On feeling humiliated

The experience of humiliation in interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup contexts

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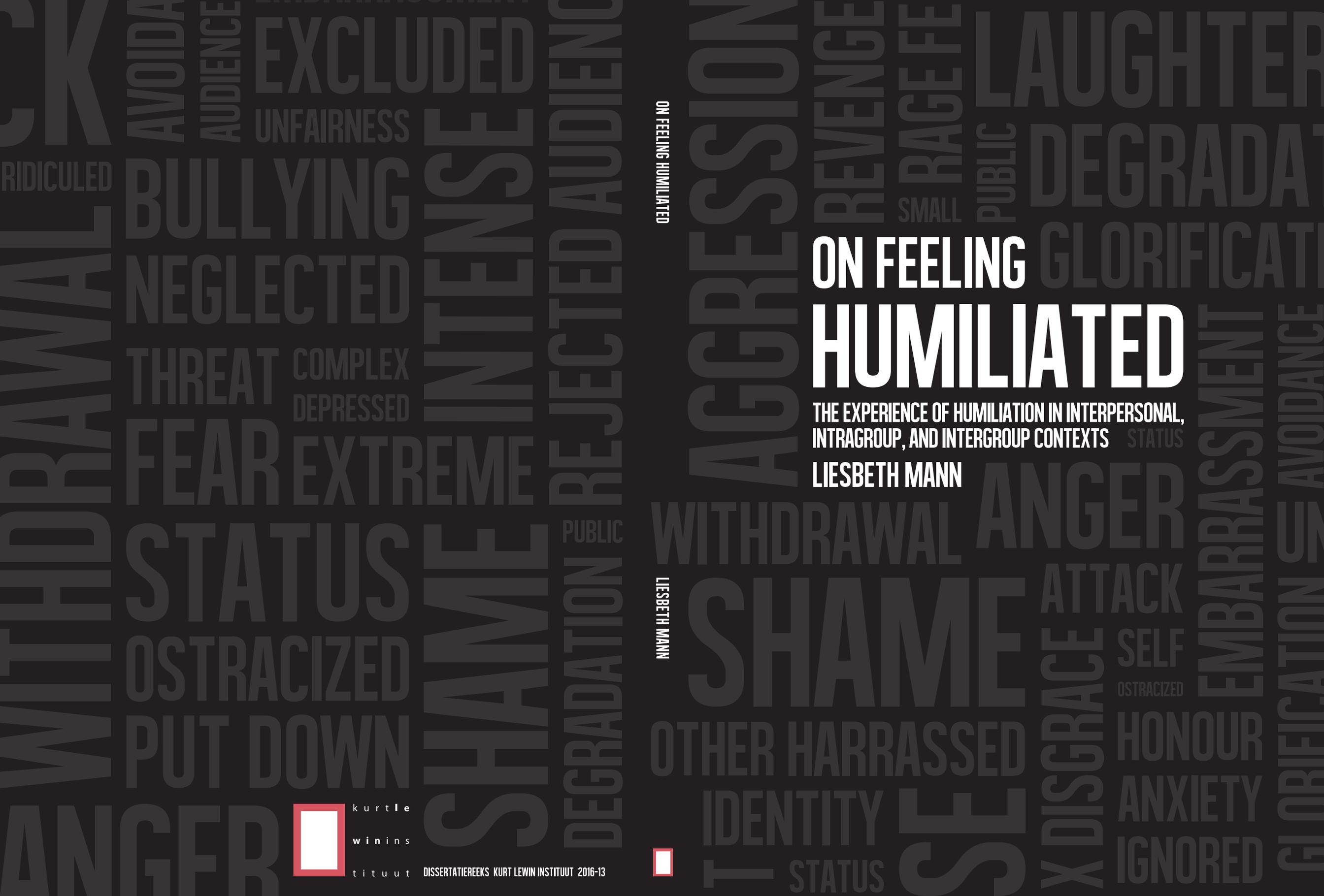**Citation for published version (APA):**
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ON FEELING HUMILIATED

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THE EXPERIENCE OF HUMILIATION IN INTERPERSONAL, INTRAGROUP, AND INTERGROUP CONTEXTS

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The Experience of Humiliation in Interpersonal,

Intragroup, and Intergroup Contexts

Liesbeth Mann

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The Experience of Humiliation in Interpersonal, Intragroup, and Intergroup Contexts

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor

aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam

op gezag van de Rector Magnificus

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ten overstaan van een door het College voor Promoties ingestelde commissie,

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Chapter 1

General Introduction

Her height and her voice made her different. Karen was the tallest girl in her high school class, even towering over most of the boys, and had a deep baritone voice that stood out from the cacophony of other teenage girls' high-pitched blabber. These qualities that set her apart also made her a target of bullying. Her classmates called her a horse. Some of the mean boys made a game of tugging at her bra straps or raising her skirt to expose her underwear. Most people in her class just laughed. A few others cast disapproving looks but did nothing. (Kristine, 2012)

In their zeal to join a fraternity at Towson University [U.S.], Brad Notaro and his fellow pledges submitted to a battery of humiliation and abuse. At the direction of students they hoped would make them brothers at Pi Lambda Phi, they ran and performed jumping jacks for hours on end, crouched under a cold shower holding a bag of ice, ate raw flour and drank a bitter concoction that made them vomit. Now it was Hell Week — the culmination of the pledge process — and Notaro, 18, was nearing a breaking point. For three days, he said, the brothers forbade him from sleeping and forced him to drink alcohol. To cope with the stress, Notaro said in a recent interview, he took anti-anxiety medication — and collapsed inside Towson's Albert S. Cook Library. According to a police report, paramedics found him "unconscious … not moving and exception[ally] pasty and pale." (Wells, 2014)

What America is tasting now, is something insignificant compared to what we have tasted for scores of years. Our nation (the Islamic world) has been tasting this humiliation and this degradation for more than 80 years. Its sons are killed, its blood is shed, its sanctuaries are attacked, and no one hears and no one heeds. (Bin Laden, 2001)

These quotes all contain strong examples of humiliation. The experience of humiliation is intensely negative and can have very dramatic (inter) personal consequences such as low self-esteem, depression, general anxiety disorder, suicide, homicide and (domestic) violence (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Farmer & McGuffin,

2003; Gilbert, 1997; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Kendler, Hettema, Butera, Gardner, & Prescott, 2003; Klein, 1991; Leary, Kowalski, Smith, & Phillips, 2003; Torres & Bergner, 2010; Walker & Knauer, 2011). At the group level, experienced humiliation is often mentioned as playing a role in intractable conflicts and it is associated with war, mass crime, genocide and terrorism (e.g., Atran & Stern, 2005; Baumeister, 2002; Fontan, 2006; Klein, 1991; Kristof, 2002; Lickel, 2012; Lindner, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2006, 2009; Pettigrew, 2003; Scheff, 1994; Staub, 1989; Stern, 2003, 2004; Volkan, 1997, 2004). Such grave consequences may suggest that humiliation is an exceptional emotion that is only rarely experienced and under specific circumstances, but surprisingly, this is not the case. Humiliation is familiar to almost everyone and it is a significant emotional experience in different cultures (e.g., Ginges & Atran, 2008; Leidner, Sheikh, & Ginges, 2012).

Although in clinical psychology and psychiatry some attention has been devoted to the consequences of severe and prolonged experiences of humiliation, still not much is known about what exactly constitutes humiliation and the circumstances in which it is elicited, in particular in the general, non-clinical population. The current dissertation focuses on the experience of humiliation. In three empirical chapters this emotion is studied in different contexts: the interpersonal, the intragroup, and the intergroup context. The aim of these studies is to get more insight in the determinants, strength, emotional correlates and consequences of experienced humiliation in these different settings.

In the current chapter we first present a theoretical overview of the nature and consequences of (mainly interpersonal) humiliation and we review the empirical research on humiliation conducted thus far. Next, based on psychological theories of emotion and intergroup conflict, we address the aspects relating to humiliation that we will specifically focus on in the current dissertation. These are the social contextual determinants of humiliation in interpersonal and intragroup contexts and the potential consequences of humiliation in an intergroup context. Finally, we

present a short overview of the research reported in each of the empirical chapters (Chapter 2-4) of this dissertation.

The Nature of Humiliation

The word *humiliation* stems from the Latin *humilis* (low) and *humus* (earth). The word both refers to the act of humiliating (to humble, degrade or depriving one of self-esteem) and to the feeling of humiliation (a state of disgrace or loss of self-respect). In the current dissertation, humiliation is studied from a psychological perspective, leaving aside normative perspectives (e.g., Margalit, 1996; see also Neuhäuser, 2011). Thus, we focus on the *subjective feeling* of humiliation, which not necessarily implies that there always is an objective *act* of humiliation (see also Lickel, 2012). In addition, acts of humiliation that are not experienced as such are not the focus of this dissertation.

From this psychological perspective, we follow Hartling and Luchetta (1999) in defining humiliation as "the deep dysphoric feeling associated with being, or perceiving oneself as being unjustly degraded, ridiculed, or put down—in particular, one's identity has been demeaned or devalued" (p. 264). The emphasis on identity (threat) seems essential in this and other definitions of humiliation. Klein (1991), for example, explains humiliation as the experience of a loss of face and an "invasion" of the self, which he defines as the violation of personal boundaries and a breach of personal space (p. 98). In general, feelings of humiliation can result from receiving negative attention, such as when one is being teased, harassed, ridiculed or put down (Elison & Harter, 2007; Elshout, Nelissen, & Van Beest, 2016; Harter, 2012), but the experience may also result from being neglected, excluded or ostracised (Elshout et al., 2016; Hartling, 2007; Veldhuis, Gordijn, Veenstra, & Lindenberg, 2014).

Humiliation belongs to the family of self-conscious emotions such as shame, guilt, pride and hubris. These emotions are all based on self-related processes (i.e., self-awareness and self-representations) which are necessary for self-evaluation

(Tracy & Robins, 2007). However, humiliation is distinct in two ways. It is a *complex* emotion and it is a very *intense* emotion.

Humiliation is Complex

To be sure, all self-conscious emotions are complex, because they "require a fairly sophisticated level of intellectual development. To feel them, individuals must have a sense of self as well as a set of standards. They must also have notions of what constitutes success or failure, and have the capacity to evaluate their own behavior" (M. Lewis, 1995, p. 68). However, humiliation's complexity also stems from its conceptualization as a "mixed" emotion, that is, an emotion consisting of a blend of other emotions, namely shame and embarrassment on the one hand and anger and rage on the other hand. Although these emotions are univalent in the sense that they are all negative, they are related to different action tendencies (e.g., Roseman, Wiest, & Swartz, 1994). Shame and embarrassment are associated with a tendency to hide the self, disappear from the scene, or a wish to become invisible (i.e., avoidance tendencies), whereas anger and rage are associated with a tendency to attack or take revenge (i.e., approach tendencies).

A review of the literature shows that, theoretically, humiliation has been most often related to shame (e.g., Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; H. B. Lewis, 1971; M. Lewis, 1992; Lindner, 2009; Miller, 1993); sometimes the two emotions are even equated (for example in Thomaes, Stegge, Olthof, Bushman, & Nezlek, 2011). Indeed, both emotions are negative and concern the self (Zavaleta Reyles, 2007) and both are the result of global attributions; i.e., a focus on the total or core self, rather than on specific aspects of the self, such as is the case with guilt (M. Lewis, 1995). Furthermore, they both arouse a wish to hide from others (Harter, 2012). In some instances, humiliation is seen as a specific variant of shame. For example, Allpress, Brown, Giner-Sorolla, Deonna, and Teoni (2014) regard humiliation as a form of "image shame"—as opposed to "moral shame."

However, humiliation and shame differ from each other in important domains. First, unlike shame, humiliation always requires a (perceived) action of *another* person or (group of) persons. Shame is inflicted by the self—although it often relates to others—and is also usually accepted by the self, that is, someone who feels ashamed believes there is a good reason for this feeling. Humiliation in contrast is not, or less, accepted, and feels therefore undeserved (e.g., Gilbert, 1997; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Jackson, 2000; Klein, 1991). This leads to a second important difference between these emotions, namely an appraisal of unfairness. Humiliation often feels unfair, whereas shame does not.

Like shame, embarrassment is closely related to humiliation. However, in contrast to humiliation, embarrassment may be non-evaluative, because it can be merely a result of self-exposure rather than self-evaluation, for example, when one is aware that one is being looked at or when receiving a compliment (M. Lewis, 1995). Furthermore, people can often (at least afterwards) laugh about their own embarrassing behaviour or feelings. Thus, embarrassment is not necessarily negative, whereas humiliation is always negative.[1] Furthermore, embarrassment is not always very intense. One can feel slightly embarrassed, but not somewhat humiliated. Related to these points, a perceived hostile intent by others is a key feature of humiliation (e.g., Harter, 2012), but not a necessary condition for embarrassment. This perception of hostile intent may increase the appraisal of unfairness in humiliation. In sum, both shame and embarrassment share the negative appraisal of the global self with humiliation, but they differ from humiliation in their lack of an appraisal of unfairness or injustice, which is empirically shown to be a core aspect of humiliation (Combs, Campbell, Jackson, & Smith, 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007).

Finally, many scholars have connected humiliation to anger, rage and (a desire for) aggression or revenge (e.g., Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Fattah & Fierke, 2009; Fontan, 2006; Gilbert, 1997; Harter, 2012; Hartling, 2007; Jackson, 2000;

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[1] Although it may be sought after and lead to positive arousal in sadomasochistic people or people practicing bondage (BDSM), which we leave aside in the current dissertation.

Klein, 1991; Lacey, 2011; Leary et al., 2003; Lindner, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2002; D. Smith, 2008; Stern, 2003, 2004; Torres & Bergner, 2010; Trumbull, 2008). This seems remarkable because anger and humiliation clearly differ. Anger is a basic emotion that is felt because an important goal is blocked, which not necessarily implies a threat to the self, whereas humiliation always involves a devaluation of the self. However, it is theorized and empirically shown that the appraisal of unfairness differentiating humiliation from shame and embarrassment, connects it to anger (e.g., Fernández, Saguy, & Halperin, 2015).

Other empirical research has also emphasized the mixed nature of humiliation, suggesting that it contains aspects of both shame and embarrassment ánd anger and aggression. Elison and Harter (2007), for example, reported overlap between humiliation and embarrassment, and to a lesser degree shame, but they found that these emotions diverge in terms of intensity. They concluded that humiliation is as intense as shame, but more intense than embarrassment. Further, the appraisal of another's hostile intent is more typical for humiliation than for shame and embarrassment. In support of this, Combs et al. (2010) found evidence that perceived intentionality of a negative act intensifies reports of humiliation, but not shame. In their study, humiliation and shame were moderately correlated, but they also showed that humiliation was related to anger and a desire for revenge, whereas these relations were not, or less strongly, present for shame. Elison and Harter further reported evidence showing that experiences of humiliation are strongly linked to self- and other-directed anger and that humiliation mediates the relationship between being bullied and anger, suicidal- and violent ideation.

Other research also confirmed the connection between humiliation and anger and aggression. In a study on recollected experiences of shame and guilt, R. H. Smith, Webster, Parrott, and Eyre (2002) found that whereas shame was weakly correlated with hostile feelings, a much stronger correlation existed between humiliation and hostility. Corroborating these findings, Leidner et al. (2012) showed

that recollected experiences of group-based humiliation were similar to anger (and dissimilar to shame) in terms of high levels of other-directed outrage and low levels of guilt. However, they were more similar to shame (and dissimilar to anger) in terms of feelings of powerlessness. Lastly, Fernández et al. (2015) showed that humiliation is closer to shame and embarrassment than to anger in the appraisal of accepting a devaluation of the self (although the effect of such acceptance is stronger for shame and embarrassment than for humiliation), but it differs from these emotions and is closer to anger in an appraisal of injustice. In terms of action tendencies, they showed both approach- and avoidance tendencies to be associated with humiliation, whereas shame and embarrassment were only related to avoidance tendencies, and anger was only related to approach tendencies. In their research, the association between humiliation and approach tendencies was as strong as the relation between humiliation and avoidance tendencies, but this likely depends on the context, cultural factors and individual differences (e.g., low versus high, unstable self-esteem, humiliation proneness) and may thus differ in other settings.

Humiliation is Intense

As indicated, the second important feature of humiliation is that it is a very intense emotional experience that "sticks out" and is more pervasive than many other emotions. Leidner et al. (2012) suggest that this pervasiveness can be explained by the conflicting action tendencies associated with humiliation. These conflicting action tendencies could foster greater accessibility of humiliating experiences in memory. That is, humiliating incidents may be remembered better and/or over a longer period of time than other negative emotional episodes. Indeed, according to Klein (1991), humiliating experiences remain vivid in the minds of victims, "no matter how many years have passed" (p. 96). Consider, for example, the following account by one of the victims of abuse in the Catholic Church in the Netherlands: "I have been raped four times. That is terrible, but worst of all is the humiliation. From 6 until 16 years old: humiliate, just humiliate. That is the very worst" ("Nieuwsuur",

2011). The fact that after many years, an abused person still recalls humiliation as the core feeling of a traumatic experience illustrates its intense character and profound impact.

There is also empirical research supporting this claim. For example, Otten and Jonas (2014) present electrophysiological evidence showing that humiliation is an intrinsically intense experience consuming attention and cognitive resources. They asked participants in the lab to read scenarios that induce humiliation (for example: "You see your internet-date at the arranged location. Your date takes one look at you, turns around and quickly walks away"). Other scenarios were designed to induce anger, happiness or shame. After reading the scenarios, participants were instructed to think about their own emotional reaction in these situations. Meanwhile the electrical brain activity of these participants was measured using the Electro-Encephalogram (EEG). It was found that people reading and thinking about the humiliating scenarios showed brain activity that was more indicative of a negative perception of the scenarios than people reading anger or happiness-inducing scenarios. Furthermore, people reading humiliation-inducing scenarios showed higher intensity of cortical activation, which is related to the processing of information, than people reading anger-, happiness- or shame-inducing scenarios. This suggests that humiliation is a more intense emotional experience in terms of neuro-cognitive and emotional processing than other approach-related emotions, such as anger and happiness, and avoidance-related emotions, such as shame.

Social-Contextual Determinants of Humiliation

In sum, previous social psychological emotion research showed that humiliation is an intense and complex emotion, which is related to shame and embarrassment as well as to anger and rage. In addition, clinical research has shown that humiliation can have severe consequences. However, there are still questions that need to be answered to obtain a more complete understanding of humiliation.

For example, although we know what constitutes humiliation very generally (e.g., negative attention, exclusion, ostracism), we do not have a clear idea yet of more specific social-contextual determinants of humiliation, that is, elements that enhance experiences of humiliation.

One social-contextual determinant of humiliation could be the presence of other people and their behaviour in a potentially humiliating situation. According to Klein (1991), other people—besides the humiliator and the victim—are an integral part of humiliation. He describes humiliation not just as an experience, but as a dynamic process involving a humiliator, a victim and a witness. Such a witness or multiple witnesses (i.e., an audience) may accidentally be present during a humiliating episode, or their presence may be of a more active nature, that is, they may choose to witness the event and even engage in mocking the victim. Therefore, an important question is: What is the effect of an audience during a humiliating episode? Does its mere presence make an insult or degrading comment more humiliating for the victim?

Some research indeed indicates that humiliation is felt more strongly when a potentially humiliating episode is public rather than private, or when an audience is present showing hostile intent (Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández et al., 2015; R. H. Smith et al., 2002). For example, Elison and Harter (2007) asked participants to judge different scenarios describing emotional episodes. They found that the presence of an audience displaying hostile intent is judged as prototypical for humiliation. If this is true, the presence of a hostile audience in a situation in which someone is, for example, insulted, should lead to more humiliation than when an audience shows no hostile intent, because this situation is more typical for humiliation. Hostility or mocking can be expressed in different ways, but we are especially interested in the potential effect of *laughter* by an audience, as a sign of hostile intent. Although laughter is usually considered and recognized as something positive (e.g., Sauter, Eisner, Ekman, & Scott, 2010; Scott, Lavan, Chen, &

McGettigan, 2014), in the context of a humiliating episode, we predict that a laughing audience has a negative effect in the sense that it intensifies experienced humiliation (Chapter 2).

On the other hand, there are probably also factors relating to an audience that may decrease or attenuate experiences of humiliation, for example, showing support to the victim of humiliation. The positive role of social support has been demonstrated in several domains. For example, Cohen and Wills (1985) showed that the perceived availability of social support attenuates the adverse effects of stress on psychological well-being. Furthermore, Noh and Kaspar (2003) found that seeking social support after experiencing discrimination was associated with reduced levels of depression. In relation to humiliation, there is some research showing that a *peer support system* helps victims of bullying in school (e.g., Cowie & Hutson, 2005; Naylor & Cowie, 1999). In line with this, we expect that social support after a humiliating episode decreases feelings of humiliation. We address this hypothesis in Chapter 2 as well.

As noted before, the presence of a hostile audience is regarded as prototypical for humiliation (Elison & Harter, 2007). Thus, we expect that audience laughter during a humiliating episode intensifies feelings of humiliation. However, this effect may also depend on the relevance of the episode to the victim. When people are humiliated or insulted about something that is of little importance to them, they may not care very much about others' response. This leads to the question which types of threats are important when it concerns humiliation. On the basis of previous definitions (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Klein, 1991) we consider humiliation a threat to the core self and to values that are central to the self-concept of a person. Building on this idea, we argue that when a humiliating episode entails a threat to central and stable aspects of one's identity, or one's core or autonomous self, this episode becomes more relevant and other people's (negative) response matters more to the victim, leading to stronger feelings of humiliation. Thus, the effect of a laughing

audience (as one of the contextual determinants of humiliation) on experiences of humiliation may be especially strong after threats to autonomous aspects of the self.

However, what is important for people's self-concept may depend on their cultural background. Cultures can be differentiated on the basis of several dimensions, the most prominent being collectivism versus individualism. Generally, in individualistic cultures one's behaviour is seen as the product of a stable, unique, and independent self rather than determined by circumstances. In collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, there is a stronger emphasis on the collective, the group, and the interdependence between individuals. The individual self is thus less central to the self-concept and social and situational flexibility of the self is considered more focal (Cross, Harding, & Gercek-Swing, 2011; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). This could imply that the effect of a laughing audience on experienced humiliation may be especially strong when the autonomous self is threatened, but only in individualistic cultures. In more collectivistic cultures, audience laughter may have an effect in particular when it concerns a threat to the social-relational self. In Chapter 2, we explore whether audience laughter increases reports of humiliation after threats to the autonomous self (and not the social-relational self), and whether this depends on the cultural background of participants.

With or without an audience, humiliation can be experienced in different settings. One specific context in which humiliation is often felt is during initiation rituals, for example in fraternities, sports teams or the army. *Hazing* is the term that is used to describe initiation practices that are humiliating, degrading, abusive or dangerous, regardless of a person's willingness to participate (Hoover, 1999). It is often thought that these hazing practices, including humiliation, lead to stronger affiliation among the novices in a group. This idea is based on previous social psychological research indicating that severe initiations to become a member of a group lead to more liking of the group than mild initiations or no initiations (i.e., the *severity-attraction hypothesis,* Aronson & Mills, 1959). Furthermore, the same effect—of

group liking as a result of initiation severity—is predicted by the *severity-affiliation-attraction hypothesis* based on research by Schachter (1959). According to this idea, perceived or anticipated severity of an initiation to become member of a group (specifically a fraternity or sorority) leads to stronger attraction to the group because of a stronger need for affiliation amongst the group members (e.g., Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001; Lodewijkx, Van Zomeren, & Syroit, 2005).

However, as humiliation is related to tendencies to withdraw (as well as tendencies to attack), we predict that when initiation rituals contain hazing practices that evoke humiliation, this is not associated with more, but rather with *less* group affiliation (Chapter 3). We also predict that when people are hazed together, within a group, rather than alone in front of a group, there will be a stronger expectation of social support from the other group members, which, in turn, leads to an decrease in feelings of humiliation.

Humiliation as a Group-Based Emotion

So far, we mainly discussed theories and research dealing with the experience of humiliation in interpersonal and, with regard to hazing, intragroup contexts. However, humiliation is also regarded an important group-based emotion. That is, humiliation can be experienced as a result of identification with a group one belongs to. A combination of insights obtained from Self Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) and appraisal theories of emotions (e.g., Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 1991) led to the development of Intergroup Emotions Theory (IET; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999). Based on IET, it has been shown that when one's group membership is salient, emotions can be felt on behalf of the group, depending on the degree of identification with that group. Such group-based emotions can be experienced even if they are not felt on a personal level, and they are only felt if one's group-identity is salient. Thus, group-based

emotions are different from their personal counterparts and this is also likely the case for humiliation.

As indicated before, group-based, or collective,[2] humiliation has been described as playing an important role in intergroup conflict. These conflicts may become intense and severe when they involve humiliation. An example that is often mentioned to illustrate this point is the deep humiliation felt by many Germans as a result of the loss of the First World War and the degrading *Treaty of Versailles*. This wounded pride seemed fertile ground for the rise of fascism and violent anti-Semitism (e.g., Baumeister, 2002; Lindner, 2001a, 2002; Staub, 1989).

However, conflicts in which group-based humiliation plays a role may also be less intense. These conflicts happen on a frequent basis all over the world and are often extensively covered by the media. Consider a headline in one of the Dutch big newspapers: *"Italy feels humiliated"* (Mesters, 2011). According to the accompanying article, the European Union offended the proud Italians' dignity by legally restraining Italy as the biggest risk factor in the Eurozone. Furthermore, the Italian president was publicly mocked by other European leaders including Merkel and Sarkozy: "The French and German leaders – now dubbed 'Merkozy' – exchanged glances and smiled when asked if they were confident Berlusconi would come up with reforms, prompting a gale of laughter from journalists" (Mesters, 2011). This incident created anger and indignation among the Italian population, even amongst Berlusconi's opponents. For example, Pier Ferdinando Casini, the head of the opposition UDC party said: "No one is authorised to ridicule Italy, even after Berlusconi's obvious and embarrassing delays in tackling the crisis," and he added: "I didn't like Sarkozy's sarcastic smile" (Kington, 2011). Other examples of group-based humiliation covered in the media often relate to sports games (e.g., the Dutch 5 to 1 victory over Spain in the World Cup soccer games of 2014) or public

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[2] Group-based and collective emotions are not the same. Collective emotions are emotions that are shared by group members for different reasons, whereas group-based emotions are emotions felt as a result of identification with a group (Bar-Tal, Halperin, & de Rivera, 2007). However, it is quite often the case that group-based emotions are shared and thus become collective emotions as well.

condemnation or shaming of people who represent a group or nation (e.g., the arrest of Dominique Strauss-Kahn after he was accused of sexually assaulting a hotel employee was regarded a humiliation for France as a whole, see also Jonas, Otten, & Doosje, 2014).

Not much empirical work has been conducted on group-based humiliation, but several studies have suggested that people can feel humiliated on behalf of their group. For example, one study (Veldhuis et al., 2014) has shown that participants who observed rejection of an in-group member felt as humiliated as participants who were personally rejected, and they felt significantly more humiliated than participants who observed the rejection of an out-group member. These researchers also found a strong connection between humiliation and anger and not between humiliation and fear or shame (Veldhuis et al., 2014). Although this research focused on vicarious humiliation, rather than group-based humiliation, the two are probably related. Thus, this may indicate that, on a group level, humiliation is more strongly connected to anger than to shame. In line with these findings, Jonas, Doosje, Lobel, and Pysczcynski (2016) found that humiliation was related to harsh treatment of an out-group. However, Ginges and Atran (2008) did not find an effect of humiliation on anger or aggressive tendencies. Instead they found an *inertia* effect, showing that Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza who felt more humiliation as a result of the Israeli occupation were *less* supportive of suicide attacks against Israelis, although they were also less supportive of peace deals. These mixed findings are puzzling. Possibly group-based humiliation leads to aggression only under certain conditions. For example, feelings of powerlessness could be an explanation of the inertia effect found by Ginges and Atran. In the current dissertation we specifically focus on perceived group-status in feeling and acting upon humiliation. We predict that when people are from a high status group, or perceive this to be the case, they feel more humiliated when confronted with a humiliating loss of their group than when they belong to a low(er) status group. We also predict that this humiliation in

turn leads to aggression towards out-groups, even if the out-group is not associated with the humiliation evoking event (Chapter 4).

