

# “The Response”: A Day of Prayer and Protest

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study examines two unique groups in the United States: participators and protestors of a religious event held in Houston, Texas. Texas Governor Rick Perry called upon Christians to come together on August 6, 2011 for a day of prayer and fasting. Survey data were gathered from participants and protestors of “The Response.” Differences in values, psychological sense of global community, political conservatism, and social dominance orientation (SDO) were examined. Participators placed greater importance on conservation and self-enhancement values and were more conservative and higher in SDO than protestors. Protestors placed greater importance on self-transcendence values. Moreover, protestors scored higher on psychological sense of global community, indicating greater perceptions of belonging to a global community consisting of all of humanity. Respondents also rated the importance of current issues facing the United States. Participators placed significantly greater importance on economic and conservative concerns. Protestors placed significantly greater importance on social justice issues. This essay discusses significant and noteworthy differences in terms of the motivations for social change.*

In the United States, political parties struggle to encourage citizens to get involved and advocate for change essential to their particular vision for society. The intergroup dynamics of the two dominant political parties have placed politics in the United States in a contentious state. Red and blue states and conservative and liberal are terms used to describe the ideological divide that exists in the United States today. This division is seen not only among elected officials, but also among the public as new social movements develop across the country. For instance, the Tea Party emerged in 2009 as a voice advocating for conservative reform. Members of the Tea Party, frustrated by the bailouts initiated under George W. Bush’s administration and the stimulus package passed during the beginning of Barack Obama’s administration, perceived the federal government as fiscally irresponsible in its handling of bank bailouts and takeover of private industry. During the 2010 Congressional elections, 109 Republican challengers were, in some way, associated with the Tea Party movement (Jacobson, 2011). In contrast, Occupy Wall Street is a liberal movement fighting the power of banks and multinational corporations in the democratic process. Members of the Occupy movement express concerns over the ability of banks and corporations to influence public policy and the simultaneous loss of the average U.S. citizen’s ability to influence government and impact policy decisions. Both the Tea Party and the Occupy movement claim to be grassroots organizations powered by the concerns of U.S. citizens.

The ideological schism defining politics in the United States today was recently on display in Houston, Texas. Rick Perry, the Governor of Texas and, at one point, a potential 2012 Presidential candidate for the Republican Party, called upon Christians from across the country to come together on August 6, 2011 for a day of prayer and fasting. The event, referred to as “The Response,” aimed to bring God’s help to a “nation in crisis.” The Mississippi-based American Family Association (AFA), a Christian nonprofit organization best known for its strong opposition to homosexuality, provided funding for the event. Three days before the event, organizers indicated 8,000 people were registered to attend (Acosta, 2011). The day of the event, however, brought out nearly 30,000 people (Montgomery, 2011). In addition to the participants, an estimated 300 protestors countered the controversial gathering (Gerlich, 2011). Protestors of “The Response” voiced opposition to the AFA, the exclusionary focus on Christianity, and the blatant merging of religion and politics. Participators downplayed the role of politics and claimed the day was focused on prayer and saving the United States. This study surveyed two key groups: those who participated in the event and those who protested the event. The essay focuses on distinctions between these two specific groups by examining differences in personal values, perceptions of belonging to a global community consisting of all humanity, political conservatism and social dominance orientation (SDO), and differences in the key issues perceived to be pressing concerns for the United States. This research is a real-world

application of several prominent, theoretical approaches in social psychology to a very intense and complex intergroup situation.

### **Values**

According to Piurko, Schwartz, and Davidov (2011), values are “cognitive representations of desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or group” (p. 538). This view starts with the premise that values are based on a set of universal human needs or motivations. Schwartz (1992) has identified ten value types, each representing basic human motivations and goals:

- . self-direction (independent thought and action)
- . stimulation (excitement, novelty, and challenge in life)
- . hedonism (pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself)
- . achievement (personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards)
- . power (social status and prestige and control or dominance over people and resources)
- . security (safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self)
- . conformity (restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms)
- . tradition (respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self)
- . benevolence (preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent, personal contact)
- . universalism (understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature)

Within these value types, individual values (e.g., equality, social justice) derive meaning from the motivations they represent to the individual. For instance, freedom and influence are both self-direction values with the motivation of pursuing independent thought and action.

