Alienable Speech: Ideological Variations in the Application of Free-Speech Principles

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Although freedom of speech is a Constitutionally protected and widely endorsed value, political tolerance research finds that people are less willing to protect speech they dislike than speech they like (Gibson, 2006). Research also suggests liberal-conservative differences in political tolerance (Davis & Silver, 2004). We measured U.S. citizens' political tolerance for speech acts, while manipulating the speaker's ethnicity and the speech's ideological content. Speech criticizing Americans was protected more strongly than was speech criticizing Arabs, especially among more politically liberal respondents. Liberals also reported greater free-speech support. Respondents expressed greater political tolerance for a speaker when he was an exemplar of the criticized group, but showed equal political tolerance for speakers whose group membership (as a White or Black American) was irrelevant to the speech. Finally, implicit political identity showed convergent validity with explicit political identity in predicting speech tolerance, and implicit racial and ethnic preferences showed variable prediction of speech tolerance across the two studies.

KEY WORDS: Free speech, Political tolerance, Political ideology, Implicit Association Test

The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, following a declaration of "certain unalienable rights" in the Declaration of Independence (Preamble), states that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech." The current legal interpretation of this principle holds that although free speech must be balanced with other freedoms, and thus some specific types of speech (such as libel, fighting words, perjury, price fixing, criminal solicitation, and obscenity) may be limited, political speech and symbolic speech are consid-

ered fundamental and protected (Kersch, 2003, p. 154). Accordingly, any speech regulation, such as restrictions on time, place, or manner, must be content neutral. That is, even speech espousing unpopular positions (such as flag burning or Ku Klux Klan rallies) must be protected. Although the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, the persistence of legal challenges makes it clear that the application of free speech principles to specific examples is more difficult.

This discontinuity between principle and practice is observed in research on *political tolerance*. Americans "express strong endorsement of the general principles of free expression and great reluctance to sustain these principles when asked to apply them to noxious groups" (Marcus, Sullivan, Theiss-Morse, & Wood, 1995, p. 8). A recent national survey of Americans' attitudes toward the First Amendment (Freedom Forum, 2002) found that American adults overwhelmingly endorsed the *right* to express unpopular opinions (94%; p. 10), but were less willing to apply this principle in specific instances. Political surveys have investigated Americans' willingness to protect disliked speech, but this research has largely focused on support for disliked *groups* rather than *individual* group members (Gibson, 2006; Golebiowska, 2000, 2001).

An alternative approach is to manipulate specific features of a speech act that are not relevant to its Constitutionality and test whether tolerance of speech is applied consistently across conditions. In the present studies, we manipulated the ideological position of a target individual who engaged in controversial political speech, as well as his apparent ethnicity. We investigated how tolerance for the speech was affected by (a) its ideological similarity to respondents' own political orientation and (b) by the speaker's ethnicity. We also assessed whether implicit political or racial preference predicted political tolerance.

Political Tolerance and Censorship

In nationally representative surveys and experimental studies, research on political tolerance finds those respondents who endorsed Constitutional principles in the abstract do not apply them evenhandedly to specific, disliked groups (Marcus et al., 1995; Sullivan & Transue, 1999). This disconnect is particularly evident for more personal circumstances (e.g., when permitting a Nazi to speak to a niece's classroom rather than simply to a school classroom; Chanley, 1994). However, this evidence is based on yes-no decisions of allowing one's "least-liked group" or several widely disliked groups to perform each of several actions (i.e., whether an atheist or racist should be allowed to hold public office or teach in a public university; Gibson, 2006; Golebiowska, 2000; Mondak & Sanders, 2003). Others have noted the limitations of defining targets primarily or exclusively by their group membership rather than investigating tolerance of speech acts in which the person's group membership is an incidental feature (Golebiowska, 2000, 2001). These limitations notwithstanding, this research is evidence that the American public largely fails to display principled

support for political tolerance, but instead applies Constitutional protections inconsistently.

In contrast to this interpretation, an analysis of General Social Survey data (Sniderman, Tetlock, Glaser, Green, & Hout, 1989) suggested that respondents did not use *strategic* political tolerance, by only tolerating the speech of extreme groups on their own side of the political spectrum (e.g., a liberal would tolerate communists but not racists). Instead, respondents demonstrated *principled* political tolerance, such that those who tolerated extreme left-wing groups also tolerated extreme right-wing groups. Respondents exhibited greater consistency in either tolerating or failing to tolerate both right-wing and left-wing speech than had previously been suggested, and liberals were somewhat more willing to tolerate extreme groups than were conservatives.

This suggests that some Americans may resist using a group's ideological similarity to their own as a basis for political tolerance. However, tolerance for different groups still varies widely and individuals have difficulty correcting for their own ideological biases (cf. Wilson & Brekke, 1994). Cohen (2003) found that support for proposed welfare policies was affected by the political party endorsing the policy beyond the policy's content. Liberals supported a stringent welfare policy over a generous one if Democrats proposed it; and likewise, in reverse, for conservatives. This occurred despite participants' beliefs that the policy's content, and not the proposing party, should determine their judgment. Indeed, research on the bias blind spot finds that political partisans perceived their views as being less influenced by ideology and more by objective, rational evidence than the views of those on the other side (Robinson, Keltner, Ward, & Ross, 1995; Ross, McGuire, & Minson, 2004, as cited in Pronin, Gilovich, & Ross, 2004, p. 789).

Although social scientists have largely disregarded the study of political ideology in recent decades, a resurgence of research suggests that political ideology is more coherent and related to behavior than was declared by "end of ideology" theorists in the 1950s and '60s (Jost, 2006). In particular, individuals' own political ideology may predict the relative importance that they accord to protecting controversial speech in general. Some research suggests that Americans across the political spectrum differ in the relative importance that they place on protecting speech, with liberals being less willing to give up civil liberties like free speech for security than are moderates or conservatives (Davis & Silver, 2004). Sniderman and colleagues (1989) noted that liberals tended to exhibit greater political tolerance than do conservatives, and most research on censorship finds that political liberals report less willingness to censor speech than do political conservatives. For instance, Altemeyer (1996) found that among both college students and legislators, "even when the issues were raised in the context of leftist censoring, rightists wanted censorship more than anyone else" (pp. 230–233; see also Fisher et al., 1999).

Research on political tolerance and censorship suggests that political liberals are more willing to tolerate unpopular or personally disliked speech than are political conservatives (Altemeyer, 1996; Davis & Silver, 2004; Sniderman et al.,

1989), but this view is not universally held. Some commentators argue that both liberals and conservatives are interested only in protecting controversial speech with which they already agree (Hentoff, 1992). Conservative commentators also critique liberals' commitment to free speech, noting the limitations set on disliked speech by hate crime legislation and university speech codes. George Will (2002) wrote, "Nothing more tellingly illuminates the contemporary liberal mind than the retreat from the defense of First Amendment guarantees of free speech" (p. B07). He argued that despite claiming to uphold the principles of free speech, liberals condone and pursue the censorship of speech that they dislike.

In summary, research suggests that manipulating ideological or political similarity can influence even carefully considered judgments in personally relevant domains (Cohen, 2003). Most research on political tolerance has used national surveys to assess discontinuities between general endorsement of free speech principles and willingness to permit public actions by various controversial or disliked groups. While some research has manipulated characteristics of specific speech events such as the target's group membership (Golebiowska, 2000, 2001), experimental research on political tolerance is lacking.

