UC Davis

UC Davis Previously Published Works

Title

Defining Who You Are by What You're Not: Organizational Disidentification and the National Rifle Association

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6pv663cz

Journal

Organization Science, 12(4)

ISSN

1047-7039

Authors

Elsbach, KD

Bhattacharya, CB

Publication Date

2001

DOI

10.1287/orsc.12.4.393.10638

Peer reviewed

eScholarship.org Powered by the California Digital Library
University of California

Defining Who You Are by What You're Not: Organizational Disidentification and the National Rifle Association

Kimberly D. Elsbach; C. B. Bhattacharya

Organization Science, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Jul. - Aug., 2001), 393-413.

Stable URL:
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=1047-7039%28200107%2F08%2912%3A4%3C393%3ADWYABW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-K

Organization Science is currently published by INFORMS.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at http://www.jstor.org/journals/informs.html.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

http://www.jstor.org/
Wed Mar 9 19:34:48 2005

Defining Who You Are By What You're Not: Organizational Disidentification and The National Rifle Association

Kimberly D. Elsbach • C. B. Bhattacharya
Graduate School of Management, University of California, Davis, California 95616
School of Management, Boston University, 595 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 01915
kdelsbach@ucdavis.edu • cb@bu.edu

Abstract

Through two exploratory studies, we develop and test an introductory framework of "organizational disidentification." Our first study explores the concept of organizational disidentification through a qualitative investigation of cognitive relationships with the National Rifle Association (NRA). Findings suggest that organizational disidentification is a self-perception based on: (1) a cognitive separation between one's identity and the organization's identity, and (2) a negative relational categorization of oneself and the organization (e.g., categorizations such as "rivals" or "enemies"). Organizational disidentification appears to be motivated by individuals' desires to both affirm positive distinctiveness *and* avoid negative distinctiveness by distancing themselves from incongruent values and negative stereotypes attributed to an organization. Our findings also suggest that organizational disidentification can lead individuals to take action (either volunteer work or voicing their opinion) as a result of their perceived separation from the organization's identity. Results of our second study—a large-scale survey of public attitudes about the NRA—provide support for this framework.

(Organizational Identity; Identification; Disidentification; Stereotypes)

Considerable theory and research has examined how individuals define their self-concepts vis-a-vis their connections with social groups or organizations (Tajfel 1982, Turner 1987, Abrams and Hogg 1990, Kramer 1993). This research suggests that individuals routinely develop *social identities*—defined as self-perceptions based on cognitive links between their identities and the identities of groups or organizations (Rabbie and Horwitz 1988, Hogg and Abrams 1988, Ashforth and Mael 1989, Dutton et al. 1994, Bergami and Bagozzi 2000). If a person strongly identifies with an organization, his or her social identity has a significant overlap with the identity of that organization. According to this perspective, *organizational identification* is indicated by self-perceptions of "oneness" with the organization (Mael and Ashforth 1992).

A growing amount of literature suggests that organizational identifications are important because of their implications for both individuals' and organizations' well-being. At the individual level, a large amount of research on social identifications suggests that identification with a favorably perceived social group or organization enhances a person's self-esteem, self-distinctiveness, and self-continuity (Hogg and Abrams 1988, Dutton et al. 1994). Recent studies also show that identification provides benefits to the organization by increasing members' long-term commitment and support for the organization (Bhattacharya et al. 1995; O'Reilly and Chatman 1986; Adler and Adler 1988; Mael and Ashforth 1992, 1995). This research is supported by studies of group identification, which show that group members exhibit more cooperation and group support when group identifications are salient and positive (Kramer and Brewer 1984, 1986).

Because of these important consequences of organizational identification, researchers have also studied its predictors or antecedents. This work suggests that distinctive or prestigious organizational images, satisfaction with membership experiences, and extensive experience or tenure with an organization are the primary antecedents of organizational identification (Schneider et al. 1971, Hall and Schneider 1972, Mael and Ashforth 1992). Recent research suggests that such antecedents appear to enhance organizational identification by strengthening individual's cognitive links to the organization (Dutton et al. 1994).

Together these findings about the indicators, consequences, and antecedents of social and organizational identification provide a seemingly complete framework

1047-7039/01/1204/0393/$05.00
1526-5455 electronic ISSN

of individuals' connections to their organizations. Yet this research has not discussed the possibility that individuals' social identities and self-concepts are defined by the groups or organizations from which they perceive their identities to be *separated.* That is, for the most part (see Elsbach 1999 and Dukerich et. al. 1998 for exceptions) identity researchers have not examined the concept of *organizational disidentification.* Further, no research has *empirically* examined organizational disidentification.

This omission is surprising given the importance of social distinction and differentiation in theories of social identity (Brewer and Kramer 1985). For example, social psychological research shows that individuals may use self-categorization (i.e., self-definition based on the social categories of which they are members) as a means of cognitive dissociation from groups they feel are not self-defining (Brewer 1991, Steele and Aronson 1995). These theorists have suggested the term "disidentification" as defining such cognitive distancing through self-categorizations (Steele and Aronson 1995, Tajfel 1982). Such self-categorizations are meaningful, not only in terms of what they include, but also by what they exclude. As Brewer (1991, p. 475) notes,

> Names such as Azerbaijan, Serbia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Tamil, Eritrea, Basques, Kurds, Welsh, and Quebec are currently familiar because they represent ethnic and national identities capable of arousing intense emotional commitment and self-sacrifice on the part of individuals. Furthermore, they all involve some form of *separatist action—attempts to establish or preserve distinctive group identities* against unwanted political or cultural merger within a larger collective entity. [emphasis ours]

Further, social psychologists suggest that by defining themselves as members of social categories that are inclusive enough to confer legitimacy *but exclusive* enough to denote distinctiveness on core attributes, individuals attempt to maintain identities that are "optimally distinctive" (Brewer 1991). This research suggests that people are threatened by categorizations that portray them as too distinctive *or* too indistinctive. In support, Steele and Aronson (1995) found that people distanced themselves from positively distinct categorizations that carried with them unwanted stereotypes, while Snyder and Fromkin (1980) found that people disassociated themselves from groups that were highly indistinctive even if they denoted high status to their members.

Such notions about the importance of social distinctiveness through group association and disassociation might be traced back to Heider's (1958) balance theory of the self-concept. Heider suggests that individuals are motivated to maintain relationships in which they agree with their friends and disagree with their enemies (i.e., both positive *and* negative connections are important to maintain balance in their self-concept). When individuals find themselves in a relationship in which they disagree with a friend about an issue, they are out of balance. To restore balance, they may either change their attitude about the issue or their attitude about their friend (i.e., they may separate themselves from the issue or from their friend). It is important to note that balance arises not out of a state of apathetic nonidentification (i.e., a state in which one has neither connection to nor separation from an issue or person because one does not care about it), but out of a state of informed disidentification based on personal perceptions about the issue or person.

These notions are supported in recent models of social identity (see Ellemers et al. 1999) which suggest that although it has not been explored empirically, the concept of disidentification may explain responses to many types of identity threat. For example, Ellemers et al. (1999) suggest that disidentification may be a response by people who currently are low identifiers with a social group and find themselves threatened by the low status of that group due to a recent negative event (i.e., they may be pushed to a position in which their perception of the group's identity and their own identity are negatively related, and thus they are out of balance).

In the same manner in which individuals may separate their identities from groups and their values, it seems plausible that they may separate their identities from organizations that embody such values. Individuals should thus move toward relationships in which they identify with organizations with which they agree, and disidentify (i.e., maintain a cognitive separation) with organizations with which they disagree, especially on important, self-defining issues (Steele 1988). As with organizational identification, individuals may disidentify with organizations of which they are members, nonmembers, or ex-members.

In support of this perspective, anecdotal evidence suggests that individuals sometimes find it easier to define themselves through the social groups they do *not* belong to than those to which they do belong (e.g., I'm not sure if I'm a painter, but I know I'm not a musician). In some cases, exclusion from a category may be the primary identity that defines a group (e.g., nonsmokers). Individuals may also disidentify more readily than they identify with *organizations* in relation to a specific, self-defining issue (e.g., I don't perceive myself as connected to any one gun control organization, but I see myself as clearly separated from the NRA). These examples suggest that exclusion or distance from a group may define one's identity, even if one does not identify with an opposing group.

Further support for the notion of organizational disidentification comes from the popular news media, which suggests that while people may initially disidentify with the values or practices that a company displays—(for example, widespread discrimination against African-American customers at Denny's restaurants (Rice 1996))—that over time they come to associate the firm's name with this practice and disidentify with the organization itself. As a consequence, organizations that are narrowly defined and strongly identified with a particular value or issue (e.g., the health and beauty products firm "The Body Shop" is identified with supporting native cultures through its use of native ingredients in its products) may become targets of organizational disidentification specifically because of that distinctive value or issue (e.g., working with native cultures may be perceived as exploitive). In a more manipulative manner, social marketers may strategically and proactively align organizations with a few salient issues through media campaigns as a means of provoking disidentification with the organization (e.g., in a campaign against tobacco giant Phillip Morris, the California Anti-Tobacco Coalition has depicted the "Marlboro Man" in billboards with the caption, "Bob, I've got emphysema."). The targets of these campaigns may then suffer negative consequences that accompany disidentification (e.g., boycotts of products/services).

The above findings suggest that although it has only recently been discussed (and never empirically tested) in models of social and organizational identification, maintaining perceptions of self-distinctiveness by cognitively separating one's identity from an organization's identity may be an important part of the process by which individuals maintain positive social identities. That is, individuals may understand who they are, in part, by defining who they're not. The purpose of this paper is to empirically explore, expand, and test this notion through a set of studies examining the indicators, antecedents, and consequences of organizational disidentification in a real-life setting.

In the remainder of this paper we use two studies of the National Rifle Association to develop and test this framework. We first describe a qualitative and inductive study we used to develop a general working framework of organizational disidentification. We then describe a large-scale survey we used to test the framework.

Study 1: Exploratory Study of Organizational Disidentification

Methods

To determine if the concept of organizational disidentification exists, and to better define it, we: (1) collected preliminary informal data from in-class discussions, a dozen student projects on disidentification, and a student-run focus group on disidentification in an undergraduate class in marketing, (2) ran three focus groups on disidentification with university employees, and (3) analyzed extensive archival data on public reports of disidentification with the NRA.

Preliminary, Informal Data Collection and Analysis. Our in-class discussions and results of student-run projects and a focus group showed that many people sensed a cognitive separation from organizations whose practices or operating procedures conflicted with their values (e.g., tuna companies that were not "dolphin safe"). It appeared that these people first disidentified with a value or behavior of the organization, and later came to associate the organization so strongly with that value that they also disidentified with the organization. In turn, student projects suggested the individuals were likely to boycott the products of organizations with which they disidentified.