Prior research has found religiosity to be associated with an acceptance of the social order of society and with discouraging openness and questioning about the world (Schwartz & Huismans, 1995). Moreover, religiosity has been associated with a greater concern for the welfare of others with whom frequent contact occurs. In contrast, religiosity is associated with less universalism, or being less concerned with the welfare of all people (Schwartz

& Huismans, 1995; Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, & Knafo, 2002). Participants of “The Response” would be expected to place greater importance on values stressing the importance of maintaining the status quo (i.e., national security and social order). In addition, due to the nature of the event and the intergroup context of participants and protestors, participants would be expected to place greater emphasis on demonstrating their importance to society (i.e., influence) and values indicating the ability to dominate others (i.e., wealth). In contrast, protestors would be expected to indicate greater concern for the welfare of all people (i.e., equality and social justice) and greater endorsement of independent thought and action (i.e., freedom and creativity).

### **Religion, Prejudice, and Psychological Sense of Global Community**

Social identity theory posits that people who identify with a particular group often hold more favorable attitudes toward ingroup members than outgroup members (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Dovidio and Gaertner (2010) provide a review of the long research tradition in the social sciences examining prejudiced attitudes and intergroup relations. Viewing the ingroup in a more favorable light enhances self-esteem. Moreover, research has also found greater prejudice among religious individuals toward religious outgroup members and non-religious individuals (Jackson & Hunsberger, 1999). This prejudice is reflected in both greater ingroup favoritism and more outgroup derogation. “The Response,” highlighted as bringing Christians together, certainly provided a strong basis for group identification among participants. As a result, participants of the event may have experienced greater ingroup favoritism and engaged in derogation of protestors of the event. Interestingly, this call to bring one particular group together to pray for the salvation of a nation may have diminished endorsement of common Christian teachings such as the universality of humanity. This event may have led participants to strongly identify with other Christians, but perhaps attenuated perceptions of belonging to a global community of all humanity.

Psychological sense of community (PSC) includes people’s feelings of belonging, their concern and appreciation for other community members (i.e., that community members matter to each other and to the broader group), and a shared belief that individual needs can and will be met through the community’s commitment to be together (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Omoto & Malsch, 2005; Omoto & Snyder, 2010). PSC is abstract in nature and extends beyond geographical boundaries

and includes communities organized around common interests, characteristics, experiences, and opinions. Psychological sense of global community (PSGC) is an extension of PSC and considers perceptions of belonging and commitment to a global community that consists of all humanity (Malsch, 2005). PSGC has been associated with greater political and social activism (Hackett & Omoto, 2015) and with greater concern for human rights violations and greater engagement in human rights behaviors (Hackett, Omoto, & Matthews, 2015). The exclusionary focus of this religious gathering may have increased feelings of belonging to a Christian community but likely decreased perceptions and feelings of belonging to a global community of humanity. In contrast, protesting the exclusionary nature of the event may have increased perceptions of belonging to a global community by encouraging protestors to desire a more open and diverse dialogue. As a result, protestors should indicate greater perceptions of belonging to a global community consisting of all humanity than participators of the event.

#### *Political Conservatism and Social Dominance Orientation*

Conceptual views of political conservatism have focused on the role of preserving the establishment and opposing change (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003). The political nature of the prayer rally allowed for an analysis of the differences in political conservatism between participators and protestors. Recent research has found political conservatism to be associated with greater religiosity (Guth, Kellstedt, Smidt, & Green, 2006; Olson & Green, 2006). Governor Rick Perry (2011), as highlighted in the campaign message below, is a politician who frequently mixes his religious convictions with his political beliefs:

I am not ashamed to admit that I am a Christian. But you don't need to be in the pew every Sunday to know that there is something wrong in this country when gays can serve openly in the military, but our kids can't openly celebrate Christmas or pray in school. As President, I'll end Obama's war on religion, and I'll fight against liberal attacks on our religious heritage. Faith made America strong; it can make her strong again.

