Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin

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Political Tolerance and Coming to Psychological Closure Following the September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks: An Integrative Approach

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This study tested hypotheses generated from an integrative model of political tolerance that derived hypotheses from a number of different social psychological theories (e.g., appraisal tendency theory, intergroup emotion theory, and value protection models) to explain political tolerance following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. A national field study (N = 550) found that immediate postattack anger and fear had different implications for political tolerance 4 months later. The effects of anger on political tolerance were mediated through moral outrage and outgroup derogation, whereas the effects of fear on political tolerance were mediated through personal threat, ingroup enhancement, and value affirmation. Value affirmation led to increased political tolerance, whereas moral outrage, outgroup derogation, ingroup enhancement, and personal threat led to decreased political tolerance. Value affirmation, moral outrage, and outgroup derogation also facilitated post-9/11 psychological closure and increased psychological closure led to greater political tolerance.

Keywords: terrorism; political tolerance; anger; fear; intergroup relations

One of several reactions Americans had to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, was an increased willingness to sacrifice some of the civil liberties that traditionally define a liberal democracy. Despite the Justice Department's detention of several hundred individuals without clear charges and a host of potential threats to freedom posed by the USA-PATRIOT Act, two thirds of Americans reported that they were willing to sacrifice some civil liberties to fight terrorism, and one in four thought that the

Bush Administration had not gone far enough to restrict civil liberties in the months immediately following the attacks (Etzioni, 2002; Huddy, Khatid, & Capelos, 2002).

Although the tendency of people to become more politically intolerant under conditions of threat is well documented (see Etzioni, 2002; Gibson, 1992; Gibson & Bingham, 1982; Kuzma, 2000; Marcus, Sullivan, Theiss-Morse, & Wood, 1995, for reviews), researchers only recently have noted the specific link between terrorist attacks and political intolerance. For example, Huddy et al. (2002) analyzed cross-sections of national opinion polls and found that more people were willing to sacrifice civil liberties to fight terrorism in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 (49%) and following the 2001 terrorist attacks (68%) than in 1997 (29%), when perceived threat of a terrorist attack was comparatively low. Although political tolerance does appear to recover over time, terrorist attacks erode support for

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broad civil liberties for significant periods of time (e.g., a year or more; Huddy et al., 2002) and therefore are particularly effective weapons against democratic functioning.

The goals of this study were to explore different social psychological explanations for the links between terrorist attacks and political intolerance, with a focus on the role of discrete emotion. We explored the notion that fear and perceived threat lead people to become more intolerant of those whose beliefs differ from their own. Moreover, we explored whether anger, in addition to fear, plays an important role in the link between terrorism and subsequent political intolerance. Finally, we also investigated a number of possible mediators of the links between anger and fear and subsequent political intolerance.

FEAR

A number of researchers have explored the idea that fear leads people to become more politically intolerant. Marcus et al. (1995), for example, argue that under normal conditions, people easily access their standing commitment to democratic values. However, when something happens to make people anxious and afraid (e.g., a terrorist attack), their attention becomes overwhelmingly focused on their contemporary environment and subsequent feelings of threat, leaving them with little remaining attention to devote to accessing values such as their standing commitment to civil liberty. Consequently, people's judgments become driven by affectively primed heuristics and appraisals of continued threat rather than by more rationally developed beliefs about and commitments to civil liberty. Consistent with this idea, fear and perceived threat lead people to express higher degrees of ethnocentrism, to respond more punitively toward outgroups, and to become less politically tolerant (Feldman & Stenner, 1997; Marcus et al., 1995). Other research suggests that once people develop the belief that civil liberties should be sacrificed to fight terrorism, these beliefs may well become resistant to subsequent revision (Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979; Ross, Lepper, & Hubbard, 1975). Taken together, this research suggests that when terrorist attacks induce high levels of fear, people subsequently perceive outgroups to be more threatening, and therefore express greater levels of political intolerance—reactions that may become resistant to revision.

ANGER

Anger, in addition to fear, also may underlie why people become more politically intolerant following a terrorist attack. Intergroup Emotion Theory (IET; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), for example, predicts that people's appraisals of intergroup conflict lead to discrete reactions of anger and fear, which in turn shapes perceivers' behavioral intentions toward outgroups. More specifically, appraisals of ingroup strength lead people to respond to intergroup conflict with anger and confrontation, whereas appraisals of ingroup weakness lead people to respond to intergroup conflict with fear and avoidance (E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999). These predictions were supported in laboratory studies that explicitly tested whether people chose to confront or avoid an insulting outgroup member as a function of aroused anger and fear (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000).

Although traditional work on emotional appraisal, such as research based on IET, is centered on how people's cognitive appraisals influence their emotions (e.g., C. A. Smith & Ellsworth, 1985), more recent research taking an Appraisal Tendency Theory (ATT) approach finds that discrete emotions can be both a cause and consequence of cognitive appraisal (Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003; Lerner & Keltner, 2000, 2001). For example, anger is associated with more optimistic subsequent appraisals of risk, whereas fear is associated with more pessimistic appraisals of subsequent risk (Lerner et al., 2003; Lerner & Keltner, 2000). A now large body of research supports the ATT prediction that discrete emotions color people's subsequent judgment and behavior across a wide range of contexts (e.g., Bodenhausen, Sheppard, & Kramer, 1994; DeSteno, Petty, Wegener, & Rucker, 2000; Keltner, Ellsworth, & Edwards, 1993; Lerner et al., 2003; Lerner & Keltner, 2000).

In sum, regardless of which comes first—cognitive appraisal or affect—both IET and ATT predict that anger, in addition to fear, is likely to be implicated in why people become more intolerant after a terrorist attack. Given increasing evidence that anger and fear are discrete emotions, the effects of anger and fear on political tolerance are also likely to be a consequence of different social psychological processes.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES

In addition to having possible direct effects on political tolerance, anger and fear may lead to a host of other reactions that in turn may shape people's relative degree of political tolerance following a terrorist attack. Specifically, anger and fear may differentially relate to perceptions of threat of a future terrorist attack, the tendency to engage in heightened group differentiation (i.e., ingroup enhancement and outgroup derogation), attempts to alleviate distress through expressions of moral outrage, engaging in value affirmation, or combinations of these responses, each that in turn may influence political tolerance.