Overview of Empirical Chapters

In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, we study the role of an audience during a humiliating episode. We use scenarios to investigate whether (imaginary) audience laughter intensifies reported humiliation. We also study a contrasting audience reaction, namely helping behaviour, in order to investigate whether a supportive audience reduces reports of humiliation. In addition, we examine whether audience laughter is perceived as particularly humiliating when the humiliating or insulting episode entails a threat to central and stable aspects of one's identity, i.e., one's core or autonomous self, or whether this depends on the cultural background of participants. To this end, we ask participants from an individualistic culture (i.e., The Netherlands and the United States) and a collectivistic culture (i.e., India) to read scenarios describing insulting episodes—including an audience that either laughs or does not react—and to indicate whether they would feel humiliated in such a situation.

Chapter 3 is focused on the role of humiliation during initiation rituals and we specifically focus on initiation rituals in fraternities and sororities (Study 3.1 and 3.3). We present three studies in which we use very different methods. In Study 3.1 we report results from a questionnaire among (former) members of fraternities and sororities investigating relations between experiences of humiliation, severity of the initiation and affiliation. In Study 3.2 we simulate a humiliating ritual in the lab and investigate whether experiencing this together with others in a group or alone in front of the group differently affects feelings of humiliation, withdrawal tendencies, affiliation and expected social support. Study 3.3 aims to replicate findings of Study 3.1 and 3.2, using scenarios in which typical hazing rituals are described.

In Chapter 4 we explore the role of group-status in relation to group-based humiliation and examine the relation between experienced group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies toward an out-group that is unrelated to the humiliation evoking event. We present three studies in which we aim to evoke group-based humiliation and measure whether people respond with aggression towards another, unrelated group, as a way to enhance their threatened group identity. We investigate whether (perceived) high group-status enhances feelings of humiliation and in turn aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group.

Finally, Chapter 5 presents a summary of the main empirical findings reported in this dissertation. On the basis of these findings, we outline general conclusions with regard to the nature and consequences of humiliation in different contexts (interpersonal, intragroup and intergroup). We further discuss theoretical and practical implications of this research. In addition, we discuss some important limitations of the research that is presented and we propose avenues for further research.[3]

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[3] Note that the empirical chapters (Chapter 2 to 4) were submitted to scientific journals almost in their current state. Therefore, some overlap exists between these chapters and both the General Introduction (Chapter 1) and the General Discussion (Chapter 5).

Chapter 2

When Laughing Hurts: Humiliation, Audience Behaviour, and the Self

Humiliation seems to be a "darker" and more profound emotional experience than many other emotions, underlying psychological and relational as well as societal problems. The examples quoted in the General Introduction of this dissertation show the intense character and the potentially dramatic consequences of humiliation, and they raise questions about its nature and the circumstances in which humiliation is elicited.

Despite this, humiliation as a specific emotion has been largely ignored by emotion researchers, although there is a recent increase of research interest (e.g., Combs, Campbell, Jackson, & Smith, 2010; Doosje, Jasini, Jonas, & Sveinsdóttir, 2016; Elison & Harter, 2007; Elshout, Nelissen, & Van Beest, 2016; Fernández, Saguy, & Halperin, 2015; Ginges & Atran, 2008; Harter, 2012; Jasini, Doosje, Jonas, & Fischer, 2012; Jonas, Doosje, Lobel, & Pysczcynski, 2016; Leidner, Sheikh, & Ginges, 2012; Otten & Jonas, 2014; Otten, Jonas, Doosje, & Erbas, 2016; Veldhuis, Gordijn, Veenstra, & Lindenberg, 2014). On the other hand, social and clinical psychologists and criminologists have described the consequences of sometimes severe and prolonged experiences of humiliation, such as low self-esteem, depression, general anxiety disorder, suicidal intentions, homicide and (domestic) violence (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Farmer & McGuffin, 2003; Gilbert, 1997; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Kendler, Hettema, Butera, Gardner, & Prescott, 2003; Klein, 1991; Leary, Kowalski, Smith, & Phillips, 2003; Torres & Bergner, 2010; Walker & Knauer, 2011). These and other studies consistently show that humiliation is an extremely painful and maladaptive emotional experience. They also suggest that humiliation is complex in terms of its constellation of feelings and action tendencies. For example, humiliation has been frequently related to the self-conscious emotions of shame, guilt and embarrassment (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; H. B. Lewis, 1971; M. Lewis, 1992; Miller, 1993; R. H. Smith, Webster, Parrott, & Eyre, 2002; Tracy & Robins, 2004), but also to anger, aggression and (a desire for) revenge (e.g., Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Gilbert, 1997; Harter, 2012; Hartling, 2007;

Jackson, 2000; Klein, 1991; Leary et al., 2003; Lindner, 2001a, 2001b; Torres & Bergner, 2010; Trumbull, 2008).

Given the complex nature of humiliation and its negative implications, we believe it is important to obtain more insight in factors that may intensify or weaken this emotion. There are two social-contextual factors that we assume will affect humiliation. First, the presence of others witnessing the event seems prototypical for the experience of humiliation (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Klein, 1991). However, an audience may enhance or decrease humiliation, depending on the nature of its actions. An audience can basically act in two ways: (join in) mocking the target, which would enhance humiliation, or help or support the target, which would decrease feelings of humiliation. Second, humiliation is considered an emotion in which the core self and one's most important values are under threat (e.g., Klein, 1991). However, depending on culture and context, different aspects of the self can be relevant or become active. We propose that the type of self-related value that is under threat in a humiliating episode affects the relevance of a situation, which may promote or block a potential audience effect on humiliation.

In three scenario studies, we examine the role of these factors. In all studies the effect of imagined audience laughter during a humiliating episode on reported humiliation is studied. In addition, in Study 2.1 we test whether imagined social support during the episode reduces reported humiliation. In Studies 2.2 and 2.3 we examine how a laughing audience effect might depend on the type of self-related value that is under threat during a humiliating episode, using data from participants of different cultural backgrounds (Study 2.3).

The Nature of Humiliation

Linguistically, *humiliation* refers both to the *act* of humiliating someone and the *feeling* of humiliation experienced by a person. In the present chapter, we refer to humiliation as a feeling which is the result from a *perceived* act of humiliation by

another person or group in which one's core-self or global aspects of the self are threatened. Literally, humiliation means lowering or humbling a person, pushing him or her to the earth (*humus*), and thus humiliation has been defined as "the emotional response to a demeaning reduction of status" (Lacey, 2011, p. 89).

The experience of humiliation can result from being the centre of negative attention, as is the case when being teased, harassed, ridiculed or put down (Elison & Harter, 2007; Elshout et al., 2016; Harter, 2012), or being neglected, excluded or ostracised (Elshout et al., 2016; Hartling, 2007; Veldhuis et al., 2014). These actions by others may be the result of a transgression or norm violation by the victim. In that case, humiliation is typically regarded as a form of punishment, although it is often judged as unfair and disproportional and may not have the intended results (Combs et al., 2010). However, a strong norm violation is not a prerequisite for being humiliated. People can be humiliated merely by being "different" or judged by others as inadequate. For example, at school, youngsters are sometimes bullied, harassed or laughed at by their peers because of their appearance or lack of social or athletic skills (Harter, 2012).

As mentioned before, humiliation is associated with other emotions. On the basis of previous theorizing and empirical evidence (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández et al., 2015; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Veldhuis et al., 2014), we argue that humiliation is a mixed, but discrete emotion that is distinct from, but related to shame and anger, and to a lesser degree embarrassment.

Of these emotions (shame, anger and embarrassment), humiliation is most often associated with shame (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; H. B. Lewis, 1971; M. Lewis, 1992; Lindner, 2009; Miller, 1993). Indeed, humiliation and shame share a number of feelings, appraisals and action tendencies (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández et al., 2015; Leidner et al., 2012). They are both negative and global emotions that refer to the self (Zavaleta Reyles, 2007) and may arouse a wish to hide from others (Harter, 2012). The most important difference between these emotions, however, is that

shame entails a judgment or criticism on the self by the *self*, whereas humiliation means to be put down by *another*, which leads to an appraisal of unfairness (Gilbert, 1997; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Jackson, 2000; Klein, 1991). Indeed, unfairness seems to be a central aspect of humiliation (Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012; Jackson, 2000; Klein, 1991; Torres & Bergner, 2010) and it is empirically shown to differentiate humiliation from shame and connecting it to anger (Fernández et al., 2015).

In addition to shame, Elison and Harter (2007) found some overlap between humiliation and embarrassment, but they and others also note important differences between these emotions, especially in terms of others' intention and, related to that, intensity. That is, humiliation is a more intense emotion than embarrassment and this may be the result of perceived hostile intent by others, which is theorized and shown to be a key feature of humiliation (e.g., Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012). Again, this is an element that seems to differentiate humiliation from other self-conscious emotions and connects it more closely to anger and aggression. Indeed, a relation between humiliation and anger, aggression, and a desire for revenge was empirically demonstrated by several researchers (e.g., Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández et al., 2015; Leidner et al., 2012; R. H. Smith et al., 2002). An extreme, but very relevant example of aggression in relation to humiliation is the phenomenon of *school-shootings*, the (attempted) mass killing and injuring of students and teachers at school or university by one or more students of that institution. The shootings are (at least partly) considered to be the result of the humiliation that is experienced by these perpetrators (Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012; Leary et al., 2003; Torres & Bergner, 2010).

In sum, humiliation can be associated with shame and embarrassment on the one hand and anger on the other. The (strength of the) connection between these emotions likely depends on personal, situational, and cultural factors. In all contexts, however, humiliation is a very painful emotion, characterized by a devaluation of the

self, a possible loss of status, appraisals of hostile intent of the other(s), and perceived unfairness.

Contextual Determinants of Humiliation

Although we know that one of the antecedents of humiliation is the perception of an unfair and intentional attack by another, the question under which specific conditions feelings of humiliation are elicited or intensified is not fully answered. A first factor that may play a role is the presence of other people during a humiliating episode. According to Klein (1991) the "triangle of humiliation" involves a humiliator, a victim and a witness. Thus, in this view the presence of a witness or audience is a key element of the process of humiliation. More generally, R. H. Smith et al. (2002) argue that "public exposure of any sort of behaviour, and the evaluative implications of public scrutiny, may be an especially powerful ingredient of the socially constructed self" (p. 146). Supporting this argument, these researchers show evidence that public exposure of a wrongdoing leads to stronger reports of shame, humiliation and embarrassment than when the wrongdoing remains private. In addition, a study by Combs et al. (2010) showed that participants who read scenarios about a person being punished for a moral transgression reported stronger humiliation when the reprimand was given in public rather than privately. A similar finding was shown by Fernández et al. (2015): Descriptions of a demeaning episode that were made public led to higher ratings of humiliation than when the episode stayed private. In line with Klein's theorizing, Elison and Harter (2007) further show that the presence of an audience displaying hostile intent is judged as prototypical for humiliation. They also found that when participants imagined being put down or violating a norm in the presence of an audience, they indicated to feel worse about themselves than when there is no audience, and they reported to feel worse if that audience shows hostile intent (i.e., condescending looks and mocking) than when it reacts sympathetically.

Although these results are important, they do not show a direct causal link between (imagined) audience behaviour and perceived humiliation, as feeling badly about oneself concerns a much broader negative affect than feeling humiliated. Furthermore, these results keep us in the dark with regard to the *type* of hostility displayed by the audience. We are especially interested in the effect of laughter on humiliation.

Although laughter has a clear positive and prosocial function in many situations (see e.g., Scott, Lavan, Chen, & McGettigan, 2014), and is cross-culturally recognized as an expression of joy (Sauter, Eisner, Ekman, & Scott, 2010), in some contexts it can be a signal of negative emotions as well (see e.g., Niedenthal, Mermillod, Maringer, & Hess, 2010, who distinguish three different types of smiles). For example, contempt is often accompanied by a smile, referred to as the unilateral lip curl (e.g., Darwin, 1872; Ekman & Friesen, 1986; Izard & Haynes, 1988; Wagner, 2000) and can be expressed with scornful and derisive laughter (Ruch & Proyer, 2008). *Schadenfreude*—the enjoyment of others' misfortune (van Dijk, Ouwerkerk, Goslinga, Nieweg, & Gallucci, 2006)—is also associated with laughter. For example, *Schadenfreude* is often used as the basis of TV shows (Ruch & Proyer, 2008) in which people are laughed at and ridiculed for their (poor) performances, appearances or norm-deviant behaviour. In such instances, laughter is not friendly or supportive, but rather derogative and implies that we *laugh at* rather than *with* someone. In the case of humiliation, we therefore expect that laughter is a clear signal of degradation, derision or bullying.

The Current Research

Our first set of hypotheses thus relates to the role of an audience. In particular, we hypothesize that the presence of a laughing audience during a humiliating episode intensifies feelings of humiliation. Based on earlier research and theory (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Klein, 1991), we

expect that humiliation is closely related to shame and anger. However, because public degradation is a prototypical feature of humiliation (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007), we expect audience behaviour to be more strongly linked to humiliation than to shame and anger.

In addition, we examine the effect of a contrasting reaction, namely the target of humiliation being socially supported by an individual from the audience, which may reduce humiliation. Social support has, to our knowledge, never been experimentally studied in the specific context of humiliation. That being said, research on classroom bullying showed that so-called *peer support systems* (e.g., Cowie & Hutson, 2005; Naylor & Cowie, 1999)—trained youngsters who offer friendship and support to victims of bullying, and promote a pro-social atmosphere in and around the classroom—reduce the negative impact of bullying on the victims (Cowie & Hutson, 2005). In line with this, we argue that social support after a humiliating event helps the victim to cope with the event and therefore reduces feelings of humiliation.

Our second set of hypotheses is more explorative and relates to which aspects of the self should be threatened in order to give rise to feelings of humiliation. As mentioned previously, the presence of an audience showing hostile intent is regarded as prototypical for humiliation (Elison & Harter, 2007). As we argue that laughter is one way of showing hostile intent, we predict that potentially humiliating situations involving such laughter are seen as more humiliating than similar events without audience laughter. However, an audience effect may also depend on the relevance of the situation for the victim. If a potentially humiliating episode does not (strongly) touch upon ones concerns (Frijda, 1986), people may not only feel less humiliated, they may also care less about other people's responses. As humiliation is described as "an invasion of the self" (Klein, 1991, p. 98), we argue that when a humiliating episode entails a threat to central and stable aspects of one's identity, i.e., one's core or autonomous self, a strong concern is activated. In turn, other people's

(negative) response matters more to the victim and evokes stronger humiliation.

What is considered one's core self, however, may depend on the social and cultural context. The notion of a stable and agentic self-construal has been shown to be more crucial in Western individualistic cultures compared to collectivistic cultures, where social and situational flexibility of the self is considered more focal (Cross, Harding, & Gercek-Swing, 2011; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Thus, we argue that the effect of a laughing audience on humiliation may be especially strong when the autonomous self is threatened, but only in individualistic cultures. In more collectivistic cultures, audience laughter may have an effect in particular when it concerns a threat to the social-relational self. To our knowledge, no research studied self-related values and culture in relation to humiliation. In the current studies, we therefore explore these issues to provide a basis for further research in this area.

Finally, based on Elison and Harter's (2007) conclusion that the dynamics of humiliation apply to both genders, we have no reason to expect gender differences. However, previous research on gender differences in subjective emotions often have shown more intense reports of emotions by women (Fischer & Evers, 2013), and one study showed higher reports of humiliation by women than by men (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999). Thus, we do control for gender in all studies.

We report three studies focusing on these ideas. In Study 2.1 we examine whether descriptions of public insults after a norm violation in the presence of an audience increase reports of humiliation when the audience laughs compared to when there is no audience reaction (Hypothesis 1), whereas this is not (or less) the case for shame and anger (Hypothesis 2). We also expect that including social support from someone witnessing the episode in such a description decreases reports of humiliation (Hypothesis 3). In Studies 2.2 and 2.3 we explore whether an audience effect on reported humiliation is more pronounced when one's autonomous and independent self is threatened than when the social-relational self is threatened, or

whether this depends on the cultural background of participants. We confirm that we report all data exclusions, all measures and all manipulations in the three studies.

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Study 2.1

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In Study 2.1 we manipulated the reaction of an audience during a hypothetical humiliating episode. We constructed a scenario that describes a person being insulted for violating a norm in the presence of others (the audience) who either laugh after the insult or show no reaction. Participants were requested to imagine themselves as the protagonist in the story and to indicate their expected emotional reaction. We predicted that reports of humiliation would be higher when the audience laughs at the protagonist than when there is no such reaction (Hypothesis 1). We also expected that this audience effect would be more pronounced for humiliation than for anger and shame (Hypothesis 2). Finally, we predicted that support offered after this episode would decrease the reported intensity of humiliation (Hypothesis 3).

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Method

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Participants and Procedure

A total of 160 participants took part in this study. Data were collected online by mailing the student mailing list of an English-speaking international university in Germany. Additionally, we collected data (paper and pencil) in and around the University of Amsterdam and via a snowball procedure in the United Kingdom.

As the current study was not focused at testing cultural differences in these situations (as in Study 2.3), we aimed for a culturally homogeneous group of people from Western Europe. However, 28 international students of the German university were born and raised in non-Western, collectivistic countries (i.e., Africa, Latin America, and Asia). For ethical reasons we did not exclude students based on nationality, but we analysed only the results of a culturally homogenous (i.e.,

Western) group of participants. Importantly, when we included the data of the non-Western participants we found the same patterns of significant results. Data of another 17 participants were excluded for other reasons.[4] Thus, 115 participants remained (72 female, 42 male, 1 gender missing). Their mean age was 27.34 years (SD = 10.81, range: 14-64).

Participants read the scenario and completed the questionnaire called "Emotions in Daily Life." Depending on their country of origin, a Dutch or an English version was presented (see below for translation procedures).

Design and Scenario

The scenario and questions were first written in Dutch and then translated into English by the researchers. These translations were inspected and where necessary corrected by a native speaker. It was made sure that the translation did not compromise the content of the scenarios so that they were fully comparable.

We used a 2 (Audience Reaction: No Reaction versus Laughter) x 2 (Social Support: No Support versus Support) between-participants design with Gender as a covariate. In all conditions we first presented the following text:

> You are participating in a discussion on politics, hosting people with different backgrounds. At a certain moment the discussion turns to a sensitive subject for some people. The discussion leader happens to be aware that you know a lot about this subject and he asks you a question about it. When you hesitate a little to answer his question, the person who sits next to you says in a sneering tone: "If you are not even able to give an honest and open opinion, then what are you doing here?"

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[4] Because (a) they did not participate in a serious manner (n = 8); (b) their responses were incomplete (n = 5); or (c) they scored too high on the item "happiness" (4 or 5 on a five-point scale), which was intended as a control variable to test the effectiveness of the scenario (n = 4).

Subsequently, in the Laughter condition the sentence: "Some of the other participants start to laugh," was added to the text. This manipulation was checked in a pilot-study in which we asked participants to indicate the reaction of the other people present in the situation. In the Support condition the sentence: "Then, another participant tells the person next to you: 'Don't act so stupid, have some respect!'" was added.

Measures

Participants indicated their agreement with statements on a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Emotions were measured with four items, each starting with the sentence: "In this situation I would experience…," and followed by one of the four emotion labels: "humiliation," "anger," "shame," and "happiness."[5] To check our manipulation of social support we asked the following question: "Do you feel the participants were on your side?" (felt support).

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Results

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Manipulation Check

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed with Social Support and Audience Reaction as factors and participants' rating of the extent they would feel that the other discussants were on their side (felt support) as dependent variable. There was no main effect of Social Support. However, there was a significant interaction between Audience Reaction and Social Support, $F(1, 111) = 14.11$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .113$. When the audience did not react after the insult, there was no difference in felt support in the two conditions ($M_{Support} = 3.04$, $SD = 0.94$; $M_{No\ Support} = 3.35$, $SD =$

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[5] Happiness was included as a control measure. If participants scored high on this item (4 or 5), their data were excluded from the analyses, because in these instances we considered the manipulation of humiliation as failed. When happiness was included in the analyses, we found an effect of Social Support. Participants scored higher on happiness when support was offered than when no support was offered after the humiliating episode. Happiness was related to humiliation ($r = -.23$, $p = .012$), anger ($r = -.31$, $p = .001$), and shame ($r = -.18$, $p = .057$). We also measured contempt with one item. There were no main effects and no interaction of Audience Reaction or Social Support on this measure. Contempt was significantly related to anger ($r = .21$, $p = .024$), but not to the other emotions.

0.63). When the audience laughed after the insult, however, support resulted in higher scores on felt support than when no support was given ($M_{Support}$ = 3.29, SD = 0.60; $M_{No\ Support}$ = 2.50, SD = 0.86). These results suggest that the manipulation of support was successful, even though the extent to which people indicated to feel support depended on the presence of audience laughter.

Main Analyses

   Emotions. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with Audience Reaction and Social Support as between-subjects factors, humiliation, shame and anger as dependent variables, and Gender as a covariate showed a significant multivariate effect for Audience Reaction, $F(3, 104)$ = 3.63, p = .015, η_p^2 = .095. Univariate analyses showed that this effect was significant for humiliation, $F(1, 106)$ = 8.37, p = .005, η_p^2 = .073, and shame, $F(1, 106)$ = 5.99, p = .016, η_p^2 = .053, and marginally significant for anger, $F(1, 106)$ = 3.75, p = .056, η_p^2 = .034. When scenarios included audience laughter, scores on these emotions were higher than when there was no audience reaction after the insult (see Table 2.1), supporting Hypothesis 1. Although audience laughter had an effect on both humiliation and shame (and a marginal effect on anger), the effect was strongest for humiliation, as indicated by the higher numerical value of the effect size, which is in line with Hypothesis 2.

   There was also a significant multivariate effect for Social Support, $F(3, 104)$ = 6.37, p = .001, η_p^2 = .155. Univariate analyses revealed only an effect on anger, $F(1, 106)$ = 17.05, p < .001, η_p^2 = .139. When scenarios described support being offered by a person from the audience, reports of anger decreased compared to when no support was offered (see Table 2.1). There was no effect on shame, $F(1, 106)$ = 1.49, p = .225, η_p^2 = .014, and, contrary to Hypothesis 3, support did not decrease reports of humiliation, $F(1, 106)$ = 0.07, p = .786, η_p^2 = .001. However, in line with our hypothesis, there was a significant negative relation between felt support and humiliation, r = -.21, p = .025, indicating that the stronger participants believed that the other discussants were on their side, the less strongly they reported humiliation. This

relationship was not significant for shame ($r = -.15$, $p = .119$) or anger ($r = -.08$, $p = .400$). There was no significant interaction between Audience Reaction and Social Support.

Table 2.1

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotions, separated for Audience Reaction (No Reaction versus Laughter) and Social Support (No Support versus Support), Study 2.1

	Audience Reaction		Social Support	
	No Reaction	Laughter	No Support	Support
Emotion	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*
Humiliation	2.22 (1.14)[a]	2.85 (1.09)[b]	2.59 (1.21)[a]	2.52 (1.09)[a]
Shame	1.90 (1.03)[a]	2.40 (1.08)[b]	2.07 (1.07)[a]	2.29 (1.09)[a]
Anger	2.94 (1.17)[†]	3.40 (1.12)[†]	3.59 (1.04)[a]	2.73 (1.14)[b]

Note. Means in the row No Reaction vs. Laughter and No Support vs. Support with different superscripts differ at least at $p < .05$. † indicates means that differ at $p < .10$.

Correlations

Reported anger and shame were both significantly and positively related to reported humiliation ($r = .30$, $p = .001$, and $r = .58$, $p < .001$, respectively), but not to each other ($r = .08$, *ns*). The relation between humiliation and shame was significantly stronger than the relation between humiliation and anger, $t(110) = -2.80$, $p = .003$.

Discussion

The results of Study 2.1 support the idea that audience laughter during a public insult leads to stronger humiliation compared to the same insult without audience laughter. We found that the increase in reported humiliation was accompanied by higher reports of shame and marginally higher reports of anger. Thus, all three emotions were affected by imagined audience laughter. However, this effect was strongest for humiliation—as indicated by its effect size—suggesting that public mocking in the form of laughter is a key feature of humiliation, more so than

of shame or anger. This notion is also supported by the negative relationship between participants' feeling that the other discussants were on their side and humiliation. The less participants indicated to feel that others supported them, the more humiliation they reported.

Contrary to Hypothesis 3, a description of social support by someone from the audience did not reduce reports of humiliation after the insult, nor did it reduce reported humiliation after descriptions of audience laughter. Yet, it did temper reports of anger. The question is whether this would be a very positive result. If an act of support does not affect humiliation and shame, but only lowers anger, the end result may be an experienced loss of control and a strong tendency to withdraw from the scene. We may explain the absence of an effect of support on humiliation by the fact that receiving social support can actually emphasize one's vulnerable and low status. Moreover, the involvement of others also stresses the public nature of the degradation, which may, in some cases, lead to an unintended *negative* effect of social support (although we did not find such an effect in the current study). We will discuss the role of social support further in the General Discussion.

Study 2.2

Study 2.1 supported Hypothesis 1 that descriptions of public insults including a laughing audience are perceived as more humiliating than when the audience does not react. In Study 2.2 we further examined whether laughing would be perceived as especially painful in response to specific types of threats to the self. Previous research has shown that values reflecting one's autonomy and stable personality are more central to people from Western-European countries than values related to one's connectedness with others (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991). We therefore explored whether in the current (Dutch) sample, descriptions of audience laughter would enhance perceptions of humiliation in particular when one's autonomous self, e.g., one's independence or honesty, is at stake rather than when the social-relational self

is threatened. Again, we expected that this effect would be more pronounced for humiliation than for anger and shame (Hypothesis 3).

To this end, we created six scenarios describing a public insult targeted either at the autonomous or social-relational self. We asked participants to read the six scenarios and imagine themselves as protagonist. The response of the audience (laughter or no response) was manipulated in the same manner as in Study 2.1.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 101 students from two universities in Amsterdam. They had different ethnic backgrounds, but Dutch was their mother tongue. Data of two participants were not analysed because they did not participate in a serious manner. Thus, 99 participants remained. Their mean age was 21.92 ($SD = 4.41$, range: 18-42, 71 female).

Students came to the lab and participated in return for credits. In addition, participants were approached at the university campus. As a small token of appreciation they were offered a candy bar. Participants read the scenarios and completed the questionnaire called "Social Situations."

Scenarios and Dependent Measures

In all six scenarios the protagonist is insulted by someone on the basis of a self-related value in the presence of other people who either laugh or do not react. Three scenarios described threats to values related to autonomy (honesty/openness, independence, and originality), and three scenarios described threats to social-relational values (respect for tradition/family, respect for elderly, and helpfulness). These values were selected on the basis of Schwartz' (2006) research on cultural values. For the exact wording of the scenarios, see Appendix A. Before presenting the scenarios, we measured endorsement of the autonomy values (i.e., honesty, independence, and originality) and social-relational values (i.e., respect for elderly,

respect for tradition, helpfulness) by asking participants to rate their importance. These questions could be answered on a scale ranging from 1 (*not important at all*) to 7 (*very important*). After each scenario, three items measured whether participants think they would feel ashamed, angry, and humiliated in the following way: "In this situation I would feel [respective emotion label]." These questions could be answered on a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).[6]

Results

Endorsement of Autonomy and Social-Relational Values

We created two scales of value endorsement (autonomy and social-relational value endorsement). However, the reliability of these scales was very low (Cronbach's α = .20 and .58 respectively). Therefore we could not use the scales in further analyses (e.g., to test a mediation of value endorsement). Nevertheless, participants scored higher on the autonomy values scale (M = 5.86, SD = 0.63) than on the social-relational values scale (M = 5.36, SD = 0.88), $t(98)$ = 5.67, p < .001, r = .50. This indicates that participants thought the autonomy values were more important for them than the social-relational values.

