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When Leaders Use Self-Uncertainty Strategically: Consequences for Intergroup Leadership and Identity Confirmation Dynamics

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Abstract

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Framed by the social identity theory of leadership, one question that is beginning to receive attention is how intergroup leaders can lead across distinct subgroups and improve inter-subgroup relations without provoking social identity-related concerns (e.g., subgroup identity distinctiveness threat). Past studies have found that leaders can use their rhetoric and boundary spanning behavior to meet their members' identity needs and garner support. In addition, the self-uncertainty literature has suggested that leaders can strategically elevate and resolve members' self-uncertainty through their rhetoric. The current research proposed that members who felt uncertain about their subgroup's identity would have more favorable evaluations of the intergroup leader and perceptions of the out-subgroup if the leader confirmed their subgroup identity and/or was a blended boundary spanner. Members' identity-uncertainty and subgroup identity validation have yet to be jointly examined in the context of intergroup leadership. Study 1 ($N = 214$) showed that those with high identity centrality had more positive leader evaluations and out-subgroup perceptions. Study 2 ($N = 248$) showed that those with greater subgroup identity-uncertainty who received a message from their leader that confirmed their subgroup identity had more positive out-subgroup perceptions; however, a person's level of subgroup identity-uncertainty led to differential perceptions depending on the leader's boundary spanning behavior. Implications and future directions are discussed.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents. Thank you for everything.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: The Need for Intergroup Leadership

A paramount issue facing the 2020 US presidential candidates was whether they could unify the country's stark political and ideological divisions. How could each party's contender reach across the aisle and win the support of the wider electorate? Finding a way to promote positive interactions among fractious social groups and their conflicting ideologies is a challenge for intergroup leaders. To be effective, such leaders must lead across subgroup boundaries and encourage harmonious inter-subgroup relations without erasing clearly defined subgroup identities (e.g., Rast et al., 2018). Although this difficult task is most evident at the national (e.g., various cultures within a country) or international level (e.g., NATO has 30 Member States), it can occur on a smaller scale (e.g., different work groups within an organization).

Leadership in any organizational context is often construed as having three dimensions: intergroup (i.e., leaders must address and overcome intergroup differences), identity (i.e., leaders shape followers' identity), and uncertainty (i.e., leaders resolve followers' self-uncertainty by providing a sense of identity; see Hogg, 2020). The present studies were conducted to explore the general hypothesis that intergroup leaders can strategically use their rhetoric and boundary spanning behavior to obtain more favorable evaluations and improve self-uncertain members' perceptions of another subgroup.

Social Identity and the Role of Leadership

Social groups are a crucial part of the human experience; people define themselves and others based on the social categories they belong to and identify with (e.g., nationality, religion, workplace division). This dynamic exchange between self-concept and group processes is captured by social identity theory, which states that individuals largely derive their sense of self

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– their social identity -- from their group memberships (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner et al., 1987).

Social identity is defined by the group's prototype - cognitive representation of the group's attributes that follows the metacontrast principle (i.e., emphasizes intragroup similarities and intergroup differences). Because prototypes have implications for social identity and one's self-definition, people want to ensure that they are in line with the prototype's prescriptive dictates; this is particularly true for those who consider membership in a specific group to be central to their self-concept. Often, highly prototypical ingroup members (i.e., those perceived as core members who best exemplify and promulgate the ingroup's identity and norms) are the most reliable and immediate source of identity-relevant information. As such, these members have greater influence within the group compared to marginal or outgroup members (Hogg, 2015a, 2018a).

Likewise, the social identity theory of leadership states that prototypical leaders are a dependable source of social identity information (Hogg, 2020; Hogg & Van Knippenberg, 2003; Hogg et al., 2012a). Individuals use prototypical leaders as a key standard of comparison to assess how members – including themselves - ought to think, feel, and behave. Leaders are conscious of their significant role as conveyors of social identity-relevant information, often including details about the group's characteristics and member expectations in their rhetoric (e.g., Hogg & Reid, 2006; Reicher & Hopkins, 2003; Seyranian, 2014).

Compared to less prototypical leaders, leaders who are perceived as highly prototypical are more influential and receive greater trust and support from members; this effect is amplified if members strongly identify with the group and consider membership central to their identity. Indeed, a meta-analysis of 35 studies ($N = 6{,}678$) found that for strongly-identifying members,

the leader's perceived prototypicality was responsible for 36% of the variance ($r = .60$) in their support for and evaluation of the leader (Barreto & Hogg, 2017). Since the entire group broadly agrees on the prototype, those who embody it best tend to be liked and elevated; they are viewed as being tightly intertwined with the group and therefore are trusted to have everyone's best interests at heart. Prototypicality creates social attractiveness, and members are more likely to comply with a leader they like. As a result, prototypical leaders can be innovative in defining the group's identity (Abrams et al., 2008) and can deviate more markedly than less prototypical leaders from group norms (Abrams et al., 2013; Abrams et al., 2018).

Intergroup Leadership

Although substantial research supports the social identity theory of leadership (e.g., Goldman & Hogg, 2016; Hohman et al., 2010; Rast et al., 2016), the theory may be limited by its focus on intragroup dynamics. In reality, leaders may lead across two or more distinct subgroups nested within a larger collective (i.e., intergroup leadership; Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b; Hogg & Rast, 2022, in press). A subgroup is a numerically smaller collection of people located within a numerically larger collection of people (i.e., superordinate group). Social groups are often composed of subgroups, with each subgroup having its own identity and norms while also sharing a superordinate group membership with the other subgroups. Subgroups can be found in many contexts, such as within organizations (e.g., students and professors at a university), governments (e.g., public works, recreation, and police departments in a city), and unions among countries (e.g., the UN consists of 193 Member States). Thus, intergroup relations can be viewed as inter-subgroup relations, since subgroups within a superordinate group interact with one another.

Furthermore, each subgroup has its own norms and leaders and is considered by its members to be central to their identity. As a result, intergroup leaders must tread carefully because their behavior and rhetoric can either improve or worsen inter-subgroup relations. For example, poor intergroup leadership may encourage subgroups to pursue autonomy within their superordinate group (Wagoner et al., 2018; Wagoner & Hogg, 2016) or completely break away (Sani, 2005).

Challenges to Intergroup Leadership

Because groups have important implications for self-definition, people are motivated to protect and promote their ingroup's evaluative superiority to and positive distinctiveness from pertinent outgroups (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Although this motivation can help individuals maintain a positive social identity, it can exacerbate intergroup biases that decrease people's inclination to work with outgroups and compromise the success of intergroup collaborations (Hogg et al., 2012b; Richter et al., 2006). It may also act as a catalyst for intergroup conflict, which can quickly turn hostile when groups derogate one another, view each other in terms of stereotypes, and compete over scarce and valuable resources (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Hogg, 2015a).

Despite numerous studies on intergroup relations (e.g., Allport, 1954; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Paluck et al., 2019), the role of an intergroup leader in managing conflict between subgroups has received little attention (Pittinsky, 2009). Since intergroup leaders must unite disparate subgroups, it is reasonable to assume that building a collective, superordinate identity that includes all subgroups would be an effective approach (Dovidio et al., 2009; Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). However, recent studies on social identity and leadership have noted a few social identity-related problems that may arise when members strongly identify with their

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subgroup, believe that their subgroup is in competition with other subgroups, and feel that their unique subgroup identity is under threat (Crisp et al., 2006; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Rast et al., 2018).

First, the leader of the superordinate group may be associated with or originate from one subgroup; as a result, the leader is both an in- and out-subgroup member. For example, the failure of mergers is often due to the leader of the superordinate organization being seen as out-subgroup by the absorbed subgroups (Ullrich & Van Dick, 2007). Typically, out-subgroup leaders are unsuccessful at imposing a superordinate identity because they are seen as lacking the credentials needed to create that identity (Rutchick & Eccleston, 2010).

In addition, the intergroup leader's in-subgroup status for some and out-subgroup status for others can affect members' perceptions of the leader's prototypicality, which may impede efforts to construct a shared identity and prototype (Hogg & Van Knippenberg, 2003). As previously discussed, prototypical ingroup leaders are more effective compared to less prototypical ingroup leaders and nonprototypical outgroup leaders (Hogg & Van Knippenberg, 2003). Members who strongly consider their group to be central to their self-definition tend to use their in-subgroup leader -- rather than an out-subgroup leader -- as a trustworthy source of identity-relevant information regarding the sub- and superordinate group. Given the uniqueness of each subgroup, it can be tough for the intergroup leader to establish a collective identity (and therefore, that identity's prototype) that is consensually validated by all subgroups (Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b).

Another problem is that an intergroup leader who tries to establish a common identity may evoke subgroup identity distinctiveness threat. A shared identity hints at similarity (Brewer & Gardner, 1996), which goes against groups' natural tendency to pursue positive distinctiveness

(Abrams & Hogg, 2010). Because they erode or remove subgroup boundaries, common identities threaten each subgroup's identity-defining features and thus jeopardize subgroup members' cherished social identities (Hogg, 2015a). As a result, intergroup relations may become conflict-ridden as subgroups attempt to protect their identities (Eggins et al., 2002; Hogg & Hornsey, 2006; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000). The common identity may also prompt members to question the intergroup leader's allegiance and agenda, thereby undermining their trust in the leader. Providing further evidence for the ramifications of identity distinctiveness threat, Crisp and colleagues (2006) found that advocating for a collective identity was an effective strategy for ameliorating intergroup relations under low levels of identity distinctiveness threat; however, this approach had the opposite effect under high levels of identity distinctiveness threat.

Similarly, ingroup projection may hinder the creation of a collective identity (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999; Wenzel et al., 2003, 2007). Due to the intergroup leader's former membership in or close association with one subgroup, members may view the collective identity as a reflection and extension of the leader's prior subgroup identity; in turn, they may be unwilling to trust the leader and adopt the overarching identity. Furthermore, ingroup projection often happens when groups differ in power and/or status. When there is a superordinate group identity, it is possible that the subgroup with more power or higher status may "project" its ingroup attributes (i.e., ingroup identity) onto that overarching identity and effectively shut out the attributes of other subgroups (Wenzel et al., 2003). Ingroup projection can bring about feelings of alienation and disengagement among less powerful and lower-status subgroups, widen the divide between subgroups, and hinder the intergroup leader's effectiveness.

