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Leadership and the strategic emotional manipulation of political identity: An evolutionary perspective

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A B S T R A C T

This paper offers a theoretical argument for some of the ways in which leaders can strategically manipulate emotion and appeal to shared identity to create cohesive political identities among followers which allow them to overcome recruitment, coordination and collective action challenges to maximize prospects for group survival. Building on divergent strands of literature from several disciplines including political science and psychology as well as recent work in biological anthropology, this argument outlines how leaders build on a foundation of shared social identity to incite fear and outrage toward out-groups among followers. Social identity and emotion thus serve as proximate mechanisms by which leaders can develop and sustain cohesive cooperation among followers that can then be deployed at will. In this way, the most effective leaders can leverage extant psychological mechanisms to cultivate a devoted group of followers whose affective attachment to a particular political identity can be activated for a wide variety of purposes independent of actual political content or issue area.

Leaders often serve and improve their constituencies responsibly. In such cases, both leaders and followers can mutually benefit from their relationship. However, many leaders do not serve their followers as much as influence them through the strategic manipulation of their emotions and social identities for the leaders' benefit. They can accomplish this even when they provide unclear or uncertain benefits, and the costs to followers may be high. At least in the modern world, leaders can be successful at cultivating followers without necessarily being particularly good at implementing policies that benefit those constituencies.

Countless examples of this phenomenon abound. The current seemingly relentless media obsession with President Trump, both by those who support as well as oppose him, provides only the most recent example of the ways that powerful leaders can mesmerize, transfix, and otherwise captivate the attention of opponents and followers alike. Yet Trump is far from the only leader who has proven adept at manipulating mass emotions and social identities. Whether or not Trump is self-serving, these strategies help facilitate the kind of leadership that can sway followers for their own political or tactical advantage. Indeed, many prominent political, religious and military leaders throughout history have relied on similar strategies to engage the loyalty of followers for their own purposes.

However, often it can be difficult to discern exactly how effective leaders manage to transfix large groups of followers. If not all leaders deliver concrete benefits to their followers, how is it that they still manage to obtain and stay in power? Clearly, successful leadership, in terms of being able to mobilize a group of followers toward a common purpose, must involve other forces at play besides the mere provision of

material benefits, the imposition of coercive force, or the ability to remain in power. This is where an evolutionary approach to the study of leadership and followership can prove particularly insightful and generative.

The emergence and actions of effective leaders depends, at least in part, on evolutionary and biological processes that trigger adaptive responses to leadership from followers. Insights from evolutionary theories allow observers to understand the interaction between leaders and followers as a kind of communication process between sender and receiver (Dawkins & Krebs, 1979). From this perspective, the receiver needs to receive some benefit for the adaptation to evolve. In other words, the follower must get benefit for following the leader. And this benefit comes in the form of the advantages provided by being able to join with others for the benefit provided by collective action as organized by the leader, who sends the messages.

This communication process will often be far from perfect for reasons that have to do with both the environment and the actors. First, environmental factors matter because modern large-scale politics make it very difficult for followers to know what leaders are doing, much less hold them accountable for their behavior. Because of this, leaders have more opportunity to manipulate and deceive followers for their own benefit than would have been the case in small-scale political environments (Li, Van Vugt, & Colarelli, 2018). This so-called evolutionary mismatch between ancestral inputs of information and modern conditions make it much easier for leaders to deceive or manipulate their followers, leading to potentially maladaptive outcomes.

How do leaders do this? This raises the second point about how actors can manipulate the communication process. Because signals

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must penetrate through a lot of different kinds of background noise provided by other information and events, receivers may not always get a clear message. In addition, followers must decide whether the potential benefit of doing what leaders suggest is worth potential costs. In order to overcome potential resistance, leaders can intensify their signals of benefit to followers by explaining how failure to follow their lead will increase the likelihood of negative outcomes. Manipulating emotions such as fear and anxiety, or highlighting threats to shared identity, serve to potentiate this signaling and communication process.

For example, if something benefits the leaders, or sender, but not the receiver as much, the leader would need to “shout” to overcome resistance on the part of the receiver or competing messages from opponents seeking to sway followers toward another leaders. Such shouting might take various forms, including threats to central values, the use of overt and outrageous language, false statements repeated ad infinitum, or the use of particularly coercive forms of influence, including abusive policing, imprisonment or torture. However, if something benefits both the sender and receiver, both the leader and the followers more evenly, then leaders only need to employ low cost signals, akin to a “whisper”, because the benefits of suggested action will be more obvious to followers, and thus persuasion will be required to inspire followership. Whispers can include various forms as well, including private side payments or the use of coded language that insiders understand to have particularly important implications for identity, including racial or ethnic superiority, but either passes by the awareness of outsiders, or is hoped to do so. If both benefit, it does not require a huge effort on the part of the sender to get the receiver to comply because the receiver also benefits from the proposed action.

This raises the obvious question of why followers should be swayed by leaders. Although it may be obviously in the interest of leaders to get followers to do things for them, why would followers be selected to follow? In short, leaders can employ mechanisms of strategic manipulation of emotion and social identity to help achieve effective collective action to increase prospects for survival and reproductive success among followers (Glowacki et al., 2016; Glowacki & von Rueden, 2015). When such benefits are obvious, as under conditions of group defense (Lopez, 2017) the leader may need only whisper, but where the benefits seem primarily to redound to the leader disproportionately, he may need to shout, by employing mechanisms of emotional manipulation and displays of shared identity in order to overcome contradictory inclinations in followers. One of the ways that leaders can accomplish this goal is through producing and amplifying emotional contagion among followers; this alone can generate coordination benefits by overcoming conflicting identities and loyalties among followers. In this way, crosscutting coalitions that may differ by age, race or gender can be united under an umbrella of hatred, fear, or anger at an out-group that is suggested by the leader to pose a threat to an overarching value. The intuition behind this process is captured by the old adage of the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

By examining leadership and followership from this perspective, an evolutionary approach helps to bridge ultimate and proximate explanations of leadership. Here, proximate refers to the immediate mechanisms that bring about a result, while ultimate refers to the function of the adaptation. In the case of leadership, the ultimate function of the adaptation is the coordination of successful group cooperation that enhances average survival benefits for each member. Two of these proximate mechanisms involve the strategic manipulation of emotion, especially fear and anger, and the display of shared social identity. Successful leaders are particularly good at mobilizing followers for collective goals by signaling emotions and appealing to shared social and political identities (Antonakis, Bastardo, Jacquart, & Shamir, 2016; Grabo, Spisak, & Van Vugt, 2017; Reh, Van Quaquebeke, & Giessner, 2017). One of the functions of signaling identity in this way is to create a so-called identity fusion that allows leaders to blur the distinction between their self-interest and the group interests of followers (Swann Jr, Jetten, Gómez, Whitehouse, & Bastian, 2012). In this

way, skilled leaders can leverage the mechanism of emotional manipulation and identity fusion to attract and mobilize followers who may otherwise be suspicious of exploitation, allowing for the group advantage of large-scale cooperation toward shared goals.