Overview of the Present Research

In two studies, we investigated the political tolerance of political liberals, moderates, and conservatives for ideologically opposed acts of free speech. In contrast to previous research that focused on tolerance for groups (Chanley, 1994; Marcus et al., 1995; Mondak & Sanders, 2003; Sniderman et al., 1989), we investigated political tolerance for acts of a target individual whose ideological group membership was indicated only by the speech act itself. We manipulated the target's ideological position by changing the object of criticism (Americans vs. Arabs), and the target's apparent ethnicity by changing his name. Recent research in political psychology (Burdein, Lodge, & Taber, 2006) suggests that implicit measures of political attitudes are useful in identifying affective or automatically elicited reactions that influence political behavior. As such, we assessed respondents' political orientation as liberal or conservative both implicitly and explicitly. Finally, we assessed whether implicit ethnic preferences predicted political intolerance, by including measures of implicit ethnic preferences for Whites compared to Blacks (Study 1) or for Whites compared to Arab Muslims (Study 2).

Presenting ideologically extreme examples of both left-wing and right-wing ideology permitted us to assess the interactive effect on political tolerance of the speech's ideological congruence with respondents' political orientation. That is, does having a stronger liberal orientation predict decreased tolerance of right-wing speech acts compared to left-wing speech acts and vice versa. At the same time, there may be liberal-conservative differences in willingness to tolerate or censor disliked speech (Altemeyer, 1996, and Fisher et al., 1999, vs. Will, 2002). That is,

liberals may be more likely than conservatives to protect any speech, regardless of its content.

Study 1

Method

Participants

Adult U.S. citizens ($N = 2,069$; $M_{age} = 30.8$; 62% women) from the research pool at Project Implicit's research Web site (http://implicit.harvard.edu) consented to participate after being randomly assigned to this study from a pool of available studies (see Nosek, Sutin, et al., 2006, and Nosek, 2005, for more information about the Virtual Laboratory). Most reported having at least some college education (94%; 30 = missing) and were primarily White (76%), with some being Hispanic (5%), Black (5%), multiracial (4%), Asian/Pacific Islander (4%), Native American (1%), or Black/White biracial (0.8%; 3% were Other/Unknown, 6 = missing). Politically, 537 (26%) reported being conservative either slightly (9%), moderately (12%), or strongly (4%); 501 as being politically moderate (24%); and 1031 (50%) as being liberal either slightly (9%), moderately (25%), or strongly (15%).[1]

Materials

Political orientation. All demographics measures, including political orientation, were collected during the Project Implicit registration process, separate from the study. Self-ascribed political orientation was identified on a 7-point scale ranging from −3 (*Strongly Liberal*) to 3 (*Strongly Conservative*).

Speech act. Respondents first read a brief description of an act of controversial free speech, modeled on an Associated Press style news article in which a Black or White native-born American made the Constitutionally protected political statement that either "Americans are the problem" (left-wing statement) or that "Arabs are the problem" (right-wing statement). The left-wing and right-wing statements were constructed as linguistic parallels that characterized post-9/11 extreme liberal and conservative positions and varied only in the group they criticized. The scenario read as follows:

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[1] Those who completed the entire study ($n = 1,548$) did not differ significantly from those who consented to but failed to complete it ($n = 521$) in gender composition, $\chi^2(1, N = 2064) = 0.45$, *ns*, or political orientation, $t(2067) = 0.71$, *ns*, but were slightly older ($M = 31.2$ years) than noncompleters ($M = 29.9$), $t(2067) = 2.20$, $p = .03$. Valid political IAT data were collected from 444 respondents, after dropping IAT results for 41 who went too fast (<300 ms) in one or more blocks, 17 for excessive error trials in one or more blocks, and 3 for missing data or a 40+% error rate in a critical block (see Nosek et al., 2007, for more details of the exclusion criteria).

> *Menomonie, Wisconsin. Brett Sullivan, 43, pasted a poster on the front of his garage that read in large, block letters "AMERICANS ARE THE PROBLEM." ["ARABS ARE THE PROBLEM."] Sullivan, a native Wisconsinite who is a process improvement engineer and 20-year employee of Con Agra, defended his actions, saying, "people have to realize who the enemy is." Sullivan's neighbor disagrees, saying the poster is "offensive beyond belief" and has asked him to take it down.*

We also investigated whether *social tolerance* (for a Black speaker) would affect *political tolerance* for his speech (Gibson, 2006). The speaker's apparent ethnicity was indicated by manipulating the first and last name (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004) that identified the speaker in both the speech scenario and opinion items. The speaker's apparent ethnicity was either a Black American (Darnell, Jamal, Kareem, or Leroy Jackson) or a White American (Brad, Todd, Jay, or Brett Sullivan). Speech protection did not significantly differ as a main effect of the four different first names used to indicate the White or Black American speaker's ethnicity.

Explicit measures. Respondents reported their opinions about the statement in 13 items, using a 6-point agreement-disagreement scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree*). Eleven items were averaged to form an index of *willingness to protect the speech* that assessed the following forms of speech protection: personal political tolerance ("The actions of Sullivan should be allowed"; "The actions of Sullivan should be prohibited," reverse coded), the actual perceived Constitutional protection ("Brad Sullivan's behavior is protected by the U.S. Constitution"; "Brad Sullivan's behavior is prohibited by the U.S. Constitution," reverse coded), the necessity of Constitutional protection ("The right for Brad Sullivan to express his opinion on that poster should be *restricted* by the U.S. Constitution," reverse coded; "The right for Brad Sullivan to express his opinion on that poster should be *protected* by the U.S. Constitution"), the speaker's right to self-expression ("Sullivan should not have expressed his opinion at all," reverse coded; "Brad Sullivan has the right to express his opinion"), the necessity of legal protection ("A law should be passed to prohibit speech like Sullivan's," reverse coded), the speaker's method of self-expression ("It was a bad idea for Brad Sullivan to express his opinion in the way that he did," reverse coded), and the speech's potential for harm ("Some people may be harmed by Sullivan expressing his opinion," reverse coded). In addition, the average of two items indexed respondents' personal *agreement with the speech* ($\alpha = .89$: "I share Brad Sullivan's opinion about Americans/Arabs"; "I am opposed to Brad Sullivan's opinion about Americans/Arabs," reverse coded).

The 11-item index of *willingness to protect the speech* (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$) was combined after an exploratory principal axis factor analysis of the 11 items found that a multifactor model did not fit the data well for either Study 1

or Study 2 data (see Supplement for details, available at http://www.projectimplicit.net/articles.php). The order of parallel *allow-forbid* items was randomized across respondents (Schwarz, Groves, & Schuman, 1998; see also Burdein et al., 2006). Items within each index were averaged so that higher values corresponded to stronger agreement with the speech or stronger willingness to protect the speech. Each index was then centered around its theoretical midpoint indicating neutrality on the agree-disagree scale to facilitate interpretation. For the aggregated *agreement* and the *willingness to protect the speech* indices, positive values indicate that respondents, on average, agreed with or were willing to protect the speech.