Social dominance orientation refers to a desire for group-based dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Group conflict emerges, according to social dominance theory, through both the hierarchy among groups in the social system and the basis for the distinctions made among these

groups. These distinctions can be small or quite large. Stratification in society can be gender-based and based on more arbitrary-set distinctions. The latter distinctions are more arbitrary in nature and vary depending on cultural factors. Groups at the top of the hierarchical system have more material and social power than groups further down the hierarchy. Greater endorsement of group-based dominance characterizes group members closer to the top of these arbitrary systems (Sidanius, Levin, Liu, & Pratto, 2000). These groups strive to maintain their access to the desired resources available to them because of their higher status.

Religion serves as one possible arbitrary-set distinction among groups. This arbitrary distinction may be particularly salient in the United States, where 73% of the citizenry identifies as Christian (Pew Research Center, 2012). Moreover, during the Presidency of George W. Bush, Christians gained access to greater resources through the faith-based initiatives program. The protestors of this event may be perceived as threatening by the Christian participators. Additionally, the fact that over 30,000 participators attended the event and only around 300 protestors were present may have heightened perceptions of dominance. Previous research has found greater SDO among dominant religious groups, particularly when the status gap between groups is perceived as large (Levin, 2004). Participators of the event should show greater SDO, suggesting perhaps a motivation to preserve the position of Christians in the hierarchical social structure of society in the United States (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994).

#### *Current Research*

The current research examines several hypotheses set in the context of "The Response."

*H1:* Participators of "The Response" will place greater importance on the values of national security, social order, influence, and wealth than protestors.

*H2:* Protestors will place greater importance on the values of equality, social justice, freedom, and creativity than participators.

*H3:* Protestors will report greater PSGC than participators.

*H4:* Participators of the event will report greater political conservatism and SDO than protestors.

In addition, in the interest of exploratory investigation, I compare participators and protestors on key issues perceived as important and pressing for the United States. Participators and protestors represent strikingly different ideological perspectives in the United States. As a result,

this data collection represents a unique opportunity to examine exactly on what issues these two groups differ and what issues, if any at all, they both agree are important.

## Method

### *Participants and Design*

Data were collected during "The Response." A research team approached participants that had gathered at Reliant Stadium, a large sports stadium in Houston, Texas where the event took place. Among the participants ( $N=53$ ) there were 27 female participants, 21 male participants, and five did not indicate their sex. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 73 with an average age of approximately 40 years old. By self-report, participants were primarily Caucasian (55.8%) with a smaller number of Latinos (21.2%), African Americans (9.6%), Asians (3.8%), and the remainder (9.6%) did not complete this item. The majority of participants, 51.9%, indicated belonging to the Republican Party, 15.4% had no party affiliation, 9.6% were Tea Party members, 7.7% indicated "other," 3.8% were Democrats, one participant belonged to the Independent Party (1.9%), and the remaining 9.6% did not respond.

Data were also collected from people protesting ( $N=60$ ) who remained outside the event (enforced by event security officers). Thirty-one protestors were female, 26 male, and three did not indicate their sex. Protestors ranged in age from 18 to 69 with an average age of approximately 58 years old. For ethnicity, the majority self-reported being Caucasian (63.3%), 11.7% Latino, 11.7% indicated "other," 8.3% African American, 3.3% Native American, and one participant did not complete the item (1.7%). For party affiliation, 30% belonged to the Democratic Party, 28.3% had no party affiliation, 15% were Socialists, 11.7% checked "other," 6.7% Independent Party members, 5% belonged to the Green Party, one participant indicated the Republican Party (1.7%), and one did not complete the item.