In this way, leaders can traction innate proximate psychological mechanisms involving emotion and identity to engage large groups of people for their own private benefit as well as the ultimate function of group survival, depending on their intention and the level of accountability built into the institutions in which they operate (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999; Tetlock & Mellers, 2011; Tetlock, Vieider, Patil, & Grant, 2013). Leaders can thus manipulate emotions in the body politics in order to obtain and sustain political support, which can then produce the survival and reproductive benefit which their charisma was designed to enhance (Van Vugt & Grabo, 2015). Charisma has many definitions, but often relies on an implicit “know it when you see it” notion of the kind of magnetic automatic appeal, power or influence that certain individuals seem to be able to exert over others. One of the ways in which they do this is by manipulating emotions to forge, transform and sustain specific political identities which can then be marshalled for particular personal or public purposes, including warfare.

This paper offers a theoretical argument for some of the ways in which leaders strategically manipulate emotion to create cohesive political identities among followers that allow them to overcome recruitment, coordination and collective action challenges. Building on divergent strands of literature from several disciplines including political science, psychology and biological anthropology (King, Johnson, & Van Vugt, 2009; Price & Van Vugt, 2014; Smith et al., 2015; Spisak, O'Brien, Nicholson, & Van Vugt, 2015; Van Vugt & Grabo, 2015; Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008; Van Vugt & Ronay, 2014; von Rueden, Gurven, Kaplan, & Stieglitz, 2014; von Rueden & Van Vugt, 2015), this argument outlines how leaders can work to create cohesive social identities through the process of emotional entrepreneurship. In this way, social identity and emotion serve as proximate mechanisms by which leaders can develop and sustain cohesive cooperation among followers that can then be deployed at will. Thus, the most effective leaders can leverage extant psychological mechanisms to cultivate a devoted group of followers whose affective attachment to a particular political identity can be activated for a wide variety of purposes independent of actual political content or issue area. The claim is not that this is the only way for leaders to develop committed constituencies; rather, this discussion simply outlines one potential way in which a leader can strategically manipulate emotion and identity to direct followers' actions in particular ways. Although this argument is designed explicitly and exclusively as a theoretical argument, it offers many generative avenues for hypothesis development and empirical testing, validation and revision.

This paper begins with a brief discussion of the independent functions of emotion and identity, including group identity. This discussion provides important background regarding the functional proximate value that emotions and identity serve in order to achieve the ultimate goal of the survival and reproductive benefit that leadership offers and can, under the best of circumstances, provide. It then discusses how leaders can link emotion to identity strategically through the use of public performance, persuasion, amplification coalitions, and the conscious use and abuse of outrage. This kind of signaling communicates important information to followers about the potential benefits that can derive from collective action on behalf of leader goals. In drawing on models from social and evolutionary psychology, an evolutionary perspective differs from most extant models of leadership in political science that emphasize organizational and institutional structures and constraints (Ahlquist & Levi, 2011) by focusing on the individual level of analysis; such a model could then easily be integrated with other structural models which examine the interaction between individuals, and within and between leaders within larger organizational and institutional structures.

Functional purposes

Leaders can automatically indicate and signal their leadership ability through their strength and skill, which can include various charismatic factors as delineated by [Grabo et al. \(2017\)](#), as well as embodied manifestations such as physical formidability ([Sell, Tooby, & Cosmides, 2009](#)). Such embodied manifestations of leadership may communicate an ability to protect others in part, but would not necessarily denote the ability to influence others. However, size may be useful to the extent that it allows leaders to attract attention for purposes of coordination, the recruitment of allies or in order to punish deviant in-group members, such as free riders ([von Rueden et al., 2014](#)). Once formidable leaders have the attention of their followers, they can use their effort and energy in various ways. In order to be most effective, they need to overcome any resistance within individual followers as well as internal divisions among their followers. In addition, aspiring leaders need to recruit as many new followers as possible to increase another important indicator of charisma, coalitional size. They can do this in a variety of ways, but two of the most effective involve the strategic delineation of social identity and the manipulation of emotions such as fear and anger. This section discusses the functions of each in order to highlight why signaling these features prove so important in constructing and maintaining political power.

Leaders strive to manipulate emotion precisely because they can be used so effectively and efficiently to shape the construction and operation of political and social identity. For example, think of white supremacists who racial identity or misogynistic men who identify as “involuntary celibates” to stoke anger and hatred toward out-group members. These identities can be used by leaders to factionalize groups who might otherwise unite under some other rubric, like class, to overthrow those leaders. In this way, leaders can use emotion to divide and conquer potentially destabilizing groups within their own constituency. Emotions can be more easily manipulated than entire structures, not least because they are more ephemeral in nature. In addition, inculcating or manipulating an emotional response in followers may also help to recruit followers by encouraging them to shut off a more abstract analytics processing of potential risks, costs and benefits; instead, endogenous downstream hormonal responses to powerful emotions make individuals feel good, while also allowing them to feel deeply connected to those who share that same emotional state. When people share a powerful emotional response such as fear or anger in the face of threat, it allows them to recognize similarity in one another that helps to overcome other potentially competing social divisions. This is because, at least in part, emotion facilitates various aspects of social communication regardless of content, including asking for, or offering, help. Indeed, recent models of emotion suggest that emotions are not even discrete phenomena but rather probabilistic calculations designed to facilitate individual survival by providing quick and efficient information about the environment so that we can make the best behavioral choices going forward ([Barrett, 2017](#)). Similarly, identity serves several different important functions in individual lives independent of politics, but when conjoined with politics, can be used by leaders to motivate and mobilize followers for collective action ([Glowacki & Wrangham, 2013](#)). As a result, individuals who demonstrate the potential for charismatic leadership can then effectively traction identity and emotion to provide additional signals of behavioral intentions that followers can embrace and join. In this way, leaders can hijack identity and emotion for political purposes, including but not limited to war.

Emotion

Emotion serves many functions, but four of them emerge as especially relevant in considering issue of leadership ([Pieters & Raaij, 1987](#)). First, emotions help organize information about the self and others and how that relates to other information about the world. Take a simple example. When a baby cries, everyone intuitively understands that

baby is in some kind of distress and most people go out of their way to try to help that baby, if only to get it to stop crying. All this can happen automatically and effortlessly, without even having to know the same language. In this way, emotion helps provide simple and immediate information that automatically and effortlessly tells us whether it is best to approach or avoid others, or strives to get others to help or fight us. Thus, emotion can provide a much more comprehensive and cohesive way of organizing the vast amount of information we constantly receive from the environment than trying to objectively calculate probabilities and utilities constantly in our heads; that simply demands too much cognitive effort in the face of all the information each person has to process every day ([Barrett, 2017](#)).