Implicit Association Tests. Respondents completed one of three Implicit Association Tests (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) that assess association strengths between two evaluative attributes (good-bad) and two concept categories (e.g., liberal-conservative). Concepts and evaluations can be categorized more quickly when they require the same response when they are strongly associated rather than relatively unassociated in memory (see Nosek, Greenwald, & Banaji, 2006, for a review). For example, most Democrats categorize *liberal* with *good* (and *conservative* with *bad*) more quickly than the reverse (Nosek et al., 2007). The IATs included evaluative attributes of *good* (e.g., delightful, excellent) and *bad* (e.g., detest, grief) and concept category exemplars for either (1) *Conservative* (conservative, George Bush, Republican, right wing, Ronald Reagan) and *Liberal* (Bill Clinton, Democrat, Jimmy Carter, left wing, liberal); (2) *Freedom* (free, independent, liberty, unregulated) and *Security* (controlled, protected, safe, secure; results for this IAT are reported in the Supplement); or (3) *White* and *Black* adult faces (available at http://www.projectimplicit.net/stimuli.php). The IATs consisted of seven trial blocks (Nosek, Greenwald, & Banaji, 2005), and IAT D scores were calculated using the scoring algorithm described by Greenwald, Nosek, and Banaji (2003) with response latencies <300 ms removed and trial latencies calculated from the beginning of the trial until the time of a correct response. The order in which respondents paired concept categories and evaluative attributes (e.g., *liberal-good* and *conservative-bad* versus *liberal-bad* and *conservative-good*) was randomized between respondents. IAT scores are scaled so that positive values indicate greater relative preference for freedom compared to security (Cronbach's $\alpha = .71$), conservative compared to liberal ($\alpha = .91$), or White faces compared to Black faces ($\alpha = .72$).

Design and Procedure

Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four primary experimental conditions in a 2 (speech's ideological content: left-wing or right-wing) X 2 (speaker's ethnicity: White or Black) factorial design, with the speaker's first name also being randomized across respondents. Respondents read the controversial

speech scenario, reported their opinions of the speech, and were randomly assigned to one of three IATs. The study closed with debriefing and feedback on their IAT performance.

Analysis Strategy

In addition to the experimental manipulations, explicit political orientation or implicit political preference served as a continuous independent variable. To permit analysis as a generalized linear model, the experimental manipulations were half-contrast coded, such that speaker's ethnicity was White ($-.5$) or Black ($+.5$) and the speech's ideological content was left-wing ($-.5$) or right-wing ($+.5$). For both the speech's ideological content and respondents' political orientation, a positive regression coefficient indicates that greater willingness to protect the speech is related to increasing conservatism; where relevant, results are reported as unstandardized regression coefficients bounded by their standard errors ($B \pm SE$). The large sample for this study permits an emphasis on effect size and confidence intervals because of high statistical power. All statistical analyses and overall models were statistically significant at $p \leq .05$ unless stated otherwise.

Results and Discussion

Speech Agreement Demonstrated Effective Manipulation of Left-wing and Right-wing Speech

We first examined whether speech agreement supported our characterization of the speech acts as left-wing and right-wing. That is, both statements were extreme, so all respondents might disagree, but liberals should disagree less with the left-wing statement "America is the problem," while conservatives should disagree less with the right-wing statement "Arabs are the problem." As reported in Table 2 (Step 2), respondent political orientation, the speech's ideological content, and their interaction simultaneously predicted agreement, such that overall agreement with the speech demonstrated the predicted crossover interaction between the speech's ideological content and respondent political orientation. That is, greater explicit conservatism predicted greater agreement with the right-wing statement ($r = .31$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = .25 - .37$) and greater disagreement with the left-wing statement, $r = -.50$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = -.45 - -.55$. It also appears that the right-wing statement was perceived as being more extreme than the left-wing statement, such that respondents disagreed with the left-wing statement significantly less strongly ($M = -0.23$, $SD = 1.60$) than with the right-wing statement ($M = -1.79$, $SD = 1.17$; Cohen's $d = 0.98$), $F(1, 1737) = 351.11$. While extreme liberals agreed slightly with the left-wing statement ($M = 1.01$) and disagreed strongly with the right-wing statement ($M = -2.32$; $d = 1.42$), extreme conservatives disagreed with both, though they disagreed with the left-wing statement

($M = -1.78$) more than the right-wing statement ($M = -0.93$; $d = 0.61$), $F(1, 76) = 9.12$. In sum, our ideological manipulation did in fact distinguish left-wing from right-wing statements.

Speech Protection was Predicted by Ideological Congruence, Political Orientation, and Speech Content

Although respondents' agreement with the two speech acts supported their characterization as examples of left-wing and right-wing speech, respondents may have interpreted one statement as being more worthy of Constitutional protection than the other. The primary hypothesis was that liberals would be more willing to protect an extreme left-wing statement than an extreme right-wing statement, while conservatives would be more willing to protect an extreme right-wing statement than an extreme left-wing statement. Also, based on prior evidence (Davis & Silver, 2004; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003), we anticipated a main effect in which liberals would be more likely to protect controversial speech acts in general.

Figure 1 (Panel 1) displays speech protection as a function of the speech's ideological content and of explicit political orientation or implicit political preference. Similarly, Table 1 (Panel 1) summarizes significance tests and effect sizes of the regression analyses.[2] The hypothesized interaction between the speech's ideological content and explicit political orientation significantly predicted willingness to protect the speech ($B \pm SE = 0.12 \pm .02$). Also as hypothesized, explicit political orientation predicted speech protection, such that conservatives expressed weaker overall speech tolerance than liberals ($-.085 \pm .012$). This effect of explicit political orientation was primarily linear; only small quadratic effects of political extremity were present ($\Delta R^2 = .01$; see Supplement for details). However, the speech's ideological content also affected overall willingness to protect the speech ($-0.87 \pm .04$). Respondents protected the left-wing statement criticizing Americans ($M = 1.61$, $SD = 0.79$) more strongly than the right-wing statement criticizing Arabs ($M = 0.68$, $SD = 0.96$; Cohen's $d = 0.93$). As implied by Figure 1, follow-up separate slope analysis indicated that willingness to protect the right-wing statement criticizing Arabs was largely unrelated to explicit political orientation ($r = -.05$, $p = .165$, $CI_{95} = -.11 - .02$), presumably because both extreme liberals ($M = 0.89$) and extreme conservatives ($M = 0.70$) extended only slight speech protection for the right-wing statement. However, greater explicit conservatism predicted weaker willingness to protect the left-wing statement ($r = -.33$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = -.26 - -.39$), such that extreme liberals ($M = 2.12$)