Main Analyses

To control for the idiosyncratic element of each scenario, we standardised emotion ratings by computing z-scores of the means. We then collapsed scores for humiliation, shame, and anger for the autonomy and social-relational scenarios.[7] Because the design prevented us from analysing the scenarios as within-subject

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[6] We also measured sadness (with one item). There were no main effects of Audience Reaction and Social Support, and no interaction, on this measure. Sadness was significantly related to humiliation (r = .67, p < .001), shame (r = .57, p < .001) and anger (r = .43, p < .001) for the autonomy scenarios, and also to humiliation (r = .68, p < .001), shame (r = .64, p < .001) and anger (r = .40, p < .001) for the social-relational scenarios.

[7] For the three autonomy scenarios, correlations for the items measuring humiliation ranged from: r = .48 (p =.001) to r = .49 (p = .001), for shame they ranged from: r = .19 (p = .060) to r = .36 (p = .001), and for anger they ranged from: r = .13 (p = .191) to r = .32 (p =.001). For the three social-relational scenarios, correlations for the items measuring humiliation ranged from: r = .33 (p = .001) to r = .46 (p = .001), for shame they ranged from: r = .21 (p = .035) to r = .25 (p = .015), and for anger they ranged from: r = .21 (p = .035) to r = .31 (p = .002).

factor, and the scenarios contained very different situations, we analysed the autonomy- and social-relational scenarios separately.

Autonomy scenarios. We conducted a MANOVA with Audience Reaction (No Reaction versus Laughter) as between-subjects factor, Gender as a covariate, and perceived humiliation, shame and anger as dependent variables. There was a significant multivariate effect for Audience Reaction, $F(3, 94) = 2.92$, $p = .038$, $\eta_P^2 = .085$. This was only significant for humiliation, $F(1, 96) = 7.99$, $p = .006$, $\eta_P^2 = .077$, indicating that, in line with Study 2.1 and Hypothesis 1, participants who read scenarios in which the audience laughed reported stronger humiliation than participants who read scenarios without audience laughter (see Table 2.2). In support of Hypothesis 3, we only found this effect for humiliation and not for shame, $F(1, 96) = 2.47$, $p = .119$, $\eta_P^2 = .025$, or anger, $F(1, 96) = 0.08$, $p = .779$, $\eta_P^2 = .001$.

Social-relational scenarios. A similar MANOVA was conducted for the social-relational scenarios. No multivariate, $F(3, 94) = 0.75$, $p = .526$, $\eta_P^2 = .023$, or univariate effects for Audience Reaction were found. For means and standard deviations see Table 2.2.

Correlations

Correlations between reported humiliation, shame and anger were positive and significant for both types of scenarios (see Table 2.3). As shown in Table 2.3 and replicating findings from Study 2.1, correlations between reported humiliation and shame were higher than those between reported humiliation and anger for both autonomy scenarios, $t(96) = -3.27$, $p < .001$, and social-relational scenarios, $t(96) = -4.79$, $p < .001$.

Table 2.2

Z-scores of the Means and Standard Deviations for Emotions after reading Autonomy-
or Social-Relational Scenarios, separated for Audience Reaction (No Reaction versus
Laughter), Study 2.2

	Autonomy Scenarios		Social-Relational Scenarios	
Emotion	No Reaction M (SD)	Laughter M (SD)	No Reaction M (SD)	Laughter M (SD)
Humiliation	-0.22 (0.78)[a]	0.18 (0.79)[b]	-0.05 (0.68)[a]	0.04 (0.86)[a]
Shame	-0.10 (0.70)[a]	0.09 (0.73)[a]	0.00 (0.70)[a]	-0.01 (0.71)[a]
Anger	-0.01 (0.64)[a]	0.02 (0.73)[a]	-0.08 (0.77)[a]	0.09 (0.65)[a]

Note. Means in one row (for Autonomy- or Social-Relational scenarios) with different
superscripts differ at least at *p* < .05.

Table 2.3

Correlations between Z-Scores of the Means for Humiliation, Shame, and Anger for
Autonomy (Aut) and Social-Relational (SR) scenarios, Study 2.2

		Humiliation		Shame		Anger	
	Scenario	Aut	SR	Aut	SR	Aut	SR
Humiliation	Aut	—					
	SR	.57***	—				
Shame	Aut	.69***	.50***	—			
	SR	.55***	.77***	.63***	—		
Anger	Aut	.41***	.27**	.33**	.26*	—	
	SR	.28**	.43***	.24*	.33**	.45***	—

Note. * *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01. *** *p* < .001.

Discussion

Study 2.2 replicated the results from Study 2.1 and found that the presence of

a laughing audience in descriptions of a public insult intensified reported

humiliation, but not shame and anger. However, this was only true for the insults

threatening the autonomous self, but not the social-relational self. Importantly,

because the method we used did not allow us to compare both types of value threats

in one analysis, we cannot draw conclusions about a possible difference between a laughter effect for the two types of threat, although we can conclude that there was an effect of audience laughter for the autonomy values, but not for the social-relational values. This supports the idea that—even though threats to all these values evoke considerably strong reports of humiliation—imagined audience laughter enhances humiliation in particular when stable, positive personality characteristics, that is, aspects of the autonomous self are threatened.

It is important to emphasize that these results were found for respondents living in an individualistic culture, where people generally adhere more strongly to autonomy-related than to social-relational values, and this pattern was observed in the present sample. This emphasis on autonomy may have caused enhanced reports of humiliation after audience laughter. If this is true, people from collectivistic cultures with more social-relational self-construals should feel more humiliated after audience laughter when their social-relational self is threatened. Indeed, there is evidence for cultural differences in antecedents of certain emotions, for example shame and anger (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Rodriguez Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer, 2002), and in the importance of situations eliciting emotions (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Mesquita, 2001). Thus, an alternative hypothesis is that *only* people from individualistic cultures are more vulnerable to audience laughter after a threat to the autonomous self. To test this idea, in Study 2.3 we compared responses of people from India and the United States who read descriptions of humiliating threats to autonomous versus social-relational aspects of the self, with and without audience laughter.

Study 2.3

A third scenario study investigated the role of an audience and self-related values in humiliation for participants with different cultural backgrounds, namely Indians and Americans. These two groups are especially suitable for the current

research for two reasons. First, they represent typical examples of individualistic (American) and collectivistic (Indian) cultures, which differ in terms of independent versus interdependent self-construals (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991[8]). Americans, in general, put stronger emphasis on the autonomous self, such as standing out, being different from others and making one's own decisions. Indians generally value the social-relational self more strongly; respect for family, obedience and group harmony are of prime importance (e.g., Kapoor, Hughes, Baldwin, & Blue, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Schwartz, 2006). However, these groups are more similar in other domains. For example, on the horizontal-vertical dimension (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfland, 1995), which emphasizes equality versus hierarchy, both groups are considered vertical or status-oriented (e.g., Harter, 2012; Sivadas, Bruvold, & Nelson, 2008). This means that status differences are emphasized and respected in both cultures. Because humiliation is linked to power and status differentials (e.g., Lacey, 2011), different ways of perceiving and dealing with status might impact humiliation. Thus, by comparing groups that are more similar in this respect, we control for possible bias.

A second reason for comparing these two groups is that English is a main language for both (it is one of the official languages in India, see e.g., Scollon, Diener, Oishi, & Biswas-Diener, 2004), which makes it possible to use the exact same scenarios, thereby overcoming potential translation biases. Thus, the Indian and the American cultures differ on important dimensions, but they are more similar in domains that we did not want to affect the results.

We aimed to replicate the results of Study 2.1 and Study 2.2 that imagined audience laughter would increase reports of humiliation (Hypothesis 1), but we explored whether this would be only the case when the autonomous self is threatened (as in Study 2.2), or whether the effect would be found for Americans

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[8] Although these authors focus on differences between Americans and Japanese to a large extent, they also discuss research that has compared Americans and Indians.

when the autonomous self is threatened, but for Indians when the social-relational self is threatened. If audience laughter generally intensifies humiliation *only* when one's autonomy is at stake, no differences between the respondents of the two countries would emerge. We also explored possible differences between both groups in reported emotions overall.

Finally, in Study 2.1 and 2.2 we used single-item measures of emotions for practical reasons, but these may not generalize well to the full spectrum of emotions. Thus, in Study 2.3 we used more elaborated scales of emotions including items tapping feelings, appraisals and action tendencies.

Method

Participants

In total, 344 participants completed the questionnaire, which was administered online. Five participants did not pass the language-check (see below). Thus, a total of 339 participants remained. Hundred and sixty-seven participants (91 female, 70 male, 6 missing) were from the United States. They were aged 19 to 72 (M = 33.76, SD = 12.00). Hundred seventy-two (60 female, 99 male, 13 missing) participants were from India. They were aged 19 to 65 (M = 31.27, SD = 10.16). Participants were recruited via the Amazon-website *Mechanical Turk*.[9] They were paid 0.50 dollars.

Design and Scenarios

Based on Schwartz' classification of cultural values (e.g., Schwartz, 2006) and Study 2.2, we constructed two scenarios describing a threat to autonomy concerns and two scenarios describing a threat to social-relational concerns. In the autonomy scenarios the protagonist is humiliated (by means of a public insult) because he/she is accused of (1) not having an independent opinion or (2) not being very creative. In

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[9] Mechanical Turk can be considered a valid alternative to traditional ways of data-collection, see for example Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz (2012) and Paolacci, Chandler, and Ipeirotis (2010).

the social-relational scenarios the protagonist is accused of (1) not caring for family or (2) not taking into account their parents' opinion. In all scenarios the insult is followed by audience laughter or not (see Appendix B for the exact wording of the scenarios).[10]

About half of the participants read the two autonomy scenarios and the other half read the social relational scenarios (this was randomly distributed). Because the design prevented us from analysing the scenarios as between-subjects factor and the content of the scenarios was very different (as in Study 2.3), we analysed the autonomy- and social-relational scenarios separately. Thus, for both the autonomy and the social-relational scenarios, this resulted in a 2 (Country of Residence: India versus United States) x 2 (Audience Reaction: Laughter versus No Reaction) between subjects design.

Procedure

We administered the questionnaire in English to all participants and checked for English proficiency by asking them to write a short story. These stories were inspected for language and clarity.[11] Subsequently, participants were requested to read brief scenarios about "Social Situations," to imagine that they were the protagonists in each scenario and to complete a series of questions about their expected response in these situations.

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[10] We also created "counterparts" of each scenario, meaning that for every autonomy scenario we created a social-relational version and vice versa. To this end we used the same situation and changed the threat in the opposite direction. For example, in Scenario 1 (Appendix B), instead of changing his/her opinion in line with the group-norm, the protagonist sticks to his/her opinion, which is then criticized by others and thus becomes a threat to the social-relational self instead of to the autonomous self. We asked participants to read these stories and answer the same questions as for the other scenarios. This enabled us to compare the autonomy and social-relational threats with each other (between participants) and see if there was an effect of Type of Threat or an interaction between Type of Threat and the other independent variables on emotions. We did not find any of these effects.

[11] Our instruction for this check-question read: "First we would like to know a little bit more about you, so please give a short description of (some aspects of) your daily life. For example, where do you live? What kind of work do you do? What are your interests or hobbies? In this way we get a more general idea of the daily lives of our respondents. Please keep in mind that this survey is strictly anonymous, so please don't give us your name or any other information with which we could identify you."

Measures

  Endorsement of autonomy and social-relational values. Two scales of both four items were constructed to measure participants' endorsement of the self-related values that were at stake in the scenarios. The items started with the sentence: "How important do you rate the following values?" For Autonomy values the items were: "Having an opinion of my own," "Being unique and different from others," "Making my own choices, independently of what others think," and "Having the freedom to live my own life." For social-relational values the items were: "Being obedient to my parents," "Taking care of parents or friends who are in need," "Conforming to the opinions or behaviors of my friends," and "Being similar to others, not standing out." Both scales were reliable (Cronbach's α = .76 and .71 respectively). However, reliability dropped for the social-relational scale when we inspected it separately for Americans and Indians (Cronbach's α autonomy scale: Americans: .77, Indians: .78; Cronbach's α social-relational scale: Americans: .56, Indians: .61). The correlation between the scales was positive, but low (r = .13, p = .019).

  Emotions. For each scenario, imagined humiliation, shame, and anger were measured with combined scales of feelings, appraisals, and action tendencies. Unless mentioned otherwise, all items were answered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).

  Humiliation. Four emotion labels from Hartling and Luchetta's (1999) *Humiliation Inventory* were selected based on their relevance to the scenarios (i.e., "discounted," "excluded," "put down," "scorned"). To these items we added the explicit emotion label: "humiliated." Each item started with the sentence: "After what happened in this situation, I would feel [respective emotion label]." In addition, two appraisals were created on the basis of theoretical definitions of humiliation (e.g., "After what happened in this situation, I would think…" "that an important part of my identity was harmed" and "that I could not do anything in this situation"). As a wish to take revenge is often associated with humiliation, we also

included three action tendencies measuring a desire for revenge (e.g., "After what happened in this situation, I would want to…" "get back at the insulter," "think about taking revenge," and "think about making the insulter suffer"). The humiliation scale was highly reliable for all four scenarios (Alpha's ≥ .85).

Shame and anger. For these emotions, we selected items from or based on research by Frijda, Kuipers, and Ter Schure (1989), Roseman, Wiest, and Swartz (1994), R. H. Smith et al. (2002), and Tracy and Robins (2006). Anger was measured with three emotion labels (i.e., "After what happened in this situation I would feel…" "angry," "irritated," "resentful"), two appraisals (i.e., "After what happened in this situation I would think…" "of how unfair the others' reaction was," "that the others were to blame for the situation"), and three action tendencies (e.g., "After what happened in this situation I would…" "feel like hitting someone," "feel the desire to say something nasty," "feel like yelling"). Reliability was high for all four scenarios (Alpha's ≥ .85).

Shame was also measured with three emotion labels (i.e., "After what happened in this situation I would feel…" "ashamed," "embarrassed," "small"), two appraisals (i.e., "After what happened in this situation I would think…" "that the reaction of the others was my own fault," "that this situation is uncontrollable"), and three action tendencies (i.e., "After what happened in this situation I would feel the desire to…" "hide," "disappear," "be alone"). This scale also showed high reliability for all four scenarios (Alpha's ≥ .85).

Other measures. To get more insight in participants' evaluation of the situation, apart from their emotional response, we asked them for each scenario to rate the appropriateness of the behaviour of the protagonist and insulter, and (only for participants in the audience laughter condition) how appropriate they thought it was that the others laughed and how bad they felt about the reaction of the others. Answers ranged from 1 (*totally inappropriate/not bad at all*) to 7 (*very appropriate/very bad*).

Results

Endorsement of Autonomy and Social-Relational Values

We conducted a mixed design analysis with Values (Autonomy versus Social-Relational) as within subjects factor and Country of Residence (U.S. versus India) as between subjects factor. A significant Values x Country of Residence interaction showed that for autonomy values, there was no difference between groups ($M_{Americans}$ = 5.78, SD = 0.92; $M_{Indians}$ = 5.79, SD = 0.91), but for social-relational values, Americans scored much lower than Indians ($M_{Americans}$ = 3.76, SD = 1.05; $M_{Indians}$ = 5.31, SD = 0.99), $F(1, 318)$ = 118.78, $p < .001$, η_p^2 = .272. This indicates that, although autonomy values were equally endorsed by Indians and Americans, the groups differed with regard to endorsement of social-relational values, in line with their cultural background.

Main Analyses

To control for the idiosyncratic element of each scenario, we standardised ratings for emotions, appropriateness and other feelings for the four different scenarios, by computing z-scores of the means.[12] Subsequently, we collapsed the standardised scores for the two autonomy scenarios and the two social-relational scenarios. For both types of scenarios, we carried out a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with Country of Residence and Audience Reaction as independent variables, reported humiliation, shame, and anger as dependent variables and Gender as a covariate.

Autonomy scenarios.

Emotions. There was a multivariate trend for Audience Reaction, $F(3, 151)$ = 2.41, p = .069, η_p^2 = .046. This effect was significant for humiliation $F(1, 153)$ = 4.56, p = .034, η_p^2 = .029 and marginally significant for shame, $F(1, 153)$ = 3.65, p = .058, η_p^2 = .023. There was no effect on anger, $F(1, 153)$ = 0.79, p = .374, η_p^2 = .005. Scores were

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[12] For the two autonomy scenarios, the correlation between the humiliation scales was: r = .59 (p <.001), between the shame scales it was: r = .50 (p < .001), and between the anger scales it was: r = .59 (p <.001). For the two social-relational scenarios, the correlation between the humiliation scales was: r = .65 (p <.001), between the shame scales it was: r = .59 (p < .001), and between the anger scales it was: r = .67 (p <.001).

higher for humiliation and marginally higher for shame when the audience laughed ($M_{humiliation} = 0.17$, $SD = 0.83$; $M_{shame} = 0.28$, $SD = 0.83$) than when it did not react ($M_{humiliation} = -0.13$, $SD = 0.94$; $M_{shame} = 0.02$, $SD = 0.88$). There was no effect of Country of Residence and no interaction. Thus, in line with Studies 2.1 and 2.2, and Hypothesis 1, both Indians and Americans reported stronger humiliation and marginally stronger shame in response to audience laughter after threats to the autonomous self.

Appropriateness. ANOVAs with Country of Residence and Audience Reaction as independent variables and the items measuring perceived appropriateness as dependent variables showed that Indians ($M = 0.55$, $SD = 0.82$) rated the comment of the insulter as more appropriate than Americans ($M = -0.36$, $SD = 0.67$), $F(1, 153) = 54.52$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .263$. Furthermore, of the participants in the audience laughter condition, Indians ($M = 0.47$, $SD = 0.88$) judged this laughter as more appropriate than Americans ($M = -0.37$, $SD = 0.52$), $F(1, 76) = 25.77$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .253$. There were no effects on perceived appropriateness of the behaviour of the protagonist ($p = ns$) or feeling bad about the reaction of the audience ($p = ns$).

Social-relational scenarios.

Emotions. There was no main effect for Audience Reaction, $F(3, 155) = 0.69$, $p = .557$, $\eta_P^2 = .013$. There was a multivariate main effect for Country of Residence, $F(3, 155) = 20.18$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .281$, which was significant for anger, $F(1, 157) = 14.90$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .087$, indicating higher scores for Americans ($M = 0.33$, $SD = 0.84$) than for Indians ($M = -0.16$, $SD = 0.79$), and for shame, $F(1, 157) = 13.67$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .080$, indicating higher scores for Indians ($M = 0.36$, $SD = 0.75$) than for Americans ($M = -0.13$, $SD = 0.90$). There was no main effect of Country of Residence on humiliation, $F(1, 157) = 1.85$, $p = .176$, $\eta_P^2 = .012$.

However, the effect of Country of Residence was qualified by a significant interaction with Audience Reaction, $F(3, 155) = 3.08$, $p = .029$, $\eta_P^2 = .056$. This interaction was marginally significant for humiliation, $F(1, 157) = 3.13$, $p = .079$, $\eta_P^2 =$

.020 (see Figure 2.1). When the audience laughed there was no difference between Indians ($M = 0.08$, $SD = 0.93$) and Americans ($M = 0.10$, $SD = 0.88$), but when the audience did not react, Indians ($M = 0.24$, $SD = 0.81$) reported more humiliation than Americans ($M = -0.20$, $SD = 0.74$), $F(1, 163) = 5.28$, $p = .023$, $\eta_P^2 = .015$. Furthermore, Americans, but not Indians, tended to report more humiliation in the Laughter condition than in the No Reaction condition, $F(1, 163) = 2.52$, $p = .114$, $\eta_P^2 = .008$. For Indians, both ratings were as high as Americans' rating in the audience laughter condition.

The Audience Reaction x Country of Residence interaction was also significant for shame, $F(1, 157) = 6.14$, $p = .014$, $\eta_P^2 = .038$, and showed the same pattern as for humiliation. When the audience laughed, Indians ($M = 0.28$, $SD = 0.80$) and Americans ($M = 0.09$, $SD = 0.88$) reported the same amount of shame, but when the audience did not react, Indians ($M = 0.44$, $SD = 0.71$) reported more shame than did Americans ($M = -0.37$, $SD = 0.88$), $F(1, 163) = 19.35$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .056$. Americans also reported significantly less shame when there was no audience reaction than when the audience laughed $F(1, 163) = 4.77$, $p = .030$, $\eta_P^2 = .014$, whereas this was not the case for Indians. Again, their ratings did not differ from Americans' ratings in the audience laughter condition.

Appropriateness. Similar ANOVAs were performed as described for the autonomy scenarios. Indians ($M = -0.31$, $SD = 0.71$) rated the behaviour of the protagonist as less appropriate than Americans ($M = 0.23$, $SD = 0.93$), $F(1, 157) = 20.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .116$. Indians ($M = 0.63$, $SD = 0.78$) rated the comment by the insulter as more appropriate than Americans ($M = -0.48$, $SD = 0.63$), $F(1, 157) = 88.93$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .362$. Furthermore, of the participants in the audience laughter condition, Indians ($M = 0.49$, $SD = 0.92$) rated the laughter as more appropriate than Americans ($M = -0.36$, $SD = 0.78$), $F(1, 80) = 12.96$, $p = .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .139$. Lastly,

Americans ($M = 0.31$, $SD = 0.74$) indicated to feel worse about the audience laughter than Indians ($M = -0.28$, $SD = 0.83$), $F(1, 80) = 7.60$, $p = .007$, $\eta_P^2 = .087$.[13]

Correlations

Table 2.4 shows the relationships between reported humiliation, shame, and anger for both groups after reading autonomy or social-relational scenarios. For both Americans and Indians, humiliation was strongly related to anger and shame. For Indians, the relationship between anger and shame was also strong and significantly stronger than for Americans for both the autonomy scenarios ($z = 3.44$, $p < .001$) and the social-relational scenarios ($z = 3.87$, $p < .001$).
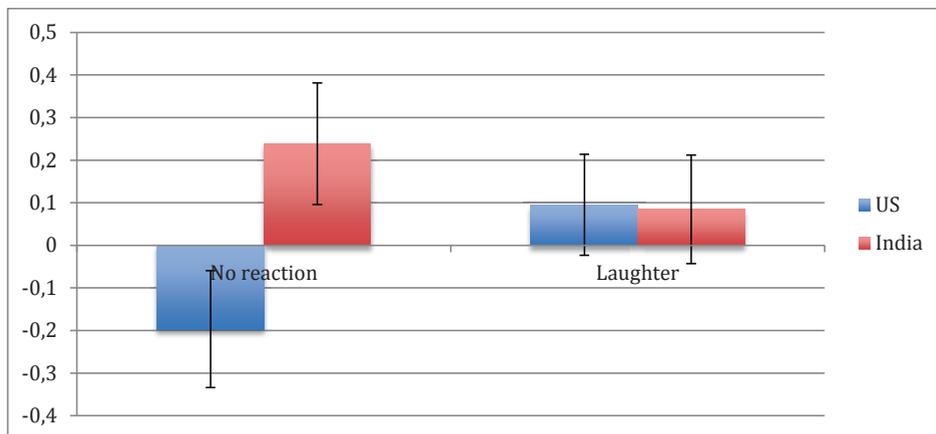
Note. Scores are calculated z-scores of the means. Error bars represent standard errors of the means.

Figure 2.1. Humiliation rated by Indians and Americans as a function of Audience Reaction (No Reaction versus Laughter) after an Insult, for Social-Relational scenarios, Study 2.3.

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[13] We also asked participants if they "felt laughed at," but did not use this measure in the end as we think it does not add to the general story. However, for both autonomy and social-relational scenarios we did find and Audience Reaction x Country of Residence interaction, indicating that when there was no audience reaction, Americans and Indians scored equally high on this item, whereas when the audience laughed, Americans indicated to feel more laughed at than Indians. This is in line with the finding of Americans' stronger sensitivity to audience laughter in the social-relational scenarios.

Table 2.4

Correlations between Humiliation, Shame, and Anger, separated for Indian and American participants, Study 2.3

Country of Residence	India			United States		
Autonomy Scenarios						
Emotion	Humiliation	Shame	Anger	Humiliation	Shame	Anger
Humiliation	—			—		
Shame	.87***	—		.68***	—	
Anger	.89***	.73***	—	.79***	.36**	—
Social-Relational Scenarios						
Emotion	Humiliation	Shame	Anger	Humiliation	Shame	Anger
Humiliation	—			—		
Shame	.85***	—		.64**	—	
Anger	.85**	.64**	—	.67**	.14	—

Note. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Discussion

Study 2.3 showed that imagined audience laughter intensifies reports of humiliation when autonomy values are under threat. This effect emerged for Americans ánd Indians. Thus, although the analyses were exploratory, they suggest that audience laughter after a threat to the autonomous self increases humiliation for individuals from both individualistic and collectivistic cultures. In line with Study 2.1 and 2.2, this effect most clearly emerged for humiliation. There was a trend for shame and no effect on anger.

After threats to one's social-relational self, imagined audience laughter elicited somewhat stronger reports of humiliation (this effect was marginal) and stronger reports of shame in Americans, but not in Indians. In fact, in both audience conditions, Indians reported levels of humiliation and shame to the same extent as Americans did after audience laughter. We can only speculate about the reason for this effect, but one explanation could be that for Indians, audience laughter is not an

important determinant of humiliation (or shame) when values related to their social-relational self are under threat. Indians may be more concerned about these threats (which is also reflected in higher reports of shame for Indians than for Americans in general) and have internalized norms and standards related to these values more strongly. Therefore audience laughter may not be necessary for Indians to evoke similar levels of humiliation as for Americans.

An alternative explanation could reside in our finding that Indians rated the audience laughter as more appropriate than Americans and they rated the behaviour of the protagonist as less appropriate than Americans. However, this was the case for both autonomy and social-relational scenarios and is thus at odds with the fact that there *was* an audience effect for Indians when autonomy-related values were at stake.

The finding that Indians generally reported more shame than Americans after threats to their social-relational self may reflect a stronger proneness to shame for people in collectivistic, interdependent cultures than for people in individualistic, independent cultures (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991), even though we only found this effect for the social-relational scenarios. For these scenarios, we also found that Americans reported more anger than Indians. This supports previous findings that these groups differ in emotional reactions as a result of their independent versus interdependent self-construal (e.g., Anolli & Pascucci, 2005; Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and fits with the idea that anger is considered detrimental to group cohesion in collectivistic cultures.

General Discussion

The current research first of all supports the idea that the social context in which a potentially humiliating event takes place can affect the response to this event. More specifically: Audience laughter after a humiliating insult leads to stronger feelings of humiliation than when there is no such reaction. Although previous research emphasized the presence of an audience showing hostile intent as

an antecedent of humiliation, this is, to our knowledge, the first study that shows a direct causal relationship between (imagined) audience laughter and reported humiliation.

On a more exploratory basis, we found that this mocking audience reaction has an effect when the humiliating situation entails a threat to the autonomous self. This was the case for people from an individualistic culture (The Netherlands, United States) as well as for people from a more collectivistic culture (India). When the humiliating situation concerns a threat to the social-relational self, the results are somewhat less clear. In that case, audience laughter had no effect on humiliation for Dutch people (Study 2.2), had a marginal effect on humiliation for Americans (Study 2.3), and had no effect on humiliation for Indians (Study 2.3).