Because certain repeated experiences come to be associated with emotional tags over the course of childhood development, they become physically instantiated in the body in a Pavlovian sense from a very early age ([Damasio, 1994](#)). These associations are often set down when children are quite young, even before they learn to speak. But these often unconscious associations can influence people throughout the rest of their lives, because they have learned in powerful ways to pair certain kinds of experience with certain responses. For example, people who are severely beaten repeatedly as children can learn to associate the experience of fear and pain with love, since those experiences were repeatedly inextricably intertwined. Such individuals, as has been shown ([Campbell, 2002](#)), often go on to find abusers as partners later in life, all without any awareness of the origin of the association. Early emotional associations can thus serve as largely automatic, effective and often efficient ways to help us discern all kinds of things throughout the course of life, including the recognition of friends and enemies. When original associations are perverted when people are young, as in the case of abuse, or as the result of traumatic experience that might occur as a result of rape or war, individual instincts can become misaligned with best interests and cause great suffering. But most healthy people can reliably use emotional cues to help organize and interpret the world quickly and effectively most of the time.

Second, emotion can also be used to mobilize attention automatically ([Carretié, Hinojosa, Martín-Loeches, Mercado, & Tapia, 2004](#)). As with the baby, people use emotion to plead for help, or use intensity of emotional distress to calibrate who needs the most help the soonest. These systems work quickly and automatically without requiring a lot of cognitive work or effort. And of course all these emotions and forces need not be negative. People use emotions of happiness and love to create and sustain families, and they can use empathy to join together in groups to improve life for everyone. In short, emotions help potentiate the kind of cooperation that provide huge survival and reproductive benefits throughout an entire community. But for political purposes, the emotions that leaders tend to invoke most frequently revolve around fear and anger because negative drives are more likely to capture attention because such emotions have served important survival needs across evolutionary time ([Hibbing, Smith, & Alford, 2014](#); [Ito, Larsen, Smith, & Cacioppo, 1998](#); [Rozin & Royzman, 2001](#)). Aside from the massive intrinsic reinforcement given to reproduction, natural selection has privileged those experiences that warn people of incipient dangers to be avoided. Emotions that signal the approach of harm and threat attract attention and entrain energy more than most positive emotions (aside from sexual drive) for good reason: our ancestors who possessed these tendencies were more likely to survive, and so such proclivities are preserved in modern humans, even as the specific nature of threats may have changed over time. Charismatic leaders can harness these emotions in powerful ways, sometimes for the survival and welfare of their community, but sometimes by creating fear or anger where there is none in service of a more personal agenda. And it can prove challenging for followers to distinguish between these goals. This is at least partly the case because leaders have an incentive to deceive followers when their goals benefit themselves disproportionately. Leaders who make signals costly can help followers discern honest signals, but when there is a lot of background noise, and

large scale populations make behavior difficult to track, leaders can more easily distract and deceive potential followers as to their true motives.

Third, emotions also operate to help us modulate our own states of arousal (Gross, 1998). Emotions can help us to regulate sensation seeking or approach and avoidance responses in order to achieve and maintain an optimal state of arousal. This is important not only to sustain personal and professional lives, but also to promote physical health and mental equanimity. These processes also help individuals to direct and sustain behavior so that, for example, not everyone walks away from the enormous demands that children place on parents in the first months of life. Indeed, complex emotions that modulate arousal allow people to engage in very hard, complex, long term activities such as raising children, or sustaining a long term relationship or obtaining career goals which require long delays of gratification, such as achieving tenure. And, from a leader's perspective, such emotion modulation allows for long term loyalty among followers, even in the face of temporary adversity.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly for our purposes, emotions serve as the primary foundation for direct and immediate social communication (Gross, 2002). For political purposes, one of the most important ways that emotion serves social communication is that specific emotions, especially fear and outrage, help overcome internal divisions and promote cooperation within a community through the identification of a shared enemy who poses a threat, whether real or potential, to everyone. This proves critical in consolidating both in-group cohesion, although it also generates out-group discrimination, as robustly demonstrated experimentally in the extensive work on social identity theory (Tajfel, 2010).

This is not to say that emotions always serve as a flawless guide. However, emotional functions and strategies have emerged from a long evolutionary history and serve as a very useful and effective guide by which to navigate the world (Cosmides & Tooby, 2000). Emotions evolved as the psychological mechanism which helps guide and direct important processes such as perception, memory, attention and motivation. To use a far from perfect analogy, emotions serve as a kind of overarching operating system for the brain, directing which program is most appropriate to the circumstances of the current environment. Because such emotions emerged in response to repeated challenges over the course of enormous swaths of human history, specific emotions may not always be well matched to particular challenges in the current political environment, as the evolutionary mismatch model suggests (Li et al., 2018). But the very adaptability, flexibility and fluidity of emotional response also makes such mechanisms ripe for manipulation by skilled leaders who can engage them in entrepreneurial ways. In other words, leaders can take advantage of particular events to activate and mobilize followers by first signaling, and directing, particular emotional responses down desired channels. By recognizing the ways in which particular environmental cues and circumstances, such as unfairness or injustice, can elicit specific emotional response, leaders can marshal ingrained responses of anger or fear for political purposes. In this way, leaders can leverage the behavioral tendencies which follow from particular emotions to motivate followers for purposes distinct from those the particular emotion originally evolved to serve.

Identity

Emotion and identity can exist independently, but are in practice often intertwined. Leaders can leverage one to manipulate the other, and either can come first. But identity often provides an easy foundation upon which to build the edifice of emotional response along in-group, out-group lines. For example, it is easy to stoke racial, gender, or religious feelings based on attacks against particular demographic identities along those lines.

Identity has been studied extensively within psychology from many different angles. It has been shown to serve purposes of exploration and

commitment (Marcia, 1966), control (Kerpelman, Pittman, & Lamke, 1997), expressiveness (Waterman, 1990), and differentiation and integration (Adams & Marshall, 1996). Some scholars have explored the nature of its construction, arguing for its co-constitutive nature (Kurtines, Azmitia, & Alvarez, 1992), while still others have argued for the important role that identity serves in establishing social capital by creating bonds of communality with others (Cote, 1997).

For current political purposes, a few arguments appear particularly relevant. First, in groundbreaking work, Erikson (1950) broke away from the earlier Freudian notion of identity as an intra-individual phenomenon to construct the notion of identity as fundamentally social in nature. Erikson's idea proved especially insightful because it demonstrated the way in which notions of the self are fundamentally vulnerable to definition, interpretation, construction and manipulation by other people. In this way, leaders can take advantage of the malleability in identity formation to create an army of followers simply by appealing to various demographic or other categories that people use to define themselves and others without ever having to convince them of the superiority of their policies or values.

Of course, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1974, 2010; Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979) adds nuance and importance to Erikson's fundamental insight. This theory not only posits that individuals derive great self-esteem from their group memberships, but also shows how such groups tend to systematically discriminate against out-groups. This simultaneous in-group prejudice and out-group discrimination serves many important psychological functions for members. One of the most important is that it helps to keep large groups together without dissolving into internecine rivalry which that make them less effective against more coordinated adversaries. This would prove absolutely critical, for example, in combat.