These early findings, along with our reading of the social identity literature, convinced us that the concept of organizational disidentification was likely to exist in the minds of many people, even those who had not explicitly defined their self-perceptions as "disidentifications." These preliminary findings also suggested that organizational disidentification was important enough to affect people's consumer behavior, and thus of practical interest to managers.

Formal Data Collection and Analysis. We carried out three separate focus groups with a total of 27 people (11 men and 16 women) to examine more directly the concept of organizational disidentification. We used focus groups for this analysis because we were interested in tapping into people's perceptions of a concept that is not explicitly discussed. We believed that group discussion might trigger insight into the concept of disidentification more efficiently than individual interviews.

Focus Group 1. We conducted the first focus group to define the concept of organizational disidentification and to develop a list of organizations with which it was commonly associated.

Respondents. Eleven respondents who responded to an electronic bulletin board advertisement participated in the first focus group. The advertisement, which was available to all students, faculty, and staff at a university in metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia asked for volunteers who had "a sense of separateness from an organization," or who felt it important that they were perceived as "separate from a particular organization." Respondents' ages ranged from 25 to 50 years, with an average of 33.8 years.

All respondents were paid $25 for a one-hour focus group session.

Procedure. Both authors moderated the focus group. We told respondents we were interested in their perceptions of separation from organizations, and explained separation as a perception that the organization and what it stood for did not fit with their "sense of self." We also explained that we were interested in how their self-perceptions of separation came about and whether these self-perceptions had led to any changes in their behavior or lifestyle. We then asked respondents to describe the organizations from which they perceived themselves to be separated. As respondents described their attitudes and perceptions we encouraged others to comment on similar perceptions or ask questions. Early conversations focused on defining self-perceptions of separation and how they came about, while our later discussions focused on outcomes or consequences of these self-perceptions. We tape-recorded and transcribed each focus group.

Questionnaire. Following the focus group, all respondents filled out a short questionnaire. The questionnaire asked them to list organizations with which they had disidentified, competing or opposing organizations with which they identified, the major issues or events that led to their disidentification, and the actions or behaviors that resulted from their disidentification. We also collected demographic information about each respondent.

Focus Groups 2 and 3. We conducted two additional focus groups to determine the antecedents, indicators, and outcomes of individuals' disidentification with a specific organization. Based on our own reading of recent news media as well as comments from the first focus group, we decided to use the National Rifle Association (NRA) as the focal organization. We selected the NRA for several reasons: (1) Many members of Focus Group 1 claimed to disidentify with the NRA, (2) the NRA has received a great amount of media exposure in the last few years in relation to highly contentious issues (i.e., gun and ammunition control), (3) reactions by focus group members and individuals in the media were relatively extreme (for and against the NRA) compared with reactions to other controversial organizations. Based on previous research on radical social movement organizations (Elsbach and Sutton 1992), we also believed that organizations with salient ideologies (such as the NRA) would be likely to be associated with groups of organizational disidentifiers due to their illegitimacy with large segments of the population. We also believed that we could find disidentifiers who were not only members or ex-members of the organization, but who were also external audiences of the organization (e.g., consumers, voters, and activists).

The NRA. The National Rifle Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to "an appreciation of the shooting sports, belief in our constitutional right to keep and bear arms, and most of all, a commitment to safety, responsibility, and freedom"(National Rifle Association 1996). The NRA was incorporated in 1871 to provide firearms training and promote shooting sports. Today, the NRA has a 76-member board that oversees an $80 million budget and seven divisions, including competitive shooting, community service, education and training, field operations, law enforcement activities, museum and gun collector programs, and administrative services. Over 300 full-time employees are supported by the organization, whose membership has recently been estimated at an all-time high of 3.5 million (Weiss 1994). The NRA is headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia and has over 14,000 local chapters in the United States. Controversy surrounding the NRA emanates primarily from its uncompromising stance on issues related to gun and ammunition control. NRA spokespersons and lobbyists consistently oppose all attempts to restrict the public's access to guns and ammunition. Such ideals about guns and gun control were the central, enduring, and distinctive characteristics that defined the identity of the NRA for most focus group members.

Methods. Methods were the same as above, except the questions focused on the NRA. Eight respondents participated in each focus group. The ages of respondents ranged from 23 to 35 years, with a mean of 29.6 years.

Archival Data. We searched the mass media database Lexis/Nexis for all stories, printed from 1994–1999, about the NRA and people's connection to or separation from it. We found a total of 238 stories in which individuals indicated self-perceptions of identification or disidentification with the NRA. We transcribed all the statements from these stories that suggested self-perceptions of identification or disidentification. We also transcribed all statements that suggested antecedents (i.e., reasons for) or consequences (i.e., resulting behaviors or beliefs) of these self-perceptions.

Analysis. Analysis followed an iterative approach, traveling back and forth between the data and our emerging theory (Miles and Huberman 1984, Eisenhardt 1989). In early analysis, we searched transcripts of the focus groups and archival data for statements that suggested indicators, antecedents, and consequences of organizational disidentification. Indicators of disidentification were denoted by statements about "separation" from the NRA (e.g., "opposite poles"). We also found that subjects made many statements indicating "relational categorizations" of themselves and the organization that were negative (e.g.,

"I see the NRA and I as enemies"). Antecedents and consequences of disidentification were denoted by statements explaining why self-perceptions of separation occurred (e.g., "they've gotten away from what it means to be human") and what those self-perceptions led to (e.g., "I try not to buy products supported by the NRA"), respectively. We found over 300 distinct statements that revealed indicators, antecedents, and consequences of disidentification (at least 80 statements in each category). We then compared these statements to related constructs such as internalization and compliance (O'Reilly and Chatman 1986, Mael and Ashforth 1992). We deleted items that seemed to indicate other measures, such as noncommitment or disloyalty (e.g., "I wouldn't support this organization"), and items that focused on a perception of the organization vs. a perception of self (e.g., "They're a violent organization").

Our labeling of antecedents and consequences was based on: (1) extant research and theory on organizational identification suggesting that *perceptions* of an organization are likely antecedents of organizational connectedness, while *actions* toward the organization are likely consequences of organizational connectedness (Dutton et al. 1994, Mael and Ashforth 1992), and (2) focus group responses to our inquiries about the order of respondents' self-perceptions, attitudes, and actions associated with the NRA. We also compared our findings with relevant literature on identification, outgroups, stereotypes, and dissonance.

Study 1 Findings: A Working Framework of Organizational Disidentification

Our above analysis provides a working framework of organizational disidentification that suggests some of its indicators, antecedents, and consequences. We display a summary of these traits for organizational identification vs. organizational disidentification in Table 1.

Organizational Disidentification: Definition and Indicators

Based on the above analysis, we define organizational disidentification as *a self-perception based on (1) a cognitive separation between one's identity and one's perception of the identity of an organization, and (2) a negative relational categorization of oneself and the organization.* This definition suggests several attributes of disidentification.

First, this definition suggests that organizational disidentification is indicated by the degree to which a person defines him or herself as *not having* the same attributes that he or she believes define the organization (mirroring Dutton et al.'s (1994, p. 239) definition of organizational identification as "the degree to which a person defines him or herself as having the same attributes that he or she believes define the organization"). This aspect of our definition indicates that disidentification is a cognitive construct,[1] that may vary (e.g., there may be a range in the perceived gap between one's identity and an organization's identity), although most participants discussed the importance of clear separation vs. a large or small separation of identities.[2]

Second, this definition suggests that disidentification is a form of "relational" categorization (Brewer and Gardner 1996) defining the organization and the individual. Positive relational categorizations (e.g., "teammates," "colleagues") may affirm a person's social identity by cognitively equating him or her with the organization and its members. As Hogg and McGarty (1990, p. 20) put it: "Self-categorization extends positive self-evaluation to include other in-groupers, as self and others become stereotypically interchangeable. . . ." By contrast, organizational disidentification appears to be indicated by negative relational categorizations such as "rivals," or "enemies."

Third, the above definition also distinguishes organizational disidentification from cognitive apathy toward an organization, in which a person neither connects nor separates his or her identity from the organization (i.e., what might be called "nonidentification"). Yet one need not have previously identified with an organization to disidentify with it, and one need not be formally connected to an opposing organization to disidentify with a given organization (e.g., one need not identify with a handgun control organization to disidentify with the NRA).

Fourth, this definition also distinguishes disidentification from a number of other perceptions about organizations (i.e., illegitimate, unworthy, low-status) by emphasizing that disidentification is a *self-perception* related to the organization's identity—and not a *perception about* the organization. This focus on cognitive self-perceptions (e.g., questions of "How do I perceive myself in relation to the organization") further distinguishes disidentification from attitudes of disloyalty or uncommitment toward an organization (e.g., questions of "How happy or satisfied am I with my organization?") (see Pratt 1998). While questions of happiness or satisfaction may be an important basis for disidentification (see our discussion of antecedents below), they are distinct from disidentification, which is solely a cognitive self-perception.

Finally, it is possible for a person who perceives an organization negatively to *not* define his or her identity based on a sense of separation from that organization (e.g., a person who believes in gun control and disagrees with the NRA's stance on it, but may not find it necessary

Table 1 Organizational Identification vs. Organizational Disidentification

	ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION*	ORGANIZATIONAL DISIDENTIFICATION**
INDICATORS		
Perceptions of Connectedness	—small to complete identity overlap	—small to large identity separation
Relational Categorization	—positive categorizations, e.g., collaborators, team member	—negative categorizations, e.g., rivals, enemies
ANTECEDENTS		
Factors that contribute to perceptions of the organization that enhance one's identity (more complex perceptions)	—possession of values congruent with organization's identity —perception that organization's reputation may positively affect an identifier's personal reputation —perception of organization based on extensive personal contact with the organization and its members	—possession of values incongruent with a negatively viewed organization's identity. —perceptions that an organization's reputation may negatively affect an identifier's personal reputation
	Likely Contexts/Catalysts —contexts where congruent values are salient (Bhattacharya et al. 1995)	*Likely Contexts/Catalysts* —contexts where incongruent values are salient (e.g., arguments with supporter of organization)
Factors that make salient perceptions of the organization that threaten one's identity (more simplified perceptions)		—perception of organization based on limited personal experience —perception that all organizationmembers are similar on important dimensions
		Likely Contexts/Catalysts —competition —potential for mistaken identity
CONSEQUENCES		
Actions that Enhance In-group or Out-group Status	—supportive behaviors (financial support, volunteer work) for the organization. —public praise for the organization	—supportive behaviors for an opposing organization —public criticism for the organization

*Based on extant research
**Based on findings of the current study

to define his or her social identity based on connection to, or separation from, the NRA).