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[2] Previous research (e.g., Marcus et al., 1995; Sniderman et al., 1989) found that education increases political tolerance, but including respondents' education as a covariate did not alter the substantive results for either Study 1 or Study 2. Similarly, separate regressions that included the main effects and interactions of respondents' own race (dummy-coded as White/non-White), did not change the substantive results for either study (including the effects of the speaker's ethnicity).
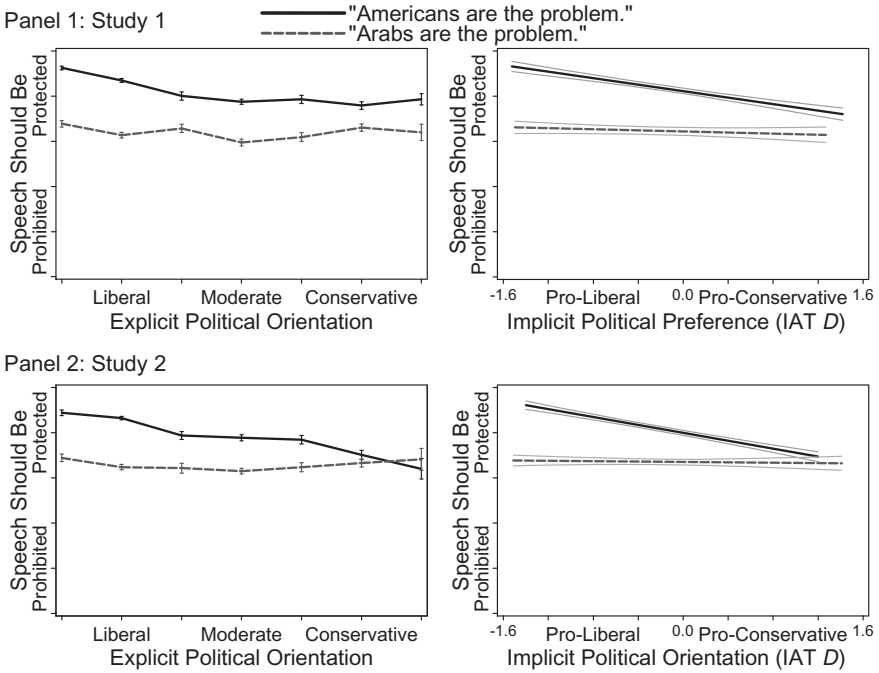
Figure 1. Average willingness to protect left-wing and right-wing statements as a function of explicit or implicit politics for Study 1 (Panel 1) and Study 2 (Panel 2). The error bars represent standard error bars (explicit politics) or standard error bands (implicit politics).

protected the left-wing statement more strongly than did extreme conservatives ($M = 1.43$). Analysis of the simple main effect of the speech's ideological content revealed that respondents at all seven points of explicit political orientation protected the left-wing statement more strongly than the right-wing statement (all $Fs \geq 14.20$). Thus, respondents on opposite ends of the political spectrum both demonstrated inconsistent speech protection by protecting the left-wing statement more strongly than the right-wing statement. However, this inconsistency was larger for extreme liberals ($d = 1.29$) than for extreme conservatives ($d = 0.70$).

   Convergent validity with implicit political preferences. The above results depend on respondents' self-assessment of political orientation on a single 7-point scale. People also have automatic responses to political concepts measured as the strength of association between political parties and self or positivity (Burdein et al., 2006; Nosek, 2005; Nosek et al., 2007). Automatic and self-reported political orientations are distinct, but related measures (Nosek & Smyth, 2007). Understanding the qualities of implicit and explicit evaluations depends on knowing when they show both convergent validity and discriminant validity. Therefore, the inclusion of implicit measurement here offers an opportunity for conceptual rep-

Table 1. Summary of Regression Analyses for Variables Predicting Willingness to Protect the Speech

Panel 1. Results for Study 1

Source	Explicit Politics ($N = 1752$)		Implicit Politics ($N = 444$)	
	F	Effect†	F	Effect†
OVERALL MODEL	193.09****	.25	48.44****	.25
Content	397.03****	.19	99.65****	.19
Politics	52.74****	.03	10.06**	.02
Content X Politics	27.24****	.02	5.14*	.01

Panel 2. Results for Study 2

Source	Explicit Politics ($N = 1491$)		Implicit Politics ($N = 543$)	
	F	Effect†	F	Effect†
OVERALL MODEL	141.73****	.22	50.61****	.22
Content	193.12****	.11	76.60****	.12
Politics	66.38****	.04	17.27****	.03
Content X Politics	49.26****	.03	14.10***	.03

†Effect is the effect size: η_p^2 for specific effects and R^2 for the overall model. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$, ****$p < .0001$.
Note. Content = Speech's ideological content; Politics = Explicit political orientation, implicit political preference (Study 1), or implicit political identity (Study 2).

lication without depending on the respondents' quality of introspection. One-third of respondents ($N = 444$) completed an implicit measure of political preference. We hypothesized convergent findings with the explicit political orientation results.

Explicit political orientation and implicit political preference were highly correlated ($r = .68$, $CI_{95} = .63 - .73$). As hypothesized, the results were similar for measures of explicit political identity and implicit political preference (see Figure 1 and Table 1). The hypothesized interaction, or congruence between respondents' political preference and the speech's ideological content, significantly predicted willingness to protect the speech ($B \pm SE = 0.30 \pm .13$). Stronger implicit preference for conservatives compared to liberals predicted significantly weaker speech protection ($-0.21 \pm .07$). There was also significantly stronger willingness to protect the left-wing statement criticizing Americans than the right-wing statement criticizing Arabs ($-0.89 \pm .09$).

Agreement mediated effects of ideological congruence, but not of political ideology. Agreement with the two speech acts demonstrated a crossover interaction between the speech's ideological content (as left-wing or right-wing) and respondents' political orientation. Previous research had also suggested liberal-conservative differences in individuals' beliefs in the preeminence of freedom of speech over other freedoms (Davis & Silver, 2004). If these political differences in support for controversial speech regardless of its content exist then agreement should only partially mediate liberal-conservative differences in speech protection.

Table 2. Mediated Moderation of Speech Protection by Self-Reported Agreement, Speech's
Ideological Content, and Political Orientation (Study 1):

A. Univariate and Bivariate Statistics

Variable	Content (Treatment)	Politics (Moderator)	Agreement (Mediator)	Protection (Outcome)
M	0.03	−0.60	−0.00	0.00
SD	0.50	1.78	1.59	0.99
CORRELATIONS†				
Content	–	−.04	−.46	−.49
Politics		–	−.13	−.09
Agreement			–	.42
Protection				–

B. Least Squares Regression Results

	Equations, Predicting Dependent Variable of†					
	Step 1. Protection		Step 2. Agreement		Step 3. Protection	
Predictors	*B*	*(SE)*	*B*	*(SE)*	*B*	*(SE)*
Content	−0.86	(.04)	−1.19	(.06)	−0.70	(.05)
Politics	−0.09	(.01)	−0.13	(.02)	−0.07	(.01)
Content X Politics	0.12	(.02)	0.66	(.03)	*0.03*	*(.03)*
Mediator: Agreement					0.14	(.02)
Agreement X Politics					*<0.001*	*(.01)*
R^2		.249		.385		.280

†Italics signify $p > .06$ (correlations) or $p > .30$ (equations). All other results are significant at
$p < .0001$.
Note. $N = 1741$. Content = speech's ideological content; Politics = respondents' political orientation;
Protection = speech protection; Agreement = speech agreement. The speech protection and
agreement indices were centered on their means (1.12 and −1.05, respectively, as recommended by
Muller et al., 2005). Equations are reported as the unstandardized regression coefficient (and
standard errors).