The overall obstacle of intergroup leadership is figuring out how to lead effectively across distinct subgroups that are central to their members' identity while circumventing issues

regarding the leader's in- or out-subgroup status and prototypicality, ingroup projection, and subgroup identity distinctiveness threat.

Intergroup Relational Identity

Instead of creating a superordinate identity, an alternative - and perhaps novel - strategy would be for intergroup leaders to maintain and celebrate each subgroup's identity-defining characteristics and encourage cooperative inter-subgroup relations (e.g., Hogg, 2015a; Hogg & Hornsey, 2006; Hogg & Rast, 2022, in press; Hogg et al., 2012b). Expanding upon previous studies of intergroup leadership (e.g., Pittinsky & Simon, 2007), Hogg and associates (Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b) suggested that intergroup leaders create, personify, and promote an overarching intergroup relational identity. This identity does not replace unique subgroup identities with a singular overarching group identity. Rather, it holds that subgroup identities are distinct and important facets of the superordinate group, and that inter-subgroup relations are collaborative. Thus, an intergroup relational identity defines people based on their subgroup membership and their subgroup's relationship with at least one other subgroup. For example, an intergroup relational identity is present among students and professors if each party defines themselves as discrete and essential constituents of the university that are in an important collaborative relationship with one another.

The promotion of an intergroup relational identity is a more effective strategy for improving inter-subgroup relations because it avoids the identity-related problems associated with the superordinate identity approach. First, because the intergroup relational identity does not yield a prototype to evaluate the leader against, the leader is instead expected to embody the intergroup relationship (Hogg, 2015a). A leader who successfully does so will be perceived as a reliable and honest reference about the identity and its norms. Second, issues of ingroup

projection are avoided because this identity views inter-subgroup relations as collaborative, with the leader being considered "one of us" in the subgroups and superordinate group. Third, subgroup identity distinctiveness threat is hindered because the intergroup relational identity celebrates subgroups' unique characteristics.

Finally, this identity lays the foundation for enduring positive intergroup relations by giving members an extended identity that includes a collaborative relationship with another subgroup. As such, this identity is appropriate in situations where subgroups differ in power and status because each subgroup is viewed as an equal partner in the relationship (Hogg et al., 2012b). The efficacy of an intergroup relational identity (compared to a collective identity) on improving intergroup leadership and inter-subgroup relations has been empirically supported (Kershaw et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rast et al., 2018; Rast et al., 2020).

Intergroup Leadership Strategies

The literature suggests that intergroup leaders can effectively create and promote an intergroup relational identity through their rhetoric (e.g., speeches, communications) and corresponding behavior (Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b). Specifically, the rhetoric should emphasize this identity and be supported through boundary spanning.

Leader Rhetoric

Given that leaders are seen as credible sources of social identity-relevant information, their rhetoric can be a powerful vehicle for suggesting desired group attributes and shaping members' knowledge of the group identity (e.g., Seyranian & Bligh, 2008; Shamir et al., 1993). Likewise, an intergroup leader's rhetoric can promote an intergroup relational identity by highlighting the link between intergroup cooperation and its relevance for achieving group-valued goals. The message should be unambiguous and straightforward (Hogg, 2018b; Hogg &

Adelman, 2013) and describe how inter-subgroup cooperation requires each subgroup's unique input. Additionally, the leader should provide the logistics of how the cooperative effort will be done, why it is more effective than if subgroups were to work independently, and what benefits it will confer upon all parties involved. Furthermore, if the intergroup leader underscores this collaborative relationship (rather than a superordinate identity) among subgroups, then members will start to perceive them as prototypical of the intergroup relational identity - and thus a reliable and trustworthy reference about the identity and its norms (Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b).

Boundary Spanning

To successfully build an intergroup relational identity and improve inter-subgroup relations, the leader's behavior must be consistent with the rhetoric. One way of doing so is through boundary spanning, in which the leader crosses subgroups' identity-defining boundaries and maintains quality relationships between otherwise disparate subgroups to promote positive relations (Callister & Wall, 2001; Ernst & Yip, 2009; Oh et al., 2004; Richter et al., 2006). In support, Richter and colleagues (2006) confirmed that boundary spanning leadership was associated with reduced intergroup conflict and greater intergroup productivity.

Because boundary spanning leadership involves facilitating positive intergroup relations, it has implications for the formation and maintenance of an intergroup relational identity. On its own, boundary spanning is not enough to successfully build this identity. However, it provides a model that adds credence to the leader's identity rhetoric (i.e., the intergroup leader is behaving in accordance with the identity message), and to the intergroup relational identity itself (i.e., it is possible and worthwhile to act in line with this identity). Therefore, boundary spanning moderates the effect of leader rhetoric on the formation of an intergroup relational identity and

by extension, effective intergroup leadership. Furthermore, a leader who embodies the identity rhetoric via boundary spanning will be seen as prototypical of the intergroup relational identity (Hogg et al., 2012b).

For intergroup leaders, the takeaway message is that transforming subgroup members' identity and reshaping intergroup relations from purely instrumental to identity-relevant takes time and repetition. Leader rhetoric and boundary spanning are not separate one-time approaches, but instead are mutually beneficial and must be used in conjunction over time to establish and maintain an intergroup relational identity (Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b).

Self-Uncertainty and Leadership

Prototypical leaders are viewed as "entrepreneurs of identity" because they create and manage members' understanding of the group's prototype and identity (Reicher & Hopkins, 1996, 2003). In turn, members - particularly those who are self-uncertain - look toward their leader for identity guidance (Goldman & Hogg, 2016; Hogg, 2018b, 2020).

Uncertainty-Identity Theory

People want to know who they are, how they should act and think, and how they might be treated by others. Therefore, uncertainty - especially if it relates to the self - is an aversive feeling that people are motivated to reduce (Hogg & Gaffney, 2023; Jonas et al., 2014). According to uncertainty-identity theory, group identification via the process of self-categorization into a group is a highly effective way of decreasing self-uncertainty (Hogg, 2000, 2015b, 2021). By doing so, self-uncertain individuals come under the prescriptive dictates of the group's prototype, which will impact their sense of self, affect, and behavior (Hogg et al., 2017). The result is a reduction of uncertainty and a clearer understanding of oneself that has been consensually validated (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Turner et al., 1987). Indeed, studies have found

that self-uncertainty prompts group identification (e.g., Grieve & Hogg, 1999; Reid & Hogg, 2005), especially with highly entitative groups (Campbell, 1958; Hamilton & Sherman, 1996; Hogg et al., 2007; see meta-analysis by Choi & Hogg, 2020).

One type of self-related uncertainty that is starting to receive attention is social identity-uncertainty, or uncertainty about the social identity of one's group. It is composed of two parts: identity-uncertainty (i.e., uncertainty about the group's prototype) and membership-uncertainty (i.e., uncertainty about one's position in the group and relationships with other members; Wagoner et al., 2017). Social identity-uncertainty may happen when, for instance, the norms and values of the group change, the group is threatened by an outgroup, the group members are in conflict, or new roles in the group are established (Wagoner et al., 2017). What is distinct about social identity-uncertainty is that unlike other self-related uncertainties, it cannot be resolved through stronger group identification. Because the uncertainty is caused by a social identity that's important to one's self-concept, increasing identification with that group will only magnify the self-uncertainty. In support, studies have shown that social identity-uncertainty is associated with *decreased* group identification (Jung et al., 2016; Jung et al., 2018; Wagoner et al., 2017; Wagoner & Hogg, 2016).

Uncertainty and Leadership Rhetoric

People who feel uncertain about their identity are motivated to find clear and reliable information concerning the group's identity and normative attributes (Goldman & Hogg, 2016); one trustworthy provider of this information is the group leader (Hogg & Gaffney, 2023; Hogg, 2018b, 2020). Thus, uncertainty is expected to increase people's need, liking, and support for a prototypical leader over a less or non-prototypical leader. Confirming this prediction, Rast and colleagues (2012) found that a highly prototypical leader received significantly more support

than a less prototypical leader. Also, highly self-uncertain members supported any leader - regardless of the leader's prototypicality - if they had only one leader option. The takeaway is that people experiencing self-uncertainty have such a great need for leadership to reduce their uncertainty that they will support a less-prototypical leader if given no other choice. In addition, individuals with a stronger need for uncertainty avoidance (compared to those with a lesser need) supported their leader more and were more susceptible to the leader's influence (Watts et al., 2020; Zhang & Zhou, 2014).

Leaders can strategically utilize their members' uncertainty to advance their personal and/or group agenda (e.g., Hohman et al., 2010; Seyranian, 2014), yield power over others (Marris, 1996), and increase members' identification with the group (Hogg, 2018b, 2020). After using their rhetoric to heighten members' self-uncertainty (which in turn elevates their desire for leadership), the leader can satisfy members' need for identification by providing a social identity solution. This leadership rhetoric strategy is commonly seen at the public or political level. Contenders for a leadership position not only increase people's self-uncertainty, but also try to present themselves as the only legitimate option compared to their less-capable competitors. Next, they attempt to resolve the uncertainty in order to prove their effectiveness over other leaders (Bligh et al., 2004). This approach was evident in the 2020 US presidential election, which occurred during a time of self-uncertainty induced by the pandemic. Many candidates discussed their plans for tackling the pandemic while then-President Trump downplayed the severity of the virus.

Because they are viewed as trustworthy sources of social identity-relevant information, highly prototypical leaders should have greater success with using their rhetoric to strategically elevate and resolve members' self-uncertainty. However, this strategy may harm a less

prototypical leader by undermining their perceived authority and capability; in turn, the self-uncertain member may find a more prototypical leader or self-categorize into another group in order to reduce the uncertainty (Hohman et al., 2010). Beyond prototypicality, some studies suggest how leaders can increase the effectiveness of this strategy. Since self-uncertain individuals want trustworthy and credible information about the social identity and its prototype, the leader and message should be unambiguous and straightforward (Hogg, 2018b). As a result, members tend to support leaders who are more autocratic (Rast et al., 2013) and use an affirmative communication style (Gaffney et al., 2016). They also prefer messages that are clear-cut about the group's identity and norms (Hogg & Adelman, 2013). The power of the leader's rhetoric may be amplified when people are experiencing self-uncertainty as a result of a crisis; this uncertainty strengthens their need for and acceptance of a leader, especially one who is strong and authoritative (Hasel, 2013; Hogg, 2021; Hunt et al., 1999; Kay et al., 2008).