The critical piece that leaders can take advantage of happens in the liminal space where individual identity transforms into group identity, and where attachment to the larger group cements. And since identity can be constructed, leaders can help followers figure out who they are by signaling particular aspects of identity that prove useful to them, such as race, gender or religion. This allows followers not only to locate themselves in the political environment, but also find a group of similar others. Thus, while individual identity helps facilitate a process of self-definition and self-categorization, group attachment can provide additional benefits as well, including a reduction in anxiety that results from social isolation. Such membership also provides validation for negative or hostile behaviors, such as avoiding particular others based on characteristics such as race, gender, religion, class and so on. (Smith, Murphy, & Coats, 1999).

From the perspective of leaders seeking to secure committed followers, there are other facets of group attachment that offer additional advantages to followers as well (Bastardo & Vugt, 2018). Henry, Arrow, and Carini (1999) describes the comprehensive nature of the benefits that group attachment can provide to those who identify. Cognitively, group members move beyond the self-categorization that individual identity offers to a larger sense of social categorization that provides a sense of community and social capital. Behaviorally, group attachment creates a sense of interdependence with other group members, making everyone feel that they can accomplish more and better things than they ever could in isolation. Group attachment also offers a sense of protection and security in the face of threat or uncertainty, which is partly why a leader can increase followership by sparking fear. Finally, group attachment instigates a level of interpersonal attraction among group members. Such coalitions can be more effective in fighting against predators and out-groups, but some attachments within a group may become sexual in nature as well. It can thus also take the form of a broader sense of family, offering emotional closeness, warmth, understanding and communality among those who share something similar, even if that similarity was originally instigated on the basis of something seemingly trivial, like what kind of art you like, or the color of one's eyes.

These processes of attachment are built into the psychological downstream effects that people experience with group identification. As a result, when leaders can get an existing group to pledge allegiance to him (note that the vast majority of political leaders still are male as they were in our ancestral environment) and his goals, he does not need to do the harder work of organizing, convincing or recruiting. He need only signal his shared identity and communicate his intentions emotionally. Group cohesion can naturally emerge among group members without additional effort on the part of leaders, as long as they can provide the original organizing force that brings people together under his dominion. The leader need only display shared social identity in order to organize a collective behind him. A leader who is successful at hijacking an existing group can simply take control to serve his larger personal or professional purpose, and group members will experience the benefits of collectivity without the leader having to actually provide any resources, because the most powerful benefits, including enhanced prospects for survival, derive from the group membership itself. In this way, the leader serves as an organizing focal point for followers who then benefit from the leader's ability to identify and display a shared identity in order to overcome collective action challenges.

The strategic manipulation of social identity and emotion

Charismatic leaders are very skilled at getting people to follow them. But once they have followers, they need to keep them. One of the most effective ways they can do so is through the manipulation of emotion to create and sustain supporting social and political identities among their followers. A leader who is able to signal and manipulate emotion to corral and cohere followers does not do the work of providing concrete material benefits, because the survival benefits members receive from the group outweigh anything concrete a leader can provide. Similarly, even charismatic individuals who can garner attention initially can fail over time, or lose out to more effective leaders, if they are not able to provide sufficient or appropriate emotional appeals and reinforcements to their constituency. Hitler was a very charismatic leader, but eventually lost his life as well as his power, not only because of military opposition, but also because of the loss of internal support among his generals (Barnett, 2003).

Successful leaders, those who can sustain collective action at low cost for their own benefit or that of the group, manage to accomplish the strategic manipulation of emotion for political purposes through a variety of tactics, including public performance, persuasion, the strategic use of amplification coalitions and outrage, and emotional entrepreneurship. To be clear, the leader may signal each of these displays for his own benefit or for that of the collective, but followers receive intrinsic benefit from group membership itself. In this way, leadership itself, even that which may not provide equal benefits to a constituency, still operates to facilitate the survival of its members by facilitating collective action on behalf of its members. Each of these techniques will be discussed in turn following a broader discussion of the overarching dynamic.

The organizational challenge facing leaders

As Grabo et al. (2017) note in their work on charismatic leadership, leaders face a fundamental challenge in coordinating and organizing their followers into an effective coalition in support of whatever personal or collective cause they wish to further. In the fundamental challenge of group cohesion, size matters. If the group is too small, they will lose against larger groups, at least most of the time. This is not only true in an absolute rule of the majority democratic voting sense, but would have also been true over evolutionary time in combat. Especially before the dawn of mechanized military force, larger armies would win against smaller ones more often than not, leaving aside the less frequent, but still occasionally successful, surprise raid (Wrangham, 1999). However, if a group of followers is too large, then they fall prey

to internal divisions which can easily be exploited by an enemy to divide and conquer the opposition, a military and political tactic which has a long history of success (Case & Maner, 2014).

The importance of preserving group cohesion presents a leader with two fundamentally different, indeed often oppositional, challenges to creating effective and coordinated group behavior within coalitions of followers. Optimally, groups should be peaceful at home, in the tradition of Rousseau, while being completely coordinated in their belligerent attacks on out-group members along the lines so well described by Hobbes. Wrangham (2018) helpfully provides a very useful distinction between reactive and proactive aggression, which describes the kind of violence which typically occurs in each type of context. When in-group members harm each other, it usually takes place in the heat of passion in reaction to an offense or violation of community norms, as for example frequently happens in the case of infidelity or disloyalty. This would clearly be a case of reactive aggression. When groups join together to plan premeditated, coordinated attacks on others, such activity lies in the domain of proactive aggression. One of the fundamental challenges for leaders is to simultaneously: 1) keep proactive aggression outside of the in-group context, so that members do not create a lawless, chaotic society where people kill each other too frequently; and 2) to prevent reactive aggression in the out-group environment from undermining the overall strategy of attack, as for example sometimes occurs when men rape local women or children in ways that alienate the support of the local population necessary for supply and intelligence.

In order to accomplish these simultaneous goals successfully, leader status and reputation, as well as charisma, become critical. Whether a leader achieves this status through dominance or prestige (Cheng, Tracy, Foulsham, Kingstone, & Henrich, 2013), followers must feel that the leader possesses some authority above and beyond that of other members of the group. In part, such a position is accomplished through the embodiment (Antonakis et al., 2016; Grabo et al., 2017; Reh et al., 2017) of charisma, but also through the strategic manipulation of emotion and the social display of identity cues. Both of these factors help signal likely benefits of group membership to potential followers. Such leader performance helps define the boundaries of identity for in-group members, and also provides the demarcation line where it becomes legitimate to socially exclude others from the group. This boundary constitutes the line that defines where proactive and reactive aggression each hold legitimate sway. There are various ways that leaders can go about signaling group membership and legitimate emotional response; some of the most common and effective are outlined in the sections below.