We tested whether self-reported agreement with the speech mediated the
effects of manipulated ideological congruence, following the procedure described
by Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt (2005) for mediated moderation (see Table 2). Step
1 presents the previously discussed regression of speech protection on respondent
political orientation, the speech acts' ideological content, and the interactive effect
of the speech's ideological congruence. Step 2 presents these effects regressed on
speech agreement. Step 3 demonstrates that partialing self-reported agreement
with the speech ($0.14 \pm .02$) reduces the interactive effect of speech's ideological
congruence on speech protection to nonsignificance ($0.03 \pm .03$; agreement's
effects were unqualified by higher-order interactions). Also as hypothesized, even
after partialing for agreement with the speech, political liberalism continued to be
associated with stronger overall speech protection ($-0.07 \pm .01$).

Speaker ethnicity did not alter speech protection. The other substantive
experimental manipulation altered the speaker's apparent ethnicity. In this context,

respondent judgments relied upon the speaker's ideology more than his apparent ethnicity. The speaker's status as a White or Black American did not significantly alter overall willingness to protect his speech, $t(1750) = 0.70$, *ns*, $d = 0.03$. When accounting for the ideology effects (i.e., Table 1), the speaker's ethnicity did not influence speech protection, either as a main effect, $F(1, 1748) = 0.66$, *ns*, or as an interaction with the speech's ideological content, $F(1,1748) = 2.22$, *ns*. No significant effects were detected despite having sufficient statistical power to identify a small difference in overall speech protection (observed power = .93 for $d = 0.15$, one-tailed $\alpha = .05$). However, the speaker's status as a Black or White American was not directly relevant to American-Arab relations. Thus, in Study 2, the speaker's ethnicity was manipulated to be directly relevant to the speech act.

Implicit racial preferences. Given the null effects of the speaker's ethnicity on speech protection, it seemed unlikely that implicit racial attitudes would predict stronger speech protection for White speakers and weaker speech protection for Black speakers. Indeed, implicit racial attitudes did not predict differential speech protection for Black and White speakers ($ps > .176$; $rs = -.09$, .06, respectively). However, stronger implicit preferences for Whites compared to Blacks did predict weaker speech protection for the left-wing statement ($r = -.24$, $p = .0002$, $CI_{95} = -.11 - -.35$) and stronger speech protection for the right-wing statement ($r = .17$, $p = .006$, $CI_{95} = .05 - .29$), regardless of the speaker's ethnicity (see Supplement for details). This effect is most easily interpreted as an effect of implicit ethnocentrism[3] (Cunningham, Nezlek, & Banaji, 2004) or social dominance orientation (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), both of which are positively correlated with conservatism. Stronger implicit preferences for Whites over Blacks were associated with less tolerance for speech against an ingroup (Americans) and greater tolerance for speech against an outgroup (Arabs). Interestingly, the content of the speech dominated over the apparent ethnicity of the speaker. In this case, the latter was irrelevant, or, at least, unrelated to implicit racial attitudes. This interpretation is elaborated in the general discussion.

Study 2

Perhaps the most surprising effect from Study 1 was that the manipulation of the speaker's ethnicity did not alter speech protection. In Study 2, we sought to replicate the key results from Study 1 and to further examine the effect of speaker's ethnicity on speech tolerance. We replicated the speech manipulations

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[3] A reviewer suggested that this could be better tested among respondents for whom Black Americans were an outgroup. Follow-up analysis among non-Black respondents ($N = 464$) indicated that stronger implicit preferences for Whites compared to Blacks significantly predicted weaker protection for the left-wing statement, $r(220) = -.24$, $p = .0003$, and stronger protection for the right-wing statement, $r(235) = .13$, $p = .046$. Indeed, a similar, though nonsignificant, pattern of results was observed among Black and biracial (identifying as Black and White) respondents for the left-wing statement, $r(12) = -.12$, *ns*, and the right-wing statement, $r(15) = .29$, *ns*.

from Study 1 but manipulated the speaker's ethnicity so that it was relevant to the object of criticism. In the first study, the name implied that the speaker was Black or White, but the speech was about Americans or Arabs. In Study 2, the name implied that the speaker was Arab Muslim or White (both were American) making the manipulation directly relevant to the criticized groups. Research on the *intergroup sensitivity effect* finds that ingroup members are more accepting of group criticism when made by ingroup rather than outgroup members, and this preference for same-group criticism is mediated by the perception that ingroup members intended the criticisms constructively (Hornsey & Imani, 2004). We also modified the implicit political measure to assess political iden-tification rather than political preference to correspond more closely to the explicit measure of political identity.

Method

Participants

Adult U.S. citizens ($N = 1,802$; $M_{age} = 29.6$; 64% women) from the Project Implicit research pool who had not participated in Study 1 consented to participate after being randomly assigned to this study. Most respondents reported having at least some college education (90%) and were primarily White (77%), Hispanic (6%), Black (6%), bi- or multiracial (5%), or Asian/Pacific Islander (3%; <1% Native American, 2% Other/Unknown, 5 = missing). Politically, 413 (23%) reported being conservative either slightly (8%), moderately (11%), or strongly (3%); 436 (24%) as being moderate; and 953 (53%) as being liberal either slightly (11%), moderately (28%), or strongly (14%).[4]

Materials

Speaker's apparent ethnicity. Respondents read the same scenario from Study 1. This time, the speaker's first and last names in the speech scenario and opinion items implied that he was White (using the same names from Study 1) or Arab Muslim (Abdullah, Ibrahim, Hammam, or Hashim Muhammad; Hammam from http://muttaqun.com/muslimnames.html, all others from "List of Arabic names," 2006).[5] Speech protection did not significantly differ as a main effect of the four first names used to identify the White or Arab Muslim speaker.

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[4] Study completers ($n = 1,197$) did not differ from noncompleters ($n = 605$) in gender composition, $\chi^2(1, N = 1796) = 0.11$, *ns*, or political orientation, $t(1800) = 0.17$, *ns*, Cohen's $d < .01$, but were somewhat older ($M = 30.2$) than noncompleters ($M = 28.6$), $t(1800) = 4.96$, $d = 0.25$. Valid IAT data were collected from 1,116 respondents after dropping IAT results for 40 with excessively high error rates; 27 for going too fast (<300 ms) in one or more blocks; and 12 for missing data or a 40+% error rate in one or more critical blocks.

[5] To ensure that the speaker's name did not unintentionally refer to a known terrorist, all potential full names for the Arab Muslim speaker (e.g., Ibrahim Muhammad) were checked against established lists

Explicit measures. As in Study 1, perceptions of the speech were assessed using 11 explicit opinion items measuring willingness to protect the speech (Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$) and two items measuring agreement with the speech ($\alpha = .85$). Counterbalancing and scoring procedures remained the same, as did the measure of explicit political orientation.

Implicit measures. Respondents completed one of two IATs that assessed implicit preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims or implicit identification with conservatives compared to liberals. Both followed the IAT procedure from Study 1. The White–Arab Muslim preference IAT assessed relative preference for *Arab Muslim* exemplars (Akbar, Ashraf, Habib, Hakim, Karim, Muhsin, Salim, Sharif, Wahib, Yousef) and *White* exemplars (Bob, Charles, Joe, John, Josh, Kevin, Richard, Sam, Tim, Tom). The political identity IAT assessed the relative association between the evaluative attributes *Self* (I, mine, my, myself, self) and *Other* (other, their, theirs, them, they) and the group categories *Liberal* (Bill Clinton, Democrat, Jimmy Carter, liberal) and *Conservative* (conservative, George Bush, Republican, Ronald Reagan). Counterbalancing, scoring, and debriefing procedures remained the same. IAT *D* scores were scaled so that positive values reflect preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims ($\alpha = .71$) or identification with conservatives compared to liberals ($\alpha = .90$).