Current Research

Given the recent emergence of intergroup leadership studies (e.g., Kershaw et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rast et al., 2018, Rast et al., 2020), there are many avenues for future research. Informed by the social identity theory of leadership, uncertainty-identity theory, and the intergroup leadership literature, two studies were conducted to examine the effects of two intergroup leadership strategies - leader rhetoric (Study 1) and boundary spanning behavior (Study 2) - on social identity-uncertain members' evaluation of the leader and perceptions of the out-subgroup. Members' social identity-uncertainty and subgroup identity validation have yet to be jointly examined in the context of intergroup leadership. The overarching hypothesis was that members who feel uncertain about their subgroup's social identity (i.e., have subgroup identity-uncertainty) will have more favorable leader evaluations and out-subgroup perceptions if the

intergroup leader confirms their subgroup identity (Study 1) and/or is a blended boundary spanner (Study 2). Perhaps these conditions would help members feel more certain about their subgroup's social identity, which in turn may reduce or prevent subgroup identity distinctiveness threat and negative attitudes toward the out-subgroup.

Study 1 tested the main hypothesis that compared to those with lower levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty, members with higher levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty will have more positive leader evaluations and out-subgroup perceptions if their subgroup identity is confirmed by the leader's rhetoric. Furthermore, Study 1 examined if this predicted effect would be enhanced by the degree to which members view their subgroup identity as central to their sense of self.

Study 2 built upon Study 1 by investigating whether the leader's boundary spanning behavior - especially in conjunction with leader rhetoric that confirmed members' subgroup identity - had an effect on members' evaluation of the leader and perceptions of the out-subgroup. This effect was predicted to be larger for members with higher rather than lower levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty. The two studies were similar in methods, materials, and procedure because Study 2 extended Study 1 by reexamining the hypotheses from Study 1 while also testing a new set of hypotheses unique to Study 2.

CHAPTER TWO

Study 1

Because people want to resolve their self-uncertainty and use their leaders as reliable sources of information about the group's identity (Hogg, 2000, 2015b, 2021), Study 1 examined whether the intergroup leader's confirmation of self-uncertain members' subgroup identity would increase their support for the leader and improve their perceptions of the out-subgroup. To test this, Study 1 measured subgroup identity centrality (i.e., how important the subgroup and its associated identity are to a person's self-concept), primed subgroup identity-uncertainty (low vs. high), and presented a message from the intergroup leader that either confirmed participants' subgroup identity or did not address it (i.e., remained neutral). This procedure was based on a standard paradigm that has been effectively used in social identity leadership research (e.g., Rast et al., 2012; Rast et al., 2016; Rast et al., 2015). The hypotheses were as follows:

H1: There will be a main effect of subgroup identity confirmation; participants whose leader confirms their subgroup identity will have more favorable leader evaluations and out-subgroup perceptions than those whose leader remains neutral about their subgroup identity.

H2: The effect under H1 will be moderated by subgroup identity-uncertainty, such that it will be stronger for those with high rather than low subgroup identity-uncertainty.

H3: The above effect will be further moderated by subgroup identity centrality; the effect will be accentuated among those with higher rather than lower levels of subgroup identity centrality.

Method

Participants and Design

Participants were recruited from Amazon MTurk. To qualify, they had to be at least 18 years old, have a U.S.-based IP address, and be a U.S. citizen. A-priori power analysis using G*Power 3.1 suggested that a minimum of 158 participants would be necessary to achieve a small to medium effect size ($f^2 = .10$, $F = 3.06$, $\alpha = .05$, $Power = .95$). A total of 264 participants were recruited; however, 50 participants were removed and excluded from analysis for failing to complete a significant number of the predictor and outcome variable measures. The final sample consisted of 214 participants (54.20% male, $M_{age} = 40.92$, $SD_{age} = 12.50$) who were predominately white (72.90%; American Indian or Alaskan Native = .90%; Asian-American = 5.10%; African-American = 13.10%; Hispanic/Latinx = 4.70%; Middle Eastern Descent = .50%; Multi-Racial = 2.30%; Other = .50%). Compensation was $1.50.

The study had three predictor variables: one measured (participants' subgroup identity centrality) and two manipulated (subgroup identity-uncertainty and leader rhetoric). The outcome variables were leader evaluation and perceptions of the out-subgroup.

Study 1 focused on participants' subgroup identity as Americans, with Canadians as the out-subgroup. The context was two subgroups (U.S., Canada) nested within a larger group (U.S. – Mexico – Canada Agreement; USMCA) headed by a hypothetical superordinate group leader (President of the USMCA Commission). The USMCA is a free trade agreement among the three North American countries; this context was chosen because it is a real intergroup setting that is less contentious – and ideally less likely to be greatly affected by confounding variables (e.g., prejudice, political affiliation) – than other types of intergroup relations. For the same reason, Canada rather than Mexico was selected as the out-subgroup for American participants.

Procedure

Participants were informed that the study was about international leadership processes. Upon consent, participants completed a measure of subgroup identity centrality. Next, they were randomly assigned to either a low or high subgroup identity-uncertainty prime, followed by a manipulation check. Afterwards, they received a communication in which the intergroup leader either confirmed their subgroup identity or remained neutral. Then, after completing the manipulation check, participants responded to the outcome variable measures of leader evaluation and perceptions of the out-subgroup. Finally, demographic information was collected and participants were debriefed (see Appendix A for Study 1 procedure, measures, and materials).

Measures

Subgroup Identity Centrality

A four-item measure adapted from various group identification studies was used to measure subgroup identity centrality (e.g. Hains et al., 1997; Hogg & Hains, 1996; Hogg et al., 2007). Participants were asked about: (1) how important being an American is to them, (2) how central being an American is to their sense of who they are, (3) how often they are aware of being an American, and (4) how much they feel they identify as an American; 1 *Not Very Much*, 9 *Very Much*, α = .93.

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty

A subgroup identity-uncertainty prime adapted from previous uncertainty-identity theory research (e.g., Hackett & Hogg, 2014; Hogg et al., 2007; Rast et al., 2016; Wagoner et al., 2017) was used to manipulate low or high subgroup identity-uncertainty. Participants were asked to reflect on their identity as an American (i.e., subgroup identity). The structure of the prime was as follows: "Spend some time reflecting on the nature of American identity and who you are as

an American. In particular, focus on all the things that make you feel *(un)certain* about your own American identity and what an American identity is. For example, you may feel *(un)certain* about what it means to be an American, the characteristics that define being an American, what the U.S. stands for, and the distinctiveness of America's identity within the world. Reflect on your thoughts, feelings, behavior, characteristics, or other areas of your life that make you feel *(un)certain* about who you are as an American. Choose one of these areas of your life that make you feel most *(un)certain* about being an American, and tell us a little about it in the box below."

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Manipulation Check

A single item measured participants' current level of subgroup identity-uncertainty; 1 *Not Very Uncertain*, 9 *Very Uncertain*.

Leader Rhetoric

Participants were assigned randomly to read a short vignette in which the leader either confirmed their subgroup identity (i.e., American identity) or did not address it (i.e., remained neutral; adapted from Prime Minister of Canada, 2021). The vignettes were matched for length (73 words in each condition). The use of imagined groups and role playing is a common paradigm in the social identity theory of leadership and uncertainty-identity research (e.g., Rast et al., 2012) and is a core feature of Crisp's imagined contact research (e.g., Crisp & Turner, 2012; Miles & Crisp, 2014).

Leader Rhetoric Manipulation Check

Two questions about the clarity of the leader's message ("How clear was the President's message?") and the extent to which the leader recognized the participant's subgroup ("To what extent did the President recognize the importance of U.S. participation in the USMCA?") were presented; 1 *Not Very Much*, 9 *Very Much*, $\alpha = .74$.

Leader Evaluation

A set of 10 items adapted from previous research on leadership (Kershaw et al., 2021a; Rast et al., 2012; Rast et al., 2013, 2016; Rast et al., 2018) was used to evaluate the hypothetical leader. The measure assessed three components of leadership evaluation: support (e.g., "I will be a strong supporter of the President"), trust ("I think the President is trustworthy"), and perceived effectiveness ("The President will represent the interests of the U.S. well"); 1 *Not Very Much*, 9 *Very Much*, α = .97.

Because the items were chosen to reflect three subscales, principal components analysis with direct oblimin rotation was conducted to explore the subscale structure. The analysis revealed a single factor clear of the scree (eigenvalue = 7.81) that accounted for 78.07% of the variance.

Perceptions of the Out-Subgroup

An eight-item measure assessed participants' perceptions of the out-subgroup (Canadians). These items were adapted from past research on intergroup relations (e.g., Kershaw et al., 2021a; Rast et al., 2018; Rast et al., 2020; Wenzel et al., 2003). Items about out-subgroup trust (e.g., "Canadians can be trusted"), willingness to engage in inter-subgroup contact (e.g., "I would like to get to know more Canadians"), and subgroup identity distinctiveness threat (e.g., "I think it is important to emphasize the similarities between Americans and Canadians") were included; 1 *Not Very Much,* 9 *Very Much*, α = .93.

Because the items were chosen to reflect three subscales, principal components analysis with direct oblimin rotation was conducted to explore the subscale structure. The analysis revealed a single factor clear of the scree (eigenvalue = 5.37) that accounted for 67.17% of the variance.

Demographics and Debriefing

Prior to the debriefing, participants reported their gender, age, racial/ethnic background, political ideology, and general attitude towards Canada.

Results

The effects of three predictor variables - one measured (subgroup identity centrality) and two manipulated (subgroup identity-uncertainty, leader rhetoric) – on the manipulation checks and outcome variables were assessed using hierarchical multiple regression. Predictors were mean-centered and interaction terms were computed (Aiken & West, 1991). Significant interactions found during hypothesis testing were further examined using simple slopes analyses. For the key variables' reliabilities, means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations, see Table 1.