To illustrate this definition, our data show that individuals experiencing organizational disidentification perceived their identities as clearly separate from the NRA's identity. As one informant noted: "It's a different dimension. It's not just the opposite side of the planet. I can't even comprehend their way of thinking." Another respondent repeated this sentiment and indicated that disidentification was more than nonidentification (i.e., a state of apathetic or passive separation). "They are so completely different from me. We're just in totally different worlds. . . . We just have nothing in common." In addition, several informants noted that they perceived themselves as belonging to negative relational categories with respect to the NRA. Thus, a focus group member suggested: "It's like we're rivals. Alabama and Auburn. Opposite poles." Finally, a member of the California State Assembly proudly noted that he received an "F" rating from the NRA and was branded a "proven enemy of gun owners' rights." (Sandalow 1999, p. 7). With respect to the NRA, respondents suggested that maintaining a cognitive separation between who they were and what the organization stood for was important to feeling good

about themselves and specifically to maintaining a positive self-concept or identity. As one respondent noted: "I feel bad if I find out I accidentally used a product made by a corporation that supports the NRA. I feel like I'm being untrue to myself and I feel guilty."

In sum, it appears that organizational disidentification is similar to organizational identification in that it is a perceptual construct that defines a person's self-concept and is related to an organization for which the person has an opinion (vs. *nonidentification* which occurs when a person has no opinion or knowledge about an organization, see Elsbach 1999). Yet, it also appears that there are some important differences between identification and disidentification.

In particular, our data showed that disidentification commonly involved extreme and simplified perceptions of the relationship between one's identity and the identity of an organization (i.e., when you disidentify there is no overlap between one's identity and the identity of the organization, and participants focused more on just being separate from a stereotyped view of the organization's identity, rather than the degree of separation from different aspects of its identity). By contrast, extant empirical findings suggest that identification involves a much broader and more complex range of perceptions (i.e., people may identify with part of an organization's identity or all of it, and commonly discuss the degree of their identification with different attributes). In line with this observation, our quantitative findings (reported in Study 2) suggest that identification and disidentification are negatively correlated, but not exact opposites.

In these respects our findings about organizational disidentification appear to fit with recent discourse about social disidentification as a more extreme self-perception than is low identification. In the most recent discourse on social identity theory (Ellemers et al. 1999, Abrams and Hogg 1999), theorists use the term disidentification to refer to one's cognitive distancing of a social identity from a group identity due to the perception that one is distant from the group prototype or norm (see Ellemers et al. 1999, p. 39). These authors note that disidentification with an in-group may be used as a defensive mechanism by those who are nonprototypical low identifiers of a group as a means of pre-empting rejection from the group, or low identifiers who want to ingratiate themselves with a more desirable outgroup. In both these cases, the authors distinguish low-identification from disidentification.

Antecedents of Organizational Disidentification

Our analysis of focus group and archival data suggests four antecedent motivators of organizational disidentification: (1) perceptions that one's personal values conflict with the values of the organization, (2) perceptions that the organization's reputation may affect one's personal reputation, (3) perceptions that all organization members are similar in their values and beliefs, and (4) perceptions of the organization based on limited personal experience with its members. Our informants' comments do not suggest that any or all of the antecedents are necessary for disidentification, but that any one of the antecedents may be sufficient for disidentification (i.e., at least one informant indicated disidentification based on only one of each of the four antecedents). We discuss these antecedent conditions below.

Antecedents Reflecting Needs for Identity Enhancement and Affirmation. The first two antecedents appear to be related to individuals' desires to enhance or affirm positive social identities by showing how they are distant from the identities of organizations that run counter to their own identities. This may be especially important for people who are members or identifiers of opposing groups, and wish to emphasize their identification with that group (Branscombe et al. 1999). We discuss below the two antecedents that appeared to be related to these desires for identity enhancements.

(1) Perceptions that one's personal values conflict with the values of the organization. Research on social and organizational identification suggests that congruence between individual and group values is a primary predictor of self-categorizations and group identification (Hogg and Abrams 1988, Dutton et al. 1994). In fact, several studies have defined organizational identification as a congruence between organizational and individual values (Schneider et al. 1971, Hall and Schneider 1972, Oliver 1990). Further, research on uniqueness biases has shown that individuals like to think of themselves as being more *morally virtuous* than others as a means of distinction (Goethals et al. 1991), and thus may perceive value incongruencies as especially strong motivators of intergroup differentiation. Finally, researchers have shown that in situations where there is clear contradiction between groups' ideals or values, motivations for positive distinctiveness from the outgroup are greater than motivations for assimilation with the ingroup (Brown and Williams 1984).

In line with this research, our findings suggest that *incongruence* between organizational and individual values may lead not only to a lack of organizational identification, but to organizational disidentification. This is especially likely if those values are central to the individual's social identity and the individual comes to believe that those values represent central, distinctive, and enduring characteristics of the organization (note that disidentification with values and disidentification with an organization are distinct). In this respect, several focus

group respondents implied disidentification affirmed their current self-image and identity because it was consistent with important and central values they held. As one respondent put it:

> They're [the NRA] a strong advocate for things that lead to violence and what [I think] they stand for will lead to more vigilante justice and accidental killings. I am as far from that as you can get.

Similarly, former President George Bush (senior) discontinued his NRA membership because he felt the organization's depiction of federal agents as "jack-booted thugs" was demeaning to his "sense of decency and honor" (Burnett 1995).

Respondents noted that these types of self-perceptions were most noticeable to them when they found themselves in a situation where the organization's values were salient, and thus their self-perceptions of separation from those values were highlighted. As one respondent recalled:

> I don't really think about my separation from the NRA all the time. But recently when I passed a group of pro-gun supporters at a rally, I remember thinking to myself how much I hated the NRA and how I needed to tell friends about my stands on gun control and the NRA.

(2) Perceptions that an organization's reputation may affect ones' social identity. Empirical research on organizational identification suggests that a primary predictor of organizational connectedness is the perception that association with an organization may enhance a person's existing social identity (Mael and Ashforth 1992, Adler and Adler 1988, Hall and Schneider 1972, Schneider et al. 1971). In the same vein, we found that informants who perceived that the NRA's reputation would reflect badly on those associated with it were likely to point out separations between their identities and the organization's. These disidentifications appeared to be motivated by respondents' desires to maintain and affirm a positive sense of self by separating themselves from the salient but unattractive reputation of the NRA.

For example, one focus group member said the NRA had a reputation for being "power-hungry thugs," and claimed his desire to be separated from the organization stemmed, in part, from this perception:

> The NRA stands for greed and power. The fact that they promote the availability of automatic firearms to the general public. They talk about it in the context of hunting. What are you gonna hunt with an automatic weapon? It just blows my mind that people can be so greedy and so self-centered and so power hungry . . . they really make their members look bad . . . I think a lot of those folks have really gotten far away from what it means to be human.

Focus group members also reported that their perceptions of the NRA's reputation, rather than direct knowledge of its actions, affected their willingness to identify with it. As one respondent put it,

> As long as they were perceived as being for the rights of sportsmen to carry guns, we all just agreed. I mean, that's OK, you should have those rights. But in the last twenty years our society has gotten so much more violent . . . if you promote guns people perceive you as promoting violence. In turn, I perceive them as the enemy because they promote violence.

Antecedents Reflecting Needs for Identity Protection. The remaining two antecedents appeared to reflect participants' needs to protect their identities from association with negative organizational stereotypes (Spears et al. 1997). Our analysis suggests that respondents' fears that their identity would be linked to these stereotypes motivated them to protect their self-esteem by pre-emptively disidentifying with the NRA. These findings are consistent with recent discourse on pre-emptive social disidentification suggested by social identity theorists as a reaction to identity threats (Ellemers et al. 1999). For example, Bramscombe et al. (1999, p. 39) suggest that "when high-performing individuals are included in a group that is low in status or that has received a negative evaluation, disidentification is likely to result."

(3) Perceptions that organization members were "all the same." We found that the more respondents' perceived that NRA members were homogeneous in their views on important organizational issues (e.g., they stereotyped them as similar in their views on guns and gun control), the more they were likely to disidentify with the organization as a means of distancing themselves from these stereotypes. As one respondent put it, "No matter what people say about the good things the NRA does, it will always come down to the NRA stands against gun control and I'm diametrically opposed to them because they all have that view."

These types of simplified perceptions, along with the perceptions of negative reputations discussed above, may have helped individuals to maintain negative stereotypes about the organization and its members (e.g., all tobacco company executives are deceptive Doise et al. 1978, Quattrone and Jones 1980, Wilder 1984, Linville and Jones 1980). In addition, these simplified perceptions may have helped individuals to "self-stereotype" themselves as outgroup members (Hogg and Abrams 1988, p. 21). As a consequence of these processes, it appears hard for such individuals to not disidentify with the organization.

Moreover, several participants noted that because of these stereotypes they found it important to affirm their

disidentification in situations where they could be mistakenly categorized as an NRA identifier. As one respondent argued:

> If, in conversation, you indicate that you're a civil libertarian, people misperceive that you're sympathetic to the NRA and your credibility goes out the window. They don't listen to you anymore because they have the attitude that you're a Rush Limbaugh-listening, Phil Gramm-voting, Pat Buchanan-like, gun-toting redneck.

These findings support research on in-group membership status and derogation of out-groups (Noel et al. 1995), which shows that if they think others might doubt their membership in a desirable in-group and mistakenly place them in an undesirable group, peripheral in-group members are likely to derogate the outgroup as public proof of their in-group status. Disidentification may thus be a means of convincing oneself and others that one is not a member of an undesirable (i.e., negatively perceived) group or organization, and/or that one is a prototypical member of an opposing group or organization (Steele and Aronson 1995).

(4) Perceptions of the organization that are based on a lack of personal experience with the organization or its members. Our analysis also suggests that limited personal exposure to organizational members is predictive of organizational disidentification. Proponents of the outgroup homogeneity hypothesis suggest that infrequent contact with a group lessens the likelihood of encountering additional novel or unusual information about the group, which biases individuals' encoding of all subsequent information about the group in ways that conform to the existing (negatively stereotypical) schema (Marques 1990, Higgins et al. 1981). Those with stereotyped impressions of out-groups may, in fact, have a great deal of information about group members, but that information is likely to be simplified, consistent, and narrow; i.e., it confirms the stereotype rather than refutes it. Along these lines, our data indicate that although many of them reported a "strong" familiarity with the NRA, most NRA disidentifiers in our focus groups had little personal exposure to the organizations with which they disidentified (e.g., none had ever met an NRA member), and gained most of their information from media reports portraying the organization in a negative light. As one informant noted: "I don't know them, and I don't want to. I don't want to legitimate their existence by even acknowledging them. We are so far apart, we probably can't even communicate."