Threat

Higher levels of fear lead people to perceive outgroups as more violent and potentially threatening, reactions that in turn are associated with increased ethnocentrism, punitiveness, and political intolerance (Marcus et al., 1995). Therefore, some or all of the effects of terrorism-induced fear on political tolerance could be the result of an increased perception of threat of a future attack. In contrast, little research is consistent with the notion that anger leads to higher levels of perceived threat. Anger is associated with a perception of ingroup strength (E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999) and more optimistic appraisals of future risk (Lerner et al., 2003; Lerner & Keltner, 2000), both of which would seem to contraindicate an increased sense of threat. Therefore, we hypothesize that immediate postattack fear, but not anger, will have a negative effect on subsequent political tolerance through its effects on perceived threat or worry of a future terrorist attack.

Group Differentiation

Anger and fear also lead people to make sharper distinctions between in- and outgroup members (Baron, Inman, Kao, & Logan, 1992; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Group differentiation is associated with ingroup favoritism and outgroup neglect or discrimination (e.g., Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). Therefore, the effects of anger and fear on political tolerance may be a by-product of anger and fear-induced group differentiation.

Anger should negatively affect political tolerance through its effects on outgroup derogation. Anger tends to be an other-focused emotion that is directed out rather than toward the self or one's group (Lazarus, 1991) and therefore seems likely to lead to outgroup- rather than ingroup-focused attention. Consistent with this idea, Mackie et al. (2000) found that anger (but not fear) makes people want to confront and argue with an insulting outgroup member. In the absence of an opportunity to directly confront outgroup members, angry people may avail themselves of symbolic forms of attack or confrontation in the form of belittling and derogating outgroups. Therefore, we hypothesize that anger will lead to outgroup derogation and by extension, decreased political tolerance, especially when direct confrontation of an outgroup is a blocked option.

It is more difficult to derive clear-cut hypotheses for how the effects of fear might be mediated through either ingroup enhancement or outgroup derogation. Fear leads to avoidance of face-to-face interaction or confrontation of outgroups (Mackie et al., 2000). It is less clear, however, if fear will lead people to avoid or embrace an opportunity to engage in indirect or symbolic outgroup condemnation.

Fear also could lead people to focus less on the outgroup and more on bolstering and strengthening ingroup ties and boundaries. If fear-induced avoidance of the outgroup is associated with an increased tendency to focus on the ingroup instead, we may observe that fear is more strongly related than anger to ingroup enhancement.

In sum, it seems likely that the effects of anger and fear on political tolerance may be partially or fully mediated through their respective effects on different forms of group differentiation. However, previous theorizing and research provide little guidance for making specific hypotheses about the discrete effects of anger and fear on political tolerance through either ingroup enhancement or outgroup derogation, so these predictions are largely exploratory.

Motivated Arousal

The anger and fear that people experience following a terrorist attack may be forms of motivated arousal. If terrorist attacks are interpreted as threats to people's sense of moral equilibrium (Skitka & Mullen, 2002; Tetlock, Kirstel, Elson, Green, & Lerner, 2000) or to their cultural worldviews (Pyszczynski, Greenberg, & Solomon, 1997), the subsequent distress will motivate people to engage in one or more attempts to restore a sense of psychic balance.

Value protection theorists argue that people are intuitive prosecutors who respond to moral transgressions with a strong sense of motivated arousal and distress (Tetlock, 2002; Tetlock et al., 2000). This motivated arousal leads people to respond with both moral outrage (a reaction that includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral components, including negative attributions and vilification of the transgressor, rage, and punitive behavior) and value affirmation (attempts to morally cleanse by reaffirming one's commitment to important cultural and moral values or by doing good deeds to reassure oneself of one's own comparative moral commitment and worth). Moral outrage and value affirmation therefore involve interpersonal and intrapsychic mechanisms for coping with threats to people's sense of moral order. Moreover, recent research indicates that responses of moral outrage and value affirmation facilitate a restored sense of moral equilibrium following a wide variety of different moral challenges (e.g., consideration of taboo trade-offs between money and sacred values; dealing with heretical counterfactuals such as asking Christians to imagine that Jesus Christ is not the son of God; Tetlock et al., 2000).

If people viewed the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks as a moral breach that violated, for example, their perception of what constitutes the tenants of just war (Walzer, 2000), the value protection model (VPM)

predicts that they will respond with aversive arousal (e.g., anger and fear), which in turn prompts moral outrage, reaffirmation of commitments to core moral values, or both. Which strategy people use following terrorist attacks seems likely to have important implications for their subsequent degree of political tolerance. Specifically, higher levels of moral outrage should be associated with less political tolerance of groups seen as similar to the transgressors. However, given that civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, represent important American values, value affirmation should be associated with increased, not decreased, political tolerance. Therefore, even though the direct effect of moral outrage on political tolerance should be negative, the direct effect of value affirmation on political tolerance should be positive.

One could work from different premises and generate similar predictions. For example, terror management theory (TMT; e.g., Greenberg, Solomon, & Pyszczynski, 1997; Pyszczynski et al., 1997) posits that events such as the terrorist attacks have profound psychological effects because they prime people's worst fear, that of their own death. The central tenant of TMT is that conflict between humans' instinctual need for self-preservation and their awareness of the inevitability of their own demise can lead to immobilizing terror if they do not employ strategies to keep awareness of death at bay. The primary strategy people use to cope with existential terror is to adhere to cultural worldviews that provide standards and value criterions that, if lived up to, lead to the perception of literal or symbolic immortality.

According to TMT, symbolic defenses against existential terror are especially likely to be activated when mortality salience is high or when people perceive a threat to the anxiety buffer that their cultural worldview represents. People respond to either situation by bolstering their cultural worldview by derogating or aggressing against those who do not share it (e.g., expressing higher levels of prejudice and ethnocentrism, effectively the VPM's moral outrage), as well as increasing efforts to meet or support cultural standards of value (e.g., to be more patriotic, celebrate heroes, or give to charity; in other words, value affirmation).

Although the design of the present study does not allow us to tease apart whether the ultimate origin of anger and fear in response to terrorist attacks is more a consequence of a reaction to a moral breach or mortality salience, it does allow us to test the prediction that the effects of immediate postattack distress (anger and fear) on political tolerance may be mediated through moral outrage and attempts to affirm cultural values. Moreover, the design of this study allows us to examine whether there are discrete effects of anger and fear or

whether reactions to terrorist attacks are better characterized as a generalized sense of aversive arousal.