Design and Procedure

Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four primary experimental conditions, in a 2 (speech's ideological content: left-wing or right-wing) × 2 (speaker's ethnicity: White or Arab Muslim) factorial design, with the speaker's first name being randomized across respondents. Respondents read the free speech scenario, completed the explicit opinion measure, and completed one of two IATs. The analysis strategy remained the same.

Results and Discussion

Speech Agreement Demonstrated Effective Manipulation of Left-wing and Right-wing Speech

As before, overall agreement with the speech demonstrated the predicted crossover interaction between speech's ideological content and respondents' political orientation ($\eta_p^2 = .13$). That is, greater explicit conservatism predicted greater agreement with the right-wing statement, $r = .29$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = .23 - .36$, and greater disagreement with the left-wing statement, $r = -.41$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = -.35 - -.47$. Also replicating Study 1, respondents were more

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of terrorists' names (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006; BBC, 2003) and a current news database (Google News, searched on March 3, 2006).

willing to agree with the left-wing statement than with the right-wing statement ($\eta_p^2 = .13$). This indicates that although agreement with the two statements were, as designed, left-wing and right-wing speech acts, they were differentially extreme.

Speech Protection was Predicted by Ideological Congruence, Political Orientation, and Speech Content

As displayed in Figure 1 (Panel 2), speech protection varied as a function of the speech's ideological content and implicit or explicit political orientation; Table 1 (Panel 2) summarizes the significance tests and effect sizes for these regression analyses. The hypothesized interaction between the speech's ideological content and explicit political orientation (as a manipulation of political congruence) significantly predicted willingness to protect the speech ($B \pm SE = 0.18 \pm .03$). Greater political conservatism again predicted weaker willingness to protect the speech ($-0.10 \pm .01$), and this relationship was primarily linear (quadratic $\Delta R^2 = .002$; see Supplement). The speech's ideological content ($d = 0.81$) also affected speech protection ($-0.64 \pm .05$), such that the left-wing statement criticizing Americans ($M = 1.52$) was protected significantly more strongly than the right-wing statement criticizing Arabs ($M = 0.76$). As implied by Figure 1, follow-up separate slope analysis indicated that although greater political conservatism was associated with weaker protection of the left-wing statement criticizing Americans ($r = -.40$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = -.33 - -.46$), it was statistically unrelated to protection of the right-wing statement criticizing Arabs ($r = -.03$, $p = .449$, $CI_{95} = -.10 - .04$). Analysis of the simple main effect of the speech's ideological content indicated that liberals, moderates, and slight conservatives afforded significantly greater protection to the left-wing statement than the right-wing statement (all $Fs \geq 18.47$). Moderate conservatives, $F(1, 166) = 1.97$, *ns*, $d = 0.20$, and strong conservatives, $F(1, 45) = 0.74$, *ns*, $d = -0.18$, protected the left-wing relative to the right-wing statements similarly.

Agreement partially mediated effects of ideological congruence, but not political ideology. As in Study 1, we examined whether self-reported agreement with the speech mediated the interaction of the speech's ideological content and respondents' political orientation or whether political differences in support for controversial speech persisted when controlling for these effects. The same procedure reported in Study 1 was followed, including centering agreement ($SD = 1.52$) and speech protection ($SD = 0.93$) around their respective means. When regressing speech protection on self-reported agreement and the ideology effects discussed earlier, political orientation continued to predict stronger speech protection. That is, although partialing for agreement with the speech (Step 3: $0.17 \pm .02$) reduced the interaction effect between the speech's ideological content and respondents' political orientation ($0.09 \pm .03$ vs. Step 1:

0.18 ± .03), political liberalism continued to predict stronger speech protection (0.08 ± .01 vs. Step 1: 0.10 ± .01).

Convergent validity with implicit political identity. Half of the respondents completed an implicit measure of political identity. The implicit and explicit measures of political orientation were highly correlated ($r = .67$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = .62 - .71$). As summarized in Table 1 and Figure 1, implicit political identity showed convergent validity by replicating the explicit results. The left-wing statement criticizing Americans was protected more strongly than the right-wing statement criticizing Arabs (−0.64 ± .07). The hypothesized interaction between implicit political identity and the speech's ideological content predicted stronger speech protection (0.42 ± .11). Stronger implicit identification with conservatives compared to liberals also predicted weaker willingness to protect the speech overall (−0.23 ± .06).

Liberals and Conservatives' Stronger Protection of Speaker who Belonged to the Criticized Group

The other substantive experimental manipulation involved whether the speaker was apparently Arab Muslim American or White American. Compared to the model from Table 1, the speaker's apparent status as a White or Arab Muslim American did not directly affect willingness to protect the speech ($F < 1$). Instead, as displayed in Figure 2, it interacted with the speech's ideological content, $F(1, 1485) = 29.92$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Respondents protected a White speaker ($M = 1.61$) more strongly than an Arab Muslim speaker ($M = 1.42$) when he criticized Americans (Cohen's $d = 0.22$).
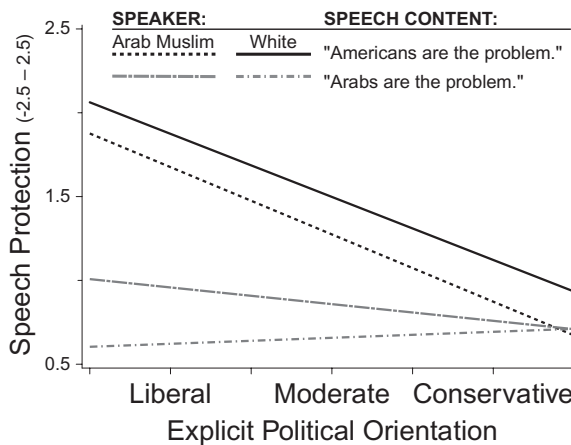
Figure 2. Average willingness to protect speech across the political spectrum, as a function of the speaker's status as an Arab Muslim American or White American and the speech's ideological content (Study 2).

In reverse, respondents protected an Arab Muslim speaker ($M = 0.90$) more strongly than a White speaker ($M = 0.64$) when he criticized Arabs ($d = 0.29$). Notably, liberals and conservatives were equivalently more willing to protect the critical speech of a person criticizing his own group; respondents' political conservatism did not significantly interact with the speaker's apparent ethnicity in predicting speech protection, $F(1, 1484) = 2.74$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$, $p = .098$. Follow-up contrast analysis indicated that the speaker's ethnicity did not interact with respondents' political ideology for either of the speech acts.

Implicit ethnic preferences. In Study 1, respondents were similarly willing to protect a White and Black speaker when he criticized Arabs or Americans. In Study 2, we made the ethnicity manipulation relevant to the speech content and assessed implicit preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims. Overall, respondents implicitly preferred Whites to Arab Muslims ($M = 0.45$, $SD = 0.39$, Cohen's $d = 1.15$). Consistent with findings across a variety of social groups (Nosek, Banaji, & Jost, 2009), greater political conservatism predicted stronger implicit preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims ($r = .20$, $p < .0001$, $CI_{95} = .12 - .28$).

