INTERSUBJECTIVE CONSENSUS AND THE MAINTENANCE OF NORMATIVE SHARED REALITY

Ching Wan
Nanyang Technological University

Carlos J. Torelli
University of Minnesota

Chi-yue Chiu
Nanyang Technological University and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Collective beliefs about the values that are widely shared among members of a group are important constituents of the normative shared reality in the group. In two studies, we examined how (a) the circulation of a narrative that resonates with intersubjectively important values and (b) communication that threatens the normative shared reality affect people's culturally motivated evaluative responses, and their implications for the maintenance of normative shared reality. Study 1 showed that an actor received the most positive evaluation when a narrative about him was widely circulated, when his behavior signaled the central value of American culture, and when he was perceived as a symbol of American culture. Study 2 showed that formulating a communicative message that denounces the normative shared reality of a culture can elicit more positive evaluation of the culture, leading to a "saying is disbelieving" effect. The results of this research extended shared reality research, and have implications for understanding the role of collective beliefs in the characterization and maintenance of culture.

Shared reality research has consistently revealed that when people establish a shared reality with another person, they would allow the other's view of things to predicate their own judgments (Echterhoff, Higgins, & Groll, 2005; Higgins, 1992; Higgins & Rholes, 1978; Sinclair, Huntsinger, Skorinko, & Hardin, 2005). This result underscores the fact that individuals' shared social environment can significantly modify their personal cognitions.

The present research aims to take shared reality research to a new direction. Past shared reality research has focused on the *processes* whereby shared reality ensued from interpersonal communication shapes individual cognitions. In the present research, drawing on our work on intersubjective value consensus (Wan & Chiu, 2009), we seek to explicate how the *normative contents* of shared reality play a role in the evocation of culturally motivated evaluative responses that lead to self-perpetuation of the culture's normative shared reality.

In our analysis, we refer to *shared reality* as the totality of the knowledge that is assumed to be known and shared by others. We use the term *normative shared reality* to refer to the normative contents of shared reality, a major component of which is *intersubjective value consensus*, or the collective beliefs about the values that are widely shared among members of a group (Wan & Chiu, 2009; Wan, Chiu, Peng, & Tam, 2007). For example, most Americans believe that pursuing one's own goals is a central value in the United States. This collective belief about the widespread agreement among Americans on the importance of pursuing one's own goal is a major constituent of the normative shared reality in the United States. It is this belief that makes pursuing one's own goal an *intersubjectively important value* in the United States (Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007). Consistent with this, past research has shown that intersubjectively important values are at the heart of people's cultural identification (Wan, Chiu, Peng et al., 2007; Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007).

In the present article, we connect shared reality research with the intersubjective consensus approach to cultural values to explicate some mechanisms through which normative shared reality is maintained. Specifically, we examine how (a) the circulation of a narrative that resonates with intersubjectively important values and (b) communication that threatens the normative shared reality may affect people's culturally motivated evaluative responses, and their implications for the maintenance of normative shared reality. In the following, we first elaborate on the concept of intersubjective consensus. Next, we will present the theoretical underpinnings and hypotheses of the present research.

INTERSUBJECTIVE CONSENSUS AS NORMATIVE SHARED REALITY

A defining property of an intersubjectively important value is its *double sharedness*—sharedness in both a subjective and a collective sense. For a value to be an intersubjectively important one, it must be subjectively assumed to be a widely shared value in the group. Moreover, members of the group must collectively agree on the assumed sharedness of the value's importance in the group. This latter property distinguishes an intersubjectively important value from a subjective norm (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). When *an individual* believes that a certain value is widely shared in the group, the value is a subjective norm to the individual; it is normatively important to the individual. However, when most individuals in the group agree that the value is widely shared in the group, the value becomes an intersubjectively important value in the group. That is, whereas subjective norm is a personal construct, intersubjectively important value is a social or cultural construct (Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007). Accordingly, to determine whether a certain value is an intersubjectively important one, investigators can ask group members to estimate the extent to which most group members or a representative member of the group would endorse it. Intersubjectively important values are those that

have high mean estimates and low standard deviations across group members' responses on this measure (Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007).

The sharedness of intersubjective consensus rests on *collective perceptions* of sharedness. As such, it is distinct from previous discussions of social norms in the literature. Norms in objective reality can be descriptive or injunctive, the former referring to what most people do and the latter referring to what the prescribed behaviors are (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Intersubjective consensus exists in the form of collective perceptions of the norms. That is, intersubjective consensus on descriptive norms refers to people's shared common beliefs about how most people behave in the culture; whereas intersubjective consensus on injunctive norms refers to people's shared common beliefs about the prescribed behaviors that are expected in the culture. Thus, intersubjective consensus is a collectively shared representation of the reality that is separate from the objective reality.

The distinction between intersubjective reality and objective reality is an important one because the two do not necessarily match. Research has demonstrated the dissociation between people's actual self-endorsement of values and their perceptions of the importance of the values in their culture (Fischer, 2006; Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007), showing that an intersubjectively important value is not necessarily a value that most group members actually endorse. For example, Wan, Chiu, Tam et al. (2007) found that European American participants perceived a much bigger difference between European Americans and Hong Kong Chinese in the endorsement of individualist and collectivist values than the actual difference between the two groups in the endorsement of these values. Similar discrepancies have also been found between perceived prevalence and actual prevalence of attitudes and personality traits. For example, research on pluralistic ignorance has shown that university students' perceptions of other students' attitudes toward drinking at their university were much more positive than the actual attitudes that the students held (Prentice & Miller, 1993). Similarly, the personality traits that are perceived to be most prevalent in a nation have been found to be quite different from the personality traits that are most prevalent in the self-ratings of people in the nation (Terracciano et al., 2005).

Intersubjective consensus has consequences on group-related processes because it serves important coordination and communication functions in the group; it offers group members a set of shared assumptions for regulating their interactions with other group members. For example, Zou et al. (2009; see also Shteynberg, Gelfand, & Kim, 2009) have shown that whereas the perceived prevalence of individualism-collectivism in a culture mediates cultural differences in persuasive communication, the actual prevalence of individualism-collectivism does not. Not surprisingly, group members are motivated to maintain the perceived validity of the intersubjective consensus, sometimes by punishing ingroup deviants who undermined the legitimacy of the intersubjectively important norms and values (Marques, Abrams, & Serôdio, 2001).

Intersubjectively important values also provide a frame of reference for constructing group identities. For example, Wan, Chiu, Tam et al. (2007) have shown that group identification is stronger when individuals' personal values are in alignment with the intersubjectively important values in the group. Furthermore, group identification is more strongly associated with the similarity between personal values and intersubjectively important values than with the similarity between personal values and the values that are widely endorsed in the group.