In addition, an implicit assumption of the VPM and TMT is that expressing moral outrage or engaging in value affirmation should alleviate the distress created by the eliciting event. In other words, moral outrage and value affirmation should facilitate psychological closure after a terrorist attack. Closure is a psychological concept that is frequently mentioned as a desired end-state following any variety of psychological traumas and refers to a state of psychological resolution that is achieved when people feel that they can effectively move beyond the trauma and attend to other problems and concerns (e.g., Beike, 2002; Gold & Faust, 2002).

If the anger and fear that people experience in response to terrorist attacks are forms of motivated arousal, then postattack moral outrage and value affirmation might have indirect positive effects on political tolerance through their positive effects on psychological closure. If expressing moral outrage or value affirmation restores a sense of equilibrium or closure, people should regain the ability to access their long-standing commitments to democratic values rather than continue to rely on affect-driven heuristics when asked to think about political tolerance (cf. Marcus et al., 1995). The hypothesis that closure facilitates political tolerance is consistent with the observation that support for civil liberties does tend to recover over time (Huddy et al., 2002) and provides one account for what leads to this recovery.

In sum, the present study was designed to test an integrated model that attempted to account for why terrorist attacks lead to decreased political tolerance. Although previous research has explored the connections between fear and political tolerance, the present study also explored the potential role of anger in explaining the links between terrorism and subsequent intolerance. Predictions about possible mediating processes were gleaned from a number of different social psychological theories. Specifically, perceived concern about future attacks, increased group differentiation, expressions of moral outrage, engaging in value affirmation, and psychological closure are each hypothesized to play potentially important mediating roles between anger and fear, on one hand, and political tolerance, on the other. These hypotheses were tested using a national random sample of adults who responded to surveys at two points in time: immediately after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and then again approximately 4 months later.

METHOD

Participants

The study sample was drawn from a panel of respondents maintained by Knowledge Networks (KN). KN

recruits panel members using random-digit-dialing telephone selection methods, and the characteristics of the panel closely match those of the U.S. Census (see http://www.knowledgenetworks.com/ganp/ for comparisons of the panel with current Census figures). Once a panel member agrees to participate, they are given a free interactive device to access the World Wide Web (e.g., a Web TV) and free Internet access in exchange for participation in regular surveys. About 50% of the panelists had no prior access to the Web before becoming KN members so the KN panel is the only Web-enabled household panel that is truly representative of the American public.

A random sample of panel members received a password-protected e-mail to alert them that they had a survey to complete during each fielding period, with a "clickable" link in the e-mail that allowed them to initiate the survey. Participants could access each survey only once and the surveys were protected from nonpanel-member access.

The First Survey

For the purposes of a different study on memory (Conway, Skitka, Hemmerich, & Kershaw, 2003), a random sample of 685 adult KN panel members (reflecting an 86% within-panel cooperation rate) responded to a survey between September 14 and October 2, 2001, with more than 80% of completions within the first week of data collection. There were no significant differences in demographic profile (in age, gender, education, income, political orientation, region, or urban/rural settings) of those who did versus did not respond to the first survey.

Measures of anger and fear in response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks were included on this first survey. Analyzing the anger and fear items (described below) using a principal components analysis with a varimax rotation yielded a two-component solution (eigenvalues of 4.47 and 2.43, respectively, all loadings > .49). Therefore, consistent with theories of affective appraisal (e.g., Frijda, 1986), anger and fear emerged as distinguishable reactions to the terrorist attacks rather than as generalized negative affect.

Anger. Anger was assessed by asking respondents the degree that they felt angry, a desire to fight back, outrage, and hatred in response to the terrorist attacks on 5-point radio button scales that ranged from *not at all* to *very much.* The average of these items was used for descriptive analyses (α = .85) but each item was used separately as a manifest variable, indicating the latent construct of anger in structural equation modeling. The measurement model indicated that these items had the respective loadings of .55, .78, .78, and .49 on the latent construct of anger.

Fear. Fear was assessed by asking respondents the degree that they felt frightened, vulnerable, helpless, and confused in response to the terrorist attacks on 5-point radio button scales that ranged from *not at all* to *very much.* The average of these items was used for descriptive analyses (α = .77) and each item was used as a manifest variable indicating the latent construct of fear in structural equation modeling. The measurement model indicated that these items had the respective loadings of .79, .76, .78, and .74 on the latent construct of fear.

The Second Survey

Those who responded to the first survey and who were still active on the KN panel were notified of the civil liberties survey on December 28, 2001, and were given until January 14, 2002, to respond. Five hundred and fifty responded with complete data, reflecting an 80% within-panel cooperation rate at Time 2 and an overall retention level of 69% across both surveys. There were no significant differences in demographic or Time 1 affective profiles (anger or fear) between those who did versus did not respond to the second survey.

The civil liberties survey included assessments of perceived personal threat, retrospective reports of ingroup enhancement; outgroup derogation; thoughts, feelings, and behaviors representing moral outrage or affirmation of cultural values; and current levels of political tolerance and psychological closure. Reducing the number of parameters of a model generally leads to improved fit. Therefore, principal components analyses with oblique rotations (that allow correlated components to emerge) were conducted with each of these measures to identify possible subscales and to reduce data where possible.

Perceived personal threat. Perceived personal threat was measured with eight items that tapped the degree of worry people felt about future terrorist attacks, flying in commercial aircraft, getting infected with Anthrax, other kinds of bioterrorism, retaliation for the war in Afghanistan, the personal safety of themselves and their family, being in tall buildings, and large public gatherings on 5-point radio button scales that ranged from *not at all* to *very much.* A principal components analysis with an oblique rotation indicated that this scale tapped a single underlying construct. Although the average of these items is reported in descriptive analyses (α = .92), each item was used as a manifest indicator of perceived personal threat in structural equation models. The measurement model indicated that these variables had the respective loadings of .81, .73, .84, .83, .63, .74, .73, and .73 on the latent construct of personal threat.