By contrast, the few respondents that had personal exposure to the NRA and its members, including negative personal experiences, exhibited reduced self-perceptions of organizational disidentification. As one focus group member whose friend had been killed by an illegally purchased gun reported:

> I've known about the NRA for a long time. I grew up in a small southern town on a farm and we still have hunting guns. In the past few years I have distanced myself from supporting gun rights. But I feel that they [sportsmen] should still have the right to have guns, but they need to have it registered, they need to have it legally intact. So, if someone steals the gun and somebody gets a hold of it, somehow it's traceable.

These types of statements suggest that through personal experience the informants came to understand some of the goals of the NRA (i.e., maintaining the rights of sports hunters) and the beliefs of their members. As a result, these informants found it difficult to completely separate themselves from the NRA, and could not say they disidentified with the organization.[3]

Social psychological research suggests that this finding results from an increased understanding of the organization based on personal experience and exposure. Proponents of the "contact hypothesis" of stereotype change (Fiske and Taylor 1991, p. 153) suggest that "bringing together members of different social categories will break down their mutual stereotypes." Thus, researchers have found that stereotypes may be changed if exposure to a group makes alternate categorizations more salient (i.e., if it divides individuals into groups that cut across racial and ethnic categories) (Deschamps and Doise 1978), or portrays group members as individuals (i.e., emphasizes the variability of their opinions and behaviors) (Quattrone 1986).

Hypotheses about antecedents of organizational disidentification. In sum, our data suggest that individuals disidentify with organizations as a means of either: (a) enhancing or affirming an existing social identity by distancing themselves from incongruent or competing values and reputations associated with the organization, or (b) fending off potential threats to their existing social identity by distancing themselves from negative stereotypes of the organization that they fear may be mistakenly attributed to themselves. Based on these findings, we offer the following four specific hypotheses concerning the antecedents of organizational disidentification:

HYPOTHESIS 1. *The more personal values and beliefs contribute to audiences' negative perceptions of an organization, the greater will be their disidentification with that organization.*

HYPOTHESIS 2. *The more an organization's reputation contributes to audiences' negative perceptions of an organization, the greater will be their disidentification with that organization.*

HYPOTHESIS 3. *The more stereotypes of members contribute to audiences' negative perceptions of an organization, the greater will be their disidentification with that organization.*

HYPOTHESIS 4. *The less personal experiences with the organization and its members contribute to audiences' negative perceptions of an organization, the greater will be their disidentification with that organization.*

Consequences of Organizational Disidentification. Finally, our data suggest that organizational disidentification may lead to at least two important consequences for the individuals and organizations: counterorganizational actions and public criticism of the organization. Both of these consequences appear to arise because self-perceptions of organizational disidentification make salient individuals' status as out-group members. These individuals then take actions to affirm and enhance their status as nonmembers of the organization.

Counterorganizational action. We found that focus group disidentifiers were likely to boycott the products and services of the focal organization and to donate money or time to opposing organizations or causes. Our data suggests that these actions were motivated by desires to avoid cognitive dissonance associated with acting inconsistently with established beliefs and prior commitments—for example, supporting a group or organization with which they disidentified (Cialdini 1984). In this respect, one informant reported that she took actions against the NRA to affirm her separation from them and avoid feeling guilty about not acting in concert with her feelings:

> It's not just that I want to be separated from [the NRA], I want to beat them. I want to stop them. That's why I've written several letters against them and I wrote an editorial page letter in the paper. . . . I would feel like a hypocrite if I didn't do something.

Similarly, other informants suggested that they supported opposing organizations in order "to do something about" their self-perceptions of disidentification. As one claimed:

> Whenever I see the NRA having an event near campus, even if it's an educational event like sponsoring a junior shooting league or helping the Boy Scouts, I try and go down to the sign-up area and convince people not to get involved . . . I feel I have to, to feel good about myself.

These findings suggest that some of the consequences of disidentification may be caused—not by desires for image enhancement—but by desires to avoid identity threats by acting consistently with a previous commitment (e.g., a self-definition that involved separation from the NRA). Further, social psychologists have shown that such consistency pressures may be especially strong when individuals' prior actions were effortful (e.g., consistently maintaining a separation between one's identity and the identity of an organization) (Gerard and Mathewson 1966). Disidentification may thus prime feelings of dissonance because it makes salient the things a person should be separating from and acting against. In this respect, disidentification affirms a person's identification as an outgroup member. As one informant noted,

> I try not to do anything that would support companies I disidentify with (like buy their products). You feel hypocritical if you think or act otherwise. If you feel a certain way socially, that's the way you think and the way you live. Then, if you support something that's totally against the way you think and live, how can you live with yourself? You want to make sure you act like someone who's against the company.

Organizational criticism. While several informants reported that they had taken the above actions because of their perceptions of the NRA, they also suggested that these kinds of actions were difficult to carry out. Informants suggested that while it was easy to know how to support an organization they identified with, it was often hard to imagine ways of countering an organization with which they disidentified. They also seemed to think that attempting to completely boycott these companies was difficult, if not futile. As one informant put it,

> It's really difficult not to support these companies. They all have sister companies that you don't know about. If you want to take a very strong stand, it's so hard, you get so frustrated when you disidentify and find out you did something that supported the company. The only way to avoid them is to drop out of society altogether.

In addition, many informants commented on the difficulty of "staying true" to their self-perceptions of disidentification because of the time and constraints of everyday life. As one reported:

> If I didn't have to work every day, I could use a lot of that time to do those things, like make those calls and sit on the phones and write those letters. . . . For example, if [company x] were donating to the NRA I would be appalled and I would try and avoid their products. But there may be other products that I don't realize support the NRA. . . . how would I know?

By contrast, we found that individuals were more likely to speak out against the NRA than take action against it or support an opposing organization. As one informant reported:

> I haven't joined another organization or taken action per se. But I've talked to my friends about them and tried to persuade them in that way. I guess that's a more passive way of fighting them, by spreading opposition to what they stand for and what I feel threatened by.

The prevalent use of this type of organizational criticism might be due to its relative immediacy and convenience (especially in relation to the above actions) as a form of self-affirmation. That is, individuals may criticize a negatively viewed organization to protect their social identity and self-integrity. For example, in his review of indirect tactics of impression management, Cialdini (1989, p. 53) shows that "blasting" (i.e., verbally exaggerating the unfavorable features of a rival or competitor) is a tactic used by insecure individuals (i.e., those who are unsure that their status as a group member is stable) who wish to enhance their own in-group status and identity. Thus, organizational criticism may serve as "a public presentation function that allows for enhancement of an insecure status within a desirable [in]group" (Noel et al. 1995, p. 127).

Hypotheses about consequences of organizational disidentification. In sum, organizational disidentification appears to motivate actions that protect an individual from identity threats and affirm his or her status as an in-group member of an opposing organization, or simply as someone who opposes the organization. Based on these findings, we offer the following hypotheses:

HYPOTHESIS 5. *The greater individuals' disidentification with an organization, the more likely they will be to take action (e.g., volunteer work) that supports their self-perception of separation from the organization.*

HYPOTHESIS 6. *The greater individuals' disidentification with an organization, the more likely they will be to speak out in a way that supports their self-perception of separation from the organization.*

Study 2: A Test of Our Working Framework

In Study 2 we sought to provide support for our framework of organizational disidentification. Accordingly, we tested our six hypotheses about the antecedents and consequences of organizational disidentification. Through empirical tests, we also sought to confirm our belief that organizational disidentification is distinct from organizational identification.

Methods

Research Context. We chose the National Rifle Association as a context for examining organizational disidentification and organizational identification. Our findings from Study 1 indicated that many individuals in the study area (metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia) maintained strong disidentification with the NRA. We also found that the NRA had several locally affiliated chapters in the Atlanta area, suggesting that there may also be a significant number of individuals who strongly identified with the NRA in this area. Finally, based on our Study 1 analysis of archival data, we found that the NRA had been featured in an increasing number of news stories over the past 24 months concerning legislation to ban assault weapons. This heavy media coverage increased the probability that local citizens would be familiar with the goals and objectives of the NRA and had formed self-perceptions of identification or disidentification with the organization.

Population. We chose our population from a private list company that selected a random sample of 3,000 individuals between the ages of 18 and 65 currently residing in metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia. We then chose every third male and every female from the list until we had a sample of 500 males and 500 females for the survey.[4]

Questionnaire. Based on our findings from Study 2, we asked several questions designed to tap the antecedents, indicators, and consequences of peoples' organizational identification and disidentification with the National Rifle Association (NRA).[5] These items are depicted in Appendix A. All questions used a 5-pt. Likert-type scale. We also asked several questions about the respondents' knowledge of and experience with the NRA and organizations opposing the NRA. We asked about demographic variables (gender, age, and occupation). Finally, we provided respondents with a section for writing any additional comments they had about the survey.

We followed the mail survey guidelines proposed by Dillman (1977). In our initial mailing of the survey we included a letter printed on university letterhead describing the study as "part of a research project examining people's perceptions and attitudes about nonprofit organizations." We included a one-dollar bill in each survey as a "token of appreciation" for filling out the survey. One week after our initial mailing, we mailed a reminder postcard to all participants who had not already responded. In another two weeks, we mailed a second questionnaire to all those who had still not responded, along with a brief letter reminding participants of the importance of the study.

Response Rate and Sample Demographics. Of the 1,000 surveys mailed, 962 were received by respondents (38 were returned by the Post Office). A total of 531 were completed and returned, for a response rate of 55.2%. To ensure a knowledgeable sample, we eliminated from analysis 126 respondents who indicated they were "not at all familiar with the NRA," leaving us with a usable sample of 405 respondents. Respondents were 41% female, 59% male. The age of respondents ranged from 24 to 78 years,

with a mean of 48.4 years and a standard deviation of 9.9 years. Respondents self-categorized their occupations as: 49% professional, 21% managerial, 12% clerical/technical, 6% labor/blue collar, 9% other, and 3% currently unemployed. The annual income level of respondents was categorized as: 6% under $25,000, 27% between $25–$50,000, 27% between $50–$75,000, 40% over $75,000 and the median income was between $60–$65,000.