Social identity and leadership

Strategic social and political identity can be defined and manipulated by leaders through a variety of mechanisms that will be discussed in greater detail just below, but the overarching dynamic fundamentally rests on the reciprocal and interdependent nature of the leader-follower relationship, and the mutual benefit that derives to each from the relationship. In essence, one cannot exist without the other, by definition. There is no leader without followers, and individuals are not considered followers unless they are supporting a particular individual or philosophy. Indeed, specific leaders may adopt particular philosophies, ideologies or ideas because it makes it easier to co-opt followers. Indeed, leaders can even adopt an idea or philosophy they may not actually espouse, but nonetheless pledge adherence to, in order to garner support for other, perhaps more selfish or nefarious, purposes.

In this way, at root, *social*, as opposed to simply individual, identity makes leadership possible. It turns a "me" into an "us" which provides a much more powerful basis for the cooperation which potentiates enhanced survival prospects. Social identity establishes the mutual nature of role definition, social cohesion, group attachment, and all the benefits that naturally and automatically derive from group associations.

These processes make leadership itself possible. And this is why it is critical for leaders to display social identities that have widespread appeal in the population of followers they covet.

As discussed above, individuals rely on various forms of social identity to categorize themselves (Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005). Oftentimes, these categories are consciously chosen in order to maximize an individual's sense of status and power within a given community or a broader society. Many of these categories, including political ideology, serve both internal needs, such as self-esteem, as well as external ones, including the provision of social capital or community protection. Leaders can then leverage these forms of social identity, including demographic categories such as race, sex, age, class, religion and other categories, to transform, direct, and mobilize followers' interests. When such categories are employed, it can be more or less obvious or easy to define who is a member of the in-group and who belongs in the out-group. Some categories, like sex, may be more obvious for most people to determine than other demographics. Other categories such as class may be more fluid as people go up or down the economic ladder over time with education or as a result of larger structural forces. Still other categories, such as age, involve transformations that everyone makes inevitably over time. In this way, some categories are more obvious, malleable or inclusive than others, but since every person inevitably embodies more than one category, opportunities for cross-cutting cleavages and antagonistic loyalties are ripe for exploitation by observant leaders. And of course individuals vary in which aspects of their identity they privilege, and which serve as primary existential referents.

Leaders are likely to be most effective in exploiting multiple social identities for their own purposes when the environment itself does not present a clear cue for action, or when existing latent divisions offer opportunities to capture new followers through the exploitation of underlying or previously unidentified wedge issues. For example, Abraham Lincoln was able to exploit slavery as an issue to create a winning coalition in the 1860 U.S. Presidential election, just as Ronald Reagan was able to use abortion in a similar manner in the 1980 election. In other words, leaders will be most likely to be effective in their attempts to manipulate social and political identity under social, economic and political conditions that are novel, uncertain, or when many individuals become detached from their larger social network or fabric, and seek the comforts attendant with group membership of any kind. Under such circumstances, skilled leaders can show followers they are not alone by signaling shared emotion and indicating appropriate emotional responses to incipient threats. In so doing, creative or entrepreneurial leaders can generate a larger following than might be possible otherwise. So, for example, as the role of churches decline as sources of identity and social capital in many areas of the western world, leaders may find it easier to exploit demographic nationalist groups who previously found overlapping and uniting forms of social connection through communities of faith.

Importantly, the success or failure of leaders in accomplishing their goals of recruiting followers will depend on the ease and viability of transforming individuals' sense of identity away from one form of self-categorization (i.e., religious) to another one (i.e. political). There is no theoretical reason that the leader need to be political, but ideology certainly offers one avenue of possible re-direction in energy and attachment for followers. But theoretically, the same process could operate for a leader trying to move people away from political attachments to more explicitly religious or social goals. But regardless of content, shared social identity becomes a powerful mechanism by which successful social mobilization, political or otherwise, can be achieved. As a result, a leader's ability to recognize, create, display or otherwise leverage a particular identity becomes extremely useful for the success of his recruitment and cohesion enterprises. This would suggest that men and women may be differentially effective and successful at emotional entrepreneurship based on the authenticity of their identity cues, as well as the nature of the topics they engage. For

example, a woman who had herself been raped or assaulted may be a more effective advocate for women's rights than a man, while a man with a distinguished combat record may be more credible when it comes to decisions about going to war. Each may wear battle scars of a different type, but the embodiment and physical display of their experience can serve to make them more credible communicators on behalf of their respective positions. This does not mean they would be successful as emotional entrepreneurs for other positions where their identity signals would not be as authentic or credible. In other words, leaders benefit when they possess the ability to become creative entrepreneurs of social identity. Such a strategy allows a leader to set the agenda with the full backing of like-minded followers who do not have to espouse his beliefs, support his specific agenda, or receive material benefits from his policies, because the benefits of group attachment under the rubric of shared social identity prove sufficient for sustaining cohesion precisely because those benefits are the ones that serve the ultimate function of potentiating survival prospects.

However, as Social Identity Theory points out, social identity does not merely serve the purpose of in-group cohesion, as important a function as that may serve. It also operates to discriminate against others, and this is an equally important aspect of group membership. People do not feel good about themselves just because they are surrounded by like-minded others; they feel good about themselves because they get to feel superior to others as a result of their group membership. This component of social exclusion represents a critical power that leaders can exploit. By shaping, defining, and signaling the boundaries of identity in any given category, and most categories allow for at least some malleability, leaders create the sites of argumentation and contestation between groups (Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, & McDermott, 2006). By disallowing alternative constructions of the group, leaders can either work to increase or decrease membership, as well as activate those who might otherwise sit on the fence. When the Occupy Wall Street movement defined the enemy as the top 1%, they ensured a very large potential constituency resided in the remainder. However, they failed to account for the fact that in-group cohesion can be difficult to negotiate within a very large group, which quickly become prone to internal divisions along the lines of other cross-cutting cleavages, such as race and sex. In addition, the movement made matters worse by explicitly undercutting their viability and prospects for success by eschewing hierarchical leadership altogether. Without leaders to define the characteristics and boundaries of group membership, large groups typically collapse under the weight of their own internal divisions.

Certainly aspects of hierarchical leadership can be prone to exploitation, but not all leadership serves parochial interests alone. Indeed, leadership strategies evolved precisely because they operated to enhance the survival aspects of their constituencies (Grabo et al., 2017). However, because the psychological mechanisms that evolved to identify forms of exploitation, such as cheater detection (Cosmides, Tooby, Fiddick, & Bryant, 2005), emerged in situations where tracking individual actions was not only possible but unavoidable, adaptation to the modern political world of millions of people where observation can only be incomplete at best allows leaders more opportunities to deceive with impunity (Li et al., 2018). However, effective leaders can still manage to employ some or all of the tactics delineated below in service of public welfare, as well as of course manipulate public support for purposes of private gain. Regardless of intent or purpose, the underlying tactics that can be employed remain the same.

Public performance of identity

One of the most visible and important ways in which leaders can define and signal the scope conditions of identity is through the public performance of various aspects of that identity. This public display of shared identity constitutes a form of signaling because it serves as a mechanism for social coordination under the penumbra of that identity.