Moral outrage. Moral outrage is conceptualized as a constellation of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and

was measured accordingly. A principal components analysis of these items with an oblique rotation indicated that thoughts and feelings emerged as a separate component of moral outrage than behavioral self-reports of moral outrage (eigenvalues of 4.75 and 1.70, respectively, with $r = .33$, $p < .001$).

The moral outrage thoughts and feelings subscale consisted of five items that asked the extent that respondents had the following reactions in the immediate aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on 5-point radio button scales that ranged from *not at all* to *very much*: a compelling need for vengeance, moral outrage, the need to wipe out terrorists and those that harbor them, that the people who did this were evil to the core, and a desire to hurt those responsible for the attacks ($\alpha = .80$).

The behavioral moral outrage subscale consisted of whether people indicated they did any of a number of behaviors in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks using a radio-button checklist. These behaviors were as follows: said something such as "we should just nuke them," tried to blow off steam about the situation, talked about the need to go to war, and talked about a desire to "get" whoever was responsible for this.

Averages on each of these subscales of moral outrage were used as manifest indicators of the latent construct of moral outrage. Average subscale scores were converted to Z scores and averaged for descriptive analyses.[1] The measurement model indicated that the subscales had the respective loadings of .88 and .59 on the latent construct of moral outrage.

Value affirmation. Value affirmation was also measured in terms of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. A principal components analysis with an oblique rotation yielded a three-component solution with reported thoughts and feelings on one component (eigenvalue = 3.17) and two different behavioral components (patriotic and other value affirming behaviors; eigenvalues respectively of 1.28 and 1.75). These components had intercorrelations that ranged from .23 to .31, $p < .001$.

The value-affirming thoughts and feelings subscale included four items that tapped how much respondents felt a need to restore moral balance, an immediate need to help someone, a compulsion to do something to reassure themselves and others that humans can be decent and good, and a sense of patriotism on 5-point radio button scales that ranged from *not at all* to *very much* ($\alpha = .77$).

The flag display subscale consisted of three behaviors, specifically, whether people indicated on a behavioral checklist that they had displayed the American flag at their home, displayed the American flag on their clothing, or displayed an American flag on their car ($\alpha = .57$). The third subscale consisted of value-affirming behav-

iors, specifically, whether people reported that they donated blood, increased their church attendance, increased attempts to do nice things for family and friends, or attempted to be a better person in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks ($\alpha = .63$).

Subscales were converted into Z scores and averaged for the purpose of descriptive analyses, and separate subscale averages representing each of these components were used as manifest indicators of the latent construct of value affirmation in the structural equation models. The measurement model indicated that these variables had the respective loadings of .83, .49, and .49 on the latent construct of value affirmation.

Group differentiation: Ingroup enhancement and outgroup derogation. Participants were asked how much their feelings about a number of groups had changed since September 11, 2001, on 5-point radio-button scales with the anchors of *much more negative, more negative, stayed the same, more positive,* and *much more positive.* A principal components analysis of the group differentiation items with an oblique rotation revealed a two-component solution. Feelings about ingroup targets—Americans as a whole, American political leaders, firefighters and police—loaded on one component (eigenvalue = 2.42), whereas feelings about outgroup targets—new immigrants, Arab American U.S. citizens, Palestinians, and those who live in Islamic or Middle Eastern countries— loaded on another component (eigenvalue = 3.18). Given that (a) the expected ingroup and outgroup components emerged, (b) the components were uncorrelated ($r = -.04$, *ns*), despite using a data reduction technique that allowed correlated components to emerge, and (c) attitudes toward ingroups and outgroups were respectively on average more positive ($M = 3.85$) and negative ($M = 2.38$), there was a sound foundation for separate measures of ingroup enhancement and outgroup derogation ($\alpha = .77$ and .86, respectively).

Each ingroup item was therefore used as a manifest indicator of the latent construct of ingroup enhancement in subsequent structural equation models. The measurement model indicated that feelings toward Americans as a whole, American political leaders, firefighters, and police had respective loadings of .88, .56, .76, and .64 on the latent variable of ingroup enhancement. After being coded so that high values reflected more negative feelings, each outgroup item was used as a manifest indicator of the latent construct of outgroup derogation in the structural equation models; feelings about new immigrants, Arab American U.S. citizens, Palestinians, and those who live in Islamic or Middle Eastern countries had respective loadings of .78,

.77, .65, and .68 on the latent construct of outgroup derogation.

Psychological closure. Psychological closure was measured with three items on 5-point radio button scales that ranged from *not at all* to *very much*: the crisis is now over; I am ready to move on; and it is time to turn our attention to other problems. A principal components analysis indicated that these items had a single-component solution. Therefore, the average of these items was used in descriptive analyses ($\alpha = .62$) and each item was used as a manifest representation of the latent construct of psychological closure in structural equation modeling. The measurement model indicated that these items had the respective loadings of .80, .51, and .72 on the latent variable of psychological closure.

Political tolerance. Political tolerance was measured two ways: With an adaptation and content-controlled version of the traditional "most disliked group" multiitem measure used in previous studies of political tolerance (e.g., Gibson, 1992; Gibson & Bingham, 1982; Marcus et al., 1995) and with a single-item measure used by many public opinion pollsters.

Rather than ask respondents to nominate a specific "most disliked group" from a list of possible alternatives as is typically done in previous research on general political tolerance, participants were randomly assigned to respond to one of three specific groups: Arab Americans, Muslims, or first-generation immigrants. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that their assigned group should be allowed to make a public speech, have their phones tapped by the government, be allowed to hold public rallies, not be allowed to purchase or own guns, be subject to more thorough searches in airports or public buildings than other people, be required to carry special identification, and whether they should be able to be legally held by authorities even if not charged with a specific crime. The degree of agreement or disagreement was assessed on 5-point radio-button scales with the anchors of *strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree,* and *strongly disagree.* A principal components analysis with an oblique rotation indicated that these items yielded a single component solution. No significant differences emerged in the relative political tolerance for Arab Americans, Muslims, or first-generation immigrants, $F(2, 543) = 2.15$, *ns*, $\eta^2 < .001$. Therefore, this measure collapsed across target outgroup ($\alpha = .89$).[2]

The single-item measure of political tolerance asked respondents to indicate whether they believed that the Bush administration had gone too far, had been about right, or had not gone far enough on restricting civil liberties to fight terrorism (a 3-point radio button scale that was reverse scored so that higher scores reflected greater levels of tolerance).