Although intersubjective consensus is an integral part of normative reality, no known research has examined intersubjective value consensus from the shared reality perspective. To fill this gap, in the present article, we examine how a culture's intersubjectively important values plays a role in the evocation of culturally motivated evaluations directed to maintain the normative shared reality. We fulfill this goal in two steps. First, we demonstrate that when a narrative that implicates an intersubjectively important value becomes widely circulated (and hence incorporated into the normative shared reality), it would be evaluated as a cultural narrative. Second, inspired by the "saying is believing" effect in shared reality research (Echterhoff et al., 2005; Hardin & Higgins, 1996), we demonstrate that formulating a communicative message that denounces the intersubjectively important values of a culture at the experimenter's request may result in a threat to the positive social relationship within the culture, because denouncing these values represents a challenge to an already established normative shared reality. To reaffirm the positive social relationship, individuals may exhibit more positive evaluations of the culture, leading to a "saying is disbelieving" effect.

SELF-PERPETUATION OF NORMATIVE SHARED REALITY

Intersubjective consensus in a culture informs people of the culture's normative shared reality. Values with high intersubjective importance (central values) are part of a culture's normative shared reality on what are most central and important to the culture; whereas values with low intersubjective importance (peripheral values) are part of the culture's normative shared reality on what are least important to and even most incongruent with the culture (Wan & Chiu, 2009; Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007).

Given that central values are the defining contents of a culture's normative shared reality, people would have an inclination to maintain the importance of these values. Previous research has examined how shared reality is perpetuated in social interactions. For example, commonly shared information in a group is discussed more and is given more weight in the group's decision than unshared information (Stasser & Stewart, 1992). Also, in a communication chain, information that is consistent with the shared reality often perpetuates through information transmission whereas information that is inconsistent with it tends to drop out in the process (Kashima, 2000). In the present research, we examine two other mechanisms that reinforce and maintain normative shared reality. The first involves culturally motivated evaluations of a protagonist in a story (Study 1), and the second involves evaluations of ingroup and outgroup cultures following communication of cultural values (Study 2).

WHEN DOES A NARRATIVE ACQUIRE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE?

Given the defining role of intersubjectively important values in a culture's normative shared reality, members of the culture are likely to attend to the cultural significance of narratives that support intersubjectively important values, and evaluate these stories favorably as cultural narratives. An established shared reality serves the function of validating the reality and regulating relationships with others who

share the reality (Hardin & Higgins, 1996). In social groups, group norms that are considered to define the group are defended as people show more positive evaluation for others who display norm-consistent characteristics (Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Henson, 2000). Thus, when the behavior of a protagonist signals the intersubjectively important values of the culture, this protagonist will be evaluated favorably to the extent that the protagonist's value-signaling behaviors are seen not as individual actions but as behaviors performed in the capacity of a representative of the culture.

Not all narratives are evaluated in cultural terms. We contend that a narrative that supports an intersubjectively important value will be positively evaluated only when it is a well-known story in the culture. This is because when such a narrative is known to be widely circulated in the culture, it will become part of the normative shared reality (Sperber, 1996). In contrast, a narrative with very restricted circulation will not become part of the normative shared reality even when the narrative supports the central values of the culture. Thus, we predict that a narrative will be evaluated in cultural terms only when the protagonist in the narrative personifies an intersubjectively important value and when the narrative is widely circulated in the group. This line of reasoning leads to the following hypothesis: Only when widely circulated narrative content is consistent with the normative shared reality would it be evaluated in cultural terms—the more the protagonist in the narrative is seen as a representative of the culture, the more favorably the protagonist will be evaluated. Study 1 was designed to test this hypothesis.

Furthermore, from a shared reality perspective, when experiences are acknowledged by others, they are established as reliable and valid (Hardin & Higgins, 1996). If this is so, even implausible information contained in a narrative may be judged as reliable and valid when it is well known in the culture. This explains why people often believe there is a kernel of truth in widely circulated urban legends (Chiu & Hong, 2006). Therefore, the believability of the narrative should not play a role in whether the narrative is evaluated in cultural terms. In other words, as long as a narrative is known to be widely circulated, it becomes culturally relevant and will be evaluated by its consistency with the intersubjective consensus about the culture. Thus, we expect the effect of circulation to hold regardless of the believability of the narrative.

WHEN SAYING IS DISBELIEVING

We propose that the "saying is disbelieving" effect is another mechanism that reinforces and maintains normative shared reality. This proposed effect refers to the phenomenon whereby induced renunciation of the normative shared reality in one's cultural group can increase positive evaluation of the culture. "Saying is believing" is a well-documented phenomenon in the shared reality literature (Higgins, 1981). When people engage in interpersonal communication, they take the perspective of the social other (Mead, 1934). When people describe a stimulus person with ambiguous behavioral information to an addressee, they would adjust the description to accommodate the perceived attitudes of the interaction partner toward the addressee (Higgins & McCann, 1984; Higgins, McCann, & Fondacaro, 1982; Higgins & Rholes, 1978), speaking more favorably of the stimulus person when they assume the addressee to possess positive (vs. negative) impressions

of the stimulus person. Once a shared representation of the stimulus person is established between the speaker and the addressee (which is often biased in the direction of the assumed attitude of the addressee toward the stimulus person), the speaker would allow the shared representation to predicate their subsequent perceptions of the stimulus persons (Echterhoff et al., 2005). The "saying is believing" effect is not simply a consequence of communicative accommodation affecting the speaker's memory representation, because it was found only when the interaction partner's attitude is assumed or known to be a widely shared attitude in the community (Echterhoff et al., 2005; Lyons & Kashima, 2003). Apparently, when individuals produce a message that is in harmony instead of in conflict with the shared reality, they perceive the attitude expressed in the message to be more valid and change their attitude accordingly.

The above studies suggest that the "saying is believing" effect is contingent on individuals formulating a message that is consistent with the shared reality. However, if individuals are induced to speak against the shared reality, the "saying is believing" effect should reverse to produce a "saying is disbelieving" effect. We contend that the "saying is disbelieving" effect is particularly likely to emerge when individuals are led to produce a message that contradicts the normative shared reality, as when they are induced to speak against the intersubjectively important values in their group. Speaking against the intersubjectively important values of one's group signals abandonment and betrayal of the normative shared reality. As shared reality functions to maintain positive social relationships between people who share the reality in the relationship (Hardin & Conley, 2001; Jost, Ledgerwood, & Hardin, 2008), betrayal of normative shared reality threatens people's relationship with the group. In order to reaffirm the positive relationship with the group, people would likely display more positive evaluation of the group. Thus, our proposal gives rise to a hypothesis not anticipated by previous empirical accounts of the cognitive consequences of communication (Chiu, Krauss, & Lau, 1998): We predict an increased (not reduced) level of positive cultural evaluation after speaking against the intersubjectively important values of the culture. We tested this hypothesis in Study 2.