Sometimes this performance can take the form of a particular kind of appearance, through clothing, insignia (i.e. American flag lapel pin) and other obvious visual signs. Indeed, tattoos and other permanent markings serve this kind of indelible, high cost signaling purpose for gang members in prisons and elsewhere (Gambetta, 2011); such signs frequently demonstrate the trade-off between cost and benefit in honest signaling (Zahavi, 1977). Women who wear white to honor the suffragettes, Hollywood stars who wear black to the Golden Globes to show support for women who suffered sexual assault, yellow ribbons to support troops, and red bows to show support for those who have HIV all constitute this kind of visual identity representation. Displays need not be on the person. Ways of talking and particular preferences in music, sports, coffee, cars and so on can also signal both public as well as hidden meanings and connections among members (Klofstad, Anderson, & Peters, 2012).

Similarly, leaders also engage in public performances of identity through the use of coded language that followers understand, but those outside the group may not fully comprehend (Skarbek, 2012). But other times out-group antagonism and in-group endorsement may be more explicit. A recent obvious example of this occurred when Trump said that there were many good people “on both sides” when violence emerged in the wake of a neo-Nazi rally in Charlottesville. White supremacists celebrated Trump’s accolade but many others were horrified. But this kind of declarative language, regardless of content, serves several important purposes for leaders seeking to consolidate and sustain loyalty among followers. In such cases, widespread public disdain among opponents only serves to solidify support among adherents who take the leader’s willingness to antagonize opponents as a sign of the leader’s commitment to the group and its values. Public performance serves to strengthen individuals’ ties to the collective, as well as the followers’ recognition of leaders’ shared beliefs and values through visual and/or verbal cues. This gives people a greater sense of belonging and community, enhancing cooperation and thus chances of survival, which is one of most important benefit of any group membership.

But the value of such public performance for leaders goes well beyond a sense of belonging to the group in and of itself. Public performance of identity shows the strength of a group or movement to everyone, friends and foes alike. As Grabo et al. (2017) discuss, coalition size serves as a strong and clear indicator of charisma in leaders by followers. This public demonstration of size and strength serves several important functions. Large groups are much more threatening at an intuitive level. Thus, public performance of identity serves to mobilize and persuade undecided observers and other fence sitters that perhaps it is best to join the winning crowd, where winning is understood to be associated with the larger crowd. The reality may be that opposition forces are larger, wealthier, smarter or stronger, but if they do not engage in as much public display, neutral observers would not necessarily be aware of the real size or formidability of the relative coalitions. When independents join a coalition, that only serves to make the group appear larger and thus stronger, rendering their victory more likely, and adding to the apparent overall strength, power and momentum of the group.

The other purpose that is served by the public performance of identity derives from its potential for coordinating disparate action, one of the most important functions of charismatic leadership overall (Grabo et al., 2017). The public performance of identity, and the rituals associated with it, help coordinate social and political activity around shared goals and values. And one of the most important of those values, as demonstrated by social identity theory, and obvious in terms of its value in warfare, lies in demonizing the out-group. This common enemy provides a unifying force around which in-group members can cohere, so that cross-cutting internal divisions do not cause the group to dissolve. It is popular for political pundits to decry the ostensibly losing strategy of using opposition to unite a fractured party. But in fact a shared enemy or threat is one of the most effective forms of infusing social cohesion into groups that might otherwise not have enough in

common to hang together. When this strategy of out-group demonization takes place, individuals gain a sense of political empowerment not so much from successful collective action in support of a particular policy, but rather from the glorification of in-group membership at the cost of out-group humanity. In other words, in-group members derive a sense of positive well-being as a direct result of out-group derogation; in exact mirror reflection, in-group members *on both sides* get to enjoy feeling superior to their out-group opponents. Leaders recognize this dynamic, and successful, skilled leaders can guide it intuitively, strategically using shared identity to signal and direct particular emotions to activate more visceral forms of out-group discrimination. This license and permission to engage in out-group derogation serves to increase the intensity of the individual commitment to the group, especially if it is costly, since higher cost signals honest advertising of identity (Zahavi, 1977) as well as advancing coherence among in-group members (Tajfel, 2010).

Emotional persuasion

Once the boundaries of social identity have been established by leaders, one of the most effective tools that leaders can employ in seeking to garner the loyalty of their followers is to engage in various forms of emotional persuasion. Emotions, particularly fear and anger, can be malleable in the same way as identity. And using cues that in other circumstances would indicate a particular emotion as an appropriate response, leaders can shape emotional responses, even if those cues are false, manufactured or misrepresented. In this way, emotions can be used to manipulate, define and further solidify social identity. Similar to the scope conditions that are defined when leaders perform public displays of personal, social or political identity, emotions can activate as well as exacerbate sites of contestation and argumentation, not only around specific policy issues, but around the legitimacy and value of particular identities themselves. Of course, the value and legitimacy of certain identities can shift across time and place, and some historical examples are obvious. For much of American history, black people only counted as three-fifths of a person. Women were not allowed to vote until 1922. Homosexuals were not allowed to marry until the 21st Century. The most divisive sites of social and political contestation at the moment seem to surround the transgender community. Each public site of contestation offers potential leaders a new wedge issue around which to persuade individuals to leave their current coalition which is failing to protect their interests, and join another that appears dedicated to advancing the rights and opportunities of their particular constituency, whatever that may be.

Strategic leaders can invoke and activate particular emotions, such as fear or anger, not only in defense of particular social identities, and to demarcate the line between who is “us” and who is “them,” but also to inflame and intensify feelings of opposition to out-group members. This process encourages adherence among in-group members who derive a sense of strength, comfort and validation from the similarities among their community (Mead & Maner, 2012), and its clear distinction from the out-group.

In this way, emotional manipulation offers a very elegant solution to the very real organizational challenge of establishing collective action that is faced by leaders, as discussed above. The strategic deployment of anger or fear accomplishes the two simultaneous forms of group consolidation that every successful leader needs to achieve in order to accomplish his goals. First, it helps promote and maintain the in-group solidarity that is essential for maintaining in-group cohesion and cooperation so that the group does not dissolve internally. As discussed previous, this cooperation offers the ultimate value of group membership by enhancing prospects for survival through the ability to engage in effective collective action. But it also, at the same time, fosters out-group hostility and generates the kind of hostile opposition to out-groups that often proves so difficult for leaders to coordinate without providing immediate material benefits to those who bear the greatest

costs of conflict, whether such fights are material or political in nature. And of course any material benefits that do not have to be paid out to followers can be kept for the leader, or distributed among the more restricted ruling coalition so as to maintain political power (Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Morrow, & Siverson, 2005). In this way, the activation of specific emotions for political purposes can serve multiple purposes for leaders because fear or anger can be used to as a social cue to consolidate group behavior and direct group antagonism toward the out-group. This also reduces the likelihood that group deprivation will be directed against the leader himself.