The single-item measure and the average of the political tolerance scale (after recoding responses so that high scores consistently reflected greater tolerance) were used as separate manifest indicators of political tolerance in the structural equation models and had the respective factor loadings of .75 and .42 on this latent construct. *Z* scores were averaged to create an index of political tolerance for descriptive analyses.

Profile information. In addition to the measures included on our surveys, KN also conducts a standard background profile of each of its respondents, that is, KN collects information about each respondent's age, education, income, political orientation, and so on. This background information was therefore available to allow us to explore the generalizability of our findings across different demographic groups.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analyses

The unweighted demographic profile of the sample is summarized in Table 1 and reveals that a broad cross-section of the American public participated in this study. At the descriptive level, people expressed moderately high levels of anger ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.12$) and fear ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 1.09$) immediately following the attacks as well as moderate levels of personal threat 4 months later ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 0.95$). Other descriptive analyses revealed that people reported feeling more negatively about outgroups, but reactions toward ingroup representatives were not significantly enhanced after the terrorist attacks (i.e., people did not report feeling different from the scale midpoint of *no change*, toward various ingroup representatives).

In addition, people reported engaging in a number of behaviors consistent with moral outrage and affirmation of cultural values. For example, 20% of the sample reported having said something such as "we should just nuke them," 38% talked about the need to go to war, and 23% reported trying to blow off steam by expressing their anger about the situation. In addition, 40% of our respondents indicated that they increased their attempts to do nice things for their family and friends, 49% reported trying to be a better person, 60% reported flying the American flag at their home, 9% reported donating blood, and 12% reported increased church attendance. On average, people reported that they did 1.32 out of 4 behaviors reflecting moral outrage ($SD = 1.39$) and 3.47 out of 7 value-affirming behaviors ($SD = 2.21$).

Closely mirroring results reported by public opinion researchers in the immediate months following the 2001 attacks (see Huddy et al., 2002), we also found that 8% of our sample thought the Bush Administration had gone too far, 71% thought it had done about right, and 21%

TABLE 1:   Demographic Profile of the Sample (Unweighted)

Demographic Information

Sample size	550
Gender	
Men	48%
Women	52%
Age	
18 to 29	16%
30 to 44	30%
45 to 59	33%
60+	20%
Highest level of education	
Less than high school	0.5%
Some high school, no high school diploma	8%
High school graduate or equivalent (GED)	33%
Some college, no degree	27%
Associate degree	6%
Bachelor's degree	18%
Master's degree	5%
Professional degree (MD, DDS, LLB, JD)	2%
Doctorate degree	0.5%
Household annual income	
Less than $14,999	9%
$15,000 to $29,999	15%
$30,000 to $49,999	33%
$50,000 to $74,999	24%
$75,000 to $99,999	10%
$100,000 to $124,999	5%
$125,000 or more	4%
Race/ethnicity	
White	79%
Black	8%
Hispanic	9%
Other	4%
Context	
Urban	88%
Rural	12%
Region	
Northeast	20%
Midwest	23%
South	36%
West	18%

NOTE: Urban areas were classified as those locations that had a census Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) code. For brevity's sake, ranges are reported, but some variables were measured at more fine-grained levels (e.g., age in years, income). Because the study sample was a true probability sample, we could correct for any departures of our sample characteristics from what would be expected based on current census estimates by applying sample weights. All other descriptive statistics and substantive analyses therefore are based on weighted data. Hypothesis testing with and without weights, however, yielded the same results.

thought that the Bush Administration had not gone far enough in restricting civil liberties to fight terrorism. Moreover, on average, people reported modest but not overwhelming support ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.87$ on a 1 to 5 scale) for civil liberties for Arab Americans, Muslims, and first-generation immigrants. As can be seen in Table 2, value affirmation, moral outrage, ingroup enhance-

ment, outgroup derogation, and political tolerance were each distinguishable constructs. Table 2 also reveals that higher levels of fear, anger, and personal threat, as well as ingroup enhancement and outgroup derogation, were each associated with lower levels of political tolerance 4 months after the attack. Only increased value affirmation led to increased political tolerance.

Psychological closure 4 months after the attack was lower among those who initially expressed greater fear and anger as well as for those who perceived higher levels of personal threat or reacted with increased ingroup enhancement. Higher levels of outgroup derogation, moral outrage, and especially value affirmation and political tolerance were positively related to psychological closure.

Finally, as can be seen in Table 3, some interesting demographic patterns emerged. Females, urban dwellers, the less educated, and more liberal were higher in immediate postattack fear than (respectively) their male, rural, more educated, and conservative counterparts. A similar pattern emerged with respect to perceived threat, with the exception that urban/rural differences were unrelated to perceived threat even though they were related to immediate postattack fear. The demographic profile for anger revealed that men, those higher in age, and lower in education expressed more postattack anger than those who were female, younger, and more highly educated.

Demographic variables emerged as weaker predictors of moral outrage, value affirmation, in- and outgroup biases, and political tolerance than they did for anger, fear, and threat. Age modestly predicted greater levels of value affirmation. Women, more than men, responded to the attacks with affirmation of cultural values and outgroup derogation. As education increased, affirmation of cultural values and ingroup enhancement decreased but political tolerance increased. People higher in household income were more likely to engage in outgroup derogation, and liberals were higher in moral outrage, psychological closure, and political tolerance than were conservatives. The only ethnic difference observed was that Whites ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.08$) expressed more immediate postattack anger than Blacks ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.17$) and Hispanics ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 1.04$), $F(1, 547) = 7.29$, $p < .01$; there was no difference in anger between the latter two groups.