In terms of nonresponse-bias tests, we investigated how the respondents compared to the overall sample to whom we mailed the questionnaires in terms of three key demographics—age, income, and gender. Our mailing population was 50% female and 50% male, so it seems that our respondent sample has a slight overrepresentation of males. There is no age difference among respondents and nonrespondents. At first blush, the median income of the respondents at $60–$65,000 and 40% of the respondents being higher than $75,000 seems at variance with the population statistics (median at $50–$55,000 and 40% over $65,000). However, once we factor in the gender representation of the respondents and the fact that males in the mailing population earned more than females, the overall disparity between the respondents and nonrespondents ceases to be of much concern. The high percentage of respondents with incomes over $75,000 suggests that a greater number of high-income residents (vs. low-income residents) in an urban area such as metropolitan Atlanta care to return a survey about the NRA. We would suggest that this group of individuals may be more educated than those of lower income levels, which may increase their knowledge about the NRA and its values, and also their appreciation for research and the need to fill out surveys. Although this respondent group may not be strictly representative of the total population of metropolitan Atlanta, we believe it is representative of those people who know and care about the NRA and its values to a great enough extent to identify or disidentify with the organization.

Data Analysis and Results

Measure Development Procedures. Traditional psychometric approaches were used to develop scale items and evaluate scale properties. We developed an initial pool of scale items based on a thorough review of the literature and our focus groups. This scale was refined based on two pilot studies we conducted with evening MBA students (i.e., practicing managers).

To confirm that our observed variables were acceptable measures of our predicted latent antecedents and consequences of organizational disidentification, we performed both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses on the nine antecedent variables and the six consequence variables of disidentification (Long 1983, Joreskog and Sorbom 1993). We also included the three indicators of organizational identification and the three indicators of organizational disidentification in both these analyses to provide evidence that they are distinct indicators of perceptions of organizational connectedness. Finally, we calculated the internal reliability of each scale using both Chronbach's alpha (Pedhauzer and Schmelkin 1991) and Jöreskog's rho (Jöreskog 1971). For exploratory research, alpha's $>= 0.70$ are considered to indicate acceptable reliability (Nunnally 1978).

To assess the goodness of fit of our hypothesized factors, we used a chi-square goodness-of-fit index. We also used the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) to assess the correspondence between the observed and the hypothesized covariances (Joreskog and Sorbom 1993), and used the normed fit index (NFI) to assess the model fit relative to a null model (i.e., a model in which no relationships are hypothesized) (Bentler and Bonnett 1980). Further, since sample size and the polychoric matrix contribute to a downward bias of other descriptive fit statistics, we also used the more robust incremental fit index (IFI, Bollen 1989) and comparative fit indices (CFI, Bentler 1990).

There are no absolute fit index values which are considered to constitute acceptable fit (Marsh et al. 1988), and for sample sizes smaller than 500 (as in the current case) commonly used cutoffs of 0.90 have been shown to overreject acceptable models (Hu and Bentler 1995). Based on a review of LISREL analyses published in the major management journals (i.e., *Administrative Science Quarterly, Academy of Management Journal,* and *Organization Science*) over the past five years, we found that acceptable model fits for exploratory studies with sample sizes under 500 should be somewhere between 0.80–0.90. Finally, we used the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) as a measure of model fit that may provide more parsimony than traditional fit indices (Brown and Cudeck 1993). According to Brown and Cudeck (1993), RMSEA's <0.05 are indicative of close fit, while an upper limit of 0.10 indicates acceptable fit.

Scale Confirmation. Both the exploratory and the confirmatory factor analyses verified that the indicators of organizational identification and organizational disidentification and the hypothesized antecedent and consequence variables are indeed separate from one another. Based on a scree plot and an eigen value cutoff of 1, eight factors were retained in the exploratory factor analysis and the proposed indicators loaded cleanly on the respective hypothesized dimensions (i.e., four antecedents of disidentification, two consequences of disidentification,

one indicator of disidentification, and one indicator of identification). Similarly, the confirmatory factor analysis results show that the measurement model with all eight latent constructs had an acceptable fit (λ^2 (161 df) = 682.21 ($p < 0.01$), GFI = 0.86; NFI = 0.87; IFI = 0.90; CFI = 0.89, RMSEA = 0.09).

Internal reliability measures for all the scales were also above acceptable levels (Nunnally 1978): 0.87 for organizational identification, 0.79 for organizational disidentification, 0.81 for values, 0.72 for personal experience, 0.70 for reputation, 0.72 for member homogeneity, 0.90 for public discourse, and 0.83 for actions. The corresponding LISREL composite reliabilities (Jöreskog 1971) are 0.91 for organizational identification, 0.84 for organizational disidentification, 0.87 for values, 0.73 for personal experience, 0.74 for reputation, 0.77 for member homogeneity, 0.92 for public discourse, and 0.88 for actions. Note that these LISREL reliability estimates are consistently higher than the corresponding coefficient alphas.

Taken together, these results provide evidence that organizational identification and disidentification are distinct constructs. Moreover, the proposed antecedents and consequences of organizational disidentification are distinct from the construct itself. Finally, all the proposed scale items demonstrate reasonable reliability. Scale items and reliabilities for all indicators, antecedents, and consequences of organizational disidentification are summarized in Appendix A.

Based on the confirmatory factor analysis results, a number of tests were used to further assess discriminant and convergent validity for the theoretical measures. First, a 95% confidence interval was constructed around the estimates of correlations between the latent constructs. To the extent that the results do not include 1.0 or -1.0, this test provides some evidence of discriminant validity. It is noteworthy that the correlation between identification and disidentification is only -0.28 and the standard deviation around this estimate is 0.05—implying that the 95% confidence interval does not include -1. In addition, a series of nested model comparisons assessed whether differences were present when correlations between the latent constructs were constrained to 1.0. Statistically significant differences between each model pair indicate discriminant validity. We emphasize that compared to the model where the traits were allowed to freely correlate, the model fit worsened significantly when we constrained the correlation between identification and disidentification to -1, implying again that identification and disidentification are different constructs.

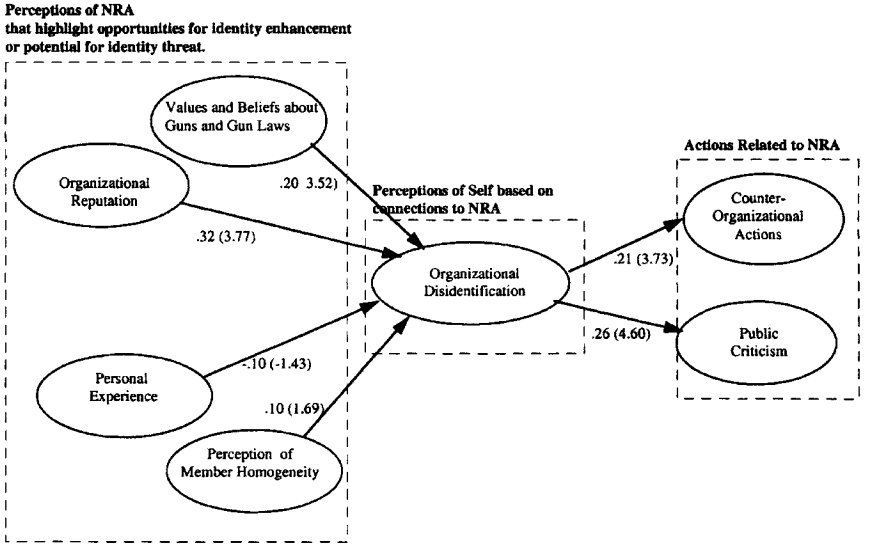
Finally, we conducted a more stringent test recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981)—demonstrating discriminant validity by showing that the average variance extracted from each latent construct exceeds the squared correlation between all pairs of constructs. This series of tests provided evidence of discriminant validity between all pairs of constructs. Further, the estimates of the paths from the individual items to the latent factors are all statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), with parameter estimates ranging from 10 to 25 times as large as the standard errors, a pattern often considered indicative of convergent validity. Together, the results provide evidence that the measures have the sound psychometric properties necessary for hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing. The second step of our analysis focused on testing the hypothesized relationships between disidentification, its antecedents, and consequences. We developed a model of organizational disidentification based on the above-hypothesized relationships between antecedents, indicators, and consequences of disidentification. We tested the overall fit of our model of organizational disidentification and the hypothesized relationships depicted in the path diagram (Figure 1) by simultaneously estimating measurement and structural models (see Drazin and Van de Ven 1985) using LISREL (Jöreskog and Sorbom 1993, Hayduk 1987). As above, we assessed model fit using the GFI , NFI, CFI, and IFI (explained above).

Results. Results of our analysis are depicted in Figure 1. All the paths depicted are significant at least at the 0.10 level of significance for two-tailed t-tests, except "personal experience," which was marginally significant at ($p < 0.12$, 2-sided). Our goodness-of-fit indices for our full model of organizational disidentification indicate adequate fit for small sample sizes and exploratory research ($\lambda^2_{122df} = 538$, $p < 0.01$, GFI = 0.88, NFI = 0.87, CFI = 0.89, and IFI = 0.90). In addition, our RMSEA of 0.092 meets the acceptable fit guideline of 0.10 (Brown and Cudeck 1993).

Results from the model support H1 and H2, ($p < 0.01$, 2-sided), and H3 ($p < 0.10$, 2-sided), suggesting that organizational disidentification with the NRA is predicted by the degree to which respondents agree that their perceptions of the NRA were affected by personal values and beliefs about guns and gun control, their perceptions of the NRA's reputation, and their perceptions that NRA members were homogeneous in their values and beliefs. H4 was marginally supported ($p < 0.12$, 2-sided; corresponding to $p < 0.06$, 1-sided) suggesting that disidentification is also partly explained by the degree to which respondents disagreed that personal experiences had affected their perceptions of the NRA. Results from the

Figure 1 Model of Organizational Disidentification: LISREL Results



All paths significant at least $p < 0.10$ for two-tailed tests, except personal experience, marginally significant at ($p < 0.1$). Maximum likelihood estimates given. T-values in parentheses. Fit statistics: chi square w/122 df = 537.96 ($p < 0.01$); GFI = 0.88; CFI = 0.89; IFI = 0.90; NFI = 0.87, RMSEA = 0.092

model also support H5 and H6 ($p < 0.01$, 2-sided), suggesting that disidentification leads individuals to actively oppose the organization and publicly criticize the organization. Fifty-seven respondents wrote comments following the survey. Most of these comments explained subjects' perceptions of the NRA in terms of broad stereotypes (e.g., "gun crazy," "redneck") and discomfort at the thought of being associated with the NRA. While these comments were not quantitatively analyzed, they provided qualitative support for our hypotheses.

Discussion

Our framework of organizational disidentification underscores the importance of distinctiveness in social identification processes. It suggests that defining who we are is often achieved by defining who we are not, and that being separated from a negatively perceived organization may be as enhancing to our social identities as is being connected to a positively perceived one. We outline below some of the theoretical and practical implications of this framework, as well as its limitations and implications for future research.

Theoretical Contributions

Disidentification and Distinctiveness.