Once the emotional trigger is activated (i.e. a leader identifies an out-group that poses harm), the behavioral tendency (i.e., fight) follows. So, for example, if someone feels that another is not sufficiently valuing their welfare, they may initially try to prove their worth to the other person in hopes of reminding the other of their value. When that strategy does not work, then people typically get very angry and try to retaliate against the person who has not sufficiently valued their welfare (Sell et al., 2009). In a similar fashion, leaders can utilize or manipulate environmental events and threats so as to activate these psychological dynamics by strategically activating anger by creating or identifying violations against group welfare. In this way, the instinctual retaliatory behavior against opponents is provoked. Although it is by no means the only emotion that can be effectively manipulated and employed by leaders, anger is one of the easiest to provoke, and one of the most effective for mobilizing action against opponents. As a result, leaders often employ the very effective strategy of provoking outrage to consolidate support and coordinate opposition.

The psychology of outrage

There are many potent emotions that can serve the purpose of motivating coordination among group members, including pride, sadness, and forgiveness. For the purposes of current discussion, this discussion examines the role of outrage, but other emotions might easily accomplish this goal using similar dynamics. Outrage, born of anger, offers numerous advantages to leaders who need to solve coordination and organizational problems (Tooby & Cosmides, 2010). From an evolutionary standpoint, outrage grows out of individuals feeling like others have not sufficiently appreciated their welfare tradeoff ratio (Delton & Robertson, 2016; Sell et al., 2009). Welfare tradeoff ratio involves complex internal computations to determine the extent to which others are willing to make sacrifices for our welfare, and the extent to which we do so for others. When someone fails to sufficiently appreciate our value, and thus our contribution to their fitness advantage, we may first try to double down and tell them or convince them of our value. When they continue to fail to make commensurate sacrifices for our welfare, we get angry. Eventually, such anger can turn into outrage as individuals come to believe that way that others are taking advantage of us can compromise our welfare, and even our fitness and survival prospects. Outrage accomplishes many goals at the same time. One of the hardest challenges leaders repeatedly must confront involves recruiting followers and labor for the many tasks required for effective coordinated action. Provoking outrage on the part of followers helps overcome these coordination challenges to collective action. It is much easier to recruit labor for defensive purposes, precisely because everyone benefits from such action, whereas offensive action delivers much more exclusive benefits that derive almost exclusively to those who take the greatest risk by fighting (Lopez, 2017). So by transforming what might otherwise appear to be an offensive campaign into a defensive fight, leaders can ensure greater participation, and thus enhance prospects for victory and survival among followers. This is how and why leaders often choose to characterize a preemptive strike as defensive in nature, suggesting if their side does not attack first they will be at the mercy of the inevitable assault mounted by the other side against them.

When a threat of loss presents itself, or a situation is framed or

manipulated to be presented as such, outrage at an offense or violation, or the potential for one, can quickly and easily become a rallying point for coordination. It can also easily overcome other objections to action that might arise within and among potential followers. This solves many coordination problems that might otherwise prove daunting. Potential internal divisions among members who might differ across other political and demographic cleavages instantly disappear in the face of what is judged to be the more serious common threat posed by the out-group. Independents and fence sitters may also become activated if the threat appears overwhelming or immediate. The collective sense of community so evident in the United States after the attacks on 9/11 illustrate this dramatically, particularly in light of how large that coalition was, and how profoundly it has broken down since.

The strategic use of outrage on the part of leaders serves additional important purposes as well. Once the emotion is invoked, the behavioral consequences are predictable, immediate and valuable. If an out-group has done something considered to be outrageous, then in-group defenders are automatically incited to retaliate against the out-group. This facilitates at least two important tasks. First, it helps quickly and easily identify any in-group members who might be disloyal or working for the opposition. Refusal to engage in retaliation helps detect those internal adversaries whose exclusion might benefit group survival and effectiveness. This is one reason why treason is punished so severely; it threatens not just individual but group survival, by giving the enemy an entry into the in-group. This is also one of the reasons leaders often prize public demonstrations of loyalty and identity; such displays make it much more difficult for the person to then be accepted by the opposition so their fate becomes even more tied to in-group concerns. For example, gang members often require members to commit a crime during initiation so as to make it more difficult for the recruit to leave the group without punishment from the outside community. These transgressions serve as costly signals, proving the honest intention of the recruit to remain loyal to the group. Any lack of cooperation or enthusiasm that might emerge among ambivalent followers can then serve to signal disloyalty, and such members then quickly become targets for exclusion or in-group punishment designed to endanger fear among others who might contemplate leaving or hurting the group.

Second, in mirror fashion, outrage and the retaliation that follows putative bad action on the part of an out-group allows adherents to identify those members of the opposition who might become potential allies. If respondents or adversaries do not react strongly in the wake of retaliation, such individuals then make ideal targets for in-group members to undertake their own divide and conquer strategy against the out-group.

What this means, in practice, is that leaders must always be on the lookout for discovering, or creating, the kind of outrages perpetuated by the other side which can then be used to mobilize followers, overcome collective action problems, and serve as an effective resource for the leader in future battles, political or otherwise. Effective leaders will be particularly good at creating or recognizing incidents that can be used in this way for that purpose. Importantly, the leader may not care about the substance of the ostensibly outrageous behavior at all; rather, the importance of the outrage lies in what the response of followers and opponents signals, and in how it can be used to solve the ongoing organizational and coordination problems that must be overcome to create and sustain sufficient support among followers.

Emotional entrepreneurship in leadership

The value of outrage in overcoming follower recruitment and coordination speaks to how and why emotional entrepreneurship is so important and effective for leaders. Few other forces and strategies are so quickly and automatically effective among such large numbers of people in overcoming collective action and coordination challenges as the systematic manipulation of emotion. The existing psychological mechanisms and processes, which people are intimately familiar with

from everyday life, can be hijacked and easily triggered by calling attention to, or creating, those environmental forces known to trigger particular responses, especially retaliatory ones. This is particularly effective if leaders want to increase support for war.

In this way, leaders are able to activate and employ specific emotional responses to mobilize collective action around fluid and malleable social and political identities. At root, groups amount to little more than a collective imagination (Anderson, 2006). Their boundaries, and the meaning and significance of their enterprise, are more malleable than followers realize. This means definitions of political identity are open to interpretation and transformation on the part of leaders, especially charismatic ones who are particularly effective at the public performance of stereotypical aspects of particular shared identities, or who embody specific characteristics that trigger attention among followers. Such leaders can then use threats to inclusiveness, including the risk of excommunication, as a source of solidification among in-group members. No value will be more important to followers than the cooperation and survival benefits that flow to members of a strong coalition. Anyone who does not adhere to the values or beliefs of the group risks social exclusion and risk the enormous costs that result from social isolation and ostracism. Whatever survival benefits derive from a sense of belonging are thus lost to members who challenge strong leaders, particularly if such followers are unable to join other coalitions for various reasons, including prior pledged loyalty to opponents. Thus, leaders can use fear and anger in the face of status challenges by rivals to their own advantage to secure and cement loyalty among followers. The strategic use of these emotions helps consolidate support among in-group members, not only by threatening additional losses to all members if purported outrages are left to stand, but also by threatening the positive benefits that members derive from group attachment if individuals fail to follow where the leader directs.