It seems that for people from India audience laughter does not make a situation more humiliating when this situation concerns a threat to social-relational aspects of the self. Indians' ratings of humiliation were, both after audience laughter *and* after no audience reaction, as high as Americans' ratings after audience laughter. Possibly Indians' stronger internalization of norms and standards when social-relational values are at stake explains this finding. According to Niedenthal, Krauth-Gruber, and Ric (2006): "When societal and familial standards for appropriate behaviour have been internalized, self-conscious emotions can be experienced even in the absence of a physical audience" (p. 80).

However, we acknowledge that we should be very cautious in generalizing these findings. First of all, the studies were explorative. We did not have clear hypotheses beforehand. Second, people from only two countries participated. These countries are not fully representative of broad cultural dimensions such as individualism-collectivism. Third, we used one language, namely English, for both groups of participants. This has the advantage of circumventing translation-related problems, but the disadvantage is that the English language could have primed Indians with a more "Western" state of mind. As a consequence we may have found

smaller differences than we would have otherwise, which means that we used a conservative test of possible cultural differences.

In Study 2.1, we found an unexpected but important null-result with regard to social support. Whereas a negative audience reaction intensifies reports of humiliation, helping behaviour after the humiliating incident does not seem to reduce reported humiliation. An explanation may reside in the "dark" side of social support. Although helping is generally regarded as positive and prosocial, it can also be interpreted as asserting dominance over an individual or a group (e.g., Nadler, 2002) and producing status differences between helper and recipient (e.g., Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012). Receiving help and being in need of help can make people feel dependent on and inferior to the helper. This can in turn lower their self-esteem (e.g., Nadler & Fischer, 1986) by keeping an unequal power relation in place, rendering the receiver unable to take control over the situation. This is relevant because a lack of control seems to be an important feature of humiliation. The humiliating incident itself probably causes a lowered self-esteem in the victim which may be further reduced, or at least not restored, by the support, and as such does not diminish feelings of humiliation.

As expected, we found that both reports of anger and shame are related to humiliation, although in the first two studies humiliation is associated more strongly with shame than with anger. This may be due to the nature of the situations we have used in the scenarios, which was always public (i.e., there were always other people present). Other situations, for example those without an audience present, may evoke stronger appraisals of unfairness and thereby cause more anger rather than shame in addition to humiliation. Yet, the effect of a laughing audience seems most specific to humiliation and to a lesser extent to shame. In Study 2.1, the audience effect also emerged for shame, but the effect was stronger for humiliation. In Study 2.2, we only found an effect of audience laughter on humiliation and not on shame and anger. In Study 2.3, the audience effect was present for humiliation and shame.

This supports the idea that audience laughter is a more central aspect of humiliation than of shame and anger.

Limitations and Future Directions

A limitation of the present research is the use of scenarios. Although this is an often used and valid method for measuring *imagined* or *expected* emotions, it is difficult to determine whether people really *feel* certain emotions as a result of reading such a scenario. Nevertheless, we think that people's concepts of humiliation provide us with a good gauge of how humiliation may be caused and experienced in reality. Moreover, research by Otten and Jonas (2014) showed that scenarios designed to induce either humiliation, shame, anger, or happiness evoked different patterns of brain activity (using EEG) in participants. Although this does not prove that the "real" emotion is indeed felt, the fact that these scenarios differently affected the brain adds to their validity in distinguishing these emotions. Still, we think it is important to develop other methods to examine the causes and effects of humiliation, such as inducing feelings of humiliation in the laboratory, in the presence of an audience. This approach, although ethically challenging, allows for a more controlled examination of antecedents and consequences of humiliation.

In addition, we consider it important to examine long-term relationships between humiliation, shame, and anger, but also fear in different (cultural) contexts. One of the consequences of repeated episodes of humiliation may be the development of social anxiety, or more in particular, a strong fear of situations involving an audience. Such anxiety may eventually turn into *gelotophobia*, a fear of being laughed at (e.g., Titze, 2009), and prevent people from interacting with others in satisfying ways.

Not only fear, but also anger may become more strongly associated with humiliation over time, and thoughts about revenge could develop as a result of enhanced opportunities to ruminate about the humiliating episode. Moreover, the

strong hypothesized link between humiliation and revenge (e.g., Lickel, 2012) may become apparent only after repeated incidents of humiliation. Being (or perceiving to be) frequently humiliated over a longer period of time, creates the opportunity for the victim to develop feelings of rage and revenge instead of, or next to, shame and fear. This process of rumination leading to revenge may also be an important element of group-based humiliation, a phenomenon that received much theoretical attention but is lacking empirical evidence.

Researching humiliation is difficult, not only because of the complexity of the emotion, but also because of its aversive character rendering people unwilling to think and talk about it. Furthermore, there are ethical issues tied to the study of humiliation; one can only manipulate low levels of this emotion in the laboratory, which seems paradoxical as humiliation appears to be extreme almost by definition. Having said that, humiliation seems to be an important motivator for aggression and violence on the one hand and shame and social phobia on the other, so it is important to find out in what specific ways contextual and cultural factors add to its intensity. In this light, all steps towards more insight into the depths of an emotion that is still largely unexplored are valuable.

Appendix A

Scenarios Study 2.2

Two different versions of the questionnaire were created to counterbalance the order of audience laughter versus no audience reaction in each scenario. In version 1 the audience laughed in the social-relational scenarios, and in version 2 the audience laughed in the autonomy scenarios.

Autonomy scenarios:

1. You are participating in a discussion on politics, hosting people with different backgrounds. At a certain moment the discussion turns to a sensitive subject for some people. The discussion leader happens to be aware that you know a lot about this subject and he asks you a question about it. When you hesitate a little to answer his question, the person who sits next to you says in a sneering tone: "If you are not even able to give an honest and open opinion, then what are you doing here?" (Some of the other discussants start to laugh.)

2. You are in a café talking to some friends. The conversation is about politics. You make a comment about politician X, saying that you think he did some good things for his voters. All your friends disagree with you on this. You didn't expect this and quickly add: "Yeah, you are right, he did made a lot of mistakes." Then, one of your friends says: "You really don't have your own opinion." (The rest of the group starts to laugh.)

3. You are joining a workgroup in which you are supposed to make an assignment and present it afterwards with other students. You thought of a nice idea for this assignment and start to explain your idea enthusiastically to the rest of the group. Suddenly, another group member starts to laugh out loud: "Well, that is not very original, I heard them propose the same idea in the other group. I thought you would come up with something more exiting!" (The rest of the group also starts to laugh.)

Social-relational scenarios:

1. It is Friday morning and you have a lot of work to do. However, it is your aunt's birthday today and she will give a big party that starts in the afternoon. You really want to finish some work before you leave and at 17:30 you clean your desk to go to the party. You explain to your colleagues that you are in a hurry because the party has already started. Then, one of your colleagues gives you a serious look and says: "How unkind of you to arrive that late at your aunt's birthday, you could at least have helped her with preparations." (Some other colleagues start to laugh.)

2. You are telling a story to your colleagues that you find very funny. It is about your very old uncle whom you were visiting a while ago in the care home where he lives. Your uncle asked you every five minutes what kind of job you have and kept on telling you the story about the boat-tour he made last week. You have to laugh very hard about this. Suddenly, a colleague looks at you and says: "You really have no respect for elderly people, how would you feel if people didn't take you seriously anymore at that age!" (Your other colleagues start to laugh.)

3. You are sitting in a tram full of people, when a disabled woman with crutches enters the vehicle. Nobody stands up for the woman, neither do you. This is not because you don't want to but actually you don't feel well and you're sure that someone else will offer his seat to her. Then an older gentleman behind you offers his seat to the woman. He looks at you disdainful and says: "Can't you even show some respect to somebody else!" (Some of the other passengers start to laugh.)

Appendix B

Scenarios Study 2.3

Autonomy-scenarios:

1. You are in a café talking to some colleagues. The conversation is about politics. You make a comment about politician X, saying that you think he did some good things for his voters. All your friends appear to disagree with you, however. You didn't expect this and quickly add: "Yeah, you are right, he did make a lot of mistakes." Then one of your friends says meanly: "You never have your own opinion, you are always just echoing what we say, you're such a follower!" (The rest of the group bursts into laughter.)

2. You and some of your colleagues organize a fundraising party to collect money for homeless people. The most important goal right now is to have a creative idea that will attract a lot of people to the party. Three of your colleagues present ideas that are all quite in line with each other. When it is your turn, you say that you like the idea of your colleagues very much and couldn't think of something better yourself. Then, one of the group members looks viciously at you and says: "Well you are never very original are you, can't you even think of something creative yourself?" (Some of the group members begin to laugh.)

Social-relational scenarios:

1. You are talking to some acquaintances about your father who is old and could use some help. You explain to them that you actually decided to bring him to a home for elderly where he is taken care of all day. This was no easy decision but you really have too much work and other obligations to take care of him yourself. Then, one of your acquaintances looks viciously at you and says: "It

is clear that you do not care about your father when you just lock him up somewhere!" (All of your friends start laughing.)

2. You are having a discussion with some friends about romantic relationships. You tell them that you father doesn't like your partner at all and that he hopes you will break up because he disapproves of this relationship. You tell your friends that you think your father's opinion is totally ridiculous and that you would never break up with your partner to please your father. Then one of your friends says maliciously: "No of course you would never do that because you don't have any respect for your father, you always know everything better!" (The others start laughing).

Chapter 3

Withdraw or Affiliate? The Role of Humiliation During Initiation Rituals

Initiation rituals have been defined as events (or ceremonies) that mark important changes in people's lives, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death (Van Gennep, 1909/1961). Such rituals or *rites de passage* generally consist of symbolic transitions, in which the novice has to perform specific tasks before being integrated into a new environment. These tasks can sometimes be humiliating. For example, a student fraternity may force its newcomers to crawl through a muddy field wearing only their underwear, while someone curses and yells at them, holding a dog leash that is tied around their neck. Meanwhile, other people are watching and laughing. Such activities that humiliate, degrade, abuse, or endanger, regardless of a person's willingness to participate (Hoover, 1999, p. 8) have been referred to as *hazing*. Hazing practices have been justified by the assumption that the experiences create strong affiliation between novices and subsequently socialise them into the group.

The question is whether this assumption is correct. Previous research on initiation rituals containing hazing showed mixed evidence, finding no, or even the opposite effect, namely that perceived severity of initiations is related to *less* liking of the other newcomers with whom novices went through the initiation (e.g., Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001). We propose that experienced humiliation is an important explanation for this negative, rather than positive, relation. In the current research, we examine the role of humiliation during initiations in different social contexts.

The Function of Initiation Rituals

The French anthropologist Van Gennep (1909/1961) distinguished three phases characterising most, if not all, initiation rituals. In the *separation* phase, the novice is set apart from his previous social group, sometimes symbolically dying to be "reborn" into a new environment. What follows is an "in between" or *transition* phase, in which the novice may have to perform difficult tasks and endure several challenges. Finally, during the *incorporation* phase, the novice, who now has a new identity and status, is reintegrated in his environment. In student fraternities, in

particular the transition phase may involve effortful and humiliating practices that are forced upon the novices to socialise them into the group (Keating et al., 2005; Klein, 1991; Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001; Lodewijkx, Van Zomeren, & Syroit, 2005; Van Raalte, Cornelius, Linder, & Brewer, 2007; Waldron & Kowalski, 2009; Waldron, Lynn, & Krane, 2011; Winslow, 1999). Such practices typically include forced excessive alcohol consumption, physical abuse (e.g., hitting, being thrown or forced to crawl in mud or dirt, being urinated on, being tied up with duct tape, forced to eat or drink repulsive substances), and being forced to fake or perform (homo) sexual acts (e.g., Waldron et al., 2011; Winslow, 1999). Severe initiation rituals have a long tradition (e.g., Winslow, 1999) and seem quite resistant to change, presumably because of the idea that it positively affects affiliation with fellow novices.

Two lines of social-psychological research are usually offered to explain the hypothesized positive effects of severe initiations (Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001). The first, the *severity-attraction hypothesis* (Aronson & Mills, 1959), assumes that severity of initiations is positively related to liking of a group. In their classic study, Aronson and Mills (1959) asked female participants who volunteered to join a discussion-group, to read out loud either obscene words (severe condition) or more neutral words (mild condition) to a male experimenter, or they did not read out anything (control condition). The participants were told that they had to be tested in this way to become a member of the group. After this initiation they listened to a recording of one of the group's discussions that turned out to be very boring. Importantly, in reality the group did not exist and participants never interacted with each other during the experiment; they could only judge the group on the basis of the recording. The researchers found that participants in the severe condition indicated to like the group and its members more than participants in the mild or control condition. This effect was interpreted as the result of dissonance reduction (Festinger, 1957); having to endure an embarrassing test to become member of a boring group

arouses dissonance. To reduce this dissonance, participants raised their evaluation of the group.

The second explanation for the potential affiliation effect of initiations is based on research by Schachter (1959), who showed that people under threat have a stronger need for affiliation than people in non-threatening situations. This *severity-affiliation-attraction hypothesis* posits that perceived (or anticipated) severity of an initiation causes more attraction to the group because of a stronger need for affiliation amongst the novices (e.g., Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001; Lodewijkx, Van Zomeren, & Syroit, 2005). Somewhat related to this is the idea that more severe initiations lead to more group conformation and cohesion (e.g., Van Raalte et al., 2007; Waldron et al., 2011; Waldron & Kowalski, 2009).

Both explanations thus propose that severe initiations lead to more cohesion or group liking, but they have actually received little support in studies on real initiations. These studies showed that severe initiations do not lead to more liking or affiliation with a group, and in some instances even result in *less* group liking or team cohesion (e.g., Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001; Van Raalte et al., 2007; Waldron & Kowalski, 2009). For instance, in two longitudinal field studies of real-life initiations of two sororities, Lodewijkx and Syroit (1997, 2001) tested both the severity-attraction hypothesis (Aronson & Mills, 1959), and the severity-affiliation-attraction hypothesis based on Schachter (1959). They did not find support for either hypothesis. In contrast, they found a *negative* rather than a positive relationship between reported severity of the initiation and attractiveness of the group, a relationship that was mediated by frustration, loneliness and depressive mood. In line with this finding, Van Raalte and colleagues (2007) found that the more hazing respondents had to endure, or observed others being subjected to, the less cohesive they perceived their team to be in sport-related tasks.

To date no clear explanation has been tested for these contradictory results. Building on findings by Lodewijkx and Syroit (1997, 2001) that negative emotions are

involved, we argue that humiliation in particular plays a crucial role during initiations, as this emotion may decrease rather than increase affiliative tendencies.

The Role of Humiliation during Initiation Rituals

Humiliation is generally considered a very negative emotional experience (e.g., Mann, Feddes, Leiser, Doosje, & Fischer, 2016). It is defined as "the deep dysphoric feeling associated with being, or perceiving oneself as being unjustly degraded, ridiculed, or put down – in particular, one's identity has been demeaned or devalued" (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999, p. 264). Humiliation is linked to psychosocial problems and mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, aggression and delinquency (see Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Klein, 1991). Because hazing practices have been defined as activities that elicit humiliation (Hoover, 1999), we expect that the more initiation rituals contain hazing practices, the more humiliating they are. This would also imply that the perceived severity of an initiation ritual is related to the extent to which one feels humiliated, whether one is forced to eat disgusting food, to sit still for hours, or to wear a funny T-shirt. We thus expect that the key feature of perceived severity is not the actual hardship or difficulty of the task, but the extent to which one *feels* humiliated. The concept of severity is thus quite broad and may encompass mentally or physically degrading experiences, which we think can both relate to humiliation.

One of the core assumptions behind potentially positive effects of initiation rituals is that the experience creates strong affiliation between novices, because being in a stressful situation with others facing the same stressors would lead one to seek the company of those others. We propose, however, that the elicitation of humiliation may have an opposite effect on one's relation with others, namely to seek withdrawal because one feels ashamed. Previous research has shown that humiliation often consists of a blend of anger and shame (e.g., Fernández, Saguy, & Halperin, 2015; Leidner, Sheikh, & Ginges, 2012; Mann et al., 2016). Whereas anger and revenge

tendencies may be stronger when focusing on the victim–perpetrator relationship (e.g. Harter, 2012), shame and withdrawal tendencies may be stronger when focusing on the relations *between fellow victims* in the group. In situations of public derogation, humiliation thus seems more strongly associated with shame and tendencies to withdraw from, rather than engage with other group members. In other words, stronger experiences of humiliation during an initiation ritual would lead to less rather than more affiliation with fellow novices. Whether a humiliating experience would also lead to less affiliation in the long run, and thus to reduced affiliation or even abandonment of this same group is less evident, because there are many factors that may influence the long-term effects of humiliation.

Another element in the initiation ritual that has received less attention is the *social* context of the emotional experience. In many initiation rituals novices are derogated in a group, together with others of the same status (Klein, 1991). However, it may also happen that only one individual is picked out of the group and degraded in front of his or her peers. Because the in-group of fellow novices then suddenly becomes an audience of people who may laugh at the target, we expect that feelings of humiliation in such situations increase (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Mann, et al., 2016). In these contexts, derogation may be most detrimental in terms of group affiliation, because humiliation may not be reduced as a consequence of experienced social support and feelings of "being in the same boat." There is indeed ample evidence that social support from friends or family can function as a buffer in stressful situations (e.g., Haslam, O'Brien, Jetten, Vormedal, & Penna, 2005; Taylor, 2011). To our knowledge, previous research on initiation rituals has not focused on the role of social context (i.e., being initiated individually in front of the group versus being initiated together with other novices).

In sum, we investigate six hypotheses that are graphically depicted in Figure 3.1. First, the perceived severity of an initiation, whether mental or physical, is positively related to humiliation and the tendency to withdraw from the group, and

negatively to affiliation with fellow novices (Hypothesis 1a, Hypothesis 1b and Hypothesis 1c respectively; Study 3.1). Second, humiliation is negatively related to affiliation with fellow novices and positively to withdrawal from the group (Hypothesis 2a and Hypothesis 2b; Study 3.1-3.3). Third, the relation between perceived severity and decreased affiliation is mediated by experienced humiliation (Hypothesis 3; Study 3.1). Fourth, being derogated as a group evokes less humiliation than being derogated as an individual target within the group (Hypothesis 4; Study 3.2 and 3.3), and fifth, this effect can be explained by expected social support from fellow novices (Hypothesis 5; Study 3.2 and 3.3). Lastly, being derogated as a group also leads to more affiliation towards fellow novices and less withdrawal tendencies (Hypothesis 6a and 6b respectively; Study 3.2 and 3.3) than being derogated as individual target within the group.

We test these hypotheses in three studies, using different methods. For Study 3.1, we collected autobiographical reports of people who underwent an initiation ritual in order to become member of a fraternity or sorority. Study 3.2 was a lab study in which participants joined a group-assignment that was either derogating or non-derogating and this derogation was either directed at the whole group or only at one participant in the group. Study 3.3 consisted of scenarios in which we manipulated social context (individual versus group target) and the type of humiliating event (only mental versus a combination of physical and mental humiliation) during an initiation. We confirm that we report all data exclusions, all measures and all manipulations in the three studies.[14]

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[14] We did not include gender as a covariate in the current studies as we did in Chapter 2. In Chapter 2 we only found very small or no effects for gender (although we had anticipated women to score higher on measures of humiliation and other emotions, which led us to include gender as a covariate in the first place). Therefore we concluded, in line with Elison and Harter (2007), that there is no reason to expect gender differences in reported humiliation. Indeed, when we checked this for the current studies (except for Study 3.2 which only included female participants) we found no differences.
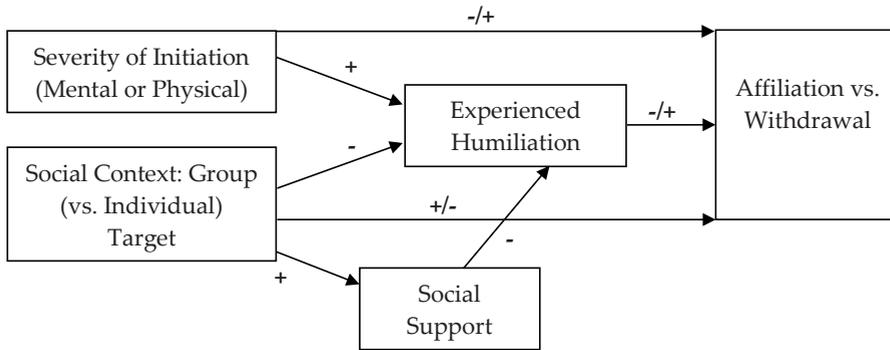
Figure 3.1. Model of the hypothesized relationships between Severity (Mental or Physical) of the Initiation, Social Context (Group versus Individual Target), Expected Social Support, Experienced Humiliation, Affiliation with Fellow Novices, and Withdrawal Tendencies. Note: A plus (+) sign indicates a hypothesized positive relationship, a minus (-) sign indicates a hypothesized negative relationship.

Study 3.1

We asked members of fraternities and sororities in the Netherlands, who had been part of an initiation ritual in the past, to recall this experience, the extent to which they felt humiliated during the time, and several other feelings, perceptions, and behavioural tendencies. We expected that the perceived (mental and physical) severity of an initiation is positively related to reported humiliation (Hypothesis 1a) and withdrawal tendencies (Hypothesis 1b), and negatively to affiliation with fellow novices (Hypothesis 1c). Further, we expected that humiliation is negatively related to affiliation with fellows (Hypothesis 2a) and positively to withdrawal from the group (Hypothesis 2b) and that the intensity of humiliation mediates the negative relationship between severity of the initiation and affiliation (Hypothesis 3).

Method

Respondents

One hundred and twenty four current members and alumni of a fraternity or sorority in the Netherlands, who had been part of an initiation ritual in the past, completed the questionnaire. One of them indicated that he did not respond

seriously, therefore his data were discarded. Thus, the final sample consisted of 123 respondents (81 female) with a mean age of 25.46 (*SD* = 5.01, Range: 19-54).[15] All respondents were either active member or alumnus of the fraternity or sorority and they had all experienced an initiation to become a member of this organisation.

Procedure

Most respondents were directly approached via email by a student who was member of a big sorority in Amsterdam (A.V.S.V.) and therefore had access to contact details of other members. In addition, respondents of other fraternities and sororities were approached via the snowball method and Facebook. They were not paid, but we raffled off 50 euros under the respondents. Respondents were requested to fill out the questionnaire *only* if they had ever experienced an initiation ritual to become member of a fraternity or sorority. The questionnaire was administered online. After completion, respondents were thanked and debriefed.

Questionnaire

Unless specified otherwise, for all items, respondents were requested to indicate their agreement with a statement, ranging from 1 (*not at all*), to 7 (*very much*).

General questions. We started the questionnaire with general questions about respondents' membership of the fraternity or sorority. The main reason for this is that we did not want to deter respondents by starting with potentially sensitive topics such as humiliation. For the current chapter, we did not use the data these questions generated.[16]

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[15] Sixteen of these respondents stopped filling out the questionnaire when they were asked for a description of their most humiliating experience during the initiation. We did use the first part of their data. There were also 30 respondents who opened the questionnaire, but only filled out the first demographic questions and then quit. Data of these participants were not used.

[16] In addition, we measured several other variables in all three studies, namely state self-esteem, in-group identification, different emotion labels and behavioural intentions and general questions about (attitudes on) membership in fraternities and sororities and involvement in hazing practices. We do not report the results for these variables, however data of these measures may be obtained from the author upon request.

Mental and physical severity. Severity of the initiation was measured by the following two questions: "How tough was the mental ordeal?" and: "How tough was the physical ordeal?" The correlation between the two items was positive ($r = .44$, $p < .001$).

Humiliation. Respondents were asked to recall the initiation period and to report to what extent they had experienced several aspects of humiliation during this time. To this end, ten items of Hartling and Luchetta's (1999) *Humiliation Inventory*, namely: "put down," "laughed at," "bullied," "scorned," "excluded," "ridiculed," "harassed," "embarrassed," "cruelly criticized," and "called names" were selected and translated into Dutch. We used these labels in ten sentences starting with: "During the initiation I experienced being…." These items formed a highly reliable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). After this measure we asked respondents to describe a specific event that they remembered as being the most humiliating during the initiation.

Affiliation. We asked respondents how they would rate the contact between them and their fellow novices *during the initiation* and *at this moment* using four items, namely: "close," "superficial" (reverse scored), "pleasant," and "equal." Reliability of both scales was good (Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$ and $.85$ respectively).[17]

Withdrawal tendencies. Respondents were asked to what extent the following feelings and action tendencies were evoked by the humiliating event they described: "shame" (subjective feeling), and the tendencies "to walk away" and "to hide."[18] These items formed a reliable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .68$), which we have labelled as withdrawal tendencies.

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[17] We asked the same questions with regard to members of the fraternity or sorority in general, also during the initiation and at this moment (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$ and $.79$ respectively). Results for these measures may be obtained from the author upon request.

[18] In all three studies we also measured anger and tendencies to aggress against the initiator (Study 3.1 and 3.3) or derogator (Study 3.2). Correlations between these measures and humiliation were all positive and significant, ranging from $r = .24$ to $r = .75$.

Results

To investigate Hypotheses 1 and 2 we examined correlations between experienced humiliation, perceived severity, affiliation, and withdrawal tendencies. To test Hypothesis 3, we investigated whether the expected negative relation between severity and affiliation was mediated by experienced humiliation via a bootstrapping procedure.

Main Analyses

Correlations. In Table 3.1, correlations between the mean scores for all variables are reported. As expected (Hypothesis 1a), both mental ($r = .62$) and physical ($r = .44$) severity were positively related to humiliation. However, mental severity was more strongly related to humiliation than physical severity $t(120) = -2.50$, $p = .007$. Moreover, only mental and not physical severity of the initiation was negatively related to affiliation with fellow novices ($r = -.21$) at the time of the initiation (Hypothesis 1c). No significant correlations were found between severity and the *current* affiliation with fellow novices. Both types of severity were positively related to withdrawal tendencies (Hypothesis 1b). In line with Hypothesis 2a and 2b, humiliation was negatively related to affiliation with fellow novices (but only during the initiation) and positively to withdrawal tendencies.

Table 3.1

Descriptives and Correlations between reported Humiliation (1), Mental Severity (2), Physical Severity (3), Affiliation with Fellow Novices During the Initiation (4), Affiliation with Fellow Novices Right Now (5), and Withdrawal Tendencies (6), Study 3.1

	Mean (*SD*)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Humiliation (1)	3.71 (1.28)	__					
Mental Severity (2)	4.41 (1.60)	.62***	__				
Physical Severity (3)	4.23 (1.47)	.44***	.44***	__			
Affiliation with Fellow Novices During Initiation (4)	4.87 (1.10)	-.33***	-.21*	-.08	__		
Affiliation with Fellow Novices Right Now (5)	5.53 (1.22)	-.04	.12	.12	.27**	__	
Withdrawal Tendencies (6)	3.50 (1.62)	.50***	.45***	.26**	-.22*	-.06	__

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Mediation of humiliation on affiliation and withdrawal tendencies. To examine if the relation between mental severity and affiliation with fellow novices during the initiation could be explained by reported intensity of humiliation (Hypothesis 3), we performed bootstrap analyses (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Based on 5000 bootstrapped samples, we found that the indirect (mediated) effect was significant, as zero was not included in the 95% Bias Corrected confidence intervals (lower CI = -0.26; upper CI = -0.03). Thus, in line with our expectations, humiliation significantly mediated the negative relationship between perceived mental severity and affiliation with fellows during the initiation (see Figure 3.2).