Participants were asked if they would be willing to participate in a study examining their personal values and opinions as well as their views on various current issues important to America. Researchers supplied a short booklet containing all of the study materials to those who voluntarily agreed to participate in the survey. Although the research team obtained permission to hand out questionnaires during the rally, recruitment for participants of "The Response" ended sooner than expected when the research team was urged to leave the grounds of Reliant Stadium by event security. The team moved outside

of the grounds and began recruiting protestors. Security measures were in place that prohibited protestors from entering the parking areas of Reliant Stadium. As a result, data recruitment for protestors occurred outside of the area the research team was asked to leave.

### *Measures*

This research was conducted at Reliant Stadium during Governor Rick Perry's prayer rally. As a result, the number of items included for each measure was minimized to make the survey more manageable for participants who were busy participating or protesting the event.

**Values.** Eight items from the Schwartz Value Survey were included. Using a 7-point scale (1=*not at all important*, 7=*very important*) participants indicated whether the following values are important guiding principles in their lives: equality, freedom, social order, wealth, national security, creativity, influence, and social justice. Greater scores on each item indicate greater agreement with the values.

**Political Conservatism.** Participants separately rated (1=*very liberal*, 7=*very conservative*) their general political views, their views on social issues, and their views on fiscal issues. These three items showed strong internal consistency ( $\alpha=.94$ ) and were averaged to create a single measure of *Political Conservatism*, with higher scores indicating greater conservatism.

**Social Dominance Orientation.** Four-items, measured with a 7-point scale (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*), assessed social dominance orientation: "Some groups are simply not the equal of others;" "Some people are just more worthy than others;" "It is not a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others;" and "If people were treated more equally we would have fewer problems in this country" (Pratto et al., 1994). The fourth item was recoded and the items were averaged to create a measure where greater scores indicate greater SDO ( $\alpha = .66$ ).

**Psychological Sense of Global Community.** Two items from the Sense of Community Index (Chavis, Hogge, McMillan, & Wandersman, 1986) were modified using humanity and global community as the referents. Participants then rated their agreement (1=*strongly disagree*, 7=*strongly agree*) with the items: "I feel a sense of belonging to a human or world community, one that extends beyond where I live and includes more than just people I know" and "I feel a sense of connection to people all over the world, even if I don't know them personally." The items were strongly correlated with one another ( $r > .72$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and were averaged to create a composite

Table 1.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<i>Correlations</i>															
(1) Equality	—															
(2) Freedom	.50***	—														
(3) Social Order	.14	.23*	—													
(4) Wealth	-.01	-.01	.31**	—												
(5) National Security	-.10	.14	-.52***	.29**	—											
(6) Creativity	.44***	.50***	.22*	-.01	.14	—										
(7) Influence	.13	.25**	.36***	.25**	.24*	.53***	—									
(8) Social Justice	.46***	.33***	.16	-.06	-.09	.28**	.21*	—								
(9) Political Conservatism	-.22*	.01	.25*	.19*	.62***	-.13	.07	-.39***	—							
(10) SDO	-.34***	-.03	-.03	.06	.29**	-.05	-.06	-.30**	.47***	—						
(11) PSGC	.22*	-.05	.08	-.12	-.20*	.07	.16†	.52***	-.42***	-.54***	—					
(12) Entitlement Reform	.02	.20*	.19†	.15	.35***	.21*	.10	-.06	.39***	.32**	-.24*	—				
(13) Social Justice Issues	.26**	.04	.01	.01	-.13	.08	.13	.47***	-.42***	-.40***	.52***	-.12	—			
(14) War Concerns	-.01	.04	.02	.14	.03	.03	.01	.04	.07	.09	-.14	.14	.13	—		
(15) Conservative Concerns	.06	.19*	.35***	.25**	.56***	.18†	.22*	-.12	.54***	.33***	-.31**	.46***	-.08	.22*	—	
(16) Economic Concerns	.06	.11	.32**	.16	.23**	.09	.25**	-.05	.14	-.16†	.05	.03	.26**	.15	.23*	—
	<i>Descriptions</i>															
All Participants																
M	6.55	6.71	5.49	3.52	5.25	5.81	5.39	6.20	4.69	2.29	5.69	5.12	5.80	5.27	5.12	6.22
SD	1.04	.85	1.72	1.48	1.86	1.32	1.59	1.52	1.52	1.31	1.53	1.76	1.17	1.75	1.35	1.04
n	110	110	108	110	110	110	110	110	109	112	111	110	111	110	111	111
Participants of "The Response"																
M	6.27	6.76	5.96	3.86	6.42	5.78	5.71	5.73	5.67	2.88	5.01	5.83	5.26	5.55	5.88	6.33
(SD)	(1.17)	(.62)	(1.40)	(1.50)	(.94)	(1.29)	(1.35)	(1.82)	(1.31)	(1.30)	(1.63)	(1.30)	(1.24)	(1.50)	(1.06)	(.83)
n	51	51	51	51	52	51	51	51	50	52	51	52	52	52	52	52
Protectors of "The Response"																
M	6.78	6.66	5.07	3.22	4.19	5.83	5.12	6.61	2.24	1.78	6.28	4.48	6.27	5.02	4.46	6.13
(SD)	(.85)	(1.01)	(1.87)	(1.42)	(1.86)	(1.37)	(1.73)	(1.05)	(1.08)	(1.09)	(1.18)	(1.87)	(1.18)	(1.93)	(1.23)	(1.19)
n	59	59	57	59	58	59	59	59	59	60	60	58	59	58	59	59