As can be seen in Table 4, there were also a number of regional differences in reactions to the attacks. The major differences were consistently between those who were closest to the terrorist attacks (respondents from Northeastern states) and those who were furthest from the attacks (respondents from Western states). Specifically, people from the Northeast reported higher lev-

TABLE 2: Correlations and Partial Correlations (controlling for age, gender, education, income, rural vs. urban context, political conservatism, and region[a]) of Fear, Anger, Threat, Moral Outrage, Value Affirmation, Ingroup Enhancement, Outgroup Derogation, Political Tolerance, and Psychological Closure (N = 550)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Fear	1.00								
2. Anger	.23** (.20**)	1.00							
3. Threat	.44** (.41**)	.21** (.17**)	1.00						
4. Value affirmation	.36** (.35**)	.30** (.26**)	.38** (.37**)	1.00					
5. Moral outrage	-.07 (-.08)	-.11* (-.10*)	-.09* (-.10*)	.12** (.10**)	1.00				
6. Ingroup enhancement	.21** (.19**)	.20** (.18**)	.17** (.15**)	.43** (.42**)	.01 (.00)	1.00			
7. Outgroup derogation	.12** (.10*)	.26** (.24**)	.20** (.17**)	-.14** (-.12**)	.00 (.00)	.11* (.10*)	1.00		
8. Political tolerance	-.14** (-.12**)	-.13** (-.10*)	-.16** (-.23**)	.11* (.09**)	.05 (.04)	-.11* (-.11*)	-.15** (-.12**)	1.00	
9. Closure	-.12** (-.14**)	-.27** (-.26**)	-.20** (-.17**)	.30** (.26**)	.11* (.08**)	-.11* (-.10*)	.25** (.23**)	.09* (.07)	1.00

NOTE: Partial correlations are in parentheses. The full correlation matrix at the individual variable level, rather than the construct level, is available on request.

a. Region was dummy coded for these analyses.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

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TABLE 3:   The Unique Effects (standardized betas) and Combined Effects (R^2) of Age, Gender, Highest Level of Education, Household Income, Urban Versus Rural Context, and Political Conservatism on Fear, Anger, Personal Threat, Moral Outrage, Value Affirmation, Outgroup Derogation, Ingroup Enhancement, Political Tolerance, and Closure ($N = 550$)

	Fear	Anger	Personal Threat	Moral Outrage	Value Affirmation	Outgroup Derogation	Ingroup Enhancement	Political Tolerance	Closure
Age	−.02	.16**	.01	−.07	.10*	.04	−.01	.08	−.08
Gender	.29**	−.09*	.15**	−.02	.16**	.09*	−.04	−.08	.02
Education	−.15**	−.21**	−.19**	.04	−.15**	−.08	−.16**	.23**	.04
Household income	.04	.01	−.02	−.08	.02	.14**	.05	−.02	−.08
Urban/rural	.11**	.06	.02	−.07	.00	−.06	−.05	.01	−.01
Political orientation	−.11**	−.02	−.10*	−.09*	.00	.02	−.01	−.09*	−.13**
R^2	.12**	.08**	.08**	.03*	.05**	.05**	.03*	.06**	.04**

NOTE: Gender was coded 0 for male and 1 for female; urban/rural was coded 0 for rural, 1 for urban; and political orientation was measured on a 7-point scale that ranged from *very liberal* (1) to *very conservative* (7).
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

TABLE 4:   Average Degree of Anger, Fear, Personal Threat, Moral Outrage, Affirmation of Cultural Values, Outgroup Derogation, Ingroup Enhancement, Political Tolerance, and Psychological Closure as a Function of Region of the United States

	Region			
	Northeast (N = 109)	Midwest (N = 127)	South (N = 197)	West (N = 117)
Anger	3.92$_{ab}$	3.67$_b$	3.52$_{bc}$	3.42$_c$
Fear	3.45$_a$	3.19$_b$	3.09$_{bc}$	3.01$_c$
Personal threat	2.84$_a$	2.45$_b$	2.49$_b$	2.26$_b$
Moral outrage	0.22$_a$	0.31$_a$	0.26$_a$	0.24$_a$
Affirmation of cultural values	0.15$_a$	0.01$_a$	−0.03$_a$	−0.10$_a$
Outgroup derogation	3.45$_a$	3.32$_b$	3.31$_b$	3.22$_c$
Ingroup enhancement	3.96$_a$	3.88$_b$	3.87$_b$	3.69$_c$
Political tolerance	0.07$_a$	−0.03$_a$	−0.08$_a$	0.08$_a$
Psychological closure	2.36$_a$	2.43$_a$	2.52$_a$	2.67$_b$

NOTE: Means with noncommon subscripts were significantly different at $p < .01$. All variables ranged from 1 to 5 with the exception of moral outrage, value affirmation, and political tolerance, which are Z scores.

els of anger, fear, and personal threat than did those from Western states. People from the Northeast also expressed more outgroup derogation and ingroup enhancement than did those from the West. Finally, people in the West were higher in psychological closure than those from all other regions. No regional differences emerged in moral outrage, value affirmation, or political tolerance.

Even though we observed a number of interesting demographic differences, controlling for gender, age, education, income, rural versus urban context, or dummy variables reflecting region and ethnicity did not significantly change the relationship between the major variables of theoretical interest (see the partial correlations in Table 2). For this reason, and because the primary goals of this study were to test the relationships

between psychological constructs rather than to test hypotheses about individual differences, we did not include demographic variables in the structural equation models that constituted the real focus of our analysis. We turn to these analyses next.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses about the direct and indirect effects of anger and fear on political tolerance were tested using structural modeling and maximum likelihood estimation using AMOS 4.0 (Arbuckle, 1997). Although the ideal when fitting structural equation models is to get a model that yields a nonsignificant Chi-square, the large sample sizes required for structural equation modeling make this unlikely and, therefore, the Chi-square a poor index of model fit. Therefore, other fit indices that correct for this problem are generally employed, for example, the normed fit index (NFI; Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990). Models with a NFI or CFI greater than .90 have good fit, and models that fit greater than .95 have excellent fit to the data (Bentler, 1990; Bentler & Bonett, 1980).

We first tested a model that included (a) the direct effects of anger and fear on political tolerance; (b) the effects of anger and fear on political tolerance mediated through perceived threat, ingroup enhancement, outgroup derogation, moral outrage, and value affirmation; and (c) the effect of anger, fear, perceived threat, ingroup enhancement, outgroup derogation, moral outrage, and value affirmative on political tolerance mediated through psychological closure. After dropping insignificant pathways, we arrived at the final best-fitting model, $\chi^2(501) = 1199.14$, NFI = .99, CFI = .98. As can be seen by the fit indices, this model had excellent fit to the data.