> To secure loyalty, groups must not only satisfy members' needs for affiliation and belonging *within* the group, they must also maintain clear boundaries that differentiate them from other groups. In other words, groups must maintain distinctiveness to survive—effective groups cannot be too large or too heterogeneous. (Brewer 1991, p. 478)

Social psychologists have shown that on dimensions that are self-relevant (e.g., one's stand on ideological issues such as gun control), individuals prefer to see themselves as unique because "similarity [to many others] on self-defining dimensions may imply that one is undistinguished or mediocre"(Wood 1989, p. 241). Researchers have also shown that individuals often prefer social categorizations that emphasize comparisons to inferior social groups as a means of affirming or enhancing their self-concept (Crocker and Gallo 1985, Wood et al. 1985). This form of self-categorization is especially likely following threats to individuals' self-concept or identity (i.e., mistaken inclusion into an undesirable social group such as "right-wing gun enthusiasts") (Hogg and Abrams 1988). Our findings support and enhance these ideas by suggesting that individuals may not only engage in social comparisons or self-categorizations to distinguish themselves from an unremarkable or undesirable social group, but may actually *disidentify* (i.e., modify their social identity) with those groups to establish a complete cognitive separation from it.

In this vein, our findings are relevant to theories of intragroup identification and intergroup differentiation

(Hinkle et al. 1989). Researchers have shown that distancing oneself from the out-group may be a means of distinguishing oneself in the in-group (Wetherell, 1987). Individuals who held strong values that were counter to the NRA may have also identified with an opposing group or organization (e.g., a gun control organization) and may have wished to enhance their in-group distinctiveness through disidentification.

Yet, our research goes beyond in-group/out-group research in defining how individuals use group boundaries to enhance self-perceptions. While research on stereotyping and categorization suggest that simplified perceptions of out-groups and their defining boundaries help people to maintain positive self-perceptions, this research does not discuss how self-perceptions based on identity overlap or separation helps people to adapt to situations in which they have little control over group membership and in-group/out-group categorizations. For example, how do people adapt to working for organizations whose products or processes violate cherished values (e.g., vegetarians working for an organization that uses animal products). For these people, the ability to separate their identity from the organization's—even though they can't undo their group membership—allows them to maintain a positive self-perception (Elsbach 2000).

Further, our findings go beyond in-group/out-group research by suggesting that individuals may perceive themselves as distinct from an out-group, even when they don't identify (or recognize the existance of) an in-group. Thus, we found that many participants who actively disidentified with the NRA did not identify with a hand-gun control organization, or any other organization that specifically opposed the NRA. These findings suggest that self-perceptions may be composed, at least in part, by identities that occupy an organizational "no-man's land" (i.e., an identity that does not overlap with organizational identities, but is distinctly outside of them). Such self-perceptions would appear difficult to maintain, but may exist for brief times (e.g., adolescence), when individuals are wary of identification with organizations, but are more confident about disidentification (e.g., with organizations representing authority or their parents way of thinking).

Disidentification and Stereotypes. Our findings about the antecedents of disidentification support the general hypothesis that simplified perceptions of an organization and its members are essential to developing and maintaining a separation with that organization. These findings support research on stereotyping and social movement activism (McAdam et al. 1988). Yet these findings also go beyond current conceptions of stereotyping by suggesting that it is not only the positiveness of organizational reputations that influences identification processes, but also the *complexity* of those reputations or images. Currently, theories of organizational identification have simply focused on how positive (vs. negative) organizational reputations affect individual's self-perceptions of connectedness to an organization (Ashforth and Mael 1989, Dutton et al. 1994). By contrast, our findings suggest that organizations that are defined by a variety of attributes—some positively and some negatively perceived—may be less likely to be the target of disidentification by any one audience than organizations that are simply defined by a few attributes that may all be negatively perceived by a given audience.

Expanding Definitions of Social Identity. The notion of a social identity defined by both organizational connections and separations provides an expanded view of how people might define themselves in connection to social groups. In particular, adding disidentification to our models of social identity suggests that people may define themselves by extreme and complete connections and separations, partial connections, and the lack of connection altogether. Such an expanded model has been proposed by Elsbach (1999), and includes the notions of organizational "schizo-identification" (i.e., a cognitive state of simultaneous identification and disidentification with a single organization), and organizational "nonidentification" (i.e., a cognitive state of neither identification nor disidentification with a single organization). The present study is a step towards empirically testing some of these notions of an expanded model of organizational identification.

Organizations: A Source of Social Identity Even in the Absence of "Formal" Relationship. In contrast to the extant identification literature that has focused mostly on members' formal affiliation with the focal organization, we studied the general public. In doing so, we expand the context in which researchers have viewed organizations as sources of social identities for individuals. Research on social movement organizations (e.g., McAdam et al. 1988) suggests that organizations like the NRA have "customers" who may identify with the organization, even though they are not formal members of it. Our findings support and extend this notion. Every member of our focus groups and survey sample had the *potential* to affirm their identification with the NRA by by joining the NRA's membership program, donating money, volunteering time to the NRA, buying products from the NRA store, or working as an employee. Conversely, every one of these individuals also had the potential to affirm their disidentification with the NRA by speaking out against it, boycotting products of its endorsers, and supporting opposing organizations and causes. Thus, this paper is

also one of the first to empirically examine how individuals can derive and express a social identity in relation to an organization *in the absence* of a "formal" relationship with it.

Practical Contributions

Our findings also have practical implications for organizations and their members. First, because individuals may find disidentifications useful for affirming and enhancing a positive self-concept and social identity, organizations may use the opportunity to affirm existing disidentifications to motivate desired individual behavior. For example, social movement organizations may motivate people to support their cause through volunteer work or donations as a means of affirming their existing disidentification with a rival organization. In other cases, consumer product companies may motivate consumers to eschew a competitor associated with undesired values (e.g., Apple Computer used the campaign, "we make computers for the rest of us" to distance themselves from IBM).

As a more proactive tactic, our findings suggest that organizations may promote new disidentifications as a means of motivating individuals to attack or oppose specific competitors. For example, organizations may highlight widely held disidentification with one group or movement (e.g., the Ku Klux Klan) to motivate actions not only against that organization, but against any organization that aligns itself with that organization (e.g., supporters of Proposition 209, which ended targeted minority hiring programs in California). This type of tactic might be defined as *disidentification by association* (i.e., promoting disidentification with one group that is associated with a second group with which you currently disidentify). Cheney (1983) defines a similar concept, termed identification through antithesis (e.g., identifying with the opposite of what one perceives as a negative group or ideal). Moreover, it is conceivable that with product and brand differentiation on the decline (Fox 1998), even organizations that don't deal with a contentious issue per se may proactively use disidentification as a competitive strategy. Thus, companies may try to win over customers by making explicit references to their competition on dimensions of "corporate social responsibility," and highlighting the "irresponsible" behavior of their competitors.

Finally, our findings about the difficulty in maintaining organizational disidentifications suggest that organizational disidentifications may be useful as a transitional tactic for individuals engaged in social identity changes. Theorists have suggested, for example, that organizational members' acceptance of new organizational identities may rely on establishing a cognitive gap between the existing identity and the proposed identity (Reger et al. 1994). Our findings suggest that such a cognitive gap may be established by promoting disidentifications with selected dimensions of the previous identity. For example, in a recent analysis of General Motor's Saturn division, Pfeffer and Sutton (2000) discuss how promoting disidentification between Saturn and GM employees was used to help Saturn employees to define their new organizational identity and culture.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

First, it is important to note that as an exploratory study of organizational disidentification, the present study focused on general long-term perceptions and experiences as antecedents of organizational disidentification and its consequences (and used scales of identification and disidentification developed in this paper for this purpose). Although they were included in the papers' data set, we did not focus on the effects of specific, one-time events, such as President George Bush's (Sr.) recent resignation from the NRA. Recent research on reactions to organizational identity threats suggests that the strength of the threat that such events pose to one's social identity may determine the strength of individuals' use of self-categorizations and social comparisons as identity-affirmation responses (Elsbach and Kramer 1996). Similarly, future research might examine how the strength of identity threats predict individuals' use of disidentification tactics.

Second, this paper has focused on disidentification with ideological organizations (i.e., organizations whose identities are strongly and saliently linked to a social ideal, rather than organizations whose most salient attribute is the product or service they deliver). Audiences who lack personal contact with an ideological organization are likely to associate it with a few narrow stereotypes that are commonly linked to the organization's ideology (e.g., all supporters of the NRA are redneck hillbillies). As a result, lack of personal experience with a negatively stereotyped ideological organization and its members is likely to be a predictor of disidentification. By contrast, in nonideological organizations stereotypes are not as likely to be associated with the organization and its members, and thus personal contact is not as likely to be a determinant of disidentification. In fact, personal contact with a nonideological organization may be more likely to increase disidentification (e.g., if that personal contact led to a negative experience such as being fired, or personal experience leads to solidification in negative views of the organization (see Gioia, 1986)), while lack of contact might lead to identification (e.g., because one identifies with one's ideal perceptions of the organization—which are not muddied by actual experience; see Pratt (1998).

Further, because ideological organizations tend to be defined by a narrow set of issues, there is less opportunity for fractionalized identification/disidentification (i.e., the possibility that individuals may identify with one aspect of an organization and disidentify with another).

Third, our recruitment of focus group informants focused on those people who were aware of their cognitive separation from the NRA's identity. Such a population may have produced a narrower conceptualization of disidentification than would have a broader cross section of informants. Moreover, there is a possibility that in the course of the discussion itself, the focus group individuals perceived and categorized themselves as an "anti-NRA group." However, this might not have happened for two reasons: First, there were participants in each of the focus groups we held who did not have negative perceptions of the NRA, and second, as moderators we consciously tried to prevent such "group think." Overall, future research might examine disidentifications among a broad sample of people with organizations that have more complex identities (e.g., individuals may identify with the American Civil Liberties Union because of their support of the poor and disenfranchised, but may disidentify with them because they support the rights of all groups, including the KKK and the neoNazis). Recent research on antecedents of identification suggests that uncertainty reduction (i.e., the desire to be part of a defined group) might be a motivation for identification (Hogg and Mullin 1999). Such uncertainty reduction is more likely to occur with people who have less clearly defined ideals and with organizations with more complex identities.