THE PRESENT STUDIES

In a pretest, we identified values that American undergraduates *agree* to be important or unimportant to the United States. These values were used in the two main studies. In Study 1, we tested our first hypothesis that a widely circulated narrative would be evaluated based on its cultural symbolism and congruence with the normative shared reality. To do so, we presented participants with a fictitious story about Tom Hanks. We manipulated the content of the story, so that Tom Hanks either personified the intersubjectively important or unimportant values of American culture. We also manipulated the perceived circulation/believability of the story by telling the participants whether others found the story widely known/ believable or not. We expected the evaluation of Tom Hanks to be a function of the values he personified and his cultural symbolism in the high circulation condition but not in the low circulation condition. We expected believability to have no effect on the evaluation of Tom Hanks.

In Study 2, under the pretext of preparing a speech for a future study, we asked some participants to make a speech against the intersubjectively important American values—a communicative act that contradicts the shared reality in the United States. The remaining participants either spoke *for* the intersubjectively important American values, or spoke for or against intersubjectively *unimportant* American values. We expected participants who denounced intersubjectively important American values to exhibit more positive evaluations of American culture than participants in other experimental conditions.

PRETEST

Seventy undergraduate students (14 men, 56 women) from a psychology class in a public university in Midwestern United States participated in the pretest. All participants were European American. The average age was 20.13 years ($SD = 2.11$). The participants received $6 for their participation.

The participants were given a list of 56 values taken from the Schwartz Value Survey (Schwartz, 1992). They were asked to think about an average American and estimate how this American would rate the importance of each value on an 8-point scale (0 = not important; 7 = very important). For each item, its mean perceived importance rating across participants indicated the extent to which the item was widely believed to be an important or unimportant American value.

Intersubjectively important (central) and unimportant (peripheral) values were chosen based on the high and low perceived importance ratings of the values respectively. To establish the generality of our results beyond specific central and peripheral values, we used different central and peripheral values in the two studies. For Study 1, we chose *choosing own goal* ($M = 5.43$, $SD = 1.26$), *responsible* ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 0.98$), and *humble* ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 1.21$) as the intersubjectively important (central), neutral, and unimportant (peripheral) American values respectively. For Study 2, we chose *enjoying life* ($M = 6.26$, $SD = 0.88$) and *true friendship* ($M = 5.71$, $SD = 1.01$) as the intersubjectively important (central) American values, and *detachment* ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.64$) and *moderate* ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.28$) as intersubjectively unimportant (peripheral) American values.[1]

STUDY 1

METHOD

Participants. Two hundred and four European American students (105 male, 99 female) from the same university as the pretest participants participated in the study for course credit. The average age was 20.54 years ($SD = 0.73$).

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1. Our data from another study (Wan, Chiu, Peng et al., 2007) that asked Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese participants their perceived importance ratings of the values for Chinese and Hong Kong culture respectively showed that *choosing own goal*, *enjoying life*, and *true friendship* ranked 42, 30, and 16 respectively for Mainland Chinese and 7, 6, and 25 respectively for Hong Kong Chinese, whereas *humble*, *detachment* and *moderate* ranked 12, 56, and 10 respectively for Mainland Chinese and 44, 54, and 48 respectively for Hong Kong Chinese. Therefore, the central and peripheral American values identified were not universally central and peripheral values.

Design. The study was a 3 (value: central, neutral, peripheral) x 2 (circulation: low, high) x 2 (believability: believable, unbelievable) factorial design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the 12 conditions. We measured participants' perception of cultural symbolism of Tom Hanks and their liking of him.

Procedure. Participants read a fictitious story of American actor Tom Hanks. The story depicted behaviors of Hanks's that signaled (a) an intersubjectively important (central) American value—*choosing own goal* (e.g., described Hanks'ss determination to pursue an acting career despite initial objections from his parents); (b) an intersubjectively unimportant (peripheral) American value—*humble* (e.g., described Hanks humbly acknowledged limitations in his acting and showed his disdain for publicity); or (c) a culturally neutral value—*responsible* (e.g., described Hanks as thorough and careful when preparing for acting jobs). The Tom Hanks narratives used in the study are presented in Appendix A.

To provide a context for the circulation and believability manipulations, next, the participants were asked to judge whether they had heard about the story (7-point scale, 1 = Have not heard, 7 = Have heard) and how believable the story was (7-point scale, 1 = Definitely not true, 7 = Definitely true). After that, the participants received "feedback" on how participants in the previous sessions responded to the two questions. Half of the participants were assigned to the high circulation condition and were told that most previous participants (77%) had heard of the story. The remaining participants were assigned to the low circulation condition where they were told that most previous participants (77%) had not heard of the story. This manipulation was crossed with a manipulation of the story's perceived believability. Half of the participants learned that most previous participants (87%) found the story believable. The remaining participants learned that most previous participants (87%) found it unbelievable. Finally, on 7-point scales, the participants rated (a) how much they liked Hanks, and (b) how successful he was as an actor on a 2-item scale (1 = dislike a lot/unsuccessful actor, 7 = like a lot/successful actor, α of the 2-item measure = .66). They also responded to a 7-item measure that assessed the extent to which they agreed that Hanks was a symbol of American culture (e.g., how much he embodies American values; see Appendix A for the full list of items; α of the measure = .83). For each cultural symbolism item, the scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants indicated that they had not heard of the story before and found the story to be fairly believable. They rated whether they had heard of the Tom Hanks story on a scale from 1 to 7 (1 = Have not heard, 7 = Have heard). The mean rating was 1.89 (SD = 1.30), and the rating did not differ across experimental conditions (all Fs in the Value x Circulation x Believability analysis of variance < 1.93, ps > .15). They also rated the believability of the story on a scale that ranged from 1 (Definitely not true) to 7 (Definitely true), with 4 (Unsure) in the middle. The mean rating on this item was 5.08 (SD = 1.10). Again, this rating did not differ across experimental conditions (all Fs in the Value x Circulation x Believability analysis of variance < 1.94, ps > .15).

TABLE 1. Mean Evaluation of Tom Hanks as a Function of the Value Implicature, Circulation, and Believability of the Narrative

	High Circulation		Low Circulation	
	Believable	Unbelievable	Believable	Unbelievable
Central value	6.30 (0.65)	6.17 (0.67)	6.30 (0.68)	6.25 (0.78)
Neutral value	5.95 (0.77)	6.36 (0.60)	5.80 (0.67)	5.48 (0.64)
Peripheral value	5.88 (0.93)	5.88 (0.65)	6.00 (0.78)	5.88 (0.83)

Note. Standard deviations are indicated in parentheses.

To test our hypothesis, we conducted a Value x Circulation x Believability x Cultural Symbolism General Linear Model (GLM) on the evaluation of Tom Hanks (the dependent variable). Value, Circulation, and Believability were between-participant factors, and cultural symbolism was a continuous predictor centered at its grand mean to minimize the threat of multicollinearity. Table 1 shows the mean evaluations of Tom Hanks in the 12 experimental conditions.