Note: †p &lt; .10, \*p &lt; .05, \*\*p &lt; .01, \*\*\*p &lt; .001

measure of PSGC with higher scores indicating greater sense of global community.

**Current Issues.** Participants, again utilizing a 7-point scale (1=*not at all important*, 7=*very important*), indicated the importance of 18 different current issues for America today. The list included: the economy, unemployment, illegal immigration, stem cell research, abortion, gun rights, the Patriot Act, federal deficit, reforming Social Security, reforming Medicare, reforming Medicaid, healthcare reform, war in Iraq, war in Afghanistan, promoting alternative energy sources, racism and prejudice, poverty, and separation of church and state.

An exploratory factor analysis with Varimax rotation was performed on all eighteen current issues. Five factors emerged with eigenvalues > 1.0. The first factor, all with loadings of .92 and greater, accounted for 24.14% of the common variance in the items, and consisted of *Entitlement Reform* issues (Social Security reform, Medicare reform, and Medicaid reform;  $\alpha=.96$ ). The second factor, with loadings of .65 and greater, accounted for 20.20% and consisted of *Social Justice Issues* (healthcare reform, promoting alternative energy sources, racism/prejudice, poverty/welfare, and the separation of church and state;  $\alpha=.79$ ). The third factor consisted of *War Concerns* (the Afghanistan and Iraq wars), accounted for 10.87% of the variance, and had loadings of .96 and greater ( $r=.98, p < .001$ ). The fourth factor accounted for 9.61% and had loadings of .62 and greater. This factor included items related to *Conservative Concerns* (illegal immigration, abortion, gun rights, federal deficit;  $\alpha=.71$ ). The final factor had loadings of .79 and greater and accounted for 6.62% of the variance. This factor consisted of *Economic Concerns* (the economy and unemployment;  $r=.57, p < .001$ ). Stem cell research and the Patriot Act cross-loaded on several factors and, as a result, were not included in the factors.

## Results

### *Descriptive and Correlation Information*

As revealed by the means in Table 1, participants in this study indicated relatively high endorsement of the values and PSGC ( $M_s > 3.52$ ). Interestingly, PSGC was positively related to equality and social justice ( $r_s > .22, p_s < .05$ ). A greater feeling of belonging to a global community was associated with placing greater importance on equality and social justice. PSGC was also related to less endorsement of national security as a value ( $r = -.20, p > .05$ ), as well as a more liberal political orientation and less SDO ( $r_s > -.42, p_s < .001$ ). Political Conservatism was related to less importance placed on equality and social

justice ( $r_s > -.22, p_s < .05$ ) and greater importance placed on wealth and national security ( $r_s > .19, p_s < .05$ ). In general, participants appeared to be at least somewhat concerned about all of the current issues factors ( $M_s > 5.12$ ).