Fourth, it is important to note that while our focus group data along with extant research on organizational identification (e.g., Dutton et al. 1994) suggest that the antecedents and consequences of disidentification we identified are likely to have the predicted direction of causality, we recognize the strong potential for feedback loops over time, which would allow our consequences to ultimately become antecedents and our antecedents to be viewed as consequences of disidentification. For example, it is not hard to imagine that taking action against the NRA or publicly criticizing the NRA (i.e., our two proposed consequences of organizational disidentification) would also predict disidentification with the NRA as a means of maintaining consistency between one's self-perceptions and actions (Cialdini 1984). In addition, it seems reasonable that individuals who disidentify with the NRA may base their perceptions of the NRA on its external reputation and may become more extreme in their values and beliefs that conflict with those of the NRA (i.e., our proposed antecedents of disidentification become consequences of disidentification). Such feedback loops have been proposed in models of organizational identification (Dutton et al. 1994) as a natural consequence of self-esteem maintenance. We would also suggest that they are a natural consequence of the polarization of attitudes that commonly occurs when one takes a position that has a salient counterposition (Reid 1983).

Finally, while we focused on the individual-level antecedents and consequences of organizational disidentification, there are undoubtedly important organizational-level variables that are associated with disidentification. For example, if disidentification is useful in motivating employees to support an opposing organization, it may be possible for managers to increase employee commitment and support by strategically promoting disidentification with a competitor. Janis' (1972) work on groupthink revealed how labeling of outside influences as "the enemy" may focus a decision-making group on their task and increase their support for a previously espoused position. Yet, as Janis also found, such strong internal focusing may lead to insular and simplified thinking among members of a decision-making group. Researchers should also inquire in more detail about whether and when it is better to use disidentification rather than identification as a tactic, as well as the long-term consequences of using disidentification as a tactic.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Marilynn Brewer, Joe Cannon, Mary Ann Glynn, Rod Kramer, Sythan Voun, and Jonathan Hibbard for their assistance in this project. Thanks also go to participants of the Goizueta Business School Green Bag Seminar and participants of the Identity Conference sponsored by the Center for the Study of Values in Organizations, Brigham Young University. Finally, the authors would like to thank Theresa Lant, and their three anonymous reviewers, for their helpful and insightful comments. An earlier version of this work received the William Novelli Best Paper Award at the 1997 Innovations in Social Marketing Conference.

Appendix A

Scale Items and Reliabilities for Indicators, Antecedents, and Consequences of Organizational Disidentification*

Indicators	SCALE RELIABILITY**
ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION	$\alpha = 0.87$, $\rho = 0.91$
1. The NRA's successes are my successes.	
2. When someone praises the NRA it feels like a personal compliment.	
3. When someone criticizes the NRA it feels like a personal insult.	

ORGANIZATIONAL DISIDENTIFICATION — $\alpha = 0.79$, $\rho = 0.84$
1. The NRA's failures are my successes.
2. When someone praises the NRA it feels like a personal insult.
3. When someone criticizes the NRA it feels like a personal compliment.

Antecedents	SCALE RELIABILITY
PERCEPTIONS OF NRA BASED ON VALUES AND BELIEFS ABOUT GUNS AND CONTROL	$\alpha = 0.81$, $\rho = 0.87$
1. I have values and beliefs about gun control that have affected my perceptions of the NRA.	
2. I have values and beliefs about gun laws that have affected my perceptions of the NRA	
3. I have values and beliefs about gun ownership that have affected my perceptions of the NRA.	
PERCEPTIONS OF NRA BASED ON THE NRA'S REPUTATION	$\alpha = 0.70$, $\rho = 0.74$
1. The NRA's reputation in my community has affected my perceptions of the NRA.	
2. The effect of joining the NRA on a person's reputation has affected my perceptions of the NRA.	
PERCEPTIONS OF NRA BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCES	$\alpha = 0.72$, $\rho = 0.73$
1. I have had personal experiences that have affected my perceptions of the NRA.	
2. A friend or family member has had personal experiences that have affected my perceptions of the NRA.	
PERCEPTIONS OF NRA MEMBER HOMOGENEITY	$\alpha = 0.72$, $\rho = 0.77$
1. Most members of the NRA joined the organization for the same reason.	
2. Most members of the NRA have the same beliefs about guns.	

Consequences	SCALE RELIABILITY
ACTIONS	
1. I have done volunteer work (for or against the NRA)	$\alpha = 0.83$, $\rho = 0.88$
2. I have made charitable contributions (for or against the NRA).	
3. I have joined organizations (for or against the NRA).	
PUBLIC DISCOURSE	$\alpha = 0.90$, $\rho = 0.92$
1. I have publicly expressed my feelings (positive or negative) about the NRA.	
2. I have publicly expressed my opinions (positive or negative) about the NRA's goals and objectives.	
3. I have publicly expressed my feelings (positive or negative) about supporters of the NRA	

**Note:* Based on Study 1 findings, antecedents tap perceptions of the NRA while indicators tap perceptions of self. That is, disidentification is not a perception of the organization, but is motivated by perceptions of the organization.
**We present two reliability coefficients: α is Cronbach's alpha and ρ is based on Joreskog's (1971) method of estimating reliabilities.

Endnotes

[1]In defining disidentification as a self-perception, we side with Dutton et al. (1994) who similarly define identification as a purely cognitive construct. Our definition of disidentification as a cognitive construct also stems from our understanding of social identifications as "essentially social self-categorizations" (Abrams and Hogg 1990, p. 25). As Hogg and Abrams (1990, p. 21) put it: "self-categorization . . . causes one to perceive oneself as 'identical' to, to have the same social identity as, other members of the category—it places oneself in the relevant social category, or places the group in one's head. . . . Although one may have positive and negative emotions about an organization—as do the participants in this study—those emotions, by our definition, are not a part of the construct organizational identification. Thus, we focus on comments by participants that relate to perceptions (even though many of those perceptions may be associated with emotions and may contain comments about emotions). Further, we follow Dutton et al.'s lead in arguing that identification is a perception about *self* that is based on overlaps between one's identity and any number of group or organizational identities. The perceptual vantage point is the identifier or disidentifier—not an uninvolved observer who may see the organization and person as an interacting pair. As a result of this vantage point, disidentification, like identification, defines the *person's self-concept*, vis-a-vis these identity overlaps. By perceiving disidentification with the NRA, for example, a person is thinking, in essence, "I have no identity overlap with the NRA," or "my identity is clearly separated from the identity of the NRA."

[2]Variance in the concept of disidentification might indicate the degree of cognitive distance between a person's and an organization's identity (i.e., a high degree of disidentification may indicate these identities are based on highly distinct attributes, while a low degree may indicate these identities are based on distinct but related attributes). For example, nonmeateaters might perceive their identities as slightly distinct from meateaters (e.g., those who don't eat red meat, but will eat fish), moderately distinct from meateaters (e.g., those who will eat animal products like eggs and milk, but no meat), or highly distinct from meateaters (e.g., those who will eat nothing that comes from an animal).

[3]Lack of personal experience may have been particularly important in producing disidentification with the NRA, because disidentification was based primarily on the ideology of the NRA, and not work experiences (such as being fired or betrayed). On the other hand, we did

find evidence that supports the notion that individuals with personal experience with an organization may come to disidentify with it after a negative experience or betrayal by the organization (Brockner et al. 1995). For example, former president George Bush tore up his NRA membership card after NRA leaders referred to federal agents involved in the Waco siege as "jack-booted thugs." In this case, the former president made comments suggesting he felt that the NRA had changed since he had joined or wasn't the organization he had thought it was. Thus, his personal experience with the NRA may have led to a sense of betrayal and may have contributed to his disidentification.

[4]Although understanding gender-based differences in respondents' perceptions of the NRA was not our objective, choosing a "gender balanced" sample ensured that in the event that such differences did exist, the views of both sexes would be covered in our sample.

[5]These items did not indicate whether consequences were negative (vs. positive) because we were using them as part of a larger study examining *both* identification and disidentification (Bhattacharya and Elsbach 1997). These relationships (i.e., disidentification leads to actions and voice against the NRA), however, are implied and supported by our data from Study 1.

References

Abrams, D., M. A. Hogg. 1990. *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances*. Springer-Verlag, New York.

——, ——. 1999. *Social Identity and Social Cognition*. Blackwell, Oxford, U.K.

Adler, P. A., P. Adler. 1988. Intense loyalty in organizations: A case study of college athletics. *Admin. Sci. Quart.* **33** 401–417.

Ashforth, B. E., F. Mael. 1989. Social identity theory and the organization. *Acad. Management Rev.* **14** 20–39.

Bentler, P. M. 1990. Comparative fit indexes in structural models. *Psych. Bull.* **107** 238–246.

——, D. G. Bonnett. 1980. Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psych. Bull.* **88** 588–606.

Bergami, M., R. P. Bagozzi. 2000. Self-categorization, affective commitment, and group self-esteem as distinct aspects of social identity in the organization. *British J. Soc. Psych.* **39** 555–577.

Bhattacharya, C. B., K. D. Elsbach. 1997. The individual and the organization: Understanding the Roles of Identification and disidentification in social marketing. Paper presented at the *Innovations in Soc. Marketing Conf.*

——, H. Rao, M. A. Glynn. 1995. Understanding the bond of identification: An investigation of its correlates among art museum members. *J. Marketing* **59** 46–57.

Bollen, K. A. 1989. *Structural Equations with Latent Variables*. Wiley, New York.

Branscombe, N. R., N. Ellemers, R. Spears, B. Doosje. 1999. The context and content of social identity threat. N. Ellemers, R. Spears, B. Doosje, eds. *Social Identity*. Blackwell, Oxford U.K. 35–58.

Brewer, M. B. 1991. The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality Social Psych. Bull.* **17** 475–482.

——, W. Gardner. 1996. Who is this "we"? Levels of collective identity and self-representations. *J. Personality Social Psych.* **71** 83–93.

——, R. M. Kramer. 1985. The psychology of intergroup attitudes and behavior. *Annual Rev. Psych.* **36** 219–243.

Brockner, J., B. M. Wisenfeld, C. L. Martin. 1995. Decision frame, procedural justice, and survivors' reactions to job layoffs. *Organ. Behavior Human Decision Processes* **63** 59–68.

Brown, M. W., R. Cudeck. 1993. Alternative ways of assessing model fit. Kenneth A. Bollen, J. Scott Long, eds. *Testing Structural Equation Models*. Newbury Park, Sage, CA 136–162.

Brown, R. J., J. A. Williams. 1984. Group identification: The same thing to all people? *Human Relations* **37** 547–564.

Burnett, J. 1995. NRA continues strong anti-government stance. *All Things Considered*. National Public Radio (May 13).

Cheney, G. 1983. On the various and changing meanings of organizational membership: A field study of organizational identification. *Comm. Monographs* **50** 342–362.

Cialdini, R. B. 1984. *Influence. The new psychology of modern persuasion*. Quill, New York.

——. 1989. Indirect tactics of image management: Beyond basking. R.A. Giacalone, P. Rosenfeld, eds. *Impression Management in the Organization*. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ. 45–56.