The predicted Value x Circulation x Cultural Symbolism interaction was significant, $F(2, 180) = 3.69$, $p = .03$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. The four-way interaction was not significant—Believability did not moderate the predicted three-way interaction, $F(2, 180) = 1.10$, $p = .34$.[2] To understand the nature of this interaction, for each level of circulation, we conducted a Value x Cultural Symbolism GLM on the evaluation of Tom Hanks. The top panel of Figure 1 shows the effect of the value implicature of Tom Hanks's behavior as a function of his cultural symbolism in the high circulation condition. When the story was widely circulated, we obtained a significant Value x Cultural Symbolism interaction, $F(2, 100) = 3.53$, $p = .03$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, and this interaction was the only significant effect in the analysis for the high circulation condition. Simple slope analysis results revealed that when cultural symbolism was high (when it was centered at one standard deviation above the mean), the value implicature of Hanks's behavior had a significant effect, $F(2, 100) = 4.81$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$. As shown in Figure 1, Tom Hanks received more positive evaluations when his behaviors signaled the central value ($M = 6.62$) than when his behaviors signaled the neutral value ($M = 5.62$), $t(100) = 2.28$, $p = 0.24$, or the peripheral value ($M = 4.06$), $t(100) = 3.05$, $p = .003$. Simple slope analysis results also revealed when cultural symbolism was low (when it was centered at one standard deviation below the mean), the value implicature of Hanks's behavior did not have a significant effect, $F(2, 100) = 0.97$, $p = .38$. Figure 1 also shows that when Tom Hanks's behaviors signaled the central American value, he was more positively evaluated among participants who saw him as a cultural symbol (vs. those who did not). In the central value condition, the correlation between cultural symbolism and evaluation was .53, $p = .002$ (the correlation between these two variables was not

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2. Other significant effects in the analysis were (a) the main effect of value, $F(2, 180) = 3.93$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$; Tom Hanks received more positive evaluations when he personified the central value ($M = 6.25$) than when he personified the neutral ($M = 5.86$, p of Tukey test = .01) or peripheral value ($M = 5.91$, $p = .02$); (b) the main effect of cultural symbolism, $F(1, 180) = 7.95$, $p = .005$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$; Tom Hanks received more positive evaluations from participants who believed more strongly in his cultural symbolism, $r = .24$, $p = .001$; and (c) the interaction of value and circulation, $F(2, 180) = 4.96$, $p = .008$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$; we interpret this interaction in the context of the significant Value x Circulation x Cultural Symbolism interaction.

High Circulation Narrative
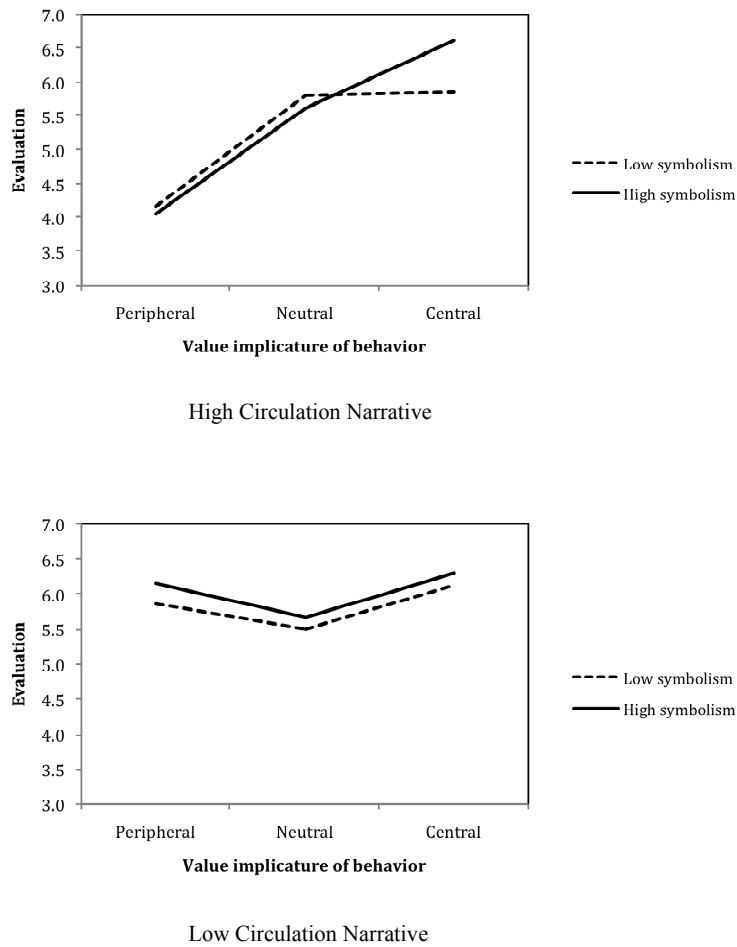

Low Circulation Narrative

FIGURE 1. Evaluation of Tom Hanks as a function of his level of cultural symbolism, the value implicature of his behavior, and the circulation of the narrative.

significant in the other two conditions: r = -.07 in the neutral value condition and -.12 in the peripheral value condition).

When the story was not widely circulated, the interaction of value and cultural symbolism was not significant, $F(2, 92) = 0.98$, $p = .38$. The bottom panel of Figure 1 shows the estimated evaluations of Tom Hanks in the low circulation condition. There was a significant main effect of value, $F(2, 92) = 7.54$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2_p = .14$. Tom Hanks received more positive evaluations when his behaviors signaled the central value ($M = 6.28$) than when his behaviors signaled the neutral value ($M = 5.58$), $t(92) = 3.80$, $p < .001$. Evaluation fell in the middle and did not differ from those in the other two conditions when Tom Hanks's behaviors signaled the peripheral value ($M = 5.94$).

Taking the results of the low and high circulation conditions together, participants had the most positive evaluation of Tom Hanks when the narrative about

him was perceived to be widely circulated, when his behavior signaled the central value of American culture, and when he was perceived as a symbol of American culture. Thus, we found support for our first hypothesis. The participants' evaluation of Tom Hanks was related to the perceived level of his cultural symbolism only when his story is seen as part of the culture's normative shared reality—when his story personifies an intersubjectively important American value and the story has become a widely circulated public story. Once these conditions are met, the participants were sensitive to the cultural significance of the narrative and evaluated Hanks more favorably the more they saw him as a symbol of American culture. Believability of the narrative did not moderate this result.

STUDY 2

In Study 2, we examined another side of the normative shared reality self-perpetuation process, focusing on how people respond to their own communicative actions that threaten their allegiance to the normative shared reality. As stated earlier, we contend that people who are induced to speak against the normative shared reality would show more positive cultural evaluation. Our contention is based on the confluence of theoretical insights from shared reality research (Echterhoff et al., 2005; Hardin & Higgins, 1996) and our previous findings (Wan, Chiu, Peng et al., 2007; Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007) on the role of intersubjectively important values.