Table 1

Study 1: Reliabilities, Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of the Key Variables

Variable	α	M	SD	2	3	4	5
1. Identity centrality (4 items)	.93	6.46	2.13	-.01	.08	.38**	.15*
2. Subgroup identity-uncertainty (prime)	-	1.49	.50	-	.00	-.11	-.11
3. Leader rhetoric (prime)	-	1.50	.50	-	-	.10	-.03
4. Leader evaluation (10 items)	.97	6.64	1.64	-	-	-	.62**
5. Perceptions of the out-subgroup (8 items)	.93	7.21	1.30	-	-	-	-

Note. Means take values between 1 and 9, with 9 indicating more of the feature described. Subgroup identity-uncertainty and leader rhetoric were binary variables with the values of 1 (low subgroup identity-uncertainty; leader remains neutral) and 2 (high subgroup identity-uncertainty; leader confirms subgroup identity).
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Preliminary Analyses

Demographic Analyses

To check for potential covariation, the predictor variables and interactions were regressed onto the demographic variables. Political ideology significantly covaried with subgroup identity centrality such that participants who were more liberal had lower levels of subgroup identity centrality, $\beta = -.36$, $t = -5.63$, $p < .001$. However, when testing the hypotheses, analyses were run with and without the covariate and the results were the same. Thus, political ideology was not included as a covariate in subsequent analyses.

Manipulation Checks

The manipulation checks determined whether the subgroup identity-uncertainty and leader rhetoric primes elicited the expected differences among participants.

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty. To examine whether the subgroup identity-uncertainty prime was successful, a three-step hierarchical multiple regression was conducted with the manipulation check as the outcome variable. The predictors were entered at Step 1, the two-way interactions at Step 2, and the three-way interaction at Step 3. At Step 1, the model was significant, $F(3, 210) = 13.89$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .17$. The inclusion of the two-way interactions at Step 2 did not explain a significant amount of variance beyond Step 1, $\Delta F(3, 207) = .29$, $p = .834$, $R^2 = .17$, $\Delta R^2 = .003$. The three-way interaction in Step 3 also did not explain a significant amount of variance beyond the previous steps, $\Delta F(1, 206) = .97$, $p = .325$, $R^2 = .17$, $\Delta R^2 = .004$.

At Step 1, the significant predictor was subgroup identity-uncertainty, $\beta = 2.09$, $t = 6.16$, $p < .001$. Participants with higher levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty felt significantly more uncertain than those with lower levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty. No two- or three-way interactions were significant. These analyses confirmed that the manipulation of identity uncertainty was successful and clean.

Leader Rhetoric. To examine whether the leader rhetoric prime was successful, a three-step hierarchical multiple regression was conducted with the manipulation check as the outcome variable. The predictors were entered at Step 1, the two-way interactions at Step 2, and the three-way interaction at Step 3. At Step 1, the model was significant, $F(3, 210) = 11.19$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .14$. The inclusion of the two-way interactions at Step 2 explained a significant amount of variance beyond Step 1, $\Delta F(3, 207) = 4.07$, $p = .008$, $R^2 = .19$, $\Delta R^2 = .05$. The three-way interaction in Step 3 did not explain a significant amount of variance beyond the previous steps, $\Delta F(1, 206) = .00$, $p = .992$, $R^2 = .19$, $\Delta R^2 = .00$.

At Step 1, the significant predictor was leader rhetoric, $\beta = .26$, $t = 3.99$, $p < .001$. Participants whose leader confirmed their subgroup identity had higher ratings of the leader compared to those with a neutral leader.

At Step 2, there was a significant interaction between subgroup identity centrality and leader rhetoric, $\beta = -.20$, $t = -3.15$, $p = .002$. However, most of the variance on the leader rhetoric manipulation check was explained by the leader rhetoric manipulation; the other effects were smaller in size. It can be concluded that the leader rhetoric manipulation was successful, but less clean than would be ideal.

Main Analyses

Leader Evaluation

A three-step hierarchical multiple regression was conducted with leader evaluation as the outcome variable. The three predictors were entered at Step 1, the three two-way interactions at Step 2, and the single three-way interaction at Step 3. At Step 1, the model was significant, $F(3, 210) = 13.37$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .16$. However, the inclusion of the two-way interactions at Step 2 did not explain a significant amount of variance beyond Step 1, $\Delta F(3, 207) = 1.02$, $p = .386$, $R^2 =$

.17, $\Delta R^2 = .01$. The three-way interaction in Step 3 also did not explain a significant amount of variance beyond Steps 1 and 2, $\Delta F(1, 206) = .10$, $p = .758$, $R^2 = .17$, $\Delta R^2 = .00$.

At Step 1, the significant predictor was subgroup identity centrality, $\beta = .37$, $t = 5.88$, $p < .001$. Participants with higher subgroup identity centrality evaluated the leader more positively. No two- or three-way interactions were significant.

Perceptions of the Out-Subgroup

A three-step hierarchical multiple regression was conducted with perceptions of the out-subgroup as the outcome variable. The predictors were at Step 1, the two-way interactions at Step 2, and the three-way interaction at Step 3. At Step 1, the model was significant, $F(3, 210) = 2.71$, $p = .046$, $R^2 = .04$. The inclusion of the two-way interactions at Step 2 did not explain a significant amount of variance beyond Step 1, $\Delta F(3, 207)$ 1.45, $p = .231$, $R^2 = .06$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$. The three-way interaction in Step 3 also did not explain a significant amount of variance beyond the previous steps, $\Delta F(1, 206) = .04$, $p = .839$, $R^2 = .06$, $\Delta R^2 = .00$.

At Step 1, the significant predictor was subgroup identity centrality, $\beta = .15$, $t = 2.27$, $p = .024$. Participants with high levels of subgroup identity centrality had more favorable perceptions of the out-subgroup. No two- or three-way interactions were significant.

Discussion

To reduce their self-uncertainty, people may turn toward their leaders for group identity-relevant information (Hogg, 2000, 2015b, 2021). Informed by the social identity theory of leadership, uncertainty-identity theory, and the intergroup leadership literature, Study 1 examined members' subgroup identity-uncertainty and subgroup identity validation in the context of intergroup leadership. The goal was to test whether subgroup identity confirmation by the leader would lead to more favorable leader evaluations and perceptions of the out-subgroup.

Contrary to hypotheses, leader rhetoric did not have a main effect on participants' evaluation of the leader and perceptions of the out-subgroup (H1) and was unaffected by participants' level of subgroup identity-uncertainty (H2). Past research (e.g., Goldman & Hogg, 2016; Hogg, 2020; Rast et al., 2012) has shown that self-uncertain members have a great need for leadership to reduce their uncertainty and provide social identity guidance; perhaps the imagined context was not meaningful enough to participants, despite the manipulation check indicating that the leader rhetoric manipulation was largely successful.

In partial support of H3, two separate main effects of subgroup identity centrality were obtained on both outcome variables. Irrespective of their level of subgroup identity-uncertainty and the leader rhetoric they received, participants whose subgroup identity was more central to their self-concept evaluated the leader more positively than did those with lower levels of subgroup identity centrality. This finding may be explained by the social identity theory of leadership, which states that as group membership becomes a more salient and central part of a person's self-concept, effective leadership will be more dependent on the leader's perceived prototypicality. Prototypical leaders receive greater support and are considered to be a more reliable source of social identity-relevant information than less or non-prototypical leaders (Hogg, 2020; Hogg & Van Knippenberg, 2003; Hogg et al., 2012a). This result may have implications for how leaders can obtain favorable evaluations and increase their members' support. Leaders can increase the salience of group membership for members' social identity; indeed, Hains et al. (1997) found that leaders received greater support if they strengthened members' identity centrality.

In addition, participants with high rather than low subgroup identity centrality held more favorable out-subgroup perceptions, regardless of subgroup identity-uncertainty and leader

rhetoric. This result contradicts past findings that symbolic threat perceptions (e.g., identity distinctiveness threat) typically bring about negative outgroup attitudes if the ingroup identity under threat is valued and important to one's sense of self (e.g., Hornsey & Hogg, 2000, Hogg et al., 2012b; Schmid et al., 2009). Perhaps in the current study, a higher level of subgroup identity centrality offered participants more security in their subgroup identity, which in turn may have helped to reduce or hinder identity distinctiveness threat and negative attitudes toward the out-subgroup.

Overall, Study 1 found that the degree to which participants considered their subgroup to be central to their self-concept impacted their evaluation of the leader and perceptions of the out-subgroup. Because Study 1 failed to support most of the hypotheses, Study 2 was designed not only to retest the hypotheses but also to explore the effect of another intergroup leadership strategy (boundary spanning leader behavior) on leader evaluation and perceptions of the out-subgroup.

CHAPTER THREE

Study 2

Extending Study 1, Study 2 investigated the leader's boundary spanning behavior as an intergroup leadership strategy; this aspect of intergroup leadership theory had yet to be empirically tested. The leader was either a discrete boundary spanner (i.e., has separate subgroup identities) or a blended boundary spanner (i.e., has some attributes from each subgroup's identity and integrates them into a "blended" identity). Using the same context as Study 1, Study 2 was a 2 (subgroup identity-uncertainty: low vs. high) x 2 (leader rhetoric: confirm subgroup identity vs. remain neutral) x 2 (boundary spanning leader behavior: discrete vs. blended) between-participants experimental design (all three independent variables were manipulated), with leader evaluation and perceptions of the out-subgroup as the dependent variables. The hypotheses were as follows:

H1: There will be a main effect of the leader's boundary spanning behavior; participants with a blended boundary spanning leader will have more favorable leader evaluations and perceptions of the out-subgroup than those with a discrete boundary spanning leader.

H2: The effect predicted under H1 will be moderated by leader rhetoric; participants whose subgroup identity is validated by a blended boundary spanning leader will have more favorable leader evaluations and out-subgroup perceptions.

H3: The above effect will be further moderated by subgroup identity-uncertainty; the effect will be larger under conditions of high rather than low subgroup identity-uncertainty.

Method

Participants and Design

Like Study 1, participants were recruited from Amazon MTurk under the same inclusion criteria and compensation rate. A-priori power analysis using G*Power 3.1 suggested that a minimum of 176 participants would be required to reach a small to medium effect size ($f^2 = .10$, $F = 2.66$, $\alpha = .05$, $Power = .95$). A total of 258 participants were recruited; however, 10 participants were removed and excluded from analysis for failing to complete a significant number of predictor and outcome variable measures. The final sample size consisted of 248 participants (51.60% female, $M_{age} = 40.58$, $SD_{age} = 12.86$) who were predominately white (68.30%; American Indian or Alaskan Native = 2.00%; Asian-American = 7.30%; African-American = 10.20%; Hispanic/Latinx = 9.30%; Middle Eastern Descent = .40%; Multi-Racial = 2.40%; Other = .10%).