Crocker, J., L. Gallo. 1985. *Prejudice against outgroups: The self-enhancing effects of downward social comparisons*. Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, CA, August.

Deschamps, J. C., W. Doise. 1978. Crossed category memberships in intergroup relations. H. Tajfel, ed. *Differentiation Between Social Groups*. Academic Press, London, U.K.

Dillman, D. A. 1977. *Mail and Telephone Surveys*. John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Doise, W., J. C. Deschamps, G. Meyer. 1978. The accentuation of contra-category similarities. H. Tajfel, ed. *Differentiation Between Social Groups*. Academic Press, London, U.K.

Drazin, R., A. H. Van de Ven. 1985. Alternative forms of fit in contingency. *Admin. Sci. Quart.* **30** 514–539.

Dukerich, J. M., R. Kramer, J. McLean Parks. 1998. The dark side of organizational identification. D. A. Whetten, P. C. Godfrey, eds. *Identity in Organizations. Building Theory Through Conversations*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA. 245–256.

Dutton, J. E., J. M. Dukerich, C. V. Harquail. 1994. Organizational images and member identification. *Admin. Sci. Quart.* **39** 239–263.

Eisenhardt, Kathleen M. 1989. Building theory from case study research. *Acad. Management Rev.* **14** 532–550.

Ellemers, N., R. Spears, B. Doosje. 1999. *Social Identity*. Blackwell, Oxford, U.K.

Elsbach, K. D. 1999. An expanded model of organizational identification. B. M. Staw, R. I. Sutton, eds. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Volume 21, 163–200.

——. 2001. Coping with hybrid organizational identities: Evidence from California legislative staff. John Wagner, ed. *Advances in Qualitative Organizational Research*. Elsevier Science Ltd., Oxford, U.K. **3** 59–90.

——, R. M. Kramer. 1996. Members' responses to organizational identity threats: Encountering and countering the *Business Week* rankings. *Admin. Sci. Quart.* **41** 442–76

——, R. I. Sutton. 1992. Acquiring organizational legitimacy through illegitimate actions: A marriage of institutional and impression management theories. *Acad. Management J.* **35** 699–738.

Fiske, S. T., S. E. Taylor. 1991. *Social Cognition*. McGraw-Hill Publishers, New York.

Fornell, C., D. F. Larcker. 1981. Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *J. Marketing Res.* **18** (February) 39–50.

Fox, H. L. 1998. Who needs corporate brands? *Marketing* (August 13).

Gerard, H. B., G. C. Mathewson. 1966. The effects of severity of initiation on liking for a group: A replication. *J. Experiment. Social Psych.* **2** 278–287.

Gioia, D. A. 1986. Symbols, scripts, and sensemaking: Creating meaning in the organizational experience. H. P. Sims, Jr., D. A. Gioia, eds. *The Thinking Organization.* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA 49–74.

Goethals, G. R., D. M. Messick, S.T. Allison. 1991. The uniqueness bias: Studies of constructive social comparison. J. Suls, T.A. Wills, eds. *Social Comparison: Contemporary Theory and Research*, Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ. 149–176.

Hall, D. T., B. Schneider. 1972. Correlates of organizational identification as a function of career pattern and organizational type. *Admin. Sci. Quart.* **17** 340–350.

Hayduk, L. 1987. *Structural Equation Modeling with LISREL: Essentials and Advances.* Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, MD.

Heider, F. 1958. *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations.* Wiley, New York.

Higgins, E. T., N. A. Kuiper, J. M. Olson. 1981. Social cognition: A need to get personal. E. T. Higgins, C. P. Herman, M. P. Zanna, eds. *Social Cognition: The Ontario Symposium on Personality and Social Psychology,* Volume 1. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ.

Hinkle, S., L. Taylor, A. Fox-Cardamone, K. F. Crook. 1989. Intragroup identification and intergroup differentiation: A multicomponent approach. *British J. Soc. Psych.* **28** 305–317.

Hogg, M. A., D. Abrams. 1988. *Social identification: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes.* Routledge, London, U.K.

——, C. McGarty. 1990. Self-categorization and social identity. D. Abrams, M. A. Hogg, eds. *Social Identity Theory.* Springer-Verlag, New York. 10–27.

——, B. A. Mullin. 1999. Joining groups to reduce uncertainty: Subjective uncertainty reduction and social identification. D. Abrams, M. A. Hogg, eds. *Social Identity and Social Cognition.* Blackwell, Oxford, U.K. 249–279.

Hu, L. T., P. M. Bentler. 1995. Evaluating model fit. Rick H. Hoyle, ed. *Structural Equation Modeling. Concepts, Issues, and Applications.* Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA. 76–99.

Janis, I. L. 1972. *Victims of Groupthink.* Houghton-Mifflin.

Joreskog, K. G. 1971. Statistical analysis of sets of congeneric tests. *Psychometrika* **36** 109–133.

——, Dag Sorbom. 1993. *Windows LISREL 8.14.* Scientific Software International, Inc, Chicago, IL.

Kramer, R. M. 1993. Cooperation and organizational identification. J. Keith Murnighan, ed. *Social Psychology in Organizations*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. 244–268.

——, M. B. Brewer. 1984. Effects of group identity on resource use in a simulated commons dilemma. *J. Personality Social Psych.* **46** 1044–1057.

——, ——. 1986. Social group identity and the emergence of cooperation in resource conservation dilemmas. H. Wilke, D. Messick, C. Rutte, eds. *Experimental Studies of Social Dilemmas.* Verlag-Peter Lang, Frankfurt, Germany. 205–234.

Linville, P. W., E. E. Jones. 1980. Polarize appraisals of outgroup members. *J. Personality Social Psych.* **38** 689–703.

Long, J. S. 1983. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis. A Preface to LISREL.* Sage, Newbury Park, CA.

Mael, F., B. E. Ashforth. 1992. Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *J. Organ. Behavior* **13** 103–123.

——, ——. 1995. Loyal from day one: Biodata, organizational identification, and turnover among newcomers. *Personnel Psych.* **48** 309–332.

Marques, J. M. 1990. The black-sheep effect: Out-group homogeneity in social comparison settings. D. Abrams, M. A. Hogg, eds. *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and Critical Advances.* Springer-Verlag, New York. 131–151.

Marsh, H. W., J. R. Balla, R. P. McDonald. 1988. Goodness-of-fit indexes in confirmatory factor analysis: The effect of sample size. *Psych. Bull.* **103** 391–410.

McAdam, D., J. D. McCarthy, M. N. Zald. 1988. Social movements. Neil Smelser, ed. *Handbook of Sociology.* Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA. 695–737.

Miles, M. B., A. M. Huberman. 1984. *Qualitative Data Analysis.* Sage, Beverly Hills, CA.

The National Rifle Association of America. 1996. *What is the NRA and how does it work?* From the NRA homepage, www.nra.org.

Noel, J. G., D. L. Wann, N. R. Branscombe. 1995. Peripheral ingroup membership status and public negativity toward outgroups. *J. Personality Social Psych.* **68** 127–137.

Nunnally, J. C. 1978. *Psychometric Theory.* McGraw-Hill, New York.

Oliver, N. 1990. Work rewards, work values, and organizational commitment in an employee-owned firm: Evidence from the U.K. *Human Relations* **43** 513–526.

O'Reilly, C., J. Chatman. 1986. Organizational commitment and psychological attachment: The effects of compliance, identification, and internalization on prosocial behavior. *J. Appl. Psych.* **71**(3) 492–499.

Pedhauzer, E. J., L. Schmelkin. 1991. *Measurement, Design, and Analysis. An Integrated Approach.* Lawrence-Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ.

Pfeffer, J., R. I. Sutton. 2000. *The Knowing-Doing Gap.* Harvard University Press, Boston, MA.

Pratt, M. G. 1998. To be or not to be? Central questions in organizational identification. D. A. Whetten, P. C. Godfrey, eds. *Identity in Organizations. Building Theory Through Conversations.* Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA. 171–207.

Quattrone, G. A. 1986. On the perception of a group's variability. S. Worchel, W. Austin, eds. *The Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, Volume 2. Nelson-Hall, New York. 25–48.

——, E. E. Jones. 1980. The perception of variability within ingroups and outgroups: Implications for the law of small numbers. *J. Personality and Social Psych.* **38** 141–152.

Rabbie, J. M., M. Horwitz. 1988. Categories versus groups as explanatory concepts in intergroup relations. *European J. Social Psych.* **18** 117–123.

Reger, R. K., J. V. Mullane, L. T. Gustafson, S. M. DeMarie. 1994. Creating earthquakes to change organizational mindsets. *Acad. Management Executive* **4** 31–46.

Reid, F. J. M. 1983. Polarizing effects of intergroup comparison. *European J. Social Psych.* **13** 103–106.

Rice, F. 1996. Denny's changes its spots. *Fortune Magazine* **133**(9) 133–142.

Sandalow, M. 1999. A skeet-shooting enemy of the NRA. *San Francisco Chronicle* (May 2) 7.

Schneider, B., D. T. Hall, H. T. Nygren. 1971. Self image and job characteristics as correlates of changing organizational identification. *Human Relations* **24** 397–416.

Snyder, C. R., H. C. Fromkin. 1980. *Uniqueness: The Human Pursuit of Difference*. Plenum, New York.

Spears, R., P. J. Oakes, N. Ellemers, A. Haslam. 1997. *The Social Psychology of Stereotyping and Group Life*. Blackwell Publishers Inc., Cambridge, MA.

Steele, C. M. 1988. The psychology of self-affirmation: Sustaining the integrity of the self. L. Berkowitz, ed. *Advances in Experimental Psychology,* Volume 21. Academic Press, New York. 261–302.

——, J. Aronson. 1995. Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *J. Personality and Social Psych.* **69** 797–811.

Accepted by Theresa Lant.

Tajfel, H. 1982. *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*. Cambridge University Press and Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Cambridge.

Turner, J. C. 1987. *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-categorization Theory*. Blackwell, New York.

Weiss, P. 1994. A hoplophobe among the gunnies. *New York Times Magazine* (September 11) 66.

Wetherell, M. 1987. Social identity and group polarization. J. C. Turner, M. A. Hogg, P. J. Oakes, S.D. Reicher, M. Wetherell, eds. *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. Blackwell, Oxford and New York.

Wilder, D. A. 1984. Intergroup contact: The typical member and the exception to the rule. *J. Experiment. Social Psych.* **20** 177–194.

Wood, J. V. 1989. Theory and research concerning social comparisons of personal attributes. *Psych. Bull.* **106** 231–248.

——, S. E. Taylor, R. R. Lichtman. 1985. Social comparison in adjustment to breast cancer. *J. Personality Social Psych.* **49** 1169–1183.