From a shared reality perspective (Hardin & Higgins, 1996), social interactions create and maintain shared realities. As these shared beliefs are socially verified, they not only serve to regulate social relationships, but also present meanings to people's self. For example, Sinclair et al. (2005) found that people's self-evaluations would tune to the interaction partner's perceptions when affiliative motivation was high. Also, Hardin and Higgins (1996) have shown that people engaged in self-verification on aspects of the self that were shared in significant social relationships, but not on socially unshared aspects, regardless of whether the aspects were positive or negative. This suggests that people would try to maintain and defend the self-definition that is socially shared in significant relationships. Extending this shared reality defense to a collective context, it is possible that people would show similar defense of the shared realities of the social group that they belong to.

The intersubjectively important values of a group are consensually validated normative expectations and socially accepted markers of the group's identity. Accordingly, these values serve as effective reminders of their associated group identity (Wan & Chiu, 2009). Consistent with this idea, our past research results revealed that talking about the intersubjectively important values in the United States can increase American students' level of national identification. In this study (Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007), American college students were requested to speak for or against values of high (*enjoying life*, *true friendship*) or low (*moderate*, *detachment*) intersubjective importance in the United States. The results showed that participants' level of national identification increased after they had spoken on intersubjectively important (vs. unimportant) American values, regardless of whether they spoke for or against these values. In summary, making the intersubjectively important American values salient served as a reminder of American identity and increased the participants' reported American identification.

Although both speaking for or against intersubjectively important American values increases the salience of national identity, we hypothesize that only speaking against these values would pose a threat to the normative shared reality of the culture, which would then evoke a tendency to exhibit more positive evaluation of the culture as a means to reaffirm one's allegiance to the group. While speaking for intersubjectively important values signals support for one's associated group's normative shared reality, speaking against the intersubjectively important values signals abandonment and betrayal of the normative shared reality. Thus, speaking against the intersubjectively important values not only makes the group identity salient, but also threatens one's relationship with the group. As such, individuals who are induced to speak against the intersubjectively important values in their group would experience a threat in their relationships with other members of the group arising from the simultaneous awareness of the group's shared reality on the importance of the denounced values and the self's action going against the shared reality. To reduce the threat resulting from such disagreement with the group, after having denounced the intersubjectively important values in the group, these individuals may become more motivated to reaffirm their relationships with the group by displaying more positive evaluations of the group. Thus, paradoxically, committing a communicative act that is directed toward defying the normative shared reality may engage the speaker in cognitive processes that can further *strengthen* the speaker's commitment to the normative shared reality.

METHOD

Participants. The participants were 87 (27 men, 59 women, 1 did not report gender) introductory psychology students at the same university as the pretest participants. All participants were European American. They had lived in the United States for an average of 18.93 years (*SD* = 3.60). They participated for course requirement credits.

Manipulations and Procedures. The participant was randomly assigned to one of the four 2 (value: central vs. peripheral) x 2 (speech: promotion vs. denouncement) between-participant conditions. We introduced our manipulations by asking the participant to give a speech on why certain values were important or unimportant. The topic of the speech was "*Enjoying life* and *true friendship* are important" in the central value promotion condition, "*Enjoying life* and *true friendship* are unimportant" in the central value denouncement condition, "*Detachment* and *moderate* are important" in the peripheral value promotion condition, and "*Detachment* and *moderate* are unimportant" in the peripheral value denouncement condition.

Upon arrival at the laboratory, the experimenter told the participant that the session consisted of several unrelated studies, and the first one was a "persuasive communication study." The experimenter told the participant that the researchers were interested in the effects of speaker enthusiasm on persuasion, and that the participant would need to produce a speech with high enthusiasm. The experimenter went on to explain that the participant would be asked to record a 5-minute persuasive speech on a certain topic, and that participants in a future study would listen and respond to the speech produced by the participant. Therefore, although there was no expectation of any future actual interaction, the participant expected the produced speech to be heard by another person in the future. Then,

the participant received four envelopes from the experimenter and learned that each envelope contained a different speech topic, although in reality, all four enve-lopes contained the same speech topic randomly assigned to the participant. The experimenter was aware of the presence of four different conditions but was not aware of the variables being manipulated or the content inside the envelopes. The participant chose one of the four envelopes.

Inside the envelope were the assigned speech topic and six arguments in sup-port of the speech topic, three addressing each of the two values in the speech topic. These arguments are shown in Appendix B. We included these arguments to ensure that the participant would focus on the values in the speech topic and not reference other values in the speech. For example, we did not want the partici-pant to argue that a certain value is important because it is more important than other values, or that a certain value is unimportant because other values are more important.

Next, the experimenter explained that from past research, an argument would seem more enthusiastic when personal experiences were cited to support it. Fol-lowing this explanation, the experimenter asked the participant to recall and write down a personal experience to illustrate each of the six arguments presented to the participant. Then, the experimenter left the participant in the experimental room alone for 10 minutes to compose and rehearse the speech. At the end of the 10-minute period, the experimenter returned to the experimental room, turned on an audio recorder, and told the participant to record the speech into the recorder. Then, the experimenter left the room before the participant started the speech.

After the participant had recorded the speech, the experimenter announced the end of the first study. Next, the participant completed a measure of his or her es-timates of American achievement, which constituted our dependent measure of the participant's judgment bias for American culture. Finally, the participant com-pleted a personal information survey, and was fully debriefed and dismissed.

Estimates of American Achievements. We measured the participants' evaluation of America by asking them to estimate American achievements in various domains. We had the participants answer 14 almanac-type questions. The questions asked the participants to estimate the percentage of winners of various famous interna-tional prizes who were Americans, the percentage of world population who were native speakers of English, and the literacy rate of the United States. For each ques-tion, the participants also provided estimates for five other countries. Finally, the participants ranked American students and students from nine other countries on math performance and creativity. We predicted that the participants in the central value denouncement condition (compared to the other three conditions) would display the most positive estimates for the achievements of the United States (vs. other countries).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results provided consistent support for the hypothesis that denouncing inter-subjectively important values increased ingroup favoring judgments. Recall that the participants ranked the United States and nine other countries on creativity and math performance. The ranks given to the United States for these two ques-

TABLE 2. Effects of Disputing the Social Reality on Mean Estimates of U.S. (vs. Non-U.S.) Achievements

	Experimental Condition			
	Central Value Promotion	Central Value Denouncement	Peripheral Value Promotion	Peripheral Value Denouncement
Estimated U.S. achievement[a]	0.28 (0.08)	0.28 (0.08)	0.30 (0.11)	0.27 (0.08)
Estimated non-U.S. achievement[a]	0.19 (0.02)	0.17 (0.03)	0.19 (0.06)	0.20 (0.04)
Perceived U.S. rank[b]	3.75 (1.63)	2.65 (0.87)	3.48 (1.63)	3.67 (2.03)