As we also found a positive relationship between mental severity and a tendency to withdraw, we performed a similar bootstrap analysis to inspect if humiliation could explain this relation as well. Based on 5000 bootstrapped samples, we found that the indirect (mediated) effect was significant, as zero was not included in the 95% Bias Corrected confidence intervals (lower CI = 0.10; upper CI = 0.37). The relationship between mental severity and withdrawal tendencies was still significant

after humiliation was accounted for. Thus, humiliation partially explained the negative relation between mental severity and withdrawal tendencies (see Figure 3.3).
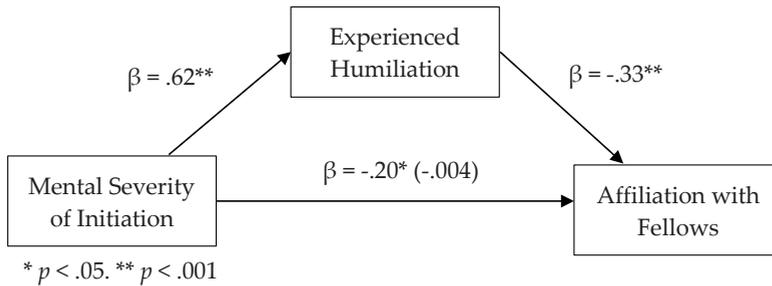
Figure 3.2. Relationship between Perceived Mental Severity of the Initiation and Perceived Affiliation with Fellow Novices, mediated by Experienced Humiliation, Study 3.1.
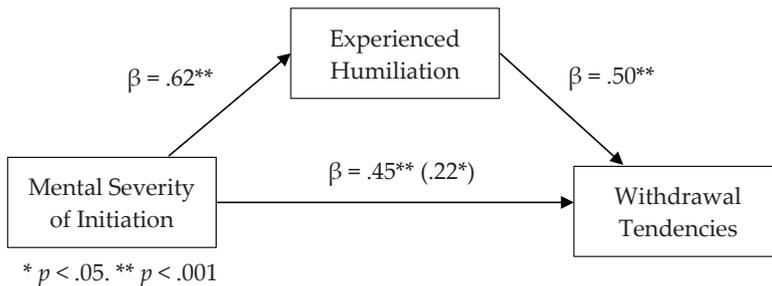
Figure 3.3. Relationship between perceived Mental Severity of the Initiation and a Tendency to Withdraw from the Group, mediated by Experienced Humiliation, Study 3.1.

Content-Analysis

With a more exploratory aim we analysed the content of respondents' descriptions of their most humiliating experiences during the initiation. These experiences were coded independently by two researchers in terms of humiliating versus non-humiliating incidents, physical versus mental humiliation, being humiliated alone versus being humiliated together with the group, and being

humiliated in public or privately. One of the most important findings of this analysis was that respondents reported stronger experiences of humiliation when they described being humiliated individually—in front of the others—than when they described being humiliated together with other novices. Furthermore, respondents described both physical and mental variants of humiliation.

Discussion

Study 3.1 partly confirmed our first three hypotheses and showed that both perceived mental- and physical severity of an initiation in fraternities and sororities are related to more intense humiliation, although mental severity was more strongly related to humiliation than physical severity. Perceived severity was also related to lower affiliation with fellow novices of the initiation ritual, however this only applied to mentally severe, and not to physically severe initiation rituals. This may be explained by our finding that mentally severe initiations evoke stronger humiliation, compared to physically severe initiations, which may be enduring, but less mentally degrading. We will examine the role of mental and physical hardship further in Study 3.3. Most importantly, the negative relationship between perceived mental severity and affiliation can be explained by experienced humiliation during the initiation. Both perceived severity and reported humiliation are positively correlated with tendencies to withdraw from the group, which forms further evidence for the non-affiliative effects of severe initiations. Moreover, experienced humiliation partially mediated the negative relation between perceived mental severity and tendencies to withdraw. Interestingly, no relationship was found between the perceived severity of the ritual and current affiliation with fellow novices, suggesting that whereas the effects of humiliating initiations are very negative in the short term, they may be absent in the long term.

This first study offers data that are ecologically valid, because they relate to real events and experiences. However, there are also some limitations. First, the data

are based on recollections of events. The initiation event itself, and especially subsequent experiences with the sorority or fraternity, may have produced biased reports. A second limitation is that the data are correlational, which makes it difficult to draw causal conclusions. For example, it is not clear whether experiences of humiliation led to less affiliation, or low affiliation caused people to experience the initiation as more humiliating. Third, our method of data collection may have led to a selection bias. This is always a risk in (online) research, but may be especially so in the current study because members of a fraternity or sorority are not supposed to disclose negative aspects of their organisation. It could well be that precisely those people who experienced humiliation during the initiation were also more inclined to break this code of honour and openly discuss their negative experiences. We aimed to overcome these limitations in the next two studies, by standardising the nature of the humiliating event and using a different sample of participants.

Study 3.2

One factor that may cause initiations to be experienced as less humiliating is the social context, because victims may find comfort in being together with other victims. In Study 3.2 we focused on this potential beneficial effect of the social setting. To this end we enacted a mild form of public derogation in the lab. Participants joined a group-dance-session and the experimenter gave either no feedback (Control condition) or derogative feedback on their performance. This feedback was either directed at the whole group (Group condition) or at one participant in the group (Individual condition). Our choice for a dance-session for this experiment was inspired by research by Hawk, Fischer, and Van Kleef (2011) who used dancing performances to evoke a sense of embarrassment. Because in the current experiment we wanted to evoke humiliation rather than embarrassment, we included degrading feedback in the experimental sessions.

Based on earlier research showing that social support can form a buffer against aversive events (e.g., Haslam et al., 2005), we hypothesized that public derogation is experienced as less humiliating in the Group condition than in the Individual condition (Hypothesis 4), and we expected that this decreased effect of group derogation compared to individual derogation can be explained by expected social support from the other group members (Hypothesis 5). In line with this, we expected that affiliation towards other group members is stronger and the tendency to withdraw from the group is weaker in the Group condition than in the Individual condition (Hypothesis 6a and 6b respectively). Finally, we again predicted that humiliation is negatively associated with affiliation and positively with withdrawal from the group (Hypothesis 2a and Hypothesis 2b).

Method

Participants and Design

Eighty-four females aged 18 to 35 ($M = 21.27$, $SD = 2.85$) subscribed to the experiment. Of these participants, 31% were first year Psychology students, the others were either more advanced Psychology students, other students, or they did not study. They were rewarded with course credits or 5 Euros. Participants joined the experiment in groups of three people (i.e., two real participants and one confederate) and were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: Control (no feedback), Individual (negative feedback to only one of the participants), Group (negative feedback to the whole group) and Witness (consisting of the participants who witnessed the feedback of another participant in the Individual condition). We do not report the Witness condition here, therefore the final sample that we analysed consisted of 64 participants.[19]

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[19] These results are not reported in the present study because in this Witness condition, psychological phenomena that are less relevant for the current research may come into play. However, data can be requested from the first author. Importantly, all analyses show the same pattern if this condition is included.

Materials and Procedure

Two rooms were used for the experiment. The first room was equipped with a dvd-player and a camera. The second room was empty, except for three chairs. The experimenters were two female second year Psychology students. They were trained to provide identical instructions to all participants. Two female confederates, also second year Psychology students, alternately joined the experiment and pretended they were participants as well (they attended the experiment in the same way as the real participants). Thus each session consisted of two real participants and one confederate. These confederates were also trained to play their role as naturally and consistently as possible. The experiment was called "Rhythm: Nature or Nurture?" and participants were told that the research was about the influence of sense of rhythm on collective task performance. Upon arrival in the lab, the two participants and the confederate (from now on: "participants") were led into the room with the dvd-player and camera and they read instructions explaining that they would perform rhythmical movements based on ancient African dances with the goal of sensing each other's movements in such a way that they could start moving "as one." Participants were told that the purpose was to see if this would lead to better group performance on a task that they would perform afterwards. They also read that this dance-session was filmed for later purposes. This was meant to induce a stronger feeling of publicity, but in reality the camera was not recording.

When participants had finished reading, the experimenter showed them the dance-movements that they should perform (i.e., standing widely and stamping the feet, shaking the hips, and waving the arms in the air) and they practiced them together. Subsequently the experimenter turned on African music and told participants to start dancing. After one minute and 20 seconds, the experimenter turned off the music. In the Control condition no feedback was given and participants were told that they would now move on to the next task. In the Individual condition one of the two "real" participants was told that she performed

this task very badly and that the experimenter thought she had no sense of rhythm at all. In order to randomize the target of the individual feedback as much as possible, this feedback was always directed to the participant who came in the lab first. The experimenter made sure that she made the comment sound derogative, but not too much.[20] In the Group condition the same feedback was directed at all three participants (for the exact wording of the feedback see Appendix A).

After the dance-session the experimenter brought the confederate and the real participants to the second room where they could fill out a questionnaire about their reactions to the dance-session and the feedback they received. They were also instructed not to talk to each other. After they finished, the experimenter thoroughly debriefed participants and the confederate revealed herself. They both made sure that participants were fully aware that the feedback was unrelated to their real performance and they did not feel uncomfortable in any way. In total, the experiment took about 30 minutes.

Measures

Unless mentioned otherwise, all questions were answered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).

Humiliation. Humiliation was measured with seven translated items from Hartling and Luchetta's (1999) *Humiliation Inventory*, starting with the sentence: "In this situation I felt…." The items were: "cruelly criticized," "bullied," "scorned," "put down," "laughed at," "unfairly treated," and "ridiculed" and they were selected based on their relevance to the situation. To these seven items we added the specific emotion label "humiliated." This scale was highly reliable (Cronbach's α = .93).

Expected social support. Five items based on Doeglas et al. (1996) and translated into Dutch measured expected social support, i.e., "How strongly do you expect that the other participants will…" "sympathise with you," "want to make you

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[20] We did this for ethical reasons, but also to make the episode more credible, as we feared that a very derogative comment would raise suspicion in this setting.

feel at ease," "want to reassure you," "want to support you," or "want to ridicule you" (reverse scored). Reliability was good (Cronbach's α = .84).

Affiliation. The current experiment did not allow us to measure group affiliation in exactly the same way as in Study 3.1, as it concerned a one-time interaction (rather than a sequence of interactions over a prolonged period of time, as is generally the case during initiations). Therefore, we used a different self-report measure, tapping (need for) affiliation with ten items based on Hill's (1987) Interpersonal Orientation Scale (subscale: Need for Emotional Support) which we translated into Dutch (e.g., "I tried to stay close to the other group members"). This scale was reliable (Cronbach's α = .81).[21]

Withdrawal tendencies. In the current study we used a more elaborate measure of withdrawal tendencies than in Study 3.1. We measured these tendencies (i.e., "I wanted to become invisible," "I wanted to walk away," "I wanted to crawl away and hide in a corner"), and feelings (e.g., "In this situation I felt ashamed," "In this situation I felt embarrassed"[22]) with five items. This scale was highly reliable (Cronbach's α = .87).

Results

In this experiment students participated in groups and we analysed data of two participants from each group (the third participant was a confederate, so we obviously did not use her data). This means the design involved two levels (participants were nested within groups), thus the data were hierarchical. As a result residual scores of participants within a group may be correlated, which violates the

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[21] We also included a behavioural measure of affiliation (distance of participant chair to confederate chair). However, we faced some problems with the measurement of this variable and the data very likely became inaccurate. When included in the analyses, we found no effect on this measure and no relation with other variables.

[22] Although we are aware of differences between embarrassment and shame, we decided to use both emotion-labels in one scale. We had two reasons for this. First, in Dutch, these emotion labels have more similar meanings than in English. This was also confirmed by a strong positive relation between these items (r = .48, p < .001). Second, the current research was not aimed at testing possible differences between shame and embarrassment in the context of initiations.

assumption of independent observations. Thus, the data analyses required multilevel modelling to investigate whether the social context of the derogation influenced reports on the dependent measures. As it concerned a simple two-level hierarchy we used SPSS (version 20.0) and followed the procedure described in Field (2013). For each dependent measure (i.e., humiliation, social support, affiliation, and withdrawal tendencies) we compared the fit of a random intercept ($Var(u_{0j})$) model with a fully fixed model (a regular ANOVA) with Social Context (Control, Individual, Group) as independent variable and the group participants belonged to as the contextual variable.

The relationship between Social Context and humiliation showed no significant intercept variance across participants, $Var(u_{0j}) = .03$, $\chi^2 (1) = .01$, $p > .10$. The same was true for the relationship between Social Context and expected social support, $Var(u_{0j}) = .00$, $\chi^2 (1) = 0$, $p > .10$, the relationship between Social Context and affiliation, $Var(u_{0j}) = .00$, $\chi^2 (1) = 0$, $p > .10$, and the relationship between Social Context and withdrawal tendencies, $Var(u_{0j}) = .07$, $\chi^2 (1) = .06$, $p > .10$. This indicated that residual scores of participants within groups were uncorrelated (i.e., the groups participants were in had no influence on their scores), thus we could analyse our data using regular ANOVAs, correlation analyses, and bootstrapping to test the hypothesized and exploratory effects.

Humiliation

Correlations between humiliation and all other variables are reported in Table 3.2. Contrary to Hypothesis 2a, we found no significant relationship between humiliation and affiliation ($r = .12$, $p = .34$). In line with Hypothesis 2b, however, we found a strong positive relationship between humiliation and withdrawal tendencies ($r = .70$, $p < .001$). We next performed an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with Social Context (Individual, Group, Control) as factor and humiliation as dependent variable (for means and standard deviations see Table 3.3). There was a significant effect of Social Context, $F(2, 61) = 19.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .385$. Standard simple contrasts revealed

that participants in the Control condition reported significantly less humiliation than participants in the Individual and in the Group conditions (both $p's < .001$). Furthermore, repeated contrasts indicated that participants in the Individual condition reported more humiliation than participants in the Group condition ($p = .023$), confirming Hypothesis 4.

Table 3.2
Correlations between reports of Humiliation (1), Affiliation (2), Expected Social Support (3), and Withdrawal Tendencies (4), Study 3.2

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Humiliation (1)	__			
Affiliation (2)	.12	__		
Expected Social Support (3)	.09	.47***	__	
Withdrawal Tendencies (4)	.70***	.07	.13	__

Note. *** $p < .001$.

Mediation of Social Support on Humiliation

We examined whether expected social support was stronger in the Individual versus Group condition by conducting an ANOVA with Social Context as factor and expected social support as dependent variable (see Table 3.3 for means and standard deviations). There was no main effect of Social Context, $F(2, 61) = 0.38$, $p = .689$, $\eta_P^2 = .012$. Testing only the difference between the Individual and the Group conditions also showed no effect ($p = .994$). Because we did not find differences between Group and Individual derogation on social support, we could not test for a mediation of social support. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not confirmed.

Affiliation

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed with Social Context as factor and self-reported affiliation as dependent variable (see Table 3.3 for means and standard deviations). There was no main effect of Social Context, $F(2, 61) = 0.29$, $p = .750$, $\eta_p^2 = .009$, and testing only the difference between the Individual and the Group conditions showed no effect ($p = .476$). Thus, Hypothesis 6a could not be confirmed.

Withdrawal Tendencies

An ANOVA with tendencies to withdraw as dependent variable revealed a significant effect, $F(2, 61) = 10.38$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .254$ (see Table 3.3 for means and standard deviations). Simple contrasts showed that participants in the Individual and Group conditions reported more withdrawal tendencies than participants in the Control condition ($p < .001$ and $p = .037$ respectively). Furthermore, participants in the Individual condition reported a stronger tendency to withdraw than participants in the Group condition ($p = .016$). Thus Hypothesis 6b was confirmed.

Mediation of Humiliation on Withdrawal Tendencies

Because we found that the tendency to withdraw was stronger for participants in the Individual condition versus the Group condition, we explored whether this difference was mediated by experienced humiliation. We selected only the participants in the Individual and Group conditions ($n = 42$) and performed bootstrap analyses (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Based on 5000 bootstrapped samples, we found that the indirect (mediated) effect was significant, as zero was not included in the 95% Bias Corrected confidence intervals (lower CI = -1.0371; upper CI = -0.0226). Thus, humiliation mediated the effect of Social Context (Individual versus Group derogation) on the tendency to withdraw.

Table 3.3

Means and Standard Deviations for reported Humiliation, Affiliation, Expected Social Support, and Withdrawal Tendencies divided by Social Context (Control, Individual, Group), Study 3.2

	Social Context		
	Control *M (SD)*	Individual *M (SD)*	Group *M (SD)*
Humiliation	1.41 (0.67)[a]	3.43 (1.06)[b]	2.66 (1.38)[c]
Affiliation	5.14 (0.87)[a]	4.99 (0.67)[a]	5.17 (0.91)[a]
Expected Social Support	4.99 (0.78)[a]	5.18 (0.84)[a]	5.18 (0.88)[a]
Withdrawal Tendencies	2.23 (0.76)[a]	3.80 (1.30)[b]	2.95 (1.23)[c]

Note. Means in one row with different superscripts differ at least at $p < .05$.

Discussion

This study supports the idea that public derogation targeted at one person within a group leads to stronger feelings of humiliation than public derogation of the whole group. In addition, derogation of one person also resulted in a stronger tendency to withdraw from the group compared to group derogation. This withdrawal tendency was strongly related to humiliation and the effect of the social context on withdrawal was mediated by reported intensity of humiliation.

Unexpectedly, we did not find expected social support to be stronger when the derogation was targeted at the whole group rather than at one person and thus, it could not mediate the effect of social context on humiliation. Furthermore, affiliation did not vary depending on social context and it was not significantly related to reported humiliation. This may be explained by the experimental context and the artificial nature of the group and, most importantly, by the short-term character of the interaction. Participants were mostly strangers, did not form an actual group in real life, and were aware that the groups' existence was only short term and for the purpose of psychological research. Thus, it was unlikely that they were very motivated to invest in long-term relationships with each other. In this context,

questions about affiliation and expected social support may have appeared rather artificial. In contrast, in real fraternities novices usually get to know one another before the initiation starts and they have certain expectancies about the outcomes of the initiation and the interrelationships after the initiation. In such contexts, affiliation and social support become more relevant, which may then result in different patterns of these variables depending on the social context of the initiation ritual.

Finally, for ethical reasons we used mild forms of derogation in this study, which may have had less strong effects than initiations in real life where hazing can be much more intense and prolonged, and the resulting feelings of humiliation may be more consequential with regard to affiliation. One way to examine and experimentally manipulate stronger forms of hazing without causing damage to participants is by using scenarios. Thus, to further investigate the potential role of expected social support and affiliation after humiliating experiences we used scenarios in Study 3.3.

Study 3.3

In Study 3.3 we created imaginary situations, reflecting the nature of an initiation better than what could be (ethically) feasible in a lab. On the basis of respondents' descriptions of both physically and mentally humiliating experiences during initiations in Study 3.1, we wrote scenarios in which we manipulated different social contexts (individual versus group target) and different types of humiliating events (only mental versus both physical and mental).

Our finding in Study 3.1, that perceived mental severity seems to have a stronger impact during initiations than perceived physical severity, could be due to other aspects of the recollected event. This raised the question if this finding would hold if we would manipulate the nature of the humiliating event and standardise all other aspects of the initiation context. Thus, in the current study we manipulated

whether the humiliating event (Event) was purely mental in nature (Mental), or also contained elements of physical humiliation (Physical and Mental) or was not humiliating (Control), trying to keep all the other aspects of the event as similar as possible. In line with findings of Study 3.1, we anticipated that both purely mental and a combination of physical and mental humiliating events would lead to more humiliation compared to the control condition and that there would be no difference between the two experimental conditions (i.e., adding a physical aspect does not make a strong difference with regard to humiliation). We further hypothesized that humiliation would be negatively associated with affiliation and positively with withdrawal from the group (Hypothesis 2a and Hypothesis 2b).

In addition, we aimed to replicate the finding in Study 3.2 that group derogation elicits less intense experiences of humiliation than individual derogation in a group context (Hypothesis 4). We further predicted that expected social support mediates the relationship between Social Context (group vs. individual derogation) and reported humiliation (Hypothesis 5). Finally, we wanted to further examine the role of affiliation with fellow novices and withdrawal from the group. We again hypothesized that affiliation towards other group members is stronger and the tendency to withdraw from the group is weaker when the derogation is targeted at the whole group (Group condition) than when one is the only target in a group context (Individual condition; Hypothesis 6a and 6b respectively).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Two hundred sixty-two people completed the online questionnaire. Ten of them did not answer our check question (see below) correctly, and four indicated to have not participated in a serious manner. Thus, a total of 248 participants (70 female, aged 18 to 67, $M = 26.72$, $SD = 7.63$) remained. Participants were from the United States and they were recruited via the Amazon-website *Mechanical Turk*.

When they started the questionnaire called: "Student organizations" they were requested to read a short text and imagine the situation described as if they were the protagonist. Then they were asked to complete a series of questions about their reactions in this situation. They were paid 0.50 dollar for their participation.

Scenarios and Design

All scenarios started with the same introduction, in which the protagonist subscribes to a student organisation and joins an initiation ritual. This initiation event is described as either tough, but not humiliating (Control), as only mentally humiliating (Mental), or as both physically and mentally humiliating (Physical & Mental). Furthermore, the protagonist either goes through the initiation alone or with a group of novices. Thus, we had a 2 (Social Context: Individual versus Group) x 3 (Event: Control vs. Mental vs. Physical & Mental) between subjects design (see Appendix B for the exact wording of the scenarios).

Measures

Unless mentioned otherwise, all questions were answered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).

Check. We checked if the participants read the story carefully by asking them the following questions: "What did the board-members instruct you to do?" (four possible answers: "to run," "to sing a song," "to eat a hamburger," "to do push ups"), and: "Was this instruction directed at you alone or at the whole group of novices?" (two possible answers: "only at me," "at the whole group of novices").[23]

Humiliation. To measure humiliation we used five items of Hartling and Luchetta's (1999) *Humiliation Inventory*, namely "bullied," "scorned," "laughed at," "ridiculed," and "put down." All items started with the sentence: "In this situation, I

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[23] If participants answered these questions incorrectly, we suspected that they did not pay enough attention to our manipulation (of which one runs a higher risk in the case of Mechanical Turk participants). On the basis of this check we discarded data of 10 participants (see the Participants and Procedure-section of Study 3.3).

would feel….” We added the emotion label "humiliated" to this scale.[24] Reliability of the scale was high (Cronbach's α = .95).

Expected social support. The same five items as used in Study 3.2 measured expected social support (e.g., "How strongly do you expect that the other novices would make you feel at ease"?). Reliability of this scale was good (Cronbach's α = .85).

Affiliation. Three items from the affiliation-scale used in Study 3.2 measured need for affiliation (e.g., "In this situation, I would find comfort in being together with the other novices"). This scale was highly reliable (Cronbach's α = .93).

Withdrawal tendencies. We used three items to measure withdrawal (i.e., "In this situation I would try to make myself invisible," "I would leave the scene," "I felt ashamed"). Reliability was satisfactory (Cronbach's α = .64).

Results

We performed ANOVAs to test whether Social Context and/or Event affected reports of humiliation, expected support from- and affiliation towards fellow group members, as well as withdrawal from the group. We used a bootstrapping procedure to test the hypothesized and exploratory mediations.

Humiliation

Correlations between humiliation and all other variables are reported in Table 3.4. Humiliation was marginally negatively related to affiliation (r = -.12, p = .06) which lent some support to Hypothesis 2a, and it was strongly positively related to withdrawal (r = .64) which supported Hypothesis 2b. We performed an Analysis of

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[24] We could not use the exact same scale as in Study 3.2 as the situations were very different and some items used in the lab-study were not relevant for the scenario study. Furthermore, the questionnaire had to be short(er), as participant fatigue can pose a threat in M-Turk studies. However, five of the seven items used in Study 3.3 were the same as in Study 3.2. When we analysed the data in Study 3.1 and Study 3.2 using this 5-item humiliation scale instead of the longer-item scales, we found the same results, except for the mediation of the effect of Social Context on withdrawal tendencies by humiliation in Study 3.2. This mediation was not significant using the 5-item scale. Thus, although we replicate this mediation in Study 3.3, we should interpret this finding with some caution.

Variance (ANOVA) with Social Context (Individual versus Group) and Event (Control vs. Mental vs. Physical & Mental) as factors, and humiliation as dependent variable. Means and standard deviations are reported in Table 3.5. There was a significant main effect for Event, $F(2, 242) = 32.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .212$. Simple contrasts showed that reports of humiliation in both the Mental and the Physical & Mental conditions were higher than in the Control condition, both p's $< .001$. This indicated that our manipulation of Event was successful. In line with the findings from Study 3.1, there was no difference for humiliation between the Mental and the Physical & Mental conditions ($p = .481$). We also found a significant main effect of Social Context, $F(1, 242) = 11.06$, $p = .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .044$. Participants reported stronger humiliation when initiated as individual than as a group. No significant interaction effects were found. Because we found a main effect and no interaction, we could not confirm Hypothesis 4, which implied an interaction between Social Context and Nature of Humiliation. However, the fact that we found a main effect of Social Context is in line with findings of Study 3.2.

Table 3.4
Correlations between reported Humiliation (1), Affiliation (2), Expected Social Support (3), and Withdrawal Tendencies (4), Study 3.3

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Humiliation (1)	—			
Affiliation (2)	-.12[†]	—		
Expected Social Support (3)	-.15[*]	.64[***]	—	
Withdrawal Tendencies (4)	.64[***]	-.08	-.07	—

Note. † $p < .07$. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

Mediation of Social Support on Humiliation

To investigate whether social support would mediate the social context effect on humiliation (Hypothesis 5), we first conducted an ANOVA with Social Context as factor and expected social support as dependent variable (see Table 3.5 for means and standard deviations). We found a significant main effect for Social Context, $F(1, 246) = 18.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .068$. Ratings of social support were lower in the Individual condition ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.33$) than in the Group condition ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.13$). We then performed bootstrap analyses (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Based on 5000 bootstrapped samples, we found that the indirect (mediated) effect was significant, as zero was not included in the 95% Bias Corrected confidence intervals (lower CI = -0.237; upper CI = -0.001). Thus, although the effect was small, expected social support significantly mediated the effect of Social Context on humiliation, supporting Hypothesis 5. Specifically, reported humiliation was lower in the Group condition because of expected social support (see Figure 3.4).

Affiliation

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed with Social Context and Event as factors and affiliation as dependent variables (see Table 3.5 for means and standard deviations). We found no main effect of Event, $F(2, 242) = 0.13$, $p = .880$, $\eta_P^2 = .001$, but a significant main effect of Social Context, $F(1, 242) = 5.89$, $p = .016$, $\eta_P^2 = .024$. Confirming Hypothesis 6a, ratings of affiliation were lower in the Individual condition than in the Group condition. There was no significant interaction.

Table 3.5

Means and Standard Deviations for reported Humiliation, Affiliation, Expected Social Support, and Withdrawal Tendencies depending on Social Context (Individual vs. Group) and Event (Control, Mental, Mental & Physical), Study 3.3

		Event			
	Social Context	Control M (SD)	Mental M (SD)	Mental & Physical M (SD)	Total M (SD)
Humiliation	Individual	4.00 (1.48)[1a]	5.70 (1.28)[2a]	5.66 (1.46)[2a]	5.07 (1.61)[a]
	Group	3.48 (1.47)[1a]	4.82 (1.46)[2b]	5.18 (1.54)[2a]	4.55 (1.64)[b]
	Total	3.73 (1.49)[1]	5.22 (1.44)[2]	5.35 (1.52)[2]	4.78 (1.65)
Affiliation	Individual	4.66 (1.11)[1a]	4.87 (1.48)[1a]	4.43 (1.81)[1a]	4.68 (1.46)[a]
	Group	5.08 (1.30)[1a]	5.00 (1.47)[1a]	5.21 (1.39)[1b]	5.10 (1.39)[b]
	Total	4.88 (1.22)[1]	4.94 (1.47)[1]	4.93 (1.59)[1]	4.92 (1.43)
Withdrawal Tendencies	Individual	3.37 (1.27)[1a]	4.19 (1.60)[2a]	3.98 (1.44)[12a]	3.84 (1.48)[a]
	Group	2.73 (1.37)[1b]	3.72 (1.59)[2a]	3.69 (1.43)[2a]	3.41 (1.53)[b]
	Total	3.04 (1.35)[1]	3.93 (1.61)[2]	3.79 (1.43)[2]	3.60 (1.52)

Note. The superscripts reflect main effects of Event or Social Context, no interactions. Means in one row with a different number differ at least at $p < .05$. Means in one column with a different letter differ at least at $p < .05$. Means of the separate conditions are not tested against totals.
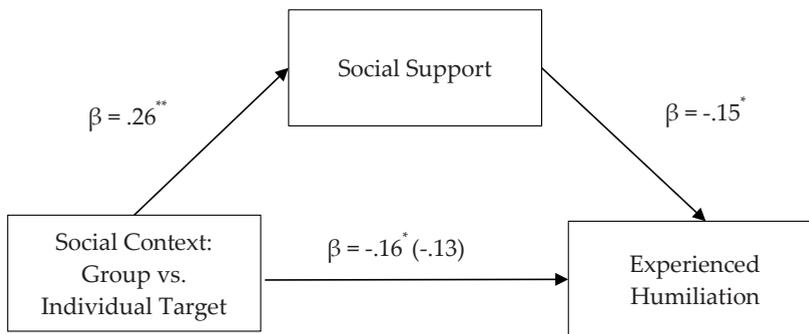
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .001$

Figure 3.4. Effect of Social Context (Group versus Individual Target) on Experienced Humiliation, mediated by Expected Social Support, Study 3.3.