Hierarchical regression analyses predicted speech protection from respondents' explicit political orientation, the speaker's apparent ethnicity, the speech's ideological content, and White-Arab Muslim preference IAT scores (see Table 3). Unexpectedly, stronger implicit ethnic preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims directly predicted weaker speech protection overall, whether the speech

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression Analyses Regressing Speech Protection on the Interactive Effects of the Implicit Association Test Assessing White-Arab Muslim Preference

Predictor	Step 1		Step 2	
	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2
Ethnicity X Content			6.98**	.01
Ethnicity			0.03	<.0001
WhiteIAT			17.93****	.03
Content X Politics	32.98****	.06	32.86****	.06
Content	69.78****	.11	69.35****	.11
Politics	16.20****	.03	10.84**	.02
R^2	.226		.261	

**p < .01, ****p < .0001

Note. $N = 563$. Ethnicity = Speaker's ethnicity (White or Arab Muslim American), Content = Speech's ideological content (left-wing or right-wing), Politics = Explicit political orientation, WhiteIAT = Implicit Association Test assessing preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims.

Step 1 = effects of content hypothesis, Step 2 = effects of content and ethnicity hypotheses, and no higher-order interactions qualified these effects.

criticized Americans or Arabs (Step 2: $B \pm SE = -0.38 \pm .09$). However, the relationship between stronger implicit ethnic preferences and weaker speech protection did not vary based on the speaker's apparent ethnicity or the speech's ideological content.[6] Follow-up separate slope analysis found that even after partialing for political orientation effects, implicit preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims consistently predicted weaker speech protection for each statement. That is, for the left-wing statement criticizing Americans, weaker speech protection was predicted ($R^2 = .21$) by stronger implicit ethnic preference, $\beta = .20$, $t(247) = 3.36$, and greater political conservatism, $\beta = -.36$, $t(247) = 6.10$. For the right-wing statement criticizing Arabs, weaker speech protection was predicted ($R^2 = .03$) by stronger implicit ethnic preference, $\beta = -.16$, $t(310) = 2.90$, when controlling for political orientation, $\beta = .08$, $t(310) = 1.45$, *ns*. Thus, stronger implicit preferences for Whites compared to Arab Muslims predicted weaker willingness to protect controversial speech, *regardless* of whether the speech criticized Americans or Arabs.

Results from Study 1 had not led us to anticipate a direct relationship between implicit preferences and political tolerance. In Study 1, the data conformed to an ethnocentrism account in which people who implicitly preferred one ingroup also afforded more protection to other ingroups (Americans) and less protection to other outgroups (Arabs). Here, greater implicit preference for the ingroup predicted less protection of *any* speech. This new pattern could be indicative of a common influence of threat sensitivity. Controversial speech acts—whatever their content—increase risk of conflict and disorder. Likewise, sensitivity to threat appears to be related to stronger preferences for ingroups (Jost et al., 2003; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). As such, threat sensitivity may serve as a third variable explaining the relationship between speech tolerance generally and implicit liking for ingroups. Despite the fact that the effect was highly reliable, this explanation should be considered quite tentative considering that it was not hypothesized a priori, and we did not include a measure of threat sensitivity to assess whether it could account for the relationship between these variables.

General Discussion

Previous research defined political tolerance as the number of public acts afforded to each of several extreme groups (e.g., yes-no decision to allow a public demonstration held by communists, racists, or homosexuals; Gibson, 2006;

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[6] A reviewer suggested that this would be best tested among White respondents. Follow-up analysis of the direct effect that the IAT had on speech protection among White respondents only ($n = 442$) replicated this finding, such that stronger speech protection was simultaneously predicted ($R^2 = .246$) by stronger political conservatism ($-0.10 \pm .02$), the speech's ideological content ($-0.58 \pm .08$), their hypothesized interaction ($0.21 \pm .04$), and stronger implicit preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims ($-0.35 \pm .11$).

Marcus et al., 1995). The present research used an experimental paradigm that manipulated key features of a speech act to investigate political tolerance. In two studies, U.S. citizens considered whether to protect an American speaker's right to make controversial statements critical of either Americans or Arabs. We found that Americans' willingness to protect the speech and the speaker's Constitutional rights was predicted by (a) both the main and interactive effects of the speech's ideological content (anti-Americans or anti-Arabs) and respondents' political ideology (Studies 1 & 2); and (b) the speaker's ethnic group membership when it was relevant to the speech (Study 2 only). Respondents across the political spectrum afforded greater protection to an ostensibly left-wing statement criticizing Americans than to an ostensibly right-wing statement criticizing Arabs. Political liberalism, whether measured implicitly or explicitly, predicted stronger speech protection overall. Being more politically liberal predicted stronger speech protection for the statement "Americans are the problem," and both political liberals and conservatives expressed similar protection of the statement "Arabs are the problem."

We manipulated the speaker's apparent ethnicity with names implying that he was a White American and either a Black American (Study 1) or an Arab Muslim American (Study 2). In Study 1, respondents across the political spectrum were similarly willing to protect speech by White and Black speakers. In Study 2, respondents across the political spectrum were more willing to protect the statement when the speaker was an exemplar of the group he criticized (i.e., White American criticizing Americans and Arab Muslim American criticizing Arabs). Implicit ethnic preferences did not predict differential protection of White and Black speakers (Study 1) or White and Arab Muslim speakers (Study 2).

Implicit ethnic preferences did predict speech protection in other ways, but each study showed distinct effects. In Study 1, implicit racial preferences' predictive utility varied based on the speech content—stronger implicit preference for Whites compared to Blacks predicted stronger protection of speech criticizing Arabs and weaker protection of speech criticizing Americans. In Study 2, implicit ethnic preferences' predictive utility of speech tolerance was a main effect— stronger implicit preference for Whites compared to Arab Muslims predicted weaker speech protection, whatever its content or its speaker's ethnicity. Although implicit ethnic preferences were related to speech protection in both studies, the differing relations between speech protection and implicit ethnic preferences highlight the need for additional research. We offer speculative interpretations of these auxiliary results below and then return to the key issues for this article.

Importance of Assessing Social Preferences

These are the first studies to test whether *implicit* ethnic preferences predicted biased behavior in the form of Constitutional intolerance of a target member's speech. One explanation for political intolerance is that malice towards a

disliked group overwhelms individuals' abstract principles (Marcus et al., 1995), suggesting that intergroup bias would predict political intolerance. However, a recent overview of political tolerance research (Gibson, 2006) noted that while group prejudice (as assessed by explicit self-reports) and political tolerance are presumed to be closely related, they often operate independently. We followed Gibson's recommendation (2006, p. 25) to directly manipulate social and political group membership to better understand the relation between social and political tolerance. Because these two studies found differing relations between political tolerance and implicit racial or ethnic preferences, additional research is needed to clarify how implicit group biases relate to political tolerance.

The results from Study 1 could reflect implicit ethnocentrism. Implicit preferences for one ingroup or dominant group tend to covary with implicit preferences for other ingroups or dominant groups (Cunningham et al., 2004). In this case, implicit preference for White over Black might serve as a general indicator of implicit ethnocentrism. As such, people higher in implicit ethnocentrism may perceive criticism of an ingroup—Americans—as less worthy of Constitutional protection and criticism of an outgroup—Arabs—as more worthy of protection. In contrast, we speculated that the direct relationship in Study 2 between stronger implicit preference for White compared to Arab Muslim and weaker speech protection of *any* speech might indicate that both are influenced by individual differences in threat sensitivity. Individuals who are more sensitive to threats (e.g., Davis & Silver, 2004) may find any controversial speech act to be disturbing in its potential to create disorder and may hold more implicit negativity toward outgroups—especially ones associated with terrorism.