Note. Standard deviations are indicated in parentheses. [a]Estimated U.S. and non-U.S. achievement scores are raw non-transformed proportions. Higher scores indicate more favorable estimates. [b]Smaller numbers indicate more favorable rankings.

tions were averaged. Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations in the four experimental conditions. Smaller numbers here indicate more favorable rankings of the United States relative to other countries. As the sum of the average rank of the non-American countries and the rank of the United States is a constant, the analysis focused on the ranking of the United States only. A Value X Speech ANOVA showed no significant main effects ($F = 1.19$ for the main effect of value and 1.78 for the main effect of speech). The predicted Value X Speech interaction was significant at the .06 level, $F(1, 83) = 3.60$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Participants in the central value denouncement condition ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 0.87$) gave the United States higher ranks than did participants in the central value promotion condition ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.63$), $t(43) = -2.83$, $p < .01$, $d = 0.84$. Participants in the peripheral value promotion condition ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.63$) did not differ from participants in the peripheral value denouncement condition ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 2.03$) on their rankings of the United States, $t(40) = -0.34$, *ns*. A contrast comparing participants in the central value denouncement condition with participants in the other three conditions was significant, $t(83) = -2.54$, $p < .05$. Participants who gave a speech on the unimportance of intersubjectively important American values showed the most favorable estimates for the United States (vs. other countries).

We next analyzed the 12 questions on international awards, language prevalence, and literacy rate. Recall that the participants provided proportion estimates for these items. First, we arcsine transformed the responses. Next, for each question, responses to the foreign country or language items were averaged to get a non-American score. Participants' responses to the 12 questions were then averaged to give an American score and a non-American score. Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations of the non-transformed proportions in the four experimental conditions. The analyses below were conducted on the transformed proportion estimates whereas the means and standard deviations were reported as non-transformed values.

Results from the Country (America vs. non-America) X Value (central vs. peripheral) X Speech (promotion vs. denouncement) mixed ANOVA with country as the within-participants factor revealed a significant main effect of country, $F(1, 83) = 146.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .64$; participants made higher achievement estimates for the United States ($M = 0.28$, $SD = 0.09$) than for non-U.S. countries ($M = 0.19$, $SD = 0.04$). This main effect, however, was qualified by the significant three-way interaction between country, value, and speech, $F(1, 83) = 4.06$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. We

examined the nature of this interaction by performing a Value X Speech ANOVA for estimates of the foreign countries and the Unites States separately.

For estimates of the foreign countries, the Value X Speech ANOVA performed on non-American scores revealed no significant main effects ($F = 1.16$ for the main effect of value and 0.21 for the main effect of speech). However, the predicted Value X Speech interaction was significant, $F(1, 83) = 4.53$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. Participants in the central value denouncement condition ($M = 0.17$, $SD = 0.03$) had *lower* non-American scores than participants in the central value promotion condition ($M = 0.19$, $SD = 0.02$), $t(43) = -2.35$, $p < .05$, $d = 0.70$. Participants in the peripheral value promotion condition ($M = 0.19$, $SD = 0.06$) did not differ from participants in the peripheral value denouncement condition ($M = 0.20$, $SD = 0.04$), $t(40) = -0.98$, *ns*. In addition, a contrast comparing participants in the central value denouncement condition with the other three conditions was significant, $t(83) = -2.15$, $p < .05$. Participants who gave a speech on the unimportance of intersubjectively important American values made more unfavorable estimates of foreign countries' achievements than did participants in the other three conditions.

For the American scores, a Value X Speech ANOVA showed no significant effects, Fs < 1. Thus, participants in the four speech conditions did not differ in their estimates for the United States. In short, the results are consistent with our hypothesis that the experience of denouncing central American values in a communication context can increase the tendency to make unfavorable estimates of non-American achievements.

Another way of interpreting the Country X Value X Speech interaction was to examine the difference of American and non-American estimates across the conditions. Unexpectedly, a planned contrast comparing the central value denouncement and peripheral value promotion conditions with the other conditions was significant, $t(83) = 2.02$, $p < .05$. This showed that participants in the peripheral value promotion condition showed a somewhat similar response as the central value denouncement participants in making unfavorable estimates of non-American achievements.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

In the present research, we applied the technique developed in our previous research (Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007) to identify the values American undergraduates agreed to be important in the United States. Utilizing the participants' shared belief about what constituted the central values in the United States, we identified values that played a meaningful role in the participants' evaluations of the culture. In Study 1, when the narrative of a famous actor implicated the culture's central values and when the narrative was known to be widely circulated, the narrative was treated and responded to as a cultural narrative—evaluation of the actor was related to the actor's cultural symbolism. In Study 2, after having been induced to speak against the central values of American culture, the participants exhibited more favoritism for American culture. They tended to make relatively favorable estimates of the United States' international accomplishments and unfavorable estimates of other countries' achievements.

Interestingly, in Study 2, participants who promoted the peripheral values also had somewhat more favorable estimates of American achievement. In hindsight, this result is compatible with our prediction of the "saying is disbelieving" effect. Whereas central values are part of a culture's shared reality on what are important, peripheral values are also part of a culture's shared reality on what are not important. Thus, promoting the importance of the peripheral values goes against the shared reality of the culture concerning what should not be important, which might produce a similar threat to the participants' positive relationship with the cultural group, resulting in a defense mechanism similar to that in the central value denouncement condition.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Beyond Communication Accommodation. Our results have several implications for understanding the psychological basis and significance of shared reality effects. First, past studies on shared reality have focused on the cognitive and motivational implications of shared beliefs regarding what is true (e.g., what is generally believed to be the characteristics of an individual or a social category). In these studies, verbal descriptions of a stimulus person can change subsequent memory representation of the stimulus person to be consistent with the verbal description, particularly when the expressed attitude toward the stimulus person is consistent with the speaker's assumption or knowledge of the shared belief about the stimulus person's characteristics in the community. However, the "saying is believing" effect is not entirely due to communicative accommodation, because the effect is attenuated when the assumed attitude of the addressee toward the stimulus person is known to be not part of the shared reality (Echterhoff et al., 2005; Lyons & Kashima, 2003).