Withdrawal Tendencies

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed with Event and Social Context on the tendency to withdraw, see Table 3.5 for means and standard deviations. There was a significant main effect for Event, $F(2, 242) = 9.20$, $p < .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .071$. Ratings on this tendency were higher in the Mental condition than in the Control condition ($p < .001$) and they were higher in the Physical & Mental condition than in the Control condition ($p = .001$). The Mental and Physical & Mental conditions did not differ significantly from each other ($p = .606$). We also found a significant main effect of Social Context, $F(1, 242) = 6.09$, $p = .014$, $\eta_P^2 = .025$. In line with findings from Study 3.2, and confirming Hypothesis 6b, participants reported stronger withdrawal tendencies in the Individual than in the Group condition. There was no significant interaction.

Mediation of Humiliation on Withdrawal Tendencies

We again used bootstrap analyses (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) to investigate whether the difference between group and individual context on reported tendencies to withdraw was mediated by reports of humiliation. Based on 5000 bootstrapped samples, we found that the indirect (mediated) effect was significant, as zero was not included in the 95% Bias Corrected confidence intervals (lower CI = -0.5618; upper CI = -0.0639). Thus, reported humiliation mediated the effect of Social Context (Individual versus Group) on a reported tendency to withdraw from other group members, that is, humiliation could explain a stronger tendency to withdraw in the Individual than in the Group condition, which was in line with the findings of Study 3.2.

Discussion

Study 3.3 shows that humiliation, as well as tendencies to withdraw from the group, are rated as more intense for descriptions of both mentally and a combination of physically and mentally humiliating initiation rituals, compared to non-

humiliating initiation rituals. It should be noted that non-humiliating physical initiation rituals, such as running around a camp site, were reported to evoke considerable reports of humiliation as well. This may be due to the fact that participants do associate such initiation rituals with humiliating experiences, even though they were not explicitly described. In line with results of Study 3.1 (and partly Study 3.2), humiliation was marginally negatively related to affiliation with others and strongly positively related to withdrawal tendencies. There was no effect for the type of event on affiliation. One explanation for this may be that—contrary to withdrawal tendencies, which may be considered more concrete and direct reactions in these kind of situations—affiliation needs more time to develop (such as in a real fraternity, see also the Discussion of Study 3.2).

We further found that descriptions of humiliation in the individual condition evoked stronger reports of humiliation than descriptions of group humiliation, which is in line with findings of Study 3.2. We also found somewhat stronger reports of humiliation in the individual context of the control condition (see Table 3.5). Thus, descriptions of being initiated generally evoked stronger reports of humiliation if these initiations were targeted at one individual than if they were targeted at the group. The same pattern was found for the tendency to withdraw from the group and this effect was mediated by ratings of humiliation. This suggests that experienced humiliation during initiation rituals is an important explanatory factor that influences behavioural tendencies associated with less rather than more group affiliation. Affiliation with others also decreased when participants imagined to be initiated alone. Finally, we found that expected social support mediated the effect of social context on humiliation, although this effect was small. This suggests that the real or imaginary support that people expect from others in their group may prevent them from feeling humiliated or, at least, help them to cope better with negative feelings.

General Discussion

In three studies using very different methods, we have provided evidence for the idea that the amount of humiliation during initiation rituals is crucial for the outcome of such rituals. The current research suggests that stronger experiences of humiliation lead to less rather than more affiliation with fellow novices, compared to rituals which evoke no (or less) humiliation. Humiliation also explains the negative relation between severity of the initiation and affiliation with fellows and it is strongly related to a tendency to withdraw from the group.

We further found that experiences of humiliation are lower when the initiation is targeted at an individual rather than at a group. Being in a group may function as a buffer because it triggers higher expectations of social support, which can prevent strong feelings of humiliation. Insight in the consequences of humiliation as part of initiation rituals is important, as common knowledge and some of the previous studies suggest that initiation rituals have mainly beneficial effects on group formation and cohesion. Although some elements of initiation rituals (e.g., physical pain) may indeed be beneficial for group affiliation, cooperation, or prosocial behaviour (e.g., Bastian, Jetten, & Ferris, 2014; Xygalatas et al., 2013), our research suggests that humiliation destroys these beneficial effects. Having said this, it may still be possible that a humiliating individual initiation causes stronger affiliation than no initiation at all. In the current research we did not compare the results of initiations with the absence of initiations, and therefore we cannot draw conclusions on whether initiation rituals are functional at all.

As said, we found that feelings of humiliation vary with the social context in which the initiation ritual takes place. Humiliation seems to be especially strong when people are singled out and humiliated alone in front of their peers. In Study 3.2, we found that when participants were derogated as an individual in front of a group, humiliation increased compared to when participants were derogated together with the other group members. In Study 3.3, we found that when

participants imagined being initiated (either by being humiliated or by having to perform something difficult and tough), reports of humiliation were higher when this initiation was imagined as experienced individually in front of the group than together with the group. We found similar results regarding the tendency to withdraw from the group. Thus, when participants were derogated as an individual (Study 3.2) or imagined to be the sole target of an initiation ritual (Study 3.3), tendencies to withdraw were stronger than when they were derogated or imagined to be initiated as a group. A similar effect was found for affiliation, but only in Study 3.3. Participants who imagined being the sole target reported less affiliation than participants who imagined being initiated as a group. The current studies further show that a tendency to withdraw from the group was not, or only weakly, related to affiliation with fellow novices, suggesting that these are independent behavioural tendencies. On the basis of the present data we cannot draw firm conclusions about the exact relationship between withdrawal and affiliation, because both may have short-term and long-term effects. We expect, however, that it is very likely that withdrawal from the group at one point in time is negatively related to affiliation in the long run and may therefore be detrimental for functional and satisfying relationships among group members.

One aspect of the research designs in Study 3.2 and Study 3.3 that we should note here is that the individual condition always involves an audience, namely the other participants or novices who are not derogated or humiliated. This audience is not present in the group conditions, because in these conditions the whole group is derogated and the only audience left is the experimenter (Study 3.2) or the initiators (Study 3.3). Future research is needed to disentangle the effects of individual versus group humiliation from the presence versus absence of an audience.

We found that both physical and mental severity are related to humiliation although only mental severity was related to affiliation with fellow novices (Study 3.1). We also found that adding a physical aspect to a description of mental

humiliation did not make a difference (Study 3.3) with regard to the amount of humiliation, affiliation, or withdrawal tendencies that were reported. It is important to acknowledge that this latter result is based on a scenario study. Reality may be different and it would be interesting to investigate whether mental or physical humiliation differs with regard to emotions, action tendencies, and perceived affiliation and social support. Such research should ideally be longitudinal and conducted during a real initiation (e.g., in a fraternity or in the army).

Conclusion and Practical Implications

The current research is in line with earlier findings (e.g., Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001) and shows that perceived severity of an initiation leads to *less* instead of more affiliation. We have tested one explanation of these negative effects of initiations, namely experienced humiliation and its related action tendencies, rather than general negative affect. In addition, we have shown that the emotions and action tendencies experienced during initiations are dependent on the social context.

These findings are important as they suggest that initiations that evoke humiliation—which especially applies to initiations that are experienced individually in front of a group—may be less functional than initiations without humiliation, if the goal of the initiation is to create a strong and cohesive group. We therefore suggest that hazing, defined as initiation practices including negative emotions such as humiliation, has negative consequences for the relations with fellow novices. Although initiation rituals in general (including hardship, challenge, and pain) may serve important functions in people's life such as group affiliation (Bastian et al., 2014; Van Gennep, 1909/1961; Xygalatas et al., 2013), these rituals may only have positive outcomes if they do not include humiliating experiences. However, as said before, it is still possible that humiliating rituals lead to more affiliation than no ritual at all, because we only examined various forms of public rituals with and without

humiliation and did not compare this with the absence of a ritual. This is a question that should be tested in future research.

Our finding of stronger humiliation as a result of derogation of an individual picked out of the group, rather than derogation of the whole group should be taken into account by (potential) initiators. Unless the goal of such individual hazing is to "filter out" people who might not fit in well in the group, or to select people who can stand humiliation, our results indicate that this might not be an effective strategy for creating a bond in a group. Selection methods may indeed be an important motivation to use humiliation in initiations. Especially in the army (much more so than in fraternities or other social organisations), novices should be tough and resilient in order to cope with physical as well as mental challenges. However, such selection procedures containing individual hazing may in some cases do more harm than good. Although humiliation aimed at an individual in a group may serve to filter out the "good guys and girls," it may damage a victim-perpetrator relationship with potential aggressive reactions by a victim, and most importantly from the perspective of our studies, it may not promote affiliation in a group but rather strengthen withdrawal tendencies.

Appendix A

Feedback to participant(s) after dance-session, Study 3.2

Group and personal conditions (differences between brackets):

"Well, sorry, but I couldn't do anything else than turn off the music, because this was a complete failure. Have you ever danced before? It doesn't look like it because you really don't have a sense of rhythm." (Only in personal condition: "This is so much out of rhythm with the other two participants"). You weren't even able to perform the different movements with the others. Well then, I will already hand you the questionnaire for the next part of the study, while I am going to discuss for a minute if we can use your results altogether, or whether we have to find an extra group of participants. Of course, you cannot help it much, but it is the first time that (Group-condition: "a group is not able to be rhythmically tuned to each other"; Personal condition: "someone moves so out of rhythm with the others").

Control condition

"We are finished with this part and will go on to the next part of the research."

Appendix B

Scenarios, Study 3.3:

General Introduction:

You start a new study in a big city. Because you are from a town far away and you don't know anybody in this city, you think about joining a fraternity/sorority. At your university's introduction day, some fraternities and sororities present themselves and you strike up a conversation with a member of the organization 'Epsilon'. You like this person and the organization attracts you very much. You decide to apply to become a member of Epsilon. Part of the introduction is an initiation period of two weeks. In the first week you and the other novices go camping in the woods, together with the organization's board-members. As part of

the initiation you have to perform several tasks and assignments. At the third day of the camp you are at the camp site of Epsilon. Twelve other novices and yourself are standing in line next to your tent. In front of you are three members of the initiation board.

Scenario 1: Individual – Control

Suddenly one of the board-members shouts at you personally: "You there! Run ten times around the camp site!" You quickly realize this will take you at least 30 minutes and it will be a tough exercise. You worry if you will make it. All by yourself, you start running. When you get tired, all board-members are pushing you to go on.

Scenario 2: Group – Control

Suddenly one of the board-members shouts at you and the other novices: "All of you! Run ten times around the camp site!" You quickly realize this will take you at least 30 minutes and it will be a tough exercise. You worry if you will make it. Together with the other novices, you start running. When everyone gets tired, all board-members are pushing you to go on.

Scenario 3: Individual – Mental humiliation

Suddenly one of the board-members shouts at you personally: "You there! Sing our favorite song right now!" All by yourself, you start singing. After ten seconds the board-member who gave the order thinks you sing out of tune and he shouts at you: "You are a big loser and you're full of shit. Look at yourself, you worthless trash!" Subsequently, another board-member starts mimicking you. All board-members are laughing their heads off.

Scenario 4: Group – Mental humiliation

Suddenly one of the board-members shouts at you and the other novices: "All of you! Sing our favorite song right now!" Together with the other novices, you start singing. After ten seconds the board-member who gave the order thinks you all sing out of tune and he shouts at you: "You are all big losers and you're full of shit. Look at yourself, you worthless trash!"

Subsequently, another board-member starts mimicking everyone. All board-members are laughing their heads off.

Scenario 5: Individual – Mental & Physical humiliation

Suddenly one of the board-members shouts at you personally: "You there! Run ten times around the camp site!" All by yourself, you start running. The first time you pass the board-member who gave the order, he shouts at you: "You are a big loser and you're full of shit. Look at yourself, you worthless trash!" Subsequently, every board-member empties a glass of beer over your head when you pass them. All board-members are laughing their heads off.

Scenario 6: Group – Mental & Physical humiliation

Suddenly one of the board-members shouts at you and the other initiates: "All of you! Run ten times around the camp site!" Together with the other novices, you start running. The first time you pass the board-member who gave the order, he shouts at you: "You are all big losers and you're full of shit. Look at yourself, you worthless trash!" Subsequently, every board-member empties a glass of beer over everyone's head when the group passes them. All board-members are laughing their heads off.

Chapter 4

Group-Based Humiliation and Intergroup Aggression: The Role of Perceived In-Group Status

Conflict between groups has been a major feature of human history and an important topic of study in various disciplines. The question of how intergroup conflicts evolve, develop and resolve—or why they do not resolve and become intractable—has been studied extensively from different perspectives and paradigms in social psychology (Bar-Tal, 2011). In recent years, growing attention has been paid to the specific role played by emotions in intergroup conflicts. According to Bar-Tal, Halperin, and de Rivera (2007) "collective emotions play a pivotal role in shaping individual and societal responses to conflicting events and in contributing to the evolvement of a social context that maintains the emotional climate and collective emotional orientation that have developed" (p. 441). The current chapter focuses on the role of one specific emotion in intergroup conflicts, namely humiliation. We study whether humiliation experienced at the group level is related to intergroup aggression. In addition, we examine the potential role of (perceived) group-status in this association.

Intergroup conflicts often involve group-based feelings of anger, fear, hatred, contempt or shame. Another more specific, and very relevant emotion—related to both anger and shame (e.g., Fernández, Saguy, & Halperin, 2015; Leidner, Sheikh, & Ginges, 2012; Mann, Feddes, Leiser, Doosje, & Fischer, 2016)—is humiliation. Group-based humiliation refers to the feeling of degradation on behalf of a group that is important to the self. Thus, for this feeling to arise, one needs not necessarily to have experienced a humiliating event personally. Rather, we argue that it is possible to experience humiliation due to the identification with a group that is perceived as being humiliated, either at present or in the past. As humiliation is often related to social identity threat, studying this emotion in an intergroup context is deemed particularly important (e.g., Leidner et al., 2012).

Empirical research devoted to group-based humiliation and its associated action tendencies is still scarce. However, theoretical and anecdotal accounts suggest a strong impact of group-based and collective humiliation in intense, intractable

conflicts, involving war, mass crime, genocide or terrorism (e.g., Atran & Stern, 2005; Baumeister, 2002; Fontan, 2006; Klein, 1991; Lickel, 2012; Lindner, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2006, 2009; Scheff, 1994, 2007; Staub, 1989; Stern, 2003, 2004; Volkan, 1997, 2004). It is hypothesized that in such conflict situations, group-based humiliation forms a specific trigger for violence. This violence may be most likely targeted against the humiliating out-group. Alternatively—for example, when the humiliating out-group is perceived as being too powerful—such violence may be vented towards out-groups other than those involved in the humiliation evoking event, reflecting a type of displaced aggression. Drawing on Intergroup Emotions Theory (IET, Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), the current research focuses on the relationship between group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies towards an out-group that is unrelated to the humiliation evoking event.

Group-Based Humiliation and Intergroup Aggression

Humiliation is part of the family of self-conscious emotions and is defined as "the deep dysphoric feeling associated with being, or perceiving oneself as being unjustly degraded, ridiculed, or put down—in particular, one's identity has been demeaned or devalued" (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999, p. 264). Whereas group-based shame and guilt have received considerable empirical attention (e.g., Allpress, Brown, Giner-Sorolla, Deonna, & Teroni, 2014; Brown, González, Zagefka, Manzi, & Čehajić, 2008; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 2006; Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007; Leach, Iyer, & Pedersen, 2006; McGarty et al., 2005; Roccas, Klar, & Liviathan, 2006; Shepherd, Spears, & Manstead, 2013, and see Lickel, Steele, & Schmader, 2011, for an overview), humiliation has mainly been studied in an interpersonal context. This is surprising, given the frequent occurrence of group-based humiliation in daily life, as, for example, covered in the media (see the General Introduction of this dissertation).

But why would people experience humiliation due to group membership? Intergroup Emotions Theory (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999) predicts that when membership in a certain group is part of the self, appraisals of events as relevant to that particular group in relation to (an) out-group(s) generate group-based emotions, emotions experienced on behalf of the group. It has been shown that such group-based emotions can be experienced even when there is no direct involvement of the self, such as when one feels happy when one's favourite soccer team wins an important game (see Devos, Silver, Mackie, & Smith, 2002). Furthermore, group-based emotions can be experienced when membership of a certain group becomes salient, but not when one's individual identity or membership of another group is salient. Someone can feel angry, for instance, when thinking about the disadvantaged position of women at universities, but this anger is not experienced when thinking about the self as part of the group of tennis players. Thus, self-categorization determines emotional responses and this is especially the case for highly identified group members (Mackie, Smith, & Ray, 2008; and see for example Yzerbyt, Dumont, Wigboldus, & Gordijn, 2003).

As indicated earlier, theories on intergroup conflict have ascribed an important role to group-based humiliation in conflict. For example, feelings of humiliation as a result of the treatment of Palestinians in occupied territories are regarded as one motivator for suicide attacks (e.g., Atran & Stern, 2005; Cook, 2004; Fattah & Fierke, 2009; Fontan, 2006; Lindner, 2001b). Another often mentioned example is Nazi Germany's aggression against the Jews as a result of the humiliating *Treaty of Versailles* (e.g., Baumeister, 2002; Lindner, 2001a, 2002; Staub, 1989). Lindner (2009) even argues that: "the most potent weapon of mass destruction is […] the humiliated mind (whether the feeling of humiliation pre-exists or is manipulated)" (p. 141). These are strong claims that have not been thoroughly empirically tested. Thus, it is important to find empirical support for the assumed connection between humiliation and intergroup aggression.

There are a number of empirical studies on group-based humiliation that have shown, first of all, that humiliation—like other emotions—can be experienced in an intergroup context (Ginges & Atran, 2008; Jonas, Doosje, Lobel, & Pyszczynski, 2016; Leidner et al., 2012; Veldhuis, Gordijn, Veenstra, & Lindenberg, 2014). Second, these studies showed that humiliation might instigate specific behaviours in intergroup conflict situations. For example, Jonas et al. (2016) showed that group-based humiliation amongst Americans as a result of the terrorist attacks at 9/11 was related to harsher treatment of an out-group. However, opposite reactions have also been found. Ginges and Atran (2008) studied humiliation in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and found that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who felt more humiliated by the Israeli occupation were *less* supportive of suicide attacks against Israelis (although they were also less supportive of peace deals). They concluded that humiliation in an intergroup context leads to *inertia* rather than to political violence, and suggest that the perceived powerlessness inherent in humiliation causes this effect.

The Role of Status in Humiliation

The inconsistent findings of the few studies on group-based humiliation (aggression versus inertia as a result of humiliation) may be due to the fact that humiliation is a complex emotion that consists of appraisals that could be differently evoked depending on the specific context. Humiliation may entail appraisals such as powerlessness leading to inertia, but also appraisals of unfairness and anger leading to the goal of taking revenge (e.g., Leidner et al., 2012; Veldhuis et al., 2014). For example, Ginges and Atran (2008) studied a chronically low-power group, i.e. the Palestinians. Thus, members of this group may have felt powerless, and not angry, when humiliated. Humiliation experienced by a high-power (or high-status) group on the other hand, may lead to aggression because of the greater salience of unfairness and feelings of outrage and indignation resulting from the humiliating

event. This would imply that the experience of humiliation, at least in terms of its action tendencies, qualitatively differs depending on (perceived) group-status or power.

Besides a *different* experience of humiliation, i.e., a (stronger) aggressive response tendency, members of powerful or high status groups may feel *more quickly or intensely* humiliated than people from low status or less powerful groups, because they perceive the humiliating act as a strong reduction of their status. If one has a high personal or group self-esteem or even feels superior to others, such a status reduction may be seen as more unfair and more humiliating, leading to moral outrage and reactions of disbelief ("How dare you?" "Do you realize who we are?"). This may, in turn, result in stronger aggressive tendencies. In line with this idea is the finding that powerful people have stronger expectations to be treated fairly and they more quickly attend to situations in which they are unfairly treated than less powerful people (Sawaoka, Hughes, & Ambady, 2015). These people may also be more strongly inclined to perceive such situations as humiliating than less powerful people.

Another reason why powerful or high status groups may more readily feel humiliated is that there may be more at stake than when it concerns a powerless or low-status group. This could trigger a stronger need for restoration, which can be achieved by means of aggression. Research by Baumeister, Smart, and Boden (1996) and Bushman and Baumeister (1998) showed that individuals with high, but unstable and threatened self-esteem, that is, people who are narcissistic (i.e., they perceive themselves as having a high status position), behave violently. According to Bushman and Baumeister: "it appears that people who are emotionally invested in grandiose self-views are the most aggressive, particularly in response to an esteem threat" (p. 227). In line with this, people with higher levels of narcissism are not only thought to be more sensitive to humiliation, but also to be more likely to react with

anger and violence than people who are low in narcissism (Besser & Zeigler-Hill, 2010; Torres & Bergner, 2010, and see Lickel, 2012).

These ideas can be extended to the group level (Lickel, 2012). For example, Golec de Zavala, Cichocka, Eidelson, and Jayawickreme (2009) studied the effects of collective narcissism. They found that narcissistic idealisation of the in-group predicts sensitivity to group-threat and it predicts retaliatory intergroup hostility. These findings may explain the positive relation between humiliation and harsh treatment of an out-group, as reported by Jonas et al. (2016). Jonas et al. studied people from a powerful country with high, sometimes inflated group-self-regard, namely the United States (e.g., Mandel, 2002), a view reflected in the commonly used term *American exceptionalism*. Thus, people who perceive their group as having high status, may be particularly prone to feel group-based humiliation and they may also be more likely to react aggressively towards other groups when they experience humiliation on behalf of their in-group.

In some instances, it is not possible to directly aggress or retaliate against the humiliator-group. Research on displaced aggression shows that people who are provoked, but unable to retaliate, show more aggression towards an innocent other than people who are not provoked (see Marcus-Newhall, Pedersen, Carlson, & Miller, 2000). In a group-context, this may be related to the so-called *scapegoat theory* (e.g., Glick, 2002), that is, an innocent group is the target of aggression and revenge by a frustrated perpetrator group. For example, the Nazis showed extreme aggression against Jews, Roma, Sinti and homosexuals. Yet, the humiliation of Versailles was inflicted by the allied forces (e.g., the United States, England, France, Russia). Why not only retaliate against them? Of course, eventually—usually after an intensive propaganda campaign—a scapegoat-group is considered the cause of all problems in society and thus becomes a psychological threat, but objectively it does not pose a direct threat to the humiliated group.

The Current Research

So far, we have treated status and power as similar constructs in order to capture studies that have been conducted on both these phenomena, but in previous literature these concepts have been distinguished. In general, power refers to one's control over valued resources, whereas status is related to the respect one has in the eyes of others (Magee & Galinsky, 2009). In the current research, we specifically focus on the role of status in experiencing and acting upon humiliation. We study the effect of group-based humiliation on one's reactions towards an out-group *unrelated* to the humiliation evoking event, in order to examine whether group-based humiliation evokes displaced aggression when there is no direct possibility of aggression towards the humiliator group. Such a reaction might function as a group-enhancement strategy, similar to self-enhancement at a personal level.

In three studies, we aim to evoke feelings of group-based humiliation by confronting participants with a defeat of their in-group in the context of an intergroup conflict. To this end, in Study 4.1, participants read a text about a current defeat of their in-group, whereas in Study 4.2 and Study 4.3 they read a text about a historical defeat of their in-group. In line with Jonas et al. (2016), we study people from the United States, who generally perceive their group as being of high status. We anticipate that for this group, reported humiliation is, in general, positively related to aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group.

We do not expect that reading a description of a defeat of the in-group would inevitably lead to strong feelings of humiliation. The use of humiliating words or phrases may increase perceptions of a defeat as humiliating and thereby evoke (stronger) feelings of humiliation. Thus, by framing the defeat in humiliating terms (versus more neutrally, in terms of loss) we aim to manipulate feelings of humiliation about this defeat. In addition, we prime group-status (high or neutral). In line with the theories and research described earlier (e.g., Baumeister et al., 1996; Besser & Zeigler-Hill, 2010; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Torres

& Bergner, 2010), we hypothesize that people who read a humiliating description of their in-groups' defeat report stronger humiliation than people who read a more neutral description, in particular when they are primed with a high group-status. Furthermore, we hypothesize the same interactive pattern of emotion framing and group status prime on aggressive tendencies against an unrelated out-group. Thus, people who read a humiliating description of their in-groups' defeat will report stronger aggressive tendencies than people who read a neutral description, in particular when they are primed with a high group-status.

Furthermore, on the basis of IET (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), we expect that when people identify more strongly with their in-group, they report more humiliation when they are confronted with a defeat of their group. In addition, identification with one's group should be positively related to aggressive tendencies against another group after being humiliated. This relation should be mediated by group-based humiliation.

We use different framing operationalizations to investigate these hypotheses: in Study 4.1 participants only passively read a humiliating (versus loss) message pertaining to their in-group, while in Study 4.2 and Study 4.3 participants are more actively engaged in the production of such a message. We confirm that we report all data exclusions, all measures and all manipulations in the three studies.[25]

Study 4.1

In Study 4.1 we confronted American participants with a (at the time of the study) recent defeat, namely the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Afghanistan

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[25] As in Chapter 3, we did not include gender as a covariate in the current studies. When we checked for possible gender differences on emotion ratings, we found no differences for Study 1 and Study 2. However, in Study 3 men scored higher on humiliation, shame and anger than women. This is contrary to what is sometimes found in interpersonal contexts and may be further tested in future research on group-based emotions.

from 2011 to 2014. Many Americans perceived this withdrawal as a failure and in some American and international media outlets, it was described as humiliating.[26]

To manipulate the extent to which participants would perceive this withdrawal as humiliating (and feel humiliated about it), we described it either in humiliating terms or in terms of loss. In addition, we primed group-status (high versus neutral). We expected that participants who read a humiliating description of the withdrawal from Afghanistan would report stronger humiliation than participants who read about the withdrawal in terms of loss, in particular when they were primed with a high group-status. Furthermore, we expected that participants who read a humiliating description of the withdrawal would report stronger aggressive tendencies against an unrelated out-group (i.e., report more displaced aggression) than participants who read about the defeat in terms of loss. Again, we expected this effect to be more pronounced when participants were primed with a high group-status.

Additionally, we expected that, in line with IET (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), in-group identification would be positively related to reports of group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies and that reported humiliation would mediate the relation between in-group identification and aggressive tendencies.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 203 people (68 female) living in the United States. They ranged in age from 18 to 72 years ($M = 34.41$, $SD = 12.18$). They were recruited via the Amazon-website *Mechanical Turk* and were paid .50 dollars for their participation.