To examine Hypotheses 1 through 4, independent samples *t*-test analyses were conducted to evaluate differences between participants and protestors. Supporting Hypothesis 1, participants placed greater importance on the values of national security and social order ( $t_s > 2.78, p_s < .01$ ), as well as the power value of wealth ( $t(108)=2.31, p < .05$ ) and the achievement value of influence ( $t(108)=1.96, p = .05$ ). Independent *t*-test analyses were also conducted to examine Hypothesis 2. Protestors placed greater importance on the universalism values of equality and social justice,  $t_s > -2.61, p_s < .01$ . For the self-direction values of freedom and creativity, there were no significant differences between protestors and participants,  $t_s < .64, ns$ . As a result, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported. Protestors placed significantly more importance on values associates with the welfare and interests of others than participants. There were not significant differences, however, for values promoting independent thought and action.

Hypothesis 3 predicted PSGC to be significantly higher among protestors compared to participants. Supporting this hypothesis, protestors indicated greater PSGC ( $M=6.28, SD=1.18$ ) than participants ( $M=5.01, SD=1.63$ ),  $t=-4.73, p < .001$ . The perception of belonging to a global community consisting of all humanity was greater among protestors than participants. In addition, participants of "The Response" indicated significantly greater Political Conservatism and SDO ( $M=5.67, SD=1.31; M=2.88, SD=1.30$ ) than protestors ( $M=2.24, SD=1.08; M=1.78, SD=1.09$ ),  $t_s > 4.89, p_s < .001$  respectively. Participants of the event were more politically conservative and indicated a greater preference for hierarchy within society. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Participants and protestors were compared on the importance placed on the five factors that emerged in the factor analysis on the current issues. Participants placed greater importance on Entitlement Reform ( $M=5.83, SD=1.30$ ) than protestors ( $M=4.48, SD=1.87$ ),  $t(108)=4.34, p < .001$ . Similarly, significantly greater importance was placed on Conservative Concerns among participants ( $M=5.88, SD=1.06$ ) than protestors ( $M=4.46, SD=1.23$ ),  $t(109)=6.45, p < .001$ . In contrast, protestors placed greater importance on Social Justice Issues ( $M=6.27, SD=1.18$ ) than participants ( $M=5.26, SD=1.24$ ),  $t(109)=-4.97, p < .001$ . There was no significant difference in the importance placed on

War Concerns and Economic Concerns for participants ( $M=5.55$ ,  $SD=1.49$ ;  $M=6.33$ ,  $SD=.83$ ) and protestors ( $M=5.02$ ,  $SD=1.93$ ;  $M=6.13$ ,  $SD=1.19$ ),  $t_s < 1.60$ , *ns*.

## Discussion

Recent social movements have highlighted the growing ideological divide and polarization that exists in the United States. “The Response” was a unique event that brought two groups with clear political and social goals into confrontation with one another. As such, this event presented an interesting and timely opportunity to examine several social-psychological theories in a real-world context characterized by a very complex intergroup situation.

Participants of the event endorsed national security and social order as important personal values more than protestors. The underlying political nature of the event and the focus of restoring the United States may highlight the focus of conservation values for those participating in the prayer rally. That is, attending and participating in the event may have been perceived as a way to focus on preserving conservative principles and attempting to “take back” the country from its current perceived path of secularism and liberalism. There was no significant difference between the two groups on values associated with the pursuit of individual thought and action. This may have been the result of both groups, although certainly from different perspectives, being open to and seeking to affect society. For participants, the focus appeared to be preserving the status quo and restoring the United States to more conservative principles. The focus for protestors, however, appeared to be promoting more progressive viewpoints and, in particular, focusing on the welfare of all people.