By focusing on normative shared reality (shared belief regarding what is important in a collective), our results reinforce and extend this conclusion. When a narrative is widely circulated, it becomes part of the culture's shared reality. If this story is also consistent with the culture's consensual norms, it acquires cultural significance and will be favorably evaluated as a cultural narrative. When this happens, the story reinforces the normative shared reality in the culture. On the contrary, making a public speech that contradicts the consensual norm in the culture upsets one's allegiance to the culture's normative shared reality. To reaffirm one's allegiance to the shaken normative shared reality, individuals may favor their group in subsequent intergroup evaluations. Study 2's results illustrate this cultural dynamic. In this study, participants who denounced the importance of intersubjectively important values in their speech produced more positive evaluations of the culture than did those who promoted the importance of these values in their speech. Like the saying is believing effect, this effect cannot be reduced to communicative accommodation. Thus, our results extend the attitudinal tuning and memory effects in current shared reality research to the self-perpetuation of intersubjective value consensus, which is an important part of a culture's normative shared reality. The present research brings shared reality investigations to the domain of shared meaning negotiation in a culture, and identifies new effects that are tied to the maintenance of normative social reality.

Extending Shared Reality Effects to Group Processes. Second, theoretical and empirical accounts of shared reality (Echterhoff et al., 2005; Hardin & Higgins, 1996) often emphasize a shared reality established within interpersonal interactions. Our research looks at shared reality at a broader, collective level. Consensus perceptions emerge in a society through meaning negotiations that take place at different levels of social interactions. Through such meaning negotiation processes, individual attitudes are tuned toward an evolving shared reality in the collective (Hausmann, Levine, & Higgins, 2008; Jost et al., 2008; Lau, Chiu, & Lee, 2001). To some extent individual attitudes are assimilated into the intersubjective consensus.

However, social transformation of individual attitudes is hardly powerful enough to homogenize individual attitudes, particularly those that are seldom communicated or difficult to articulate (Lau et al., 2001). Thus, the collective level shared reality cannot be reduced to the summation of individual attitudes and thus should be treated as a separate theoretical entity. As the results of our studies have shown, examining consensus perceptions of values at a collective level opens opportunities for the examination of important culture-related phenomena.

The above analysis distinguishes intersubjective consensus from the ingroup norms and prototypes discussed in social identity research. Self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) posits that groups are defined by prototypic characteristics in a context of intergroup contrast. Also, the model of subjective group dynamics (Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998) predicts that people would maintain the validity of the ingroup norms via intergroup and intragroup differentiation. Important in the social identity proposition is that the prototypic characteristics and norms that are most salient in defining a group changes depending on situational intergroup contrast (Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994). Intersubjective consensus on the other hand, develops over time as people negotiate common ground in communication, and ultimately build a collective shared reality that serves coordination functions within the collective and makes up the contents of *conventional* (but not necessarily positively distinctive) norms in the group (Zou et al., 2009).

Explaining the Velocity of Value Change. Furthermore, past research has shown that a society's central values are more resistant to change than its peripheral values (Fu & Chiu, 2007; Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Our results provide a social cognitive explanation for this phenomenon. To elaborate, most central values in the society are intersubjectively important. As noted, past research has found evidence for the dissociation between intersubjectively important values and values that are most prevalent in the society. For instance, Wan, Chiu, Tam et al. (2007) reported that *mature love*, *loyal*, *self-respect* and *meaning in life* are among the most widely endorsed values among the undergraduate students in a public university in the United States; however, these values are *not* perceived to be of high importance in the student community. But more importantly, shared reality is often a better predictor of identity and behavior than objective reality (Heine, Buchtel & Norenzayan, 2008; Shteynberg et al., 2009; Wan, Chiu, Tam, et al., 2007; Wan, Tam, & Chiu, in press). In the Wan, Chiu, Tam et al. (2007) study, the students' personal endorsement of intersubjectively important values was a better predictor of their identification with the university's student culture than their personal endorsement of the values that were widely endorsed among the student body. Similar results have also been found in the domain of national identification (Wan, Chiu,

Peng et al., 2007). Thus, although it is conceptually reasonable to define a society's central values both from a normative shared reality and from an objective reality point of view, central values identified through a normative shared reality perspective are more intimately linked to a person's group identity.

In addition, social processes that lead individuals to speak against intersubjectively important versus unimportant values tend to have very different psychological effects. When people are led to denounce the importance of intersubjectively important values, a rebound effect may follow; these individuals are likely to make cognitive effort to reaffirm the importance of the normative shared reality. However, criticizing intersubjectively unimportant values are unlikely to produce a rebound effect. This may explain why central values, which are likely to be intersubjectively important values, are more resistant to change compared to peripheral values, which are likely to be intersubjectively unimportant values. Behaviors that devalue the intersubjectively important central values might result in reactions that reaffirm the normative shared reality, which provides a buffer for the central values against attempts of change.

Characterizing Cultures. Central values in a society are important symbolic components of the society's culture. Given that central values in a society overlap substantially with its intersubjectively important values, principles of shared reality can offer useful insights into basic cultural processes (Wan & Chiu, 2009). Indeed, many cultural theorists define culture by people's shared representations of the reality (Chiu & Hong, 2006, 2007; Pelto & Pelto, 1975; Romney, Boyd, Moore, Batchelder, & Brazill, 1996). For example, some cultural theorists maintain that culture is a pattern of symbolic meanings understood by members of the culture (Geertz, 1973; Roberts, 1964). Keesing (1981) compares culture to a shared system of competence consisting of people's "theory of what [their] fellows know, believe and mean, of the code being followed, the game being played" (p. 58). More recently, Higgins (2008) defines culture as "the members of a network of interconnected actors comprehending, managing, and sharing their inner states—their knowledge, feelings, moral standards, goals, and so on" (pp. 12-13).

A common practice in cultural and cross-cultural psychology is to characterize a society's culture in terms of the prevalent values and beliefs in the society. From the shared reality perspective, it is also appropriate to characterize culture by identifying the values that people in the society *agree* to be widely shared in the society. We contend that these two approaches to measuring culture complement each other (Wan & Chiu, 2009). Indeed, recent research findings indicate that these two measurement approaches may produce different images of a culture and that measuring culture through the shared reality approach can yield better predictions of basic cultural processes (Fischer, 2006; Heine et al., 2008; Shteynberg et al., 2009; Wan, Chiu, Peng et al., 2007; Wan, Chiu, Tam et al., 2007; Zou et al., 2009).

Predicting Intergroup Relations. Finally, the shared reality perspective to culture suggests that culture is in the eyes of the beholder. People in one community develop shared perceptions of their own culture, as well as those of other communities. More important, the shared perception of a culture in one community may not correspond to the shared perception of the same culture in another community. For example, there can be a high level of consensus among Israelis and among Palestinians on what the important values are for Israel. However, there can be

marked differences in the important values attributed to the Israelis from the perspectives of Israelis and Palestinians.