Despite their inconsistency with each other, the effects in Study 1 and 2 were both highly reliable, suggesting that they should be taken seriously. The critical next steps will be to pursue direct evidence for our speculative interpretations of ethnocentrism in the first case and a common influence of threat sensitivity in the second case. It is also curious that the effects differed between the two studies, considering that the designs were quite similar. The most notable difference is that the implicit measure in the first study assessed social group attitudes that were not directly relevant to the speech act (Black–White), and the implicit measure in the second study was directly relevant to the speech act (Arab Muslim–White). If this is the operative factor, then future research may develop a model of how multiple individual difference variables—political orientation, threat sensitivity, ethnocentrism—contribute in concert to influence political tolerance. For now, the results provide fertile ground for hypothesis generation.

Liberals Protected Speech More Than Conservatives, but Were More Inconsistent in that Protection

Political liberals reported greater willingness to protect both speech acts, particularly the left-wing statement criticizing Americans. These findings are

consistent with recent reviews of ideological differences suggesting that liberals place greater value than conservatives on freedom of speech (Davis & Silver, 2004; Jost et al., 2003). The relation between stronger speech protection and political liberalism was primarily linear with liberals protecting speech more than conservatives. Commentators have argued that research on liberal-conservative differences is overinterpreted and that liberals and conservatives both censor speech that they dislike (Hentoff, 1992; Will, 2002).

Because we examined experimental manipulations in a single scenario, our data cannot unequivocally answer whether liberalism is associated with stronger protection of speech *in general*. However, agreement with the speech demonstrated the hypothesized crossover interaction between the speech's ideological content and respondents' political ideology. Even when controlling for considered judgments of agreement with the speech, political liberalism continued to predict greater political tolerance. That is, political orientation predicted reliable differences in overall interest in protecting controversial speech beyond personal agreement with the message. Other research also supports this claim. For example, political conservatism predicts greater willingness to censor both politically correct and incorrect content (Altemeyer, 1996; Fisher et al., 1999). Recent research on post-9/11 political differences in Americans' support for civil liberties over security found that liberals were less willing to trade speech tolerance for increased security (Davis & Silver, 2004).

Our research also shows that the relationship between ideology and protection of controversial speech is not simple. In both studies, speech protection was strongly influenced by whether the speech criticized Americans or Arabs. That is, conservatives, moderates, and liberals consistently afforded stronger speech protection for the left-wing than the right-wing statement. Because of this, political liberals showed less consistency in their speech protection (see Figure 1). Although conservatives expressed relatively weaker protection for the speech acts, they also evidenced smaller differences in speech protection based on its ideological congruence with their politics. Liberals' greater discrepancy in protection of the two speech acts was isolated to the speech's ideological content and did not extend to differential speech protection based on the speaker's ethnicity. These findings were consistent across two studies with more than 3,200 American respondents. This finding can be interpreted as consistent with positively or negatively framed political stereotypes of liberals as "flexible" or "flip-floppers," and conservatives as "resolute" or "rigid" (Jost et al., 2003).

Additional research can determine whether the *ideological consistency* findings are consistent liberal-conservative differences in political tolerance. It is possible that the ideological consistency is specific to this paradigm. That is, the speech acts were perceived to be differentially extreme (as assessed in agreement with them), even though they were constructed as linguistic parallels. To avoid sensitization to the manipulations, respondents judged only one speech act. The speech acts differed only in the group criticized (Americans or Arabs) and the

speaker's name (implying different ethnic origins). The speech acts were disliked, but legally protectable (a political statement made on the speaker's own property) and issued by a longtime resident of the United States (Kersch, 2003). However, because the right-wing statement criticized Arabs, an ethnic outgroup, it may have simply been judged as less worthy of Constitutional protection because it criticized an ethnic minority as a whole. That is, both conservatives and liberals might differ in how strongly they extend political tolerance to opposing *ideologies*, but be similarly dismissive of *racially charged* speech. However, it is notable that previous research shows that political conservatism predicts stronger preferences for dominant groups in implicit and explicit social group attitudes (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Nosek et al., 2007, 2009).

Indeed, previous nation-wide surveys have found that a majority of Americans report unwillingness to permit people to say things in public that might be offensive to racial groups (Freedom Forum, 2002, p. 9). Alternatively, different motivations might drive liberal and conservative responses to the speech acts. If conservatives are primarily concerned with maintaining order and stability (Jost et al., 2003), then the speech's content may be less alarming than its potential to create disorder. Because the speech act (posting a sign on one's house) was the same across conditions, conservatives might have reacted similarly to the act itself. Liberals, on the other hand, might be more concerned with protecting speech—but especially "vulnerable" speech. If liberals believe that a threat against the majority (America) is not as credible or dangerous as a threat against a minority ethnic group (Arabs), this might explain why they afforded less privilege to the anti-Arab speech (cf. Davis & Silver, 2004).

To address these differences, future research could use a variety of statements that are representative of extreme left-wing or extreme right-wing *ideological* positions. For example, the speech acts could criticize ideological positions (e.g., "radical Islam"), not ethnic groups. In addition, including paired statements from multiple domains (e.g., pro-choice-pro-life, creationism-evolution) would increase confidence that liberal-conservative differences generalize to multiple ideological domains.

Convergent Findings for Implicit and Explicit Political Identity and Attitudes

In both studies, explicit political measures predicted speech protection in similar ways to implicit political measures, whether assessed as implicit political preference (Study 1) or implicit political identification (Study 2). A previous investigation of implicit-explicit correspondence across many topics found the highest correlations between implicit and self-reported preferences in political domains (e.g., candidate preferences, pro-choice-pro-life, creationism-evolution, feminism-traditional values, gun rights-gun control; Nosek, 2005; see also Nosek et al., 2007). We observed convergent validity between explicit and implicit measures of political orientation in how they predicted political tolerance. This

illustrates the predictive validity of implicit political preferences and political identity on judgments of speech protection, adding to the growing body of predictive validity evidence for implicit measures (Greenwald, Poehlman, Uhlmann, & Banaji, in press).

Conclusion

Americans almost universally endorse democratic principles, including the right to express unpopular positions. The current legal interpretation of the First Amendment holds that offensive and hateful speech is legally permissible. In 1969, for instance, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that neo-Nazis are permitted to burn a cross and declare, "white people may need to take revenge if the U.S. government continues 'to suppress the white, Caucasian race' " (Kersch, 2003, p. 150). As commentator George Will wrote (2002), defense of the First Amendment does and should "reject the idea that there should be asymmetrical protections of different sides in public issue debates" (p. B07). This is indeed the legal interpretation (Kersch, 2003) expanding on the Declaration of Independence's principle that humans enjoy "certain unalienable rights" (Preamble). However, minds are not as principled as declarations. We found that willingness to protect "free" speech depended on the target of the speech's criticism and on the observer's personal political orientation. In the minds of human perceivers, speech protection is alienable.

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