With a greater focus on equality and social justice, the protestors appeared to be driven by a greater concern for others. While participants of “The Response” may have been motivated to participate because of shared conservatism and religious beliefs, feelings of belonging to a global community and a greater concern for others may have driven protestors to voice opposition to the event. This greater concern for others may be apparent in the greater feelings of belonging to a global community consisting of all humanity. Feelings of belonging to a global community include the perception of being connected to others even when there is no anticipation of future contact. In other words, greater feelings of PSGC should be associated with a greater commitment and concern for all people. Not only should higher feelings of

PSGC increase concerns about the welfare of others, but it should also lead to a greater willingness to take action and participate in demonstrations and protests to counter perceived injustices. In line with this, recent research has found greater PSGC is associated with more political and social involvement (Hackett & Omoto, 2015) and greater concern with human rights (Hackett, Omoto, & Matthews, 2015). Endorsing security, power, and achievement values, which participants did significantly more than protestors, should promote a greater focus on the promotion of one’s own welfare and attainment and should decrease willingness to take action on behalf of others. Significant differences in the personal values reported to be important driving principles in people’s lives emerged between the participants and protestors.

While previous research has shown that identifying with a broader superordinate category of being human is associated with prosocial behaviors (Wohl & Branscombe, 2005), others have questioned whether people truly identify with a superordinate category in routine day-to-day social interactions (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009; Pettigrew, 1998; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009). In addition, concern has been raised that identifying with a superordinate category may decrease the likelihood of social change by increasing the perception that people are interchangeable (Dovidio et al., 2009). Ultimately, this interchangeability may reduce the desire to pursue social change. The results of this study, however, may alleviate these concerns by finding that feeling part of a global community, a broad superordinate category, is strongly associated with a concern for the welfare of all people.

Participants indicated greater political conservatism than protestors. The left-right distinction in political conservatism has been characterized by two interrelated factors (Jost et al., 2003): (1) advocating versus resisting change, and (2) rejecting versus accepting inequality. Participating or protesting this controversial event may reflect the importance of these two dimensions. Protestors and participants advocated for the social change they believed important for the United States society. Protestors may have been motivated by their perception of an inherent inequality in the event’s exclusionary nature, while participants may have been driven by a desire to declare their belief in the superiority of Christian principles and ideals. This may be reflected in the greater SDO found among participants. According to SDO theorists, human societies have a tendency to organize along a social hierarchy (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), where certain groups have greater access to power and privilege.

Participants of "The Response" indicated a greater tendency to preserve the hierarchical social structure and perceive certain groups as more deserving than others.

Participants and protestors of the event differed in the issues believed to be important for the United States. For participants, greater importance was placed on Entitlement Reform and Conservative Concerns. In contrast, protestors placed greater importance on Social Justice Issues. Interestingly, there were no significant differences in the importance placed on Economic Concerns and War Concerns. For both groups, concern about the struggling economy and prolonged wars are pressing issues facing the United States.

### Limitations and Future Research

There are limitations that should be mentioned regarding the data and findings. Due to the nature of this study, measures consisted of a limited number of items. While this is certainly less than ideal, it was essential to keep the questionnaire to a length that participants who were engaged in social activism could complete in a short amount of time. The data are correlational and as such the causal direction between variables cannot be unambiguously determined. Another limitation occurred during recruit-

ment of participants. Data collection was intended to occur throughout the day of the event. When the research team was asked to leave the area around Reliant Stadium, however, data collection ended earlier than intended. It is not possible to ascertain definitively if the results obtained are limited to this particular event or are generalizable to other social and political events. For instance, it is possible that people who showed up early for the rally were higher on SDO or other measures than people who did not attend until after the research team was removed.

The results of this study are noteworthy and suggest several avenues for future research. Future research should continue to examine fundamental differences in guiding principles that exist between supporters and opponents of particular social, political, and religious movements. Knowledge of these differences can be used to develop intervention programs designed to address the contentious divide that exists in American politics. "The Response" provided a real-world opportunity to examine real differences between groups working for opposing social change.

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