Conclusions

Leaders may emerge because of inherent embodied characteristics that indicate and signal their ability to successfully deliver the cooperation that can enhance survival prospects among followers (Grabo et al., 2017). But that charisma is most effective when used in service of larger behavioral goals among followers. It is often not enough for the leader to simply exist; he must outperform alternatives. One of the most effective ways for leaders to marshal their influence is to traction the power of social identity and emotional manipulation to direct followers toward specific behavioral goals which can enhance the survival and reproductive prospects of their community.

Effective leaders can establish and consolidate political identity through the strategic use and manipulation of specific emotions. To be clear, leaders need not be conscious of what they are doing or how they are using and invoking this strategy in order for it to be effective. Some leaders no doubt engage in these manipulations consciously in order to achieve specific intended purposes. But others may accomplish the same objectives intuitively, merely by sensing what followers need and want in order to keep them in line for their own purposes. One might imagine that either process might be accomplished by leaders with psychopathic, narcissistic, or empathic traits, depending on intent. Inferring the intent is part of what makes it hard for followers to discern in a large, modern environment where signals are constant, often contradictory, and rarely allow for systematic follow up. Regardless of whether the process is deliberate or unconscious, successful leaders can rely on a depiction of the out-group as not sufficiently valuing the welfare of in-group members in order to generate outrage among followers. By calling attention to this real or imagined threat, an effective leader can thus overcome the organizational and coordination problems that tend to undermine group coherence and performance and thus enhance the chances of survival among followers.

These processes are not necessarily always automatic or effective. The emotional manipulation of followers by leaders depends,

fundamentally, on the ability of a leader to establish or define a viable social or political identity that can cement the affective attachments of large groups of followers. If the identity is too diffuse, the group will fall prey to internal divisions. If the identity is too tightly constructed, the coalition may not be sufficiently strong against opposition, unless out-groups are similarly small or riven with internal divisions. Therefore, leaders need to create and perform a public political identity that is, like the fabled story of the three pigs, just right: not too big and not too small.

Even more important, the leader has to recognize that the value of in-group membership lies, in large part, on the cooperative benefits that members derive inherently from group attachment. These benefits involve not only whatever specific material benefits that may derive from a specific campaign, but much more importantly the benefits of cooperation that result from group membership itself. Again, experimental tests which manipulate the intensity of individual attachment to various causes may help identify the kinds of material and social benefits that encourage or diminish group attachment.

Leaders can also exploit the real or imagined violations against in-group identity that out-group members perpetuate. Because the other side usually espouses different values and beliefs, violations of preferences provide the ideal sites to locate the outrages that inspire in-group loyalty, and engender out-group retaliation and blind support for a leader's definitions regarding the nature and boundary of group identity and group behavioral goals and purposes.

Effective leaders help define and locate acceptable place for identity to be contested, because they know that if identity is contested at areas of significant overlap between groups, they are likely to lose followers to alternative groups. When intra-sexual competition gets too heated, the women's movement loses members to Black Lives Matter, as black women leave the coalition of women to join the coalition of race. This can happen along all kinds of cross-cutting cleavages, just as when Occupy Wall Street broke apart around issues of implied hierarchy around race and gender. When minority groups ignore women's rights, they risk losing members to women's groups and so on. Leaders must remain aware of adversaries who threaten their internal construction of identity for this reason; if followers come to see greater alignment in identity, or even more importantly, feel a greater sense of emotional attachments to another group, they may switch sides. Leaders who prove adept at locating potential allies and enemies through the strategic manipulation fear and outrage are able to mobilize collective action and overcome enduring challenges to labor recruitment, organization and coordination posed by internal divisions. In addition, leaders who are effective emotional entrepreneurs can awaken potential constituencies to the importance of their collective action by activating their sense of threat in the face of opposition action.

The construction of social identity and the manipulation of emotion provide the innate psychological mechanisms which leaders can traction to successfully solve collective action challenges in a quick, easy and automatic manner. What separates leaders who are more effective from those who are less so lies in their differential ability to publically signal and display shared aspects of identity and recognize or create environmental circumstances that activate specific emotions to support that identity. The successful leader can then direct this energy for cooperative purposes. When done effectively, emotion and identity merge and operate in interaction to both reinforce group attachment as well as devotion and loyalty to the leader who creates them.

Obviously this paper has presented a theoretical argument that requires greater empirical investigation to explore its accuracy and scope conditions. Experimental tests could manipulate the size and strength of coalitions to determine the relationship between those factors and how devoted followers may be to a leader, or how much control the leader may have over group activity. Varying content domains, or emotional triggers (i.e. fear vs. anger) could help tease apart the interaction between identity and emotion in generating political support for certain types of leaders. And of course forcing choice between social identities

could inform observers about those aspects of individual identity that people privilege, which are most amenable to shift, and which are most likely to inspire action to protect.

Charismatic characteristics can set the stage for effective leadership by identifying the individuals most likely to be able to serve the cooperative needs of their communities, thus enhancing their chances for survival and reproductive success. Charisma may be necessary but, depending on environmental circumstances and depending on context, it may not prove sufficient. What leaders do with their inherent charisma matters. And one of the ways they can most effectively traction their charisma to overcome collective action challenges and most effectively potentiate the survival prospects of their constituency is through the strategic creation, manipulation and merging of specific social identities with emotional responses in order to direct followers toward particular behavioral goals. In this way, an integration of the charismatic signaling leadership model with the current identity-emotions approach further enhances our understanding of how leadership processes operate within the context of real world challenges, as well as demonstrates how emotion and identity serve important evolutionary purposes through similar signaling dynamics.

Leaders may be able to effectively manipulate emotions and identity to incite outrage toward real and imagined opposition, and this may serve a larger goal of consolidating collective action. But the goals of such action are not without normative implications. To be clear, strategies of effective leadership that served the larger survival benefit of group members in our evolutionary past may not be well suited to the less accountable modern world of nation states. As Yuval Harari (2018) cautions:

The enemies of liberal democracy, they have a method. They hack our feelings, not our emails, not our bank accounts - they hack our feelings of fear and hate and vanity, and then use these feelings to polarize and destroy democracy from within because, in the end, democracy is not based on the human rationality. It's based on human feelings. During elections and referendums, you're not being asked, what do you think? You're actually being asked, how do you feel? And if somebody can manipulate your emotions effectively, democracy will become an emotional puppet show.

The challenge for the future will lie in the ability of followers to determine when such manipulation serves the function of advancing positive collective action, and when emotional arousal only serves the interest of the leader to the detriment of followers and the environment. Without greater attempts to discern such intentions, mechanisms that evolved for the benefit of humanity may become hijacked for far more nefarious purposes in the future.

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