There were three independent variables, all manipulated: subgroup identity-uncertainty (low vs. high), leader rhetoric (confirm subgroup identity vs. remain neutral) and boundary spanning leader behavior (discrete vs. blended). In addition, there were checks on all independent variables. The dependent variables were leader evaluation and perceptions of the out-subgroup. Like Study 1, the context of Study 2 was an international free trade agreement.

Procedure

The procedure was nearly the same as Study 1. Participants were told that the study was about international leadership processes. Upon consent, participants were randomly assigned to either a low or high subgroup identity-uncertainty prime, followed by a manipulation check. Next, they received a message in which the intergroup leader either confirmed their subgroup identity or remained neutral. After completing a manipulation check, participants read a brief description describing the leader as either a discrete or blended boundary spanner. They then responded to a manipulation check and completed the dependent variable measures of leader

evaluation and out-subgroup perceptions. Finally, demographic information was collected and participants were debriefed (see Appendix B for Study 2 procedure, measures, and materials).

Measures

Study 2 used the same subgroup identity-uncertainty manipulation and check, leader rhetoric manipulation and check, leader evaluation measure (10 items; $\alpha = .97$), perceptions of the out-subgroup measure (8 items; $\alpha = .92$), and demographic variables as Study 1.

Regarding the leader evaluation measure, principal components analysis with direct oblimin rotation indicated a single factor clear of the scree (eigenvalue = 7.93) that accounted for 79.30% of the variance. For the perceptions of the out-subgroup measure, factor analysis revealed a single factor clear of the scree (eigenvalue = 5.63) that accounted for 62.50% of the variance.

Boundary Spanning Leader Behavior

Participants were randomly assigned to read a vignette describing the leader as either a discrete or blended boundary spanner. The vignettes were similar in length (119 words in the discrete condition vs. 120 words in the blended condition).

Boundary Spanning Leader Behavior Manipulation Check

Two items based on the content of the boundary spanning leader vignette were given: "The President changes their leadership style depending on what country they are in" and "The President's identity is a mixture of American and Canadian identities;" 1 *Strongly Disagree*, 9 *Strongly Agree*, $\alpha = .11$. High scores were indicative of discrete boundary spanning for the first item and blended boundary spanning for the second; as such, the second item was reverse coded. Although reliability was low, a three-way ANOVA with the manipulation check as the

dependent variable indicated that the manipulation had its intended effect (see below for more information).

Results

Three manipulated independent variables (subgroup identity-uncertainty, leader rhetoric, boundary spanning leader behavior) were assessed using three-way ANOVAs onto the manipulation checks of the independent variables and the dependent variables of leader evaluation and perceptions of the out-subgroup. Significant interactions found during hypothesis testing were explored using simple main effects analyses. For the key variables' reliabilities, means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations, see Table 2.

Table 2

Study 2: Reliabilities, Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of the Key Variables

Variable	α	M	SD	2	3	4	5
1. Subgroup identity-uncertainty (prime)	-	1.48	.50	-.05	.05	.07	.07
2. Leader rhetoric (prime)	-	1.49	.50	-	.08	.06	-.004
3. Boundary spanning leader characteristic (prime)	-	1.50	.50	-	-	.05	-.14*
4. Leader evaluation (10 items)	.97	6.66	1.60	-	-	-	.56**
5. Perceptions of the out-subgroup (8 items)	.92	7.28	1.33	-	-	-	-

Note. Means take values between 1 and 9, with 9 indicating more of the feature described. Subgroup identity-uncertainty, leader rhetoric, and boundary spanning leader behavior were binary variables with the values of 1 (low subgroup identity-uncertainty; leader remains neutral; discrete boundary spanning) and 2 (high subgroup identity-uncertainty; leader confirms subgroup identity; blended boundary spanning).
* *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01

Preliminary Analyses

Demographic Analyses

A series of three-way ANOVAs were conducted to determine whether the independent variables were related to any demographic variables. Political ideology significantly covaried with the interaction of subgroup identity-uncertainty and leader rhetoric ($F(1, 238) = 5.80$, $p = .017$, $\eta_p^2 = .024$) and the three-way interaction ($F(1, 238) = 4.86$, $p = .028$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$). However, when analyses were run with and without political ideology as a covariate, the results were the same. Thus, political ideology was not included as a covariate in subsequent analyses.

Manipulation Checks

Manipulation checks determined if the subgroup identity-uncertainty, leader rhetoric, and boundary spanning leader behavior primes elicited the expected differences among participants.

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty. To see if the subgroup identity-uncertainty prime was successful or not, a three-way ANOVA was conducted with the manipulation check as the dependent variable. The manipulation was successful; participants in the high uncertainty condition felt significantly more uncertain ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 3.62$) than those in the low uncertainty condition ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 3.54$), $F(1, 240) = 49.65$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .171$.

Additionally, there was a significant effect of the interaction between leader rhetoric and boundary spanning leader behavior on the manipulation check, $F(1, 240) = 5.32$, $p = .022$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$. However, the leader rhetoric and boundary spanning manipulations occurred after the subgroup identity-uncertainty prime. In addition, the partial eta squared for the interaction was lower compared to the one for the subgroup identity-uncertainty main effect ($\eta_p^2 = .171$). Overall, the analyses indicated that the subgroup identity-uncertainty manipulation was successful, albeit not as clean as intended.

Leader Rhetoric. A three-way ANOVA on the leader rhetoric manipulation check revealed that the manipulation was successful. Participants whose leader confirmed their

subgroup identity ($M = 7.78$, $SD = 2.06$) had higher ratings of the leader than those whose leader remained neutral ($M = 7.16$, $SD = 2.05$), $F(1, 239) = 11.19$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .045$.

There was also a significant interaction of subgroup identity-uncertainty and boundary spanning leader behavior, $F(1, 239) = 7.08$, $p = .008$, $\eta_p^2 = .029$. However, the partial eta squared for the interaction was markedly smaller than the one for the main effect of leader rhetoric ($\eta_p^2 = .045$). Again, it can be concluded from the analyses that although the leader rhetoric manipulation was successful it was less clean than would be ideal.

Boundary Spanning Leader Behavior. A three-way ANOVA on the boundary spanning leader behavior manipulation check confirmed that the manipulation was successful; a discrete boundary spanning leader ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 2.09$) was significantly more highly rated than a blended boundary spanning leader ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 2.09$), $F(1, 240) = 56.23$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .190$. There were no other significant effects.

Main Analyses

Leader Evaluation

A three-way ANOVA on leader evaluation did not find any significant main effects or interactions.

Perceptions of the Out-Subgroup

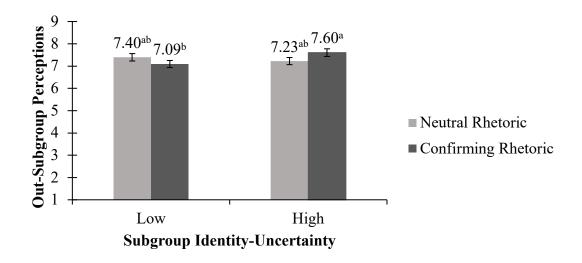A three-way ANOVA with perceptions of the out-subgroup as the dependent variable revealed a significant main effect of boundary spanning leader behavior, $F(1, 240) = 5.32$, $p = .022$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$. Participants with a discrete boundary spanning leader ($M = 7.52$, $SD = 1.83$) evaluated the out-subgroup significantly more favorably than did those with a blended boundary spanning leader ($M = 7.14$, $SD = 1.83$).

Perceptions of the out-subgroup was significantly affected by the interaction of subgroup identity-uncertainty and leader rhetoric, $F(1, 240) = 4.27$, $p = .040$, $\eta_p^2 = .017$ (Figure 1). Simple main effects analyses revealed that among participants whose leader confirmed their subgroup identity, those with high subgroup identity-uncertainty ($M = 7.60$, $SD = 2.71$) evaluated the out-subgroup significantly more favorably than did those with lower levels of uncertainty ($M = 7.09$, $SD = 2.50$), $F(1, 240) = 4.75$, $p = .030$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$. However, for participants who received a neutral leader rhetoric, out-subgroup perceptions did not significantly differ between those with low ($M = 7.40$, $SD = 2.61$) or high subgroup identity-uncertainty ($M = 7.23$, $SD = 2.52$), $F(1, 240) = .54$, $p = .464$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. Comparisons across the low ($F(1, 240) = 1.72$, $p = . 191$, $\eta_p^2 = .007$) and high ($F(1, 240) = 2.59$, $p = . 109$, $\eta_p^2 = .011$) subgroup identity-uncertainty conditions were not significant.

Figure 1

Study 2: Two-Way Interaction Between Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty and Leader Rhetoric on Perceptions of the Out-Subgroup

Note. Means not sharing a superscript differ significantly at $p < .05$ by simple main effect test. Error bars reflect 95% confidence intervals for the means.

There was also a significant interaction between subgroup identity-uncertainty and boundary spanning leader behavior, $F(1, 240) = 8.42$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .034$ (Figure 2). For participants with a discrete boundary spanning leader, those with high subgroup identity-uncertainty ($M = 7.84$, $SD = 2.69$) evaluated the out-subgroup significantly more favorably than did those with low subgroup identity-uncertainty ($M = 7.20$, $SD = 2.49$), $F(1, 240) = 7.75$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .031$. Furthermore, among those with high subgroup identity-uncertainty, those with a discrete boundary spanning leader ($M = 7.84$, $SD = 2.69$) evaluated the out-subgroup significantly more favorably than did those with a blended boundary spanning leader ($M = 6.99$, $SD = 2.55$), $F(1, 240) = 13.25$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .052$. Comparisons across the blended boundary spanning leader condition ($F(1, 240) = 1.74$, $p = .188$, $\eta_p^2 = .007$) and the low subgroup identity-uncertainty condition ($F(1, 240) = .18$, $p = .671$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$) were not significant.

Figure 2

Study 2: Two-Way Interaction Between Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty and Boundary Spanning Leader Behavior on Perceptions of the Out-Subgroup
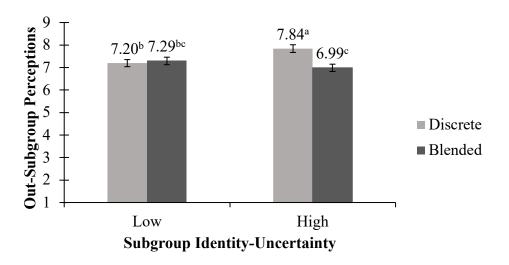

Note. Means not sharing a superscript differ significantly at $p < .05$ by simple main effect test. Error bars reflect 95% confidence intervals for the means.