When participants opened the link to the study named "What is your opinion about current U.S. politics?", they were first instructed to write a short text about

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[26] See Appendix A for an overview of the headlines we used in the Humiliating Framing condition. These headlines were real and they were all selected from the Internet.

themselves. These texts were inspected for language, clarity, and serious participation (e.g., sometimes participants write nonsensical strings or copy-paste the instruction which could be a reason to discard their data). On the basis of these stories we did not exclude any data. Subsequently, participants completed a measure of in-group identification, which was followed by the status prime and the framing manipulation. Lastly, they completed questions about their emotions and about aggressive tendencies towards the unrelated out-group. Completing the questionnaire took participants about 11 minutes on average.

Design and Materials

We used a 2 (Status Prime: High vs. Neutral) x 2 (Emotion Framing: Humiliation vs. Loss) between subjects design. To prime status, we presented four statements to participants which either emphasized the strong and powerful nature of the U.S. and Americans (High status condition: "The United States is home to some of the world's leading businesses," "Americans are among the most inventive people in the world," "The United States is one of the leading democracies in the world," "The Unites States has one of the biggest economies in the world") or were neutral (Neutral status condition: "The United States is part of the continent of North America," "The United States is bordered by Canada to the north and Mexico to the south," "The United States has 50 states," "Basketball and baseball are two of the most popular sports in the United States"). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with these statements by clicking "yes" or "no." In addition, they were requested to: "Please describe in a few words why the U.S. is one of the best and most esteemed countries in the world" (High status), Or: "Please name 10 states that belong to the United States of America" (Neutral status).

To manipulate the Emotion Framing of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, we asked participants to read a short text placing the withdrawal in the historical context of 9/11 and its aftermath. Next we told them that they would read some of the headlines from newspaper articles and columns that they may have come across

when reading on this topic. We varied the content of the text and headlines to be either framed as humiliating (Example of headline: "The Afghanistan exit will humiliate the United States more than Vietnam") or in terms of loss (e.g., "The Afghanistan exit will affect the United States more than Vietnam"; see Appendix A for the full text and headlines). Importantly, all the humiliating headlines that we used were selected from real (online) sources (see Appendix A). In the control condition, the humiliation-phrases or words were either left out or replaced by the terms: "loss" or "defeat."

Measures

Unless mentioned otherwise, all items were answered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at* all) to 7 (*very strongly*).

In-group identification. This construct was measured to inspect its relations with the other variables and to make participants' national identity salient (see for example Doosje et al., 2006). We used four items from Doosje, Ellemers, and Spears (1995), for example: "I identify with other Americans". Items were answered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*) (Cronbach's α = .92).

Emotions. Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they feel several emotions when they think about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. For humiliation we selected six items of Hartling and Luchetta's (1999) *Humiliation Inventory* based on their appropriateness to the topic (i.e., "discounted," "laughed at," "powerless," "put down," "ridiculed," "scorned"). We added the explicit emotion label "humiliated" to this scale (Cronbach's α = .95). We also measured shame and anger and selected items for these emotions from Roseman, Wiest, and Swartz (1994), R. H. Smith, Webster, Parrott, and Eyre (2002), and Spielberger, Jacobs, Russell, and Crane (1983). Three items measured shame (i.e., "ashamed,"

"embarrassed," "small"; Cronbach's α = .85) and three items measured anger (i.e., "angry," "irritated," "resentful"; Cronbach's α = .90).[27]

Aggressive tendencies. The following text was used to introduce another group to participants: "Even though the U.S. is retreating from Afghanistan, tensions in the Middle East are far from over. For example, in Syria civilians were recently attacked with chemical weapons." We used this example because it was very relevant at the time of the study and Syria was considered a threat to the West and the United States. At the same time, it was rather unrelated to the withdrawal from Afghanistan.[28]

Aggression: Endorsement. We constructed 11 items starting with the text: "Thinking of the chemical weapon attacks in Syria, to what extent do you think that the U.S. should consider each of the following actions:" The items were: "taking military action," "instituting capital punishment for the attackers," "starting peace talks with the Syrian government" (reverse scored), "launching a dirty war," "initiating a military invasion," "conducting air strikes," "deploying ground forces," "exploring every possibility for a diplomatic solution" (reverse scored), "launching missiles," "using the most sophisticated weapons possible to fight the attackers," "ask other countries to launch a military intervention."

Aggression: Support. We constructed a second measure (consisting of 8 items) asking participants how strongly they would support the following positions "if there were a U.S. response to the attack in Syria": "adhering to international conventions" (reverse scored), "punishing those who are responsible for the chemical

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[27] In addition, one control item measured "indifference" about the withdrawal in all studies. For Study 4.1, mean scores lay between 2.45 and 3.13 (on the same 7-point scale as the emotions). There was no effect of Status Prime or Emotion Framing on this item. For Study 4.2, means lay between 3.13 and 4.03. There was a trend for Emotion Framing (p = .09) indicating somewhat stronger reports on indifference in the Unfortunate Framing condition than in the Humiliating Framing condition. For Study 4.3, means lay between 3.17 and 3.98 and there was a trend for Emotion Framing: Scores were somewhat higher in the humiliating framing condition than in the other conditions.

[28] To check this, we asked participants how similar they thought the war in Syria was to the war in Afghanistan. Answers ranged from 1 (*not similar at all*) to 7 (*very similar*). The mean score on this question was 3.20 (SD = 1.73). Thus, although participants considered these two wars to be somewhat similar, we still concluded that both conflict situations were generally perceived as different from each other.

attacks," "ensuring that aggressors face harsh punishment," "avoiding the use of violence" (reverse scored), "showing the perpetrators how strong and powerful the US really is," "engaging in acts of retaliation," "punishing the Assad regime," "handing Assad over to the International Criminal Court." We created a composite scale of the aggression endorsement and support items together which we called "aggressive tendencies." The reliability of this scale was good (Cronbach's α = .90).[29]

Results

Main Analyses

Status prime and emotion framing. To investigate whether Emotion Framing and Status Prime had an effect on reported emotions,[30] we performed a MANOVA with Emotion Framing (Humiliating vs. Loss) and Status Prime (High vs. Neutral) as factors and humiliation, shame, and anger as dependent variables. Unexpectedly, there was no overall main effect of Emotion Framing: $F(3, 197) = 0.73$, $p = .534$, $\eta_P^2 = .011$, or Status Prime: $F(3, 197) = 0.95$, $p = .420$, $\eta_P^2 = .014$, and there was no interaction, $F(3, 197) = 1.87$, $p = .136$, $\eta_P^2 = .028$. In addition, there were no univariate effects on each of the separate emotions. For means and standard deviations see Table 4.1.

An ANOVA was performed with Status Prime (High vs. Neutral) and Emotion Framing (Humiliating vs. Loss) as factors and aggressive tendencies towards Syria as dependent variable. Unexpectedly, there was no effect of Status

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[29] We also used the item: "do nothing" in all studies. There were no effects on this measure. Furthermore, in all studies, we asked participants to indicate what proportion of the military budget they would want the U.S. to spend "if there were a U.S. military invasion of Syria." They could indicate this on a scale ranging from 0% to 100%. There were no effects on this measure, but it was positively related to emotions, aggressive tendencies, in-group identification, attachment, glorification, and hate (See Study 4.2 and Study 4.3 for explanation about these latter three variables).

[30] We did not include a manipulation check for status. Such a check is problematic because any question related to status asked *before* our measures of emotions and action tendencies would also prime participants in the neutral status condition. A solution is to include a manipulation check at the end of the questionnaire. In the current studies we chose not to do this because after the other measures (notably aggressive tendencies) we did not expect there would still be a difference between participants who were (subtly) primed with high or neutral status. However, we did check if there were differences depending on Status Prime on a more "hidden" item in the aggressive tendencies scale, namely whether people would support "showing the perpetrators how strong and powerful the US really is" if there were an attack against Syria. There was no difference between participants primed with high or neutral status (Study 4.1: $p = .78$), or participants primed with high or neutral status or without a status prime (Study 4.2: $p = .79$) on this item, suggesting that our status prime did not work.

Prime: $F(1, 199) = 1.68$, $p = .196$, $\eta_P^2 = .008$, or Emotion Framing: $F(1, 199) = 0.12$, $p = .726$, $\eta_P^2 = .001$, and there was no interaction $F(1, 199) = 0.03$, $p = .871$, $\eta_P^2 = .000$. For means and standard deviations see Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Means and Standard Deviations for Humiliation, Shame, Anger, and Aggressive Tendencies by Emotion Framing (Humiliating versus Loss) and Status Prime (High versus Neutral), Study 4.1

	Humiliating Framing		Loss Framing	
	High Status	Neutral Status	High Status	Neutral Status
	M (SD)	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*
Humiliation	2.09 (1.34)	2.03 (1.41)	2.22 (1.54)	1.80 (1.12)
Shame	2.04 (1.30)	2.10 (1.49)	2.32 (1.51)	1.78 (1.07)
Anger	2.27 (1.55)	2.00 (1.35)	2.42 (1.57)	2.03 (1.30)
Aggression	3.15 (1.18)	2.97 (1.05)	3.12 (1.11)	2.90 (0.99)

Note. There are no significant differences between the means in one row.

Correlations. Table 4.2 shows the correlations between reported emotions about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, aggressive tendencies towards Syria, and in-group identification. As shown, reported humiliation, shame, and anger about the withdrawal were highly related. Furthermore, all three emotions were significantly related to reported aggressive tendencies. Thus, the more people reported to feel humiliated, ashamed, and angry about the withdrawal, the more they endorsed the use of aggression against Syria, and would support aggression in case the U.S. would attack Syria. Both reported humiliation and anger were positively related to in-group identification. Thus, the stronger people identified with Americans, the more they indicated to feel humiliated and angry about the withdrawal from Afghanistan. In-group identification was also positively related to aggressive tendencies, that is, the stronger people identified with Americans, the

more they endorsed the use of aggression against Syria, and would support

aggression in case the U.S. would attack Syria.

Table 4.2

*Descriptives and Correlations between reported Humiliation (1), Shame (2), and Anger (3)
about the U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan, Aggressive Tendencies against Syria (4), and
In-Group Identification (5), Study 4.1*

	M (SD)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Humiliation (1)	2.04 (1.37)	__				
Shame (2)	2.07 (1.37)	.88**	__			
Anger (3)	2.18 (1.45)	.88**	.83**	__		
Aggressive Tendencies (4)	3.04 (1.08)	.38**	.32**	.41**	__	
In-Group Identification (5)	5.27 (1.42)	.19*	.10	.19*	.36**	__

Note. *** $p < .001$. * $p < .01$. † $p < .06$.

Mediation of humiliation on aggressive tendencies. To test whether reported

group-based humiliation mediated the relationship between in-group identification

and aggressive tendencies, we used bootstrap analyses (Preacher & Hayes, 2004).

Based on 5000 bootstrapped samples, we found that the indirect (mediated) effect

was significant, as zero was not included in the 95% Bias Corrected confidence

intervals (lower CI = 0.01; upper CI = 0.09). However, the effect of in-group

identification on aggressive tendencies was still significant when humiliation was

taken into account. Thus, although the effect was small (i.e., a change in Beta-value

from .36 to .30) humiliation partially mediated the positive relationship between in-

group identification and aggressive tendencies (see Figure 4.1).

We also performed the same mediation-analysis with shame and anger instead of humiliation and found that shame was no significant mediator of the relationship between group identification and aggressive tendencies, but anger was. However, because of multicollinearity, we could not include both humiliation and anger in one model to test whether one of these emotions is responsible for the effect.
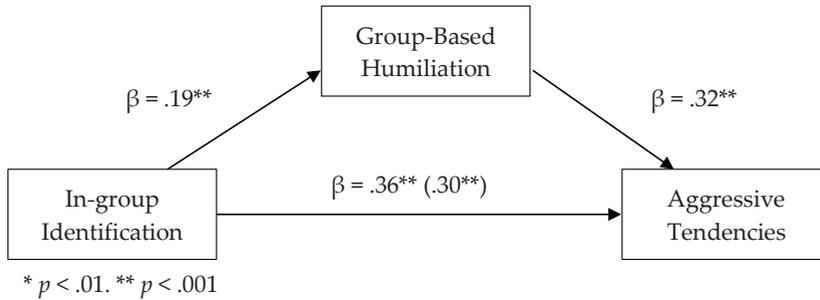
Figure 4.1. Partial mediation of the relation between In-Group Identification and Aggressive Tendencies by Group-Based Humiliation, Study 4.1

Discussion

Study 4.1 failed to confirm our prediction that framing a defeat in humiliating terms induced higher reports of humiliation and aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group than framing the defeat in terms of loss, in particular when people are primed with a high status of their in-group. Moreover, we did not find main effects of the emotion framing or status prime on any of the measures. This may indicate that our manipulation of emotion framing and group-status failed (see footnote 30 for an explanation of why adding a manipulation check for status was problematic in the current study).

With regard to emotion framing, a failed manipulation could be due to participants' lack of attention to the wording of the scenario, but this was difficult to check without disclosing our study goals. Therefore, we used a different framing manipulation in Study 4.2, which more clearly directs people's attention to the way

the group defeat is framed. Further, even when participants *did* perceive the humiliation words and phrases, the manipulation was still quite subtle, which could be a reason why it failed. In Study 4.2, we therefore also used a stronger manipulation. Possibly related to this point is that we found emotion reports to be quite low. This may indicate that participants did not feel strong emotions as a result of the withdrawal from Afghanistan; it was not relevant enough to touch upon their concerns. One reason for this may be that people do not categorize themselves in terms of their in-group or they do not identify strongly with that in-group. However, in the current study, in-group identification was quite strong and the event clearly concerned the in-group. Therefore, the event itself may simply have not elicited the expected emotions, or people underreported their emotions. In Study 4.2, we used an episode in American history that very clearly evoked strong emotions at the time it happened and that is still a very salient, painful part of history at present.

Nevertheless, we did find that humiliation, as well as shame and anger, about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan was related to higher reports of aggressive tendencies towards an out-group (Syria) that was unrelated to the conflict between the U.S. and Afghanistan. This is in line with findings by Jonas et al. (2016), but contradicts research by Ginges and Atran (2008), who showed an inertia effect as a result of reported humiliation (although these studies did not concern aggression against an *unrelated* out-group). Furthermore, in line with IET (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), we found that in-group identification was positively related to group-based humiliation and shame, as well as to aggressive tendencies towards the out-group. In addition, reported humiliation partially mediated the positive relation between in-group identification and aggressive tendencies. However, the indirect (mediated) effect was—although significant—quite small. This may be due to the general nature of the measure of in-group identification that we used. Although in-group identification is strongly related to group-based emotions such as anger and fear, its relation to humiliation may be more complicated. As discussed in the

General Introduction of this chapter, we argue that humiliation is more strongly felt by people and groups who feel threatened in their high self-regard. Thus, group-based humiliation may be felt especially strongly, and acted upon with more aggression, by people who have an inflated image of their group.

Relevant to this idea, research by Roccas et al. (2006) points to an important distinction between two dimensions of in-group (or national) identification that are related, but theoretically different, namely in-group attachment and in-group glorification. The first refers to emotional attachment to the group and a motivation to contribute to the group (Roccas et al., 2006), whereas the second refers to a view of the group as clearly superior to other groups, and thus has a comparative element. These modes of identification are found to be differentially related to certain group-based emotions. For example, guilt and shame about the in-groups' immoral behaviour are positively related to in-group attachment, but negatively to in-group glorification (Berndsen & Gausel, 2015; Roccas et al., 2006).

We think that this distinction between modes of identification is also relevant for group-based humiliation. As discussed in the General Introduction of this chapter, people who highly glorify their group may more easily feel humiliated and be more prone to react with aggression when humiliated. Thus, in Study 4.2 we examined whether in-group glorification is positively related to humiliation and aggression, whereas attachment is not. Lastly, as hate and contempt towards out-groups are often associated with intractable conflicts (e.g., Halperin, 2008; Tausch et al., 2011), and related to humiliation (Scheff, 2007), we also measured these emotions towards the out-group in order to explore whether they may explain a positive relation between humiliation and aggression.

Study 4.2

In Study 4.2 we chose a different, stronger example of an (historical) episode that evoked feelings of group-based humiliation (e.g., Klein, 1991), namely the U.S.

involvement in the Vietnam War (1955-1975), ending with the gradual withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Vietnam. In addition, we used a stronger framing manipulation in Study 4.2. Rather than merely reading a description of an episode, we asked participants to read a text about the withdrawal from Vietnam and then to write about it, focusing either on the humiliating aspect of the withdrawal (Humiliating condition) or—more neutrally—on its unfortunate character (Unfortunate condition). Furthermore, as we did not find an effect of status manipulation in Study 4.1, we used a more elaborated status prime. Possibly, the neutral status prime also induced slightly stronger feelings of in-group-status. For ethical reasons, however, we could not use a low status prime, and therefore we added a condition in which people were *not* primed in addition to the neutral prime condition. We expected that participants who wrote about the humiliating withdrawal from Vietnam would report more humiliation and aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group than participants who wrote about the unfortunate withdrawal from Vietnam, in particular when they were primed with a high group-status.

We also measured U.S. in-group glorification and attachment (Roccas et al., 2006) and hate and contempt towards the out-group. We expected that glorification of the in-group, and not attachment to the in-group, would predict group-based humiliation and, in turn, aggressive tendencies. We explored the role of out-group hate and contempt in this context and examined whether these emotions play a role in explaining the potential relation between humiliation and aggressive tendencies. We used structural equation modelling to test this proposed model.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 203 people living in the United States. We discarded data of one participant because this person did not answer the questions in a serious manner. Thus, a sample of 202 participants remained (83 female). They ranged in age

from 18 to 73 years (M = 31.66, SD = 11.38). They were again recruited via the Amazon-website Mechanical Turk and were paid .50 dollars for their participation.

Participants opened the link to the study called "What is your perception of U.S. history and politics?" and wrote a short text about themselves, which was inspected for language, clarity, and serious participation. On the basis of these stories, we excluded data of one person (see above). After this, participants completed a measure of in-group attachment and glorification, which was followed by the status prime and the framing manipulation. Next, they completed questions about their emotions and about aggressive tendencies towards the out-group. Completing the questionnaire took participants about 14 minutes on average.

Design and Materials

We used a 3 (Status Prime: High vs. Neutral vs. No prime) x 2 (Emotion Framing: Humiliation vs. Unfortunate) between subjects design. To prime status, participants were first asked to indicate their agreement with the same high- and neutral status statements as in Study 4.1. After this, participants in the high status prime condition were asked to: "Please describe in a few words why people may consider the United States of America as one of the best and most esteemed countries in the world." We added "people may consider" in this sentence used in Study 4.1 because some participants had indicated that they felt the question in Study 4.1 was leading. Participants in the neutral status prime condition were asked to answer the same question as in Study 4.1 (i.e., "Please name 10 states that belong to the United States of America"). Participants in the no status prime condition did not answer any questions.

The framing manipulation consisted of a short text about the Vietnam War from 1955 to 1975 and the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. This text was the same in both framing conditions (see Appendix B for the full text). After participants read the text, we asked them to give a detailed description of how and why they think the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam was seen by people as *humiliating* (Humiliating

framing condition) or as *unfortunate* (Unfortunate framing condition) for the United States.

Measures

Unless mentioned otherwise, all items were answered on 7-point scales that ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very strongly*).

In-group attachment and glorification. We used Roccas et al.'s (2006) scales of attachment to the national group (e.g., "Being an American is an important part of my identity," "It is important to me to contribute to my nation") and glorification of the national group (e.g., "Other nations can learn a lot from us," "The United States is better than other nations in all respects"). Both scales consist of eight items that were answered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*) (Cronbach's α was .93 for attachment and .88 for glorification; the scales correlated strongly: $r = .79$, $p < .001$).

Emotions. Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they feel several emotions when they think about the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. The same items as used in Study 4.1 were used to measure humiliation (Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$), shame (Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$), and anger (Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$).

Aggressive tendencies. The following text was used to introduce another—unrelated—group to participants: "Although the Vietnam War is some time ago, the U.S. is still involved in conflicts around the world. For example, the U.S. is considering intervening in Syria, where civilians were recently attacked with chemical weapons." After this description we used the same measures as in Study 4.1 for aggression endorsement and support and created a composite scale of these items together (Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$).

Emotions towards the Syrian government. Two items measured the extent to which participants felt hate and contempt when they think about the Syrian Government.[31]

Involvement in the Vietnam War. We checked whether participants had been personally or indirectly involved in the Vietnam War by asking the following questions: Were you involved in the Vietnam War? ("yes"/"no"; personal involvement). If yes, in what way? (Open ended). Do you have family or friends who were involved in the Vietnam War? ("yes"/"no"; indirect involvement). If yes, in what way? (Open ended).[32]

Results

Involvement in the Vietnam War

Of the sample, only two people (1%) had been personally involved in the Vietnam War. Sixty-one people (30.2%) had family or friends who had been involved in the Vietnam War. Controlling for these measures had no effect on the results, therefore we kept all participants in the sample.

Main Analyses

Status prime and emotion framing. We performed a MANOVA with Emotion Framing (Humiliating vs. Unfortunate) and Status Prime (High vs. Neutral vs. No

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[31] We also measured whether participants felt indifference and warmth towards the Syrian government (in both Studies 4.2 and 4.3). We used these items because we did not want to create the impression that the scale was leading, by only focusing on negative emotions (hate and contempt). We did not have specific expectations about effects on these measures. Indifference was negatively related to hate (Study 4.2: $r = -.21$, $p = .002$; Study 4.3: $r = -.26$, $p = .001$) and contempt (Study 4.2: $r = -.37$, $p < .001$; Study 4.3: $r = -.38$, $p < .001$) and positively to warmth (Study 4.2: $r = .26$, $p < .001$; Study 4.3: $r = .21$, $p = .008$). Warmth was unrelated to the other measures in both studies.

[32] In both Study 4.2 and Study 4.3 we also included the questions: "How knowledgeable are you of the Vietnam War?" and: "How knowledgeable are you of the Syrian conflict?" Both were answered on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*). In addition we asked "How prepared are you for American soldiers dying in Syria?", answered on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). Statistics for knowledge about the Vietnam War were: $M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.55$ (Study 4.2) and $M = 4.18$, $SD = 1.42$ (Study 4.3). Statistics for knowledge about the Syrian conflict were: $M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.57$ (Study 4.2) and $M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.48$ (Study 4.3). People were generally not very prepared for American soldiers dying in Syria (Study 4.2: $M = 2.10$, $SD = 1.65$), (Study 4.3: $M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.72$). Preparedness was positively related to aggressive tendencies in Study 4.2 ($r = .37$, $p < .001$) and Study 4.3 ($r = .45$, $p < .001$).

prime) as factors and humiliation, shame, and anger as dependent variables. As in Study 4.1, there were no overall main effects for Emotion Framing: $F(3, 194) = 0.23$, $p = .878$, $\eta_P^2 = .003$, nor for Status Prime: $F(6, 390) = 0.72$, $p = .632$, $\eta_P^2 = .011$, and there was no interaction, $F(6, 390) = 0.02$, $p = .684$, $\eta_P^2 = .010$. There were also no univariate effects on each of the separate emotions. For means and standard deviations see Table 4.3.

An ANOVA was performed with Emotion Framing (Humiliating vs. Unfortunate) and Status Prime (High vs. Neutral vs. No prime) as factors and aggressive tendencies towards Syria as dependent variable. Again, there was no effect of Status Prime: $F(2, 196) = 0.21$, $p = .815$, $\eta_P^2 = .002$, and Emotion Framing: $F(1, 196) = 0.26$, $p = .609$, $\eta_P^2 = .001$, and there was no interaction, $F(2, 196) = 0.04$, $p = .965$, $\eta_P^2 = .000$. For means and standard deviations see Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Means and Standard Deviations for Humiliation, Shame, Anger, and Aggressive Tendencies by Emotion Framing (Humiliating versus Loss) and Status Prime (High versus Neutral versus No Prime), Study 4.2

	Humiliating Framing			Loss Framing		
	High Status	Neutral Status	No Status Prime	High Status	Neutral Status	No Status Prime
	M (SD)	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*
Humiliation	2.49 (1.64)	2.49 (1.22)	2.36 (1.41)	2.23 (1.29)	2.56 (1.31)	2.49 (1.60)
Shame	2.70 (1.56)	2.92 (1.45)	2.58 (1.48)	2.57 (1.42)	3.03 (1.65)	2.79 (1.66)
Anger	2.94 (1.48)	2.82 (1.56)	2.38 (1.40)	2.39 (1.31)	2.89 (1.69)	2.72 (1.86)
Aggressive Tendencies	2.94 (1.07)	2.98 (1.11)	2.83 (1.04)	3.02 (0.80)	3.00 (0.92)	2.95 (1.05)

Note. There are no significant differences between the means in one row.

Relations between modes of identification, group-based humiliation, out-group hate and contempt, and aggressive tendencies. Table 4.4 shows the zero-order correlations between reported emotions about the withdrawal from Vietnam, aggressive tendencies towards Syria, in-group attachment and glorification, and contempt and hate towards the Syrian government.

In line with Study 4.1, reported humiliation, shame, and anger about the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam were strongly related. All emotions were positively related to aggressive tendencies. Thus, the more people indicated to feel humiliated, ashamed, and angry about the withdrawal from Vietnam, the more they endorsed the use of aggression against Syria and would support aggression in case the U.S. attacked Syria. Furthermore, in-group attachment and glorification were positively related to the emotions and to the aggressive tendencies. Thus, the stronger people indicated to feel attached to the U.S. and glorified the U.S., the more they reported humiliation, shame, and anger about the withdrawal from Vietnam, and the more aggressive tendencies they reported against Syria. In addition, emotions about the withdrawal from Vietnam were positively related to both contempt and hate towards the Syrian government, and in-group glorification was positively related to hate towards the Syrian government. Lastly, contempt and hate towards the Syrian government were positively related to aggressive tendencies towards Syria.

Chapter 4

Table 4.4
*Descriptives and Correlations between reported Humiliation (1), Shame (2), and Anger (3)
about the U.S. Withdrawal from Vietnam, Aggressive Tendencies against Syria (4), In-group
Attachment (5), In-group Glorification (6), and Contempt (7) and Hate (8) towards the
Syrian government, Study 4.2*

	M (SD)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Humiliation (1)	2.44 (1.40)	—							
Shame (2)	2.77 (1.53)	.84***	—						
Anger (3)	2.69 (1.56)	.79***	.77***	—					
Aggressive Tendencies (4)	2.96 (1.00)	.35***	.30***	.24**	—				
In-Group Attachment (5)	4.54 (1.43)	.32***	.33***	.35***	.39***	—			
In-Group Glorification (6)	3.58 (1.25)	.34***	.30***	.30***	.51***	.79***	—		
Contempt (7)	4.12 (2.01)	.16*	.18*	.13†	.23**	.10	.05	—	
Hate (8)	3.25 (1.94)	.25***	.21**	.16*	.35***	.08	.16*	.60***	—

Note. *** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$. † $p < .08$.

We used Structural Equation Modelling (SEM; EQS 6.1 software, Bentler, 1995)
to test our proposed model involving the relationships between different modes of
in-group identification, group-based humiliation, out-group emotions, and
aggressive tendencies. We allowed the predictors and the residuals of out-group
emotions to correlate. First, we inspected a fully saturated model. Wald tests
suggested removing the paths from in-group attachment to humiliation, contempt
and aggressive tendencies. The fit further improved when we removed the path from
in-group glorification to contempt and the path from contempt to aggressive
tendencies. The resulting model fitted the data well: χ^2 (5) = 4.261, p = .512, CFI =
1.000, NFI = .990, GFI = .993, SRMR = .022, RMSEA = .000, and is depicted in Figure
4.2.