The cumulative indirect effects of anger and fear were respectively −.30 and −.22. On balance then, the effects of both anger and fear on political tolerance were more
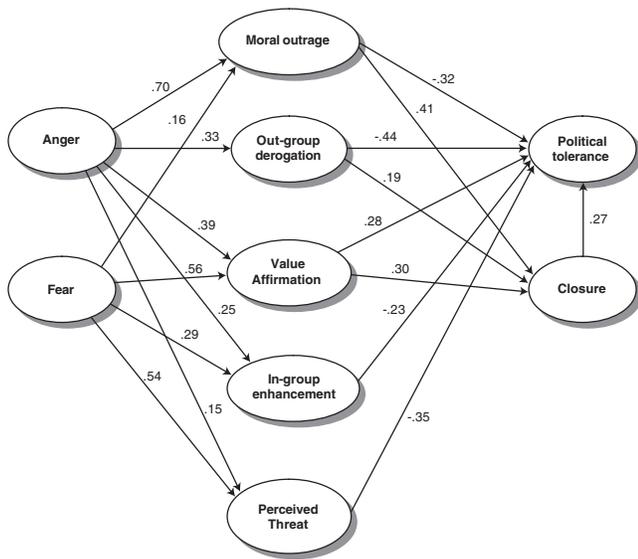
Figure 1   An integrated model of political tolerance.
NOTE: Path coefficients are standardized.

TABLE 5:   The Relative Effects of Anger and Fear on Perceived
Threat, Ingroup Enhancement, Outgroup Derogation,
Moral Outrage, and Value Affirmation in Response to
the September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks

	Anger	*Fear*	*t(547)*
Threat	.15* (.03)	.54* (.08)	–19.93*
Ingroup enhancement	.25* (.03)	.29* (.02)	–2.92*
Outgroup derogation	.33* (.02)	.06 (.03)	15.88*
Moral outrage	.70* (.04)	.16* (.05)	32.37*
Value affirmation	.39* (.03)	.56* (.06)	–9.09*

NOTE: Standardized regression weights are the nonparenthesized numbers and standard errors are the parenthesized numbers in the anger and fear columns. The fourth column reflects *t* tests that tested the difference between the regression weights for anger and fear predicting each proposed mediator (see Cohen & Cohen, 1983, pp. 479-480). *$p < .01$.

negative than positive. However, a focus on the cumulative effects masks the fact that anger and fear had their effects through very different processes and that even though the cumulative effects for both anger and fear were negative, some evidence of positive consequences of a terrorist attack on political tolerance also emerged.

The best-fitting model. As can be seen in Figure 1, anger and fear did not have significant direct effects on political tolerance but had indirect effects through a number of different mediating variables. Anger was significantly associated with each mediating variable—moral outrage, outgroup derogation, value affirmation, ingroup enhancement, and to a considerably lesser extent, perceived threat. These variables, in turn, were each associated with political tolerance. Specifically, higher levels of moral outrage, outgroup derogation, ingroup enhancement, and perceived threat each led to decreased political tolerance. Only value affirmation had a positive effect on subsequent political tolerance.

The effects of fear on political tolerance were mediated through four out of the five tested mediators. Specifically, higher fear was positively associated with value affirmation, ingroup enhancement, perceived threat, and modestly to moral outrage but was not significantly related to outgroup derogation.

Anger and fear also had indirect effects on political tolerance through their indirect effects on psychological closure. In other words, the motivated arousal hypothesis that people's reactions to the terrorist attacks would facilitate restoration of a sense of equilibrium or closure

also received empirical support. Moral outrage and value affirmation, and to a lesser degree outgroup derogation, each led to increased psychological closure. Closure was unrelated to either perceived threat or ingroup enhancement. Consistent with the hypothesis that the mediated effects of anger and fear, at least to some degree, reflect attempts to restore a sense of postattack equilibrium or closure, closure in turn facilitated a restored commitment to political tolerance.

The relative effects of anger and fear. Finally, to explicitly test the hypothesis that anger and fear would affect political tolerance through different social psychological processes, we explored whether anger and fear had different effects on the proposed mediators. As summarized in Table 5, fear was more strongly related than anger to perceived threat; the tendency to engage in value-affirming thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; and to a lesser but nonetheless significant degree, ingroup enhancement. Anger, in contrast, was more strongly related than fear to moral outrage and outgroup derogation. In short, although the impact of anger and fear on political tolerance may overlap to some degree (e.g., both were related to value affirmation), there is strong empirical evidence in support of the hypothesis that anger and fear impact political tolerance through largely different social psychological processes.

In sum, immediate postattack anger was more strongly associated than fear with subsequent higher levels of moral outrage and outgroup derogation, reactions that in turn were associated with lower levels of political tolerance. Immediate postattack fear had more of a mixed effect on subsequent political tolerance. Specifically, fear (more than anger) led to higher levels of both perceived threat and to increased ingroup enhancement, reactions that were associated with weakened support for civil liberties. However, fear (more than anger) also led to higher levels of value-affirming thoughts, feel-

ings, and behaviors, such as attempts to be a better person or donating blood. Fear channeled through value affirmation led to increased, rather than decreased, political tolerance.

DISCUSSION

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were very grim, infuriating, tragic, and life-shattering events that had and continue to have consequences that cut across many aspects of American life. As tragic as these events were, capturing people's reactions shortly after the terrorist attacks and then again several months later provided the opportunity to gain new insights into the psychological dynamics that shape how people think about civil liberty following terrorist attacks.

An important contribution of the present study is the finding that anger, in addition to fear, plays an important role in shaping people's political tolerance following a terrorist attack. Moreover, anger and fear were related to political tolerance through quite different processes. Anger led to negative effects on political tolerance through multiple channels, including stronger effects than fear on moral outrage and outgroup derogation. To the extent that expressing moral outrage or engaging in outgroup derogation facilitated coming to psychological closure, anger also led to indirect positive effects on political tolerance 4 months later.

As expected, fear had stronger negative effects than anger on political tolerance through perceived threat. Fear, more than anger, was associated with perceived threat and threat consequently was associated with lower levels of political tolerance. Fear (more than anger) also was associated with increased ingroup enhancement but was weakly or unrelated to outgroup derogation or moral outrage, reactions that were at least symbolically more confrontational of the outgroup. Fear therefore seems to lead people to focus more on bolstering the ingroup than on defending against the outgroup. Consistent with the idea that fear leads to ingroup-focused attention, fear was also more strongly related than anger to the tendency to engage in value-affirming thoughts, feelings, and behavior. In addition to representing cultural standards of value, donating blood, attempting to be a better person, and so on also may serve to strengthen ingroup cohesion and ties.