Discussion

Leader rhetoric on its own is not enough to improve inter-subgroup relations; the leader must also behave in a rhetoric-consistent way, such as through boundary spanning (e.g., Ernst & Yip, 2009; Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b). The purpose of Study 2 was to understand the effects of both approaches on subgroup identity-(un)certain participants' evaluation of the leader and perceptions of the out-subgroup.

All significant effects were in regards to participants' perceptions of the out-subgroup. In partial support of H1, there was a main effect of boundary spanning leader behavior; indeed, past research has shown that boundary spanning can help intergroup leaders succeed (Ernst & Yip, 2009) and is associated with decreased inter-subgroup conflict (Richter et al., 2006). Contrary to predictions, those with a discrete (rather than blended) boundary spanning leader had significantly more favorable out-subgroup perceptions. Perhaps this type of boundary spanning was more effective because it demonstrated how an in-subgroup member can maintain a positive relationship with the out-subgroup without having to change defining in-subgroup attributes by incorporating some features from the other subgroup (i.e., have a blended identity). This interpretation is supported by the extended contact literature. For example, knowing that an ingroup member has outgroup friends can lead to more positive attitudes toward the outgroup (e.g., Mazziotta et al., 2011; Vezzali et al., 2014; Wright et al., 1997).

The interaction between boundary spanning leader behavior and leader rhetoric was not significant (H2), and subgroup identity-uncertainty did not moderate the effects predicted under the previous hypotheses (H3). However, in partial support of H2 and H3, two significant interactions between (1) subgroup identity-uncertainty and boundary spanning leader behavior and (2) subgroup identity-uncertainty and leader rhetoric were obtained. In the first interaction,

participants with high rather than low subgroup identity-uncertainty had significantly more favorable out-subgroup perceptions when their leader was a discrete boundary spanner.

For the second interaction, participants with high subgroup identity-uncertainty whose subgroup identity was confirmed by the leader's rhetoric had more positive out-subgroup perceptions than those with lower uncertainty levels. Because leaders are viewed as trustworthy sources of social identity-relevant information, self-uncertain individuals often turn toward them for guidance about the group's identity and norms (e.g., Goldman & Hogg, 2016; Hogg & Gaffney, 2023). Perhaps a confirming leader rhetoric strengthened participants' confidence in their subgroup identity, thus helping them feel less threatened by and have better attitudes toward the out-subgroup.

Taken together, the results lend support to the use of leader rhetoric and boundary spanning behavior as strategies for improving intergroup relations. However, the efficacy of both methods depends on the degree to which members feel (un)certain about their subgroup identity.

CHAPTER FOUR

General Discussion

Leadership is a widely studied phenomenon that examines various topics like charismatic leadership (e.g., Hunt et al., 1999), the leader-follower dyad (e.g., leader-member exchange (LMX) theory; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), and the leader's personality traits (e.g., Dark Triad; Paulhus & Williams, 2002). However, such studies were conducted in an intragroup context; not much is known about the intergroup aspect of leadership. It is rare for groups to be a purely homogenous entity; often, they consist of diverse subgroups that each confer an important identity to their members rooted in category memberships like ethnicity, gender, and profession. Therefore, intergroup relations can also be construed as inter-subgroup relations because subgroups within a superordinate group interact with one another.

Intergroup leadership studies are emerging (e.g., Kershaw et al., 2021a, 2021b; Rast et al., 2018; Rast et al., 2020), with many directions for future research. Past research has suggested that leaders can utilize two strategies to improve intergroup relations: leader rhetoric and boundary spanning (Hogg, 2015a; Hogg et al., 2012b). Integrating the social identity theory of leadership, uncertainty-identity theory, and past intergroup leadership research, the present studies examined how an intergroup leader's rhetoric (Study 1) and boundary spanning behavior (Study 2) may affect subgroup identity-uncertain members' evaluation of the leader and perceptions of the out-subgroup.

Study 1 found two separate main effects of subgroup identity centrality on the outcome variables. Participants who viewed their subgroup identity as central to their self-concept had higher ratings of the leader; it could be that these participants strongly favored any leader who represented a personally valuable social identity. Those with high subgroup identity centrality

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also had more positive out-subgroup perceptions; perhaps they felt secure in their subgroup identity and therefore did not feel threatened by or have negative attitudes toward another subgroup.

Study 2 re-examined the conceptual ideas from Study 1 while also testing the efficacy of the leader's boundary spanning behavior as an intergroup leadership strategy. In support, results indicated that the leader's boundary spanning behavior had a main effect on out-subgroup perceptions; participants with a discrete (rather than blended) boundary spanning leader had more favorable perceptions of the out-subgroup. Unlike Study 1, there was a significant interaction between leader rhetoric and participants' subgroup identity-uncertainty in Study 2; participants with high subgroup identity-uncertainty whose subgroup identity was confirmed by the leader's rhetoric evaluated the out-subgroup significantly more favorably than did those with lower uncertainty levels. This finding is consistent with past research showing that self-uncertain members have a great need for leadership to reduce their uncertainty and provide social identity guidance (e.g., Goldman & Hogg, 2016; Hogg, 2020; Rast et al., 2012).

Subgroup identity-uncertainty was also found to significantly interact with boundary spanning leader behavior; compared to those with lower levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty, highly uncertain participants had more positive out-subgroup perceptions when their leader was a discrete boundary spanner. This result may suggest that discrete boundary spanning was a more effective approach because it showed how an in-subgroup member (i.e., the leader) can maintain a relationship with the out-subgroup without having to integrate some out-subgroup attributes into the in-subgroup identity (cf. blended boundary spanning).

When analyzing for possible covariates in both studies, political ideology was found to covary with key variables. However, when analyses were run with and without the covariate, the

results remained the same; thus, political ideology was not entered as a covariate. Nevertheless, the ways in which political ideology related to the key variables is somewhat unclear and warrants future investigation. For example, a possible explanation can be given for why political ideology covaried with subgroup identity centrality in Study 1. In this context, subgroup identity centrality can be referred to as national identity centrality, since participants' subgroup was the U.S. Past research has found a relationship between national identity centrality and political ideology, with individuals who consider being American as central to their identity tending to hold more politically conservative views (e.g., Wagoner & Hogg, 2016). In addition, people who are more ideologically conservative often harbor more negative attitudes toward those outside their ingroup (e.g., immigrants; Saldaña et al., 2018).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the studies add to our understanding of the factors underlying the efficacy of intergroup leadership strategies, a few limitations must be acknowledged. As noted in Study 2, the boundary spanning manipulation had low reliability - even though it was successful at yielding the expected differences between conditions. Likewise, although the manipulations in both studies were successful, some were not as clean as they could be (e.g., leader rhetoric). In addition, since participants had to imagine receiving a message from a hypothetical leader (Study 1) and/or information about the leader's boundary spanning behavior (Study 2) within the context of an international trade agreement, experimental realism may have been hindered. Although this scenario may not be realistic to their daily lives, the imagined contact paradigm has been successful in a variety of group contexts (for a meta-analysis, see Miles & Crisp, 2014). Furthermore, vignette methodology was appropriate because it allowed for the manipulation and control of predictor variables while ideally excluding possible confounds. Aguinis and Bradley's

(2014) best practices for vignettes were followed throughout the research process; for example, the same contextual background information was given to all participants prior to the vignette manipulations.

Another limitation may be the choice of a well-liked out-subgroup (Canada) within the free trade agreement between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada, rather than one that Americans may harbor stronger feelings toward (Mexico). Indeed, a (2018) Pew Research Center survey ($N =$ 4,581) revealed that 67% of Americans felt warmly toward Canada, whereas 39% of Americans felt warmly toward Mexico (Laloggia, 2018). The present studies chose to focus on the relationship between Americans and Canadians because the goal was to examine the phenomena under investigation without the intrusion of possible confounds (e.g., prejudice, stereotypes) and social desirability bias. Nevertheless, it is worth exploring inter-subgroup relations that are contentious (e.g., political parties in a country, ethnic groups within a specific location) to heighten the level of participant immersion and to see if the results of the current studies hold true for other inter-subgroup contexts. Future research can compare and contrast the liked versus disliked out-subgroups of the in-subgroup participants. Other types of phenomena that may shape the inter-subgroup relationship, such as the intergroup sensitivity effect (e.g., Hornsey & Imani, 2004; Hornsey et al., 2002), intergroup anxiety (e.g., Stephan & Stephan, 1985; Stephan, 2014), and other types of identity threat (e.g., national identity distinctiveness threat, Maloku et al., 2019), should also be investigated.

Because subgroup membership and inter-subgroup dynamics were the focus of the present studies, future research can increase the salience of superordinate group membership for participants. For example, if manipulations similar to the current studies are used, then the experimenter can include strong introductory material about the historic relationship between the

countries, the benefits conferred upon each country by the free trade agreement, and so forth. An assessment of attitudes toward the superordinate group should also be incorporated as a possible covariate or moderator.

Implications

The current research provides a solid foundation for understanding how subgroup identity centrality, leader rhetoric, and boundary spanning leader behavior affect how individuals with varying levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty evaluate the intergroup leader and perceive another subgroup located within the superordinate group. Regardless of whether the leader's rhetoric confirmed their subgroup identity or not, those who considered their subgroup identity to be very central to their self-concept had more favorable leader evaluations and out-subgroup perceptions. Among those who were very uncertain about their subgroup identity, receiving a message from their leader that confirmed their subgroup identity led to more positive out-subgroup perceptions. However, low or high levels of subgroup identity-uncertainty led to differential perceptions depending on the leader's boundary spanning behavior. Specifically, those with high rather than low subgroup identity-uncertainty had more positive out-subgroup perceptions when their leader was a discrete boundary spanner.

The studies move beyond previous intergroup leadership research by examining intergroup leadership strategies in conjunction with social identity-uncertainty and validation. They also build upon uncertainty-identity theory by demonstrating how a person's perception of the out-subgroup can worsen or improve based on their level of subgroup identity-uncertainty and their leader's boundary spanning behavior. These results may have implications for developing leadership strategies aimed at strengthening the relationship between a superordinate leader and subgroup members, and among subgroups. Leadership development programs can

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help leaders create compelling rhetoric and foster boundary-spanning relationships based on their members' characteristics.