This analysis has an important implication for predicting the quality of intergroup relations. Past research has shown that group members' beliefs about how the ingroup is being stereotyped by an outgroup has social interaction consequences (Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998). From the normative shared reality perspective, success of intergroup communication and the quality of intergroup relations depends not only on one group's perception of the other but also on the match between both groups' collective representations of each other's important values. A social group (Group A) may perceive and receive another group (Group B) more warmly if Group A's collective representation of Group B's important values matches Group B's collective representation of Group B's important values (Chiu & Hong, 2005; Guan et al., 2009; Kurman & Ronen-Eilon, 2004; Li & Hong, 2001). This hypothesis merits further systematic examination.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although we identified the central American values in a pretest, aside from being intersubjectively important values, these values may also be popular values among American college students. Thus, both intersubjective consensus and the popularity of these values could have played a critical role in our results. Specifically, hearing a popular story that supports a popular value may evoke positive evaluation, whereas denouncing a popular value may strengthen ingroup favoritism. However, this explanation does not fully account for Study 1's results. Study 1 showed that in the familiar condition, the effect of cultural values on the evaluation of Tom Hanks was related to the perceived cultural symbolism of Hanks. The popularity effect does not explain why only those who saw Tom Hanks as an American symbol would respond favorably to a widely circulated account of his individualistic goal pursuits. Hence, the effect of intersubjectively important values in the maintenance of shared reality found in our research cannot be reduced to the popularity of these values among the college participants.

We used two different sets of central and peripheral values in the two studies and found support for our hypotheses in both studies. This shows that the effects of intersubjectively important values on the maintenance of normative shared reality were not limited to one specific value. Although we need future studies to establish the generalizability of these effects, our results support the view that values that are considered by a cultural collective to be important could play an important role in the maintenance of a culture's normative shared reality.

We have used the theoretical perspective of shared reality to explain the results of our studies. Such explanation emphasizes the relationship maintenance and social regulation function of normative shared reality. As people are motivated to maintain a positive relationship with their cultural ingroup, they show more positive evaluations of the culture symbols after hearing well-known stories affirming the normative shared reality, and also after being induced to speak against the intersubjectively important values of the culture. We are aware that other theoretical frameworks may predict the same results. For example, social identity theories (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner et al., 1987) posit that people are motivated to maintain a positive ingroup identity. This should result in more positive evaluation of

characteristics that are consistent with their ingroup's prototypic characteristics, and more ingroup favoritism after the ingroup identity is threatened. Also, self-verification theory (Swann, 1990) posits that people would try to affirm an existing consistent belief. As intersubjectively important values are existing beliefs about a culture, people might be motivated to maintain this belief in social interactions. We are not able to tease apart the three theories in the present research. However, it is worth noting that normative shared reality can serve all three functions—it regulates social relationships, defines the ingroup identity, and serves as valued beliefs of a group. We call for future research that would illuminate how these three functions of normative shared reality operate in concert to maintain normative shared reality.

Finally, the specific mechanisms of Study 2 results need further explorations. It is possible that talking against the shared reality results in a suppression of the shared reality, which leads to an eventual rebound in the endorsement of the culture's normative shared reality (Wenzlaff & Wegner, 2000). It is also possible that denouncing the normative shared reality can inoculate the speaker against further attacks of the shared reality (McGuire, 1964), producing stronger endorsement of the denounced values, which in turn results in the display of more ingroup favoring judgments. Whether our findings are outcomes motivated by a need to maintain the normative shared reality or cognitive responses to attacks of the shared reality would need to be answered in further research.

Notwithstanding these unanswered questions, what we consider as the most important contribution of the present research is the demonstration that intersubjectively shared cultural values are part of a culture's normative shared reality, which is maintained through at least two processes. First, people increase liking for a cultural icon when a widely known story of the icon resonates with the culture's normative shared reality. Second, communications that threaten the normative shared reality would result in a more positive evaluation of the culture. These processes reinforce each other to help maintain the normative shared reality.

APPENDIX A. TOM HANKS NARRATIVE IN STUDY 1

Choosing Own Goal Condition

Tom Hanks decided to become a famous actor when he was only 10 years old. His parents wished for him to pursue College education and live a typical career life. However, Tom had other plans. When he was in fourth grade, he performed in a school play. He was praised for his performance and realized that acting was his passion. He felt like he had been struck by a lightning bolt and decided to pursue an acting career. Tom told his decision to his parents, who initially thought about it as a kid's dream to be easily forgotten. Time proved them wrong as Tom Hanks became one of the most renowned American actors in his generation.

Humble Condition

Tom Hanks is a man of the people. Shunning publicity, he is quoted as saying: "You shouldn't gloat about anything you've done; you ought to keep going and find something better to do." When once offered a very difficult job by director Robert Zemeckis, Hanks had the humility to decline saying, "there's only so much I can internally grasp as an actor." Shifting the focus away from himself and continually recognizing the contributions of others is one of his key strengths. This has helped Tom Hanks become one of the most renowned American actors in his generation.

Responsible Condition

Tom Hanks is a responsible and conscientious individual. Taking his job very seriously, he is quoted as saying: "You have the obligation to always carry forward an assigned task to a conclusion." When once offered a novel job by director Robert Zemeckis, Hanks showed a conviction for being thorough and careful when preparing for acting. He always researches in advance about the characters he will be impersonating to make sure that no details are left to chance. Colleagues refer to Tom Hanks as "a hard working and reliable actor who can take things to an extreme in the quest of being a perfectionist." This has helped Tom Hanks become one of the most renowned American actors in his generation.

Cultural Symbolism Items Used in Study 1

Tom Hanks is associated with American culture.
Tom Hanks is an icon of American culture.
Tom Hanks embodies American values.
Tom Hanks reminds me of my American identity.
Tom Hanks is a good example of what it means being an American.
A picture of Tom Hanks carrying an American flag makes a lot of sense.
Tom Hanks is a symbol of American culture.

APPENDIX B. MAIN POINTS IN THE VALUE IMPORTANCE SPEECH IN STUDY 2

Central Value Promotion Condition

True friendship is important because it gives you someone to count on.
True friendship is important because it gives you someone to talk to.
True friendship is important because it helps you cope.
Enjoying life is important because life is short.
Enjoying life is important because it is of human nature.
Enjoying life is important because it is fulfilling.

Central Value Denouncement Condition

True friendship is unimportant because people change.
True friendship is unimportant because it makes you vulnerable.
True friendship is unimportant because friends are troublesome.
Enjoying life is unimportant because enjoyment is temporary.
Enjoying life is unimportant because it interferes with long-term goals.
Enjoying life is unimportant because it makes you lose touch with reality.

Peripheral Value Promotion Condition

Detachment is important because it protects you from being hurt.
Detachment is important because it makes you emotionally stable.
Detachment is important because it helps you cope.
Moderate is important because it limits the extremes.
Moderate is important because it regulates your life.
Moderate is important because it maintains the stability of your life.

Peripheral Value Denouncement Condition

Detachment is unimportant because it makes you vulnerable.
Detachment is unimportant because it makes your life miserable.
Detachment is unimportant because it makes you lose touch with reality.
Moderate is unimportant because you only live once.
Moderate is unimportant because it is difficult to be balanced all the time.
Moderate is unimportant because it gets you nowhere.

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