Moreover, fear—and to a lesser degree anger—had positive, not negative, effects on political tolerance when these reactions were channeled through value affirmation. This effect was particularly remarkable. No research to our knowledge has ever found that fear (or anger) has positive indirect effects on political tolerance. This may be because researchers have primarily focused on variables such as personal threat to the relative exclusion of more positive strategies people might employ to cope with their fears (e.g., value affirmation).

Taken together, these results were consistent with other recent research that finds that not all forms of negative affect have similar consequences (e.g., DeSteno et al., 2000; Elster, 1998; Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Moreover, the effects of immediate postattack fear and anger had more than a momentary impact. The effects of these variables were clearly related to people's level of political tolerance several months later through their effects on various social psychological processes. The role of affect therefore not only reflects a fleeting inability to access commitments to longer standing values but instead initiates a set of processes that have longer term and varying implications for political tolerance that extend well beyond the initial eliciting event.

These results were consistent with, but extended in important new ways, current theories of political tolerance (Marcus et al., 1995) as well as IET (e.g., Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), ATT (e.g., Lerner & Keltner, 2000), and theories of motivated arousal, specifically the VPM and TMT (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1997; Tetlock et al., 2000). Specifically, Marcus et al.'s (1995) hypothesis that fear and perceived personal threat would lead people to become more politically intolerant was supported. However, the results of the present study also indicated that we gain additional insight into the psychological dynamics of political tolerance by expanding consideration beyond the effects of fear and threat. The finding that anger, in addition to fear, has discrete effects on people's reactions to terrorist attacks and subsequent political tolerance also was consistent with and extends IET and ATT. Moreover, our results suggest that affect and appraisal may have reciprocal rather than unidirectional effects on how people respond to intergroup situations or conflict, a potentially new insight for IET.

Finally, the results of this study also were consistent with theories that posit an important role for worldview maintenance and defense (i.e., VPM and TMT). First, the results of the present study supported the proposition that people's responses to terrorist attacks would represent attempts to alleviate distress and that certain classes of responses (e.g., expressing moral outrage or engaging in value-affirming thoughts, feelings, or behavior) facilitate a restored sense of equilibrium or psychological closure. To the extent that people arrived at some psychological closure, they also became more politically tolerant. Although these results are consistent with the motivated arousal premise of TMT and VPM, neither theory currently posits an important role for discrete emotion. Future research will be needed to explore whether discrete emotion is a necessary, rather than only a sufficient, cause of worldview maintenance and defense.

Although our results were consistent with hypotheses, one can nonetheless generate alternative accounts for the results observed here. For example, some of our measures relied on retrospective reports of behavior (e.g., our measures of moral outrage and value affirmation). People's current state of mind can sometimes color their recall of their past behavior. Moreover, one could argue that our measure of immediate postattack anger was too similar to our subsequent measure of moral outrage and therefore effects observed for anger may be due more to common measurement variance than to something special about anger itself. However, because our measure of moral outrage (a) was separated from our measure of immediate postattack anger by a period of several months and (b) included retrospective reports of attributional and behavioral reactions of moral outrage, whereas our measure of anger tapped only affect, our findings seem unlikely to be the result of shared measurement effects alone.

Similarly, our measures of outgroup derogation and ingroup enhancement may not be the strongest possible operationalizations of these constructs. For example, our measure of ingroup enhancement included whether feelings about ingroup authorities (e.g., politicians) had become more negative, stayed the same, or become more positive following the terrorist attacks.

In short, this study, similar to all field studies, cannot conclusively rule out alternative explanations for the observed results. Correlational field studies and statistical modeling can be criticized at multiple levels ranging from measurement to model specification errors. Future research will be needed to validate the findings reported here with other samples, measures, and possibly in response to other eliciting events (e.g., severe economic downturns, war, or other threats to people's cultural worldviews). That said, confidence in our results and conclusions are bolstered to some extent by the following observations: (a) we tested a range of variables, each of which were equally plausible explanations for how eliciting events such as terrorist attacks might lead people to become less politically tolerant; (b) by using a combination of a longitudinal panel design, retrospective reports, and measures of present attitudes, there was a natural time-order sequence to guide the structural equation models; (c) the study used a national probability sample of American adults that allowed for population estimation and ensures that the observed results are generalizable across persons; and (d) the research was conducted in the context of a consequential and involving real-world event rather than using hypothetical vignettes or laboratory simulations that are often perceived as sterile or as having little connection to people's actual lives. In sum, although correlational field studies have limitations, they also have a number of strengths

and provide an important complement to research conducted in the lab or with convenience samples of college students. Only with multimethod convergence can we hope to come to a true understanding of the consequences of affective appraisal, group differentiation, and related variables and to fully understand the psychological dynamics that drive political tolerance.

In conclusion, the results of this study indicated that the effects of anger and fear in response to terrorist attacks were distinguishable, durable, and important in their implications for political tolerance some months later. Including anger, in addition to fear, yielded a more powerful explanatory and predictive model of political tolerance in the context of reactions to terrorist attacks than using fear alone. Of importance, the results of this study also revealed that political tolerance under conditions of threat might be more complexly determined than may have been heretofore thought. Specifically, fear does not inevitably lead to lower levels of political tolerance; those who channeled their fear into reaffirmation of their commitment to cultural values were more, not less, politically tolerant. Although future research will need to explore whether these findings generalize beyond reactions to terrorism, they provide some hope that democratic values are not completely undercut by acts of terrorism or other similarly threatening events. Future research in both the lab and the field that builds on these findings will continue to facilitate our ability to follow Patrick Henry's famous injunction to "guard with jealous attention the public liberty."

NOTES

1. The thoughts, feelings, and behavioral subscales had different scale ranges and therefore needed to be converted to a common measurement scale before they were averaged. The need for a common measurement scale was also the reason why Z scores of the subscales of value affirmation and political tolerance were created before averaging them for descriptive analyses.

2. Structural equation modeling also requires a large N, precluding testing models separately for Arab Americans, Muslims, or first-generation immigrants. That said, there is little reason for the models to fit differently given that there were no meaningful differences in the correlations between major study constructs across the different groups.

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