The takeaway message of the studies is twofold. First, intergroup leaders must take their members' level of subgroup identity centrality into consideration when seeking to obtain more positive leader evaluations and improve members' perceptions of the out-subgroup. Second, leaders should tailor their rhetoric and boundary spanning behavior to their members' level of subgroup identity-uncertainty in order to improve their members' out-subgroup perceptions.

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Appendix A

Study 1 Materials

Consent Form

Claremont Graduate University

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A *STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP* (IRB # 4331)

You are invited to volunteer for a research project. Volunteering will not benefit you directly, but you will be helping us explore international leadership processes. If you volunteer, you will be asked about your attitudes toward and evaluation of leaders in the context of international relations. This will take about 15 minutes of your time. Volunteering for this study involves no more risk than what a typical person experiences on a regular day. Your involvement is entirely up to you. You may withdraw at any time for any reason. Please continue reading for more information about the study.

STUDY LEADERSHIP: This research project is led by Alison Young, a doctoral student of psychology at Claremont Graduate University (CGU), and supervised by Dr. Michael Hogg, a professor of psychology at CGU.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to learn about the different ways in which international leaders can obtain support from their group members.

ELIGIBILITY: To be in this study, you must be a citizen of the United States, 18 years of age or older, and registered on Amazon Mechanical Turk.

PARTICIPATION: During the study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will take about 15 minutes, asking you to evaluate the leader of an international group.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION: The risks that you run by taking part in this study are minimal. You might feel some discomfort when answering some questions.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION: I do not expect the study to benefit you personally. This study will benefit the researcher by helping her complete her graduate education.

COMPENSATION: You will be directly compensated 1 dollar and 50 cents ($1.50) through Amazon Mechanical Turk for participating in this study. Upon finishing the survey, you will be given a completion code. Please make note of the completion code.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop or withdraw from the study at any time or refuse to answer any particular question for any reason without it being held against you. Your decision whether or not to participate will have no effect on your current or future connection with anyone at CGU.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your data is confidential. Your individual privacy will be protected in all papers, books, talks, posts, or stories resulting from this study. We may share the data we collect with other researchers, but we will not reveal your identity with it. In order to protect the confidentiality of your responses, I will keep the data in secure, password-protected files.

FURTHER INFORMATION: If you have any questions or would like additional information about this study, please contact Alison Young at alison.young@cgu.edu. You may also contact the faculty supervisor, Dr. Michael Hogg, at michael.hogg@cgu.edu. The CGU Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved this project. If you have any

ethical concerns about this project or about your rights as a human subject in research, you may contact the CGU IRB at (909) 607-9406 or at irb@cgu.edu. You may print and keep a copy of this consent form.

CONSENT: Clicking "Yes" to continue means that you understand the information on this form, that someone has answered any and all questions you may have about this study, and you voluntarily agree to participate in it.

      Yes, I agree to participate.

      No, I do NOT agree to participate.

Setup

Two of America's major goods and services trading partners are our neighbors, Mexico and Canada. For many years, the U.S., Mexico and Canada have been in a trading agreement usually referred to as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), but more recently renamed the U.S. – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA). The USCMA's goal is to strengthen trade ties between the three countries and bring about economic growth, a freer market, fairer trade, and greater protections for workers.

For the sake of this research, we are going to focus on the relationship between the U.S. and Canada within the USMCA.

Subgroup Identity Centrality

The following questions are about your identity as an **American**. Please read each question and indicate how you feel by selecting a number between 1 (*Not Very Much*) to 9 (*Very Much*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not Very Much								Very Much

How important is being an American to you?

How central do you feel being an American is to your sense of who you are?

How often are you aware of being an American?

How much do you feel you identify as an American?

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Prime

In the following section, spend some time reflecting on the nature of American identity and who you are as an American.

Low Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Prime

In particular, focus on all the things that make you feel **certain** about your own American identity and what an American identity is. For example, you may feel **certain** about what it means to be an American, the characteristics that define being an American, what the U.S. stands for, and the distinctiveness of America's identity within the world.

Reflect on your thoughts, feelings, behavior, characteristics, or other areas of your life that make you feel **certain** about who you are as an American. Choose one of these areas of your life that make you feel most **certain** about being an American, and tell us a little about it in the box below:

High Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Prime

In particular, focus on all the things that make you feel **uncertain** about your own American identity and what an American identity is. For example, you may feel **uncertain** about what it means to be an American, the characteristics that define being an American, what the U.S. stands for, and the distinctiveness of America's identity within the world.

Reflect on your thoughts, feelings, behavior, characteristics, or other areas of your life that make you feel **uncertain** about who you are as an American. Choose one of these areas of your life that make you feel most **uncertain** about being an American, and tell us a little about it in the box below:

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Manipulation Check

Based on the self-reflection task you just completed, how uncertain do you feel **right now** about who you are as an American? (1 *Not Very Uncertain*, 9 *Very Uncertain*)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not Very Uncertain								Very Uncertain

Leader Rhetoric

All trade operations under the U.S. – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA) are overseen by a governing body known as the USMCA Commission. The following message is a public statement adapted from the **President of the USMCA Commission**. Please read the message carefully and answer the following questions about it.

Leader Confirms Subgroup Identity

> Due to its economic strength, the U.S. is a valuable part of the USMCA and the global economy. The U.S. has the world's largest economy and is a major trading nation; it is the largest importer and second-largest exporter in the world, with its top trading partners being Mexico and Canada. Thus, the importance of America's participation in the USMCA cannot be understated. North America's economic future would be weaker without the U.S.

Leader Remains Neutral

> Together, we are an economic powerhouse. Home to nearly 500 million people, the U.S., Mexico, and Canada generate almost one third of global goods and services. For our economies to grow and be competitive, we need to create the right conditions for businesses and workers to thrive. Good work practices, strong labor rights protections, predictability in trading relations, and a continuous dialog between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada are a few key priorities.

Check on the Manipulation of Leader Rhetoric

Please read the following questions about what the **President of the USMCA Commission** said and indicate how you feel by selecting a number from 1 (*Not Very Much*) to 9 (*Very Much*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not Very Much								Very Much

How clear was the President's message?

To what extent did the President recognize the importance of U.S. participation in the USMCA?

Leader Evaluation

Read the following questions about the **President of the USMCA Commission** and indicate how you feel by selecting a number from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 9 (*Strongly Agree*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree								Strongly Agree

The President will be an effective leader.

The President will represent the interests of the U.S. well.

I will be a strong supporter of the President.

I think the President will do the right things.

I think the President is trustworthy.

I think the President is very capable.

The President is committed to the U.S.

The President wants the best for the U.S.

The President will strive to benefit everyone in the U.S.

The President develops an understanding of what it means to be a member of the U.S.

Perceptions of the Out-Subgroup

Within this tripart relationship represented by the U.S. – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA), we would like you to focus on the relationship between the U.S. and **Canada**. Both countries are very similar: they are two of the largest countries by area in the world, share the longest international land border, and have a strong trading relationship. The inclusion of the relationship between the U.S. and Canada in the USMCA is quite valuable.

Please read the following questions and indicate how you feel by selecting a number from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 9 (*Strongly Agree*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree								Strongly Agree

Canadians can be trusted.

I would like to get to know more Canadians.

I think it is important to be in contact with Canadians.

I would enjoy working with a group of Canadians.

Americans and Canadians may learn a lot from each other.

There is a strong sense of connectedness between Americans and Canadians.

I can easily accept those features that distinguish most Canadians from us.

I think it is important to emphasize the similarities between Americans and Canadians.

Demographics

Finally, please answer a few questions about yourself for demographic purposes.

What gender do you identify as?

○ Female

○ Male

○ Other/Non-binary

What is your age (please write in a number)? ____

Please indicate which race/ethnicity you identify yourself (select one):

○ American Indian or Alaskan Native

○ Asian/Asian-American

○ Black/African-American

○ Hispanic/Latinx

○ Middle Eastern Descent

○ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

○ White/Caucasian/European-American

○ Multi-racial

○ Other

To what extent do you consider yourself a conservative or liberal? Please choose a number from 1 (*Very Conservative*) to 9 (*Very Liberal*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very Conservative								Very Liberal

Generally speaking, what is your attitude towards Canada? Please select a number from 1 (*Not Favorable*) to 9 (*Very Favorable*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not Very Favorable								Very Favorable

Debriefing

Thank you for your participation in this study. For this study, it was important that I withhold information from you about some aspects of the study. Now that your participation is done, I will explain what information was withheld and why. You will also have the opportunity to decide if you want your data to be included or withdrawn (without penalty) from this study.

What you should know about this study
Before you started participating, you were deliberately underinformed about the true purpose of the study. You were told that the purpose of the study was to learn about international leadership processes. However, the actual purpose of the study was to test a leadership strategy in which the leader gives you a message that either praises your American identity or stays neutral about it. The study wanted to see if this strategy affected your opinion of the leader and another group, depending on how confident you felt about your American identity. I did not tell you about the true purpose of the study because it was important that your responses be spontaneous and not swayed by this information.

To influence your feelings about your American identity, you were asked to write about how certain or uncertain you felt about your American identity and what it means to be an American. Any thoughts or feelings you had about yourself during this study were influenced on purpose. The researchers do not want to influence your thoughts or feelings about yourself beyond this study.

Right to withdraw your data
Now that you know the true purpose of the study, you have the opportunity to withdraw your consent (without penalty). If you choose to withdraw, your data will be deleted from the study.

If you have questions
If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact the study's principal investigator Alison Young at alison.young@cgu.edu and (626) 303-2158. You may also contact her faculty supervisor Dr. Michael Hogg at michael.hogg@cgu.edu and (909) 607-0897.

Again, thank you for your participation in this study. Your answers are confidential and your individual privacy is protected. Please do not discuss this study from others.

Please click the button below to receive your confirmation code for MTurk.

Appendix B

Study 2 Materials

Consent Form

Claremont
Graduate
University

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A *STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP* (IRB # 4332)

You are invited to volunteer for a research project. Volunteering will not benefit you directly, but you will be helping us explore international leadership processes. If you volunteer, you will be asked about your attitudes toward and evaluation of leaders in the context of international relations. This will take about 10 minutes of your time. Volunteering for this study involves no more risk than what a typical person experiences on a regular day. Your involvement is entirely up to you. You may withdraw at any time for any reason. Please continue reading for more information about the study.

