the direction of this relationship and to discover if the differences in interaction direction are also due to differences in measurement.

Social Dominance Orientation

In comparison to right-wing authoritarianism, the social dominance orientation (SDO) is defined as support for unequal relationships between social groups (Cohrs et al., 2005; Pratto, Stallworth, & Sidanius, 1997; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). The social dominance orientation has been predictive of limiting human rights (Cohrs et al., 2007; Crowson, 2007, 2009; Crowson, DeBacker, & Thoma, 2006; McFarland & Mathews, 2005b) and a reduction in human right commitment (McFarland, 2010; McFarland & Mathews, 2005b). It is negatively correlated with a wide variety of social and humanitarian causes, but positively related to suspension of rights during times of war (Crowson, DeBacker, & Thoma, 2005, 2006; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994).

Support for unequal relationships with immigrants can show up in terms of perceived competition (Craig & Richeson, 2014) or in generalized prejudice (Dunwoody & McFarland, 2018). However, the role of social dominance orientation is important when considering power dynamics. Subjugated groups exhibit more prejudice against their powerful adversaries when low in social dominance orientation (Levin et al., 2013; Pratto et al., 2000). Those without power are constantly seeking to gain more power – to gain access to the freedoms that they have been denied. This is why we see protests for "Black rights" and "gay rights," not "Black duties" and "gay duties" (Moghaddam, 2004). Many qualitative studies around collective action have highlighted this point (c.f. Mazzoni & Cicognani, 2013; Grabe & Dutt, 2015; McFee, 2016; Offidani-Bertrand, 2016), and work using social dominance orientation for a model of activism is emerging (Stewart, 2017; Stewart & Tran, 2018).

Political Ideology

Conservatism, which is associated with higher RWA (Tarr & Lorr, 1991), has been related to a willingness to restrict the civil liberties of visitors and citizens (Breckenridge & Moghaddam, 2012) and to be less supportive of freedom of movement (Chavez & Provine, 2009; Lahav & Courtemanche, 2012). While liberals only exhibited support for restrictive immigration policies when immigration was framed as a realistic threat, conservatives supported restrictive immigration policies regardless of the type of threat (Lahav & Courtemanche, 2012). Conservatism has found to be a mediator between religiosity and support for torture, such that while the direct effect of religiosity brings

condemnation for torture, carrying a conservative ideology mediates this relationship to be a positive predictor of support for torture (Malka & Soto, 2011). Conservatives show lower support for freedom of speech and believe less harm comes from hate speech than do their liberal counterparts (Downs & Cowan, 2012; Guth & Green, 1991), and are less supportive of environmental rights (McConochie, 2011).

Conclusions and Future Directions

In this paper, I critically reviewed the psychological research on failures to protect human rights. I did this through examining four levels of analysis: the institutional, cultural, group, and individual. At the institutional level, the capabilities of the states in ensuring human rights and restricting them through censorship and authoritarian rule was explored. At the cultural level, I noted the importance the socially constructed memories of the past, and how those memories influence our emotions towards conflict and retribution. At the group level, issues of how connected we feel to both our ingroup and the outgroup were vital issues in trying to create a global identity without straying too far from justice. Finally, the individual level of personality differences in terms of RWA, SDO, and political orientation were examined, and issues with moderation and mediation directions were highlighted. This model presented in Figure 1 emphasizes the need to include threat in all levels of analyses, and noted the fluidity of not just the levels with the factors, but factors within the factors. Individuals are in constant dialogue with institutions – institutions must deal with various ingroups and outgroup problems, and cultures are constantly changing. Therefore, future research should consider more multi-level modeling and dissecting the interplay between these various levels.

While reviewing the literature, there were many ways in which support for human rights restrictions can be increased, yet relatively few studies on increasing support for human rights were located. Some groups have made attempts at focusing on a global community or identification with all humanity as the most important mediators in supporting human rights (Dunwoody & McFarland, 2017; Hackett, Omoto, & Matthews, 2015; McFarland, Brown, & Webb, 2013). In Dunwoody and McFarland's (2017) general structural equation model, identification with all of humanity was the only variable to negatively reduce threat of Muslims which lead to decreases in support for Anti-Muslim policies. However, there may be limits to how widely applicable an ever-expanding notion of an ingroup would be. As reviewed, work in deservingness argues that such an ideal is impossible and impractical, given how we structure ideas and groups as good and bad (Hafer, 2012). Since the notion of who deserves something requires a comparison group to who does *not* deserve it, building an overarching group that encompasses everyone could never occur without the comparison falling on other targets of violations – the environment, animals, et cetera. Due to this, researchers may want to look at ways not to promote human rights or the size of one's group, but instead, find ways to limit the perception of threat across groups, and avoid the conversation of violating rights entirely. Researchers may look towards fields such as positive psychology, focusing on an individual's wellbeing, resilience through hardships (Cohrs, Christie, White, & Das, 2013) and affirming individual's personal significance (Kruglanski & Orehek, 2011) as ways of decreasing one's feelings of threat.

The role of education in this effort also should not be understated. Fischer et al. (2011) showed that providing information about the motivations for terrorism increased one's affect, hinting that those who gained information found meaning in the attacks and felt less threatened by terrorism. Further research supports this claim - in a longitudinal study of U.S. adults, finding existential meaning about the September 11th attacks mediated fear of a future attack and reduced post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms two years later (Updegraff, Silver, & Holman,

2008). Along with the research of both indirect and direct education on human rights (Jabeen, 2013; Jenssen & Engesbak, 1994; Mondak & Hurwitz, 2012; Schmuck & Matthes, 2015; Stellmacher & Sommer, 2008; Theriault, Krause, & Young, 2017), there may be additional benefits to reducing one's threatening feelings in the face of terrorism and uncertainty. More research needs to be done exploring this link of education and human rights support.

There were multiple contradictory results that came out of this review. First and foremost was the relationship between threat and right-wing authoritarianism. Threat has been argued to be both a moderator of RWA (Hetherington & Suhay, 2011) and a mediator of RWA (Dhont & van Hiel, 2011). Yet, even the direction of such moderation has been contested, with some stating that those low in RWA will become like their higher RWA peers in the face of threat (Davis & Silver, 2004; Hetherington & Suhay, 2011), while others stating that those low in RWA will further entrench themselves into their values as threat increases (Cohrs et al., 2005). Clearly, there is more theoretical work needed when it comes to the interplay of RWA and perceived threat. The review also highlighted mixed effects of framing in terms of supporting human rights, and so working out the true effect size of these factors will be important for future research.

Finally, there was an overwhelming presence of Westernized samples in these studies, with the majority coming from Europe, America, and Israel. Human rights are a global issue, yet research in this topic has mainly examined a WEIRD (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010) sample of participants. Models that want to get at the issue of a global community should try to make sure that their samples reflect the globalized nature of humanity, ensuring that participants from Asia and Africa are being sampled and their stories are being told.

Overall, the future of research on human rights violations, while topically difficult, is bright. There is plenty of work to be done in uncovering various causes and consequences of perceived threat as it relates to human rights. Understanding how we can continue to promote the safekeeping of human rights in the face of international security issues is a goal for all humanity, and social psychology stands at the front in leading this charge.

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