STUDY LEADERSHIP: This research project is led by Alison Young, a doctoral student of psychology at Claremont Graduate University (CGU), and supervised by Dr. Michael Hogg, a professor of psychology at CGU.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to learn about the different ways in which group leaders can obtain support from their members.

ELIGIBILITY: To be in this study, you must be a citizen of the United States, 18 years of age or older, and registered on Amazon Mechanical Turk.

PARTICIPATION: During the study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will take about 10 minutes, asking you to evaluate the leader of an international group.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION: The risks that you run by taking part in this study are minimal. You might feel some discomfort when answering some questions.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION: I do not expect the study to benefit you personally. This study will benefit the researcher by helping her complete her graduate education.

COMPENSATION: You will be directly compensated 1 dollar and 50 cents ($1.50) through Amazon Mechanical Turk for participating in this study. Upon finishing the survey, you will be given a completion code. Please make note of the completion code.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop or withdraw from the study at any time or refuse to answer any particular question for any reason without it being held against you. Your decision whether or not to participate will have no effect on your current or future connection with anyone at CGU.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your data is confidential. Your individual privacy will be protected in all papers, books, talks, posts, or stories resulting from this study. We may share the data we collect with other researchers, but we will not reveal your identity with it. In order to protect the confidentiality of your responses, I will keep the data in secure, password-protected files.

FURTHER INFORMATION: If you have any questions or would like additional information about this study, please contact Alison Young at alison.young@cgu.edu. You may also contact the faculty supervisor, Dr. Michael Hogg, at michael.hogg@cgu.edu. The CGU Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved this project. If you have any

ethical concerns about this project or about your rights as a human subject in research, you may contact the CGU IRB at (909) 607-9406 or at irb@cgu.edu. You may print and keep a copy of this consent form.

CONSENT: Clicking "Yes" to continue means that you understand the information on this form, that someone has answered any and all questions you may have about this study, and you voluntarily agree to participate in it.

      Yes, I agree to participate.
      No, I do NOT agree to participate.

Setup

Two of America's major goods and services trading partners are our neighbors, Mexico and Canada. For many years, the U.S., Mexico and Canada have been in a trading agreement usually referred to as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), but more recently renamed the U.S. – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA). The USCMA's goal is to strengthen trade ties between the three countries and bring about economic growth, a freer market, fairer trade, and greater protections for workers.

For the sake of this research, we are going to focus on the relationship between the U.S. and Canada within the USMCA.

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Prime

In the following section, spend some time reflecting on the nature of American identity and who you are as an American.

Low Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Prime

> In particular, focus on all the things that make you feel **certain** about your own American identity and what an American identity is. For example, you may feel **certain** about what it means to be an American, the characteristics that define being an American, what the U.S. stands for, and the distinctiveness of America's identity within the world.

> Reflect on your thoughts, feelings, behavior, characteristics, or other areas of your life that make you feel **certain** about who you are as an American. Choose one of these areas of your life that make you feel most **certain** about being an American, and tell us a little about it in the box below:

High Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Prime

> In particular, focus on all the things that make you feel **uncertain** about your own American identity and what an American identity is. For example, you may feel **uncertain** about what it means to be an American, the characteristics that define being an American, what the U.S. stands for, and the distinctiveness of America's identity within the world.

> Reflect on your thoughts, feelings, behavior, characteristics, or other areas of your life that make you feel **uncertain** about who you are as an American. Choose one of these areas of your life that make you feel most **uncertain** about being an American, and tell us a little about it in the box below:

Subgroup Identity-Uncertainty Manipulation Check

Based on the self-reflection task you just completed, how uncertain do you feel **right now** about who you are as an American? (1 *Not Very Uncertain*, 9 *Very Uncertain*)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not Very Uncertain								Very Uncertain

Leader Rhetoric

All trade operations under the U.S. – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA) are overseen by a governing body known as the USMCA Commission. The following message is a public statement adapted from the **President of the USMCA Commission**. Please read the message carefully and answer the following questions about it.

Leader Confirms Subgroup Identity

> Due to its economic strength, the U.S. is a valuable part of the USMCA and the global economy. The U.S. has the world's largest economy and is a major trading nation; it is the largest importer and second-largest exporter in the world, with its top trading partners being Mexico and Canada. Thus, the importance of America's participation in the USMCA cannot be understated. North America's economic future would be weaker without the U.S.

Leader Remains Neutral

> Together, we are an economic powerhouse. Home to nearly 500 million people, the U.S., Mexico, and Canada generate almost one third of global goods and services. For our economies to grow and be competitive, we need to create the right conditions for businesses and workers to thrive. Good work practices, strong labor rights protections, predictability in trading relations, and a continuous dialog between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada are a few key priorities.

Check on the Manipulation of Leader Rhetoric

Please read the following questions about what the **President of the USMCA Commission** said and indicate how you feel by selecting a number from 1 (*Not Very Much*) to 9 (*Very Much*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not Very Much								Very Much

How clear was the President's message?

To what extent did the President recognize the importance of U.S. participation in the USMCA?

Boundary Spanning Leader Characteristic (Study 2)

The following is a description of the **President of the USMCA Commission**. After reading the description, please respond to the short questionnaire about your thoughts and opinions of the President.

Blended Boundary Spanning Leader

> The President does not see the U.S. - Canada border as a dividing barrier; instead, they see it as a bridge to create and maintain positive relationships. As the link between these countries, the President actively works to foster collaboration among different groups. The President's leadership style combines the knowledge gained from working in the U.S. and Canada. Furthermore, the President is a dual citizen of the U.S. and Canada, speaks fluent English and Canadian French, and feels at home whether they are in the U.S. or Canada. They blend the features of American and Canadian identities to create a new identity – one that is neither fully American nor fully Canadian, but a mix of the characteristics of the two.

Discrete Boundary Spanning Leader

> The President does not see the U.S. - Canada border as a dividing barrier; instead, they see it as a bridge to create and maintain positive relationships. As the link between these countries, the President actively works to foster collaboration among different groups. The President spends equal amounts of time in the U.S. and Canada. They change their leadership style to fit the workplace culture of the country they are in. Furthermore, the President is a dual citizen of both countries and speaks fluent English and Canadian French. The President has a separate American identity and a separate Canadian identity. They identify as American when they are in the U.S. and identify as Canadian when they are in Canada.

Check on the Manipulation of Boundary Spanning Leader

Based on what you read about the **President of the USMCA Commission**, please answer the following questions and indicate how you feel by selecting a number from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 9 (*Strongly Agree*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree								Strongly Agree

The President changes their leadership style depending on what country they are in.

The President's identity is a mixture of American and Canadian identities.

Leader Evaluation

Read the following questions about the **President of the USMCA Commission** and indicate how you feel by selecting a number from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 9 (*Strongly Agree*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree								Strongly Agree

The President will be an effective leader.

The President will represent the interests of the U.S. well.

I will be a strong supporter of the President.

I think the President will do the right things.

I think the President is trustworthy.

I think the President is very capable.

The President is committed to the U.S.

The President wants the best for the U.S.

The President will strive to benefit everyone in the U.S.

The President develops an understanding of what it means to be a member of the U.S.

Perceptions of the Out-Subgroup

Within this tripart relationship represented by the U.S. – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA), we would like you to focus on the relationship between the U.S. and **Canada**. Both countries are very similar: they are two of the largest countries by area in the world, share the longest international land border, and have a strong trading relationship. The inclusion of the relationship between the U.S. and Canada in the USMCA is quite valuable.

Please read the following questions and indicate how you feel by selecting a number from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 9 (*Strongly Agree*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree								Strongly Agree

Canadians can be trusted.

I would like to get to know more Canadians.

I think it is important to be in contact with Canadians.

I would enjoy working with a group of Canadians.

Americans and Canadians may learn a lot from each other.

There is a strong sense of connectedness between Americans and Canadians.

I can easily accept those features that distinguish most Canadians from us.

I think it is important to emphasize the similarities between Americans and Canadians.

Demographics

Finally, please answer a few questions about yourself for demographic purposes.

What gender do you identify as?

○ Female

○ Male

○ Other/Non-binary

What is your age (please write in a number)? ____

Please indicate which race/ethnicity you identify yourself (please select one):

○ American Indian or Alaskan Native

○ Asian/Asian-American

○ Black/African-American

○ Hispanic/Latinx

○ Middle Eastern Descent

○ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

○ White/Caucasian/European-American

○ Multi-racial

○ Other

To what extent do you consider yourself a conservative or liberal? Please choose a number from 1 (*Very Conservative*) to 9 (*Very Liberal*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very Conservative								Very Liberal

Generally speaking, what is your attitude toward Canada? Please select a number from 1 (*Not Favorable*) to 9 (*Very Favorable*).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not Very Favorable								Very Favorable

Debriefing

Thank you for your participation in this study. For this study, it was important that I withhold information from you about some aspects of the study. Now that your participation is done, I will explain what information was withheld and why. You will also have the opportunity to decide if you want your data to be included or withdrawn (without penalty) from this study.

What you should know about this study
Before you started participating, you were deliberately underinformed about the true purpose of the study. You were told that the purpose of the study was to learn about international leadership processes. However, the actual purpose of the study was to test two leadership strategies. In the first strategy, the leader gave you a message that either praised your American identity or was neutral about it. The second strategy was about the leader's behavior; for this strategy, you read a description of the leader's behavior. The study wanted to see if both strategies affected your opinion of the leader and another group, depending on how confident you felt about your American identity. I did not tell you about the true purpose of the study because it was important that your responses be spontaneous and not swayed by this information.

To influence your feelings about your American identity, you were asked to write about how certain or uncertain you felt about your American identity and what it means to be an American. Any thoughts or feelings you had about yourself during this study were influenced on purpose. The researchers do not want to influence your thoughts or feelings about yourself beyond this study.

Right to withdraw your data
Now that you know the true purpose of the study, you have the opportunity to withdraw your consent (without penalty). If you choose to withdraw, your data will be deleted from the study.

If you have questions
If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact the study's principal investigator Alison Young at alison.young@cgu.edu. You may also contact her faculty supervisor Dr. Michael Hogg at michael.hogg@cgu.edu.

Again, thank you for your participation in this study. Your answers are confidential and your individual privacy is protected. Please do not discuss this study from others.

Please click the button below to receive your confirmation code for MTurk.