In line with our predictions, in-group glorification (controlled for attachment) positively predicted humiliation, whereas in-group attachment (controlled for glorification) did not. In-group glorification further predicted hate, and this relation was partially mediated by humiliation. In contrast, there was a *negative* relation between in-group attachment and hate, indicating a suppression effect (as the zero-order correlation between these variables was positive). Humiliation predicted aggressive tendencies directly and also via out-group hate, but not via contempt, which was unrelated to aggressive tendencies. Furthermore, glorification, but not attachment, predicted aggressive tendencies directly, but also via humiliation and hate. Thus, group-based humiliation and out-group hate partially mediated the relationship between glorification and aggressive tendencies.
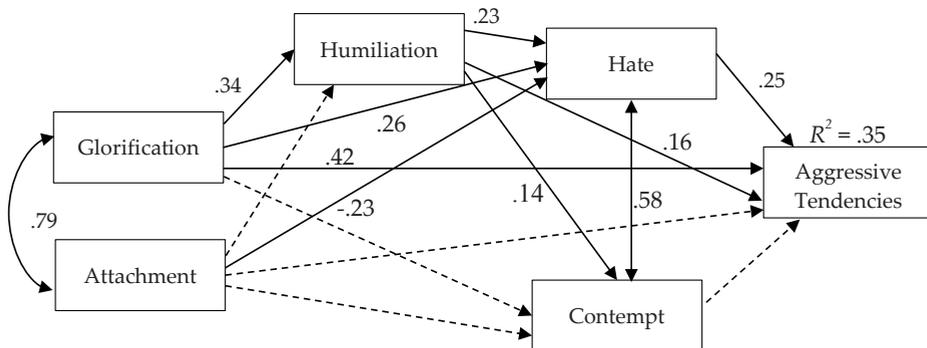
Figure 4.2. Structural model of the relationship between Modes of Identification, Group-Based Humiliation, Out-Group Emotions, and Aggressive Tendencies. Standardised parameter estimates are shown, Study 4.2. Note: Solid lines indicate statistically significant paths ($p < .05$). Dashed lines represent non-significant paths.

Alternative models. To rule out different explanations of our proposed model it is important to also test alternative models. We therefore tested the same model with different (although strongly related) group-based emotions, namely shame and anger about the withdrawal from Vietnam, and we tested the same model without the (group-based) emotion (i.e., humiliation, shame, or anger), see Table 4.5 for the results. Although the values of χ^2 from two models can be compared, it is not

possible to test differences between these values. However, the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), a predictive fit index, can be used to select from a set of competing models, the model that is most likely to replicate (Kline, 2011). The model with the lowest AIC value is preferred over the other models. As can be seen in Table 4.5, our proposed model including humiliation has a lower AIC value (−5.739) than the model including shame (−2.990), anger (.494), or no emotion (-4.349). Although the differences are not very large, our proposed model is thus preferred over the other models.

Table 4.5

Values of Selected Fit Statistics for the Proposed Structural Model and three Alternative Models, Study 4.2

	Model			
Index	Model 1: Humiliation	Model 2: Shame	Model 3: Anger	Model 4: No Emotion
χ^2	4.261	7.010	10.494	3.651
Df	5	5	5	4
P	.512	.220	.062	.455
CFI	1.000	.995	.986	1.000
NFI	.990	.983	.974	.990
GFI	.993	.989	.983	.993
SRMR	.022	.028	.035	.039
RMSEA (90% CI)	.000 (.000, .090)	.045 (.000, .114)	.074 (.000, .137)	.000 (.000, .102)
AIC	−5.739	−2.99	0.494	-4.349
R^2	.348	.342	.334	.325

Note. CI = confidence interval.

Discussion

In line with findings from Study 4.1, Study 4.2 showed that reported humiliation, shame, and anger about the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam were positively related to aggressive tendencies towards Syria. Again, the out-group, Syria, is distant from the group that evoked the humiliating episode, in this study the

Vietnamese. This is not only the case in terms of relatedness (Vietnam and Syria have very different cultures), but also in terms of time, as the Vietnam War ended almost 40 years ago, whereas the conflict in Syria was ongoing during the time of the study. This strengthens the idea that experienced humiliation about a defeat in the past can be related to aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group in the present.

Study 4.2 was also aimed at improving our operationalization of emotion framing. However, these changes did not result in effects of this manipulation on reported emotions or aggressive tendencies. In Study 4.3, we therefore again changed our framing manipulation. We now included questions about the text that participants had to answer before they continued, in order to increase their attention to the specific wording of the text. We also included a neutral condition to the unfortunate and humiliating framing conditions.

Although, again, our status prime did not cause the predicted effect, a more stable measure of perceived group-status, in-group glorification, did show interesting results. Our model testing indicated that only glorification (when attachment was controlled for) was positively related to humiliation, whereas attachment (with glorification controlled) was unrelated to humiliation, instead of positively as indicated by the zero-order correlations. In-group glorification was positively related to aggressive tendencies and this relation was partially mediated by reported humiliation and out-group hate. Interestingly, the positive relation between humiliation and aggressive tendencies was partially mediated by hate, but not by contempt. We further showed that our proposed model including group-based humiliation was preferred over models including other, related group-based emotions and a model without (in-group) emotions.

Study 4.3

In Study 4.3, we no longer used the status manipulation, but focused on the more stable measures of in-group glorification and attachment, and on emotion

framing. We used three framing conditions: a humiliating framing, an unfortunate framing, and a neutral framing condition. As the Vietnam War had a great impact on American collective identity, we wanted to keep this as the target-episode in the framing manipulation. We, again, wrote a text about the withdrawal, but we asked participants to read the text and answer some specific questions about it, instead of writing a story. We expected participants who read and responded to questions about the humiliating text to report more group-based humiliation and more aggressive tendencies toward the out-group than participants who read and responded to questions about the unfortunate or neutral texts. Furthermore, we aimed to replicate the findings with regard to the relation between modes of in-group identification, group-based humiliation, out-group hate and contempt, and aggressive tendencies. We used Structural Equation Modelling to test the same model as in Study 4.2.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 155 people living in the United States, again recruited via Mechanical Turk. We discarded data of two participants because they did not answer the questions in a serious manner. Thus, a sample of 153 participants remained (62 female), ranging in age from 18 to 71 years ($M = 33.78$, $SD = 12.44$). They were paid 0.50 dollars for their participation.

As in Study 4.2, participants opened the link to the study called "What is your perception of U.S. history and politics?" and wrote a short text about themselves which was inspected for language, clarity, and serious participation. On the basis of these stories and other checks (e.g., time participant spent answering the questionnaire), we excluded data of two people (see above). After this, participants completed the measures of in-group attachment and glorification, read the framing manipulation and completed questions about their emotions and about aggressive

tendencies towards the out-group. Completing the questionnaire took participants about 12 minutes on average.

Design and Materials

We used three Framing conditions (Humiliation Framing vs. Unfortunate Framing vs. Neutral Framing) that we tested between subjects. For all conditions we rewrote the text used in Study 4.2. The Humiliating framing condition consisted of a short description about the Vietnam War and the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. It was described in humiliating terms and was entitled: "A modern story of David and Goliath." In the Unfortunate framing condition this text was framed in terms of loss. The title was "A modern story of horses for courses." In the neutral condition only a very factual description was presented entitled "A story from modern history." After participants read the text, we asked them some questions about it to enhance the manipulation and check whether they had read the story carefully (see Appendix C for the full texts and questions in all conditions).

Measures

Unless mentioned otherwise, all items were answered on 7-point scales that ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very strongly*).

In-group attachment and glorification. We used the same scales for these constructs as in Study 4.2 (Cronbach's α = .94 for attachment and .90 for glorification; the correlation between the two variables was strong: r = .78, p < .001).

Emotions. As in Study 4.2, participants were asked to indicate to what extent they feel several emotions when they think about the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. The same items as used in Study 4.1 and Study 4.2 were used to measure humiliation (Cronbach's α = .94), shame (Cronbach's α = .83), and anger (Cronbach's α = .81).

Aggressive tendencies. The same text as used in Study 4.2 and items as used in Study 4.1 and 4.2 were used to measure aggressive tendencies. We again created a composite scale of the endorsement- and support-items together (Cronbach's α = .88).

Emotions towards the Syrian government. The same two items as in Study 4.2 measured the extent to which participants felt hate and contempt when they think about the Syrian Government.

Involvement in the Vietnam War. We used the same checks as in Study 4.2 for personal and indirect involvement in the Vietnam War.

Results

Involvement in the Vietnam War

Of this sample, three people (2%) had been personally involved in the Vietnam War and 46 people (30.1%) had family or friends who were involved in this war. Again, controlling for these measures did not change the results, thus we kept all participants in the sample.

Check

Of the sample, 11 participants (16.83 %) made one mistake in one of the three check questions after reading the framing manipulations. Removing the data of these people had no influence on the results, therefore we kept the data of these participants in the sample.

Main Analyses

Emotion framing. We performed a MANOVA with Framing (Humiliating vs. Unfortunate vs. Neutral) as factor and humiliation, shame, and anger as dependent variables. There was an overall main effect, $F(6, 29) = 2.84$, $p = .010$, $\eta_P^2 = .054$, which was significant for humiliation, $F(2, 150) = 6.57$, $p = .002$, $\eta_P^2 = .081$, shame, $F(2, 150) = 7.05$, $p = .001$, $\eta_P^2 = .086$, and anger, $F(2, 150) = 3.36$, $p = .037$, $\eta_P^2 = .043$. Simple contrasts showed that for humiliation, means were higher in the Humiliating framing condition ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.50$) than in the Unfortunate ($M = 2.01$, $SD = 1.07$) and Neutral ($M = 1. 97$, $SD = 1.14$) framing conditions ($p = .003$ and $p = .002$ respectively). For shame, means were also higher in the Humiliating framing

condition ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.60$) than in the Unfortunate ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.14$) and Neutral ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.34$) framing conditions ($p = .001$ and $p = .003$ respectively) and for anger means were marginally higher in the Humiliating framing condition ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.46$) than in the Unfortunate condition ($M = 2.14$, $SD = 1.20$, $p = .063$) and significantly higher in the Humiliating framing condition than in the Neutral framing condition ($M = 1.98$, $SD = 1.16$, $p = .014$). For all three emotions, the Unfortunate and Neutral conditions did not differ significantly (all p's $\geq .527$).

An ANOVA was performed with Framing (Humiliating vs. Unfortunate vs. Neutral) as factor and the aggressive tendencies as dependent variable ($M_{Humiliating} = 3.09$, $SD = 1.00$; $M_{Unfortunate} = 2.86$, $SD = 0.88$; $M_{Neutral} = 2.91$, $SD = 1.04$). There was no effect, $F(2, 150) = 0.82$, $p = .442$, $\eta_p^2 = .011$.

Relations between modes of identification, group-based humiliation, out-group hate and contempt, and aggressive tendencies. Table 4.6 shows the zero-order correlations between reported emotions about the withdrawal from Vietnam, aggressive tendencies towards Syria, in-group attachment and glorification, and contempt and hate towards the Syrian government.

As in Study 4.2, reported humiliation, shame, and anger about the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam were strongly related. In addition, all emotions were positively related to the aggressive tendencies. Thus, the more people indicated to feel humiliated, ashamed, and angry about the withdrawal from Vietnam, the more they endorsed the use of aggression against Syria and would support aggression in case the U.S. attacked Syria. Furthermore, in-group attachment and glorification were positively related to these emotions and aggressive tendencies. Thus, the stronger people indicated to feel attached to the U.S. and glorified the U.S., the more they reported humiliation, shame, and anger about the withdrawal from Vietnam, and the more aggressive tendencies they reported against Syria. Furthermore, emotions about Vietnam and aggressive tendencies towards Syria were positively related to both contempt and hate towards the Syrian government. In-group

glorification was also positively related to contempt and hate, and in-group attachment was positively related to hate, but unrelated to contempt.

Table 4.6
Descriptives and Correlations between reported Humiliation (1), Shame (2), and Anger (3) about the U.S. Withdrawal from Vietnam, Aggressive Tendencies against Syria (4), In-group Attachment (5), In-group Glorification (6), and Contempt (7) and Hate (8) towards the Syrian government, Study 4.3

	M (SD)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Humiliation (1)	2.25 (1.29)	__							
Shame (2)	2.49 (1.42)	.89***	__						
Anger (3)	2.25 (1.30)	.83***	.78***	__					
Aggressive Tendencies (4)	2.95 (0.98)	.26**	.23**	.19*	__				
In-Group Attachment (5)	4.62 (1.43)	.27**	.20*	.23**	.34***	__			
In-Group Glorification (6)	3.64 (1.37)	.30***	.22**	.22**	.47***	.78***	__		
Contempt (7)	3.77 (2.11)	.24**	.20*	.27**	.27**	.12	.17*	__	
Hate (8)	3.25 (1.94)	.28**	.22**	.18*	.45***	.23**	.34***	.61***	__

Note. *** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

We used SEM to test the same model as in Study 4.2. We allowed the predictors and the residuals of out-group emotions to correlate. Even though we were interested in whether we could replicate the model from Study 4.2, in order to keep the same analytical strategy as in Study 4.2, we again started out by inspecting a fully saturated model. Wald tests suggested removing the paths from in-group attachment to humiliation, contempt, hate, and aggressive tendencies. The fit further improved when we removed the paths from glorification to contempt and contempt to aggressive tendencies and from humiliation to aggressive tendencies. The resulting model had an excellent fit: χ^2 (7) = 4.469, p = .724, CFI = 1.000, NFI = .986,

GFI = .990, SRMR = .035, RMSEA = .000, and is depicted in Figure 4.3.

Replicating the findings of Study 4.2, in-group glorification predicted humiliation, whereas in-group attachment—contrary to what the zero-order correlation indicated—did not. There was also a positive relation between glorification and hate, which was partially mediated by humiliation. Humiliation, in turn, predicted aggressive tendencies via out-group hate, but not directly. Thus, in the current Study, out-group hate fully mediated the relationship between humiliation and aggressive tendencies. As in Study 4.2, there was a direct significant path from glorification to aggressive tendencies, but also an indirect relation between these variables via humiliation and out-group hate. Again, contempt towards the out-group played no role with regard to aggressive tendencies, although it was positively related to humiliation and hate. Attachment was unrelated to all other outcome variables.

Alternative models. Again we tested three alternative models, one with shame, one with anger and one without the (group-based) emotions (see Table 4.7 for the results). Replicating the results of Study 4.2, our proposed model including humiliation has a lower AIC value (−9.531) than the model including shame (−7.978), anger (−8.675), or no emotion (-4.564). Thus—although the differences are again not very large—our proposed model is preferred over the other models.

Figure 4.3. Structural model of the relationship between Modes of Identification, Group-Based Humiliation, Out-Group Emotions, and Aggressive Tendencies. Standardised parameter estimates are shown, Study 4.3. Note: Solid lines indicate statistically significant paths ($p < .05$). Dashed lines represent non-significant paths.

Table 4.7

Values of Selected Fit Statistics for the Proposed Structural Model and three Alternative Models, Study 4.3

	Model			
Index	Model 1: Humiliation	Model 2: Shame	Model 3: Anger	Model 4: No Emotion
χ^2	4.469	6.022	5.325	5.436
Df	7	7	7	5
P	.724	.537	.620	.365
CFI	1.000	1.000	1.000	.998
NFI	.986	.980	.983	.981
GFI	.990	.987	.989	.986
SRMR	.035	.046	.040	.067
RMSEA (90% CI)	.000 (.000, .073)	.000 (.000, 091)	.000 (.000, .084)	.024 (.000, .117)
AIC	−9.531	−7.978	−8.675	-4.564
R^2	.303	.300	.301	.294

Note. CI = confidence interval.

Discussion

Study 4.3 showed that when participants were forced to focus on the emotional framing of a group-defeat in a text by answering specific questions about the content of this text, the hypothesized effects of this framing appeared. Participants reported more group-based humiliation, shame, and anger after reading a text that is framed in humiliating terms than after reading a text that is framed in terms of loss, or after reading a neutral text. The emotion framing manipulation had no effect on aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group.

Replicating findings of Studies 4.1 and 4.2, we found that reported group-based humiliation, as well as anger and shame, were positively related to aggressive tendencies towards the out-group. Furthermore, our model testing largely replicated the patterns found in Study 4.2, providing evidence that it is the glorification of the in-group, not attachment to the in-group, which intensifies feelings of humiliation about an in-group defeat. This humiliation in turn, predicts—via out-group hate—aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group (although in-group glorification also predicts aggressive tendencies directly). In line with results of Study 4.2, once controlled for hate, contempt was not related to aggressive tendencies anymore. Again, our proposed model including group-based humiliation was preferred over models including other group-based emotions (shame and anger) and a model without in-group emotions.

General Discussion

In the current research, we investigated the relation between group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies towards an out-group in an intergroup context. We specifically focused on displaced aggression as a reaction to group-based humiliation, that is, aggression towards a group other than those involved in the humiliation evoking event. We also focused on the role of status in experiencing and

acting upon humiliation. Furthermore, we investigated relations between humiliation and different modes of in-group identification.

Results of all three studies indicated a positive relation between group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group. These results are in line with theories (e.g., Atran & Stern, 2005; Baumeister, 2002; Klein, 1991; Lickel, 2012; Lindner, 2002; Staub, 1989) and previous findings (e.g., Jonas et al., 2016) indicating that group-based humiliation causes intergroup aggression. They contradict other research (i.e., Ginges & Atran, 2008) showing an inertia effect of humiliation. Importantly, all of our studies included American participants, who may have more favourable, or even superior, views of their groups' status, and are generally from a more powerful group than Palestinians (who were the participants in Ginges and Atran's (2008) studies). This may explain an aggressive reaction to humiliation rather than a response of inertia. Of course, other (cultural) differences may also play a role here.

Another important difference between our studies and the research by Ginges and Atran (2008) is that we studied the reaction towards a group *other* than the one causing the humiliation, whereas they studied the reaction towards the humiliator. Moreover, in their case, the humiliator-group was the Israelis, which is exactly the group that Palestinians are in an unequal power-relation with. In such a situation, a reaction of inertia—a kind of learned helplessness—may be more likely. It would be interesting to see what Palestinians would (report to) do when the situation concerns another group with which they do not have a history of (unequal) power-relations. These issues should be addressed in future research to which we will come back later.

As would be predicted from IET (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), in-group identification was positively related to reported group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies, and reported humiliation partially mediated the relation between in-group identification and aggressive tendencies (Study 4.1). Priming

status did not affect the amount of humiliation, nor the amount of aggressive tendencies against the out-group that people reported. However, in Study 4.2 and Study 4.3 we replaced the general measure of in-group identification with measures of two different (but related) modes of identification, namely in-group glorification and in-group attachment (Roccas et al., 2006). In-group glorification may be regarded as a measure of perceived group-status, which is more stable and possibly stronger than a group status prime.

These measures showed results in line with our hypotheses. We found that only glorification (when attachment was controlled for) was positively related to humiliation, whereas attachment (with glorification controlled for) was unrelated to humiliation. Glorification predicted aggressive tendencies directly, but also via humiliation and out-group hate. This indicates that people who strongly glorify their in-group, and thus perceive their group as being of high status, seem to be more prone to feel humiliation about a past defeat of the group. In turn, they experience more hate against the out-group and may be more likely to react aggressively toward that out-group, even when that group is unrelated to the source of humiliation. Interestingly, when controlling for out-group hate, out-group contempt played no significant role with regard to aggressive tendencies. In contrast, research on collective action shows that contempt predicts non-normative collective action, such as violence (Tausch et al., 2011). The fact that we did not find this relation may be explained by our inclusion of out-group hate. That is, the link between contempt and aggression may be explained by hate towards the out-group. This is in line with Fischer and Giner-Sorolla's (2016) analysis that: "[…] contempt towards another group implies derogation or exclusion of that group, whereas hate calls for more direct and aggressive action" (p. 349).

Although the current research showed some interesting results, there are a few limitations. First, in Study 4.1 and Study 4.2 both our status prime and the framing manipulation failed to have effects. For both manipulations it is difficult to determine

whether they did not work or that they did work, but just did not have the hypothesized effect. Because we did find an effect of emotion framing in Study 4.3, we may tentatively conclude that this manipulation was not strong enough in the first two studies or did not stimulate participants enough to focus on the manipulation. However, further research should use the same manipulation to see whether the result in Study 4.3 replicates.

A second limitation of all three studies was that the correlations between reported group-based humiliation, shame and anger were very high. This possibly creates multicollinearity, which makes it impossible to investigate the effects of humiliation above and beyond shame and anger (although we could compare structural models with these emotions). This issue touches upon a broader question, namely whether humiliation—either interpersonal or at the group level—is a discrete emotion that is related to, but different from anger and shame, or whether it is a mixed emotion: a blend of anger and shame. Previous studies on humiliation that we have conducted on the interpersonal level also showed moderate to high correlations between these three emotions (Mann, Feddes, Leiser, et al., 2016). However, some other research shows relations between these three emotions to be somewhat lower (e.g., Fernández et al., 2015). It is important to find out whether there are contextual factors that cause variation in these relations.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

The current research is in line with the idea that humiliation plays an important role in intergroup conflict (e.g., Atran & Stern, 2005; Baumeister, 2002; Klein, 1991; Lickel, 2012; Lindner, 2002; Staub, 1989). People who glorify their in-group may be more prone to feeling humiliated when they are confronted with a defeat of their group, and they may react more aggressively to an out-group that is unrelated to the humiliating evoking episode.

Importantly, future research should focus on the effect of group-based humiliation on different groups, namely powerful versus powerless, or high- versus low-status groups. Such research should also compare the response to humiliation of these groups towards the humiliator-group with their response towards unrelated out-groups.

Another interesting option for future research would be to study the effect of group-based humiliation on different types of group members. For example, Ellemers and Jetten (2013) indicate that the behaviour of marginal group members is much more difficult to predict than the behaviour of core group members. In the case of humiliation of the in-group, one option is that marginal group members do not care as much as core group members and are not very motivated to respond (in particular when they are not highly identified with the group). However, as humiliation is such an extremely negative feeling, in some cases even marginal members may feel motivated to defend their group after being humiliated. This likely depends on the type of marginal group member (e.g., socializing marginal versus independent marginal). It would thus be interesting to learn whether there are specific humiliating events (e.g., when core group values are threatened) that touch upon some marginal group members' feelings in a similar way, or even stronger, than upon core group members.

In the current research we focused on one potential response to experienced group-based humiliation, namely aggressive tendencies. However, in an interpersonal context, it has been shown that the tendency to withdraw is also an important consequence of humiliation (e.g., Mann, Feddes, Doosje, & Fischer, 2015). As we studied the response towards a group other than the humiliator, it would be somewhat illogical to also focus on withdrawal tendencies towards this group. However, in future studies it may be interesting to see whether, in certain contexts, the humiliated group shows withdrawal tendencies toward the humiliator group, but (displaced) aggression towards another unrelated group.

The current research provides insight in the potential role of humiliation during intergroup conflict. Humiliation may be experienced more intensely and reacted upon with more aggression by people who highly glorify their in-group. Although theory already points in the direction of such associations (e.g., Lickel, 2012), the current research is the first that we know of to empirically show a link between collective feelings of superiority, experiences of humiliation and aggressive tendencies as a result of humiliation of the in-group. These findings strikingly cohere with observations of intergroup conflict situations. For example, many Germans who felt attracted to the Nazi party after the First World War had inflated ideas of Germany as a great and special nation and felt strongly humiliated as a result of the Versailles Treaty. In hindsight, it is often said that imposing this treaty on Germany was the most unproductive strategy the allied forces could have chosen. One of the reasons for the devastating consequences of this decision could be that humiliation in combination with strong feelings of in-group superiority is a particularly dangerous mix.

Appendix A

Framing manipulation (Humiliating versus Loss), Study 4.1.

In 2001, in response to the 9/11 attacks, the United States led 'Operation Enduring Freedom' in Afghanistan and other countries. After almost 10 years of fighting, in summer 2011, President Obama announced a gradual withdrawal of the troops from Afghanistan that would be completed in 2014. This withdrawal has been covered extensively in the media. A large number of commentators and journalists have argued that the withdrawal is humiliating *(Humiliating framing condition)*, a setback *(Loss framing condition)* for the United States.

If you click on the "next" button you find some of the headlines from newspaper articles and columns that you may have come across when reading on this topic. Please read each headline carefully, as afterwards we will ask you some detailed questions about them.

Headlines presented to participants in the humiliating framing condition:

1. *"U.S. defeat in Afghanistan coupled with humiliation in Libya and Iraq marks end of "Super Power" era."*
2. *"President Obama is allowing the heroic US Military – and, therefore, the American People – to be humiliated in Iraq and Afghanistan."*
3. *"The Afghanistan exit will humiliate the United States more than Vietnam."*
4. *"Afghanistan rejects talks with Taliban and the U.S. on brink of humiliating defeat in Afghanistan."*
5. *"Negotiating the terms of America's Humiliation."*
1. Source: http://www.islamtimes.org/vdciw3av.t1a5z2lict.html
2. Source: http://theatheistconservative.com/tag/obama-withdraws-us-troops-from-iraq-under-humiliating-conditions/#sthash.777fgVa7.dpuf
3. Source: http://www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread844254/pg1

4. Source: combination of: http://www.jammiewf.com/2013/another-obama-humiliation-afghanistan-rejects-talks-with-taliban-and-the-u-s/ and: http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/2012/03/19/us_on_brink_of_humiliating_defeat_in_afghanistan.html

5. Source: http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2013/06/negotiating-the-terms-of-americas-humiliation.php

Headlines presented to participants in the loss framing condition:

1. *"U.S. defeat in Afghanistan, Libya and Iraq marks end of era."*
2. *"President Obama is allowing the heroic US Military – and, therefore, the American People – to withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan."*
3. *"The Afghanistan exit will affect the United States more than Vietnam."*
4. *"Afghanistan Rejects Talks with Taliban and the U.S. on Brink of Defeat in Afghanistan."*
5. *"Negotiating the Terms of America's Withdrawal."*

Appendix B

Framing manipulation (Humiliating versus Unfortunate), Study 4.2.

The Vietnam War (1955-1975) has been an important episode in American history. U.S. involvement in the war was part of its 'containment' strategy, a fight against the spread of communism. This involvement was unsuccessful though. After 1968, U.S. ground forces gradually withdrew from Vietnam until U.S. involvement ended in 1973. This withdrawal had a significant impact on American politics in the years following and it triggered emotional reactions in politicians, opinion makers and the general public.

Many people thought the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam was <u>humiliating</u> *(Humiliating framing condition)*, <u>unfortunate</u> *(Unfortunate framing condition)*. We would

like you to give a detailed description of how and why you think this withdrawal was seen as <u>humiliating/unfortunate</u> for the Unites States. Please use at least 300 characters for your description.

<div align="center">

Appendix C

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<u>Framing manipulation (Humiliating versus Unfortunate versus Neutral), Study 4.3.</u>

<u>Condition 1: Humiliating loss</u>

A modern story of David and Goliath

The Vietnam War (1955-1975) has been an important episode in American history. U.S. involvement in the war was part of its 'containment' strategy, a fight against the spread of communism. However, the Vietnam War ended in a humiliating defeat for the United States whereby Goliath (the US) was beaten by David (the Vietcong). Despite the fact that the US had the strongest army in the world, they lost to a poorly equipped Vietcong, lacking the many advanced weapons, planes, helicopters and highly trained soldiers that the US army had at their disposal. After 1968, U.S. ground forces gradually withdrew from Vietnam until U.S. involvement ended in 1973.

Check questions:

In what year did the US involvement in Vietnam end?

    a. 1986

    b. 2003

    c. 1973

What was the name of the strategy to fight communism?

    a. Entertainment

    b. Containment

    c. Red Race

Can you please indicate who was the David and who was the Goliath in this story?

Condition 2: Non-humiliating loss

A modern story of horses for courses

The Vietnam War (1955-1975) has been an important episode in American history. U.S. involvement in the war was part of its 'containment' strategy, a fight against the spread of communism. However, the Vietnam War ended in a defeat for the United States. Despite the fact that the US had the strongest army in the world, they were up against an army (the Vietcong) that were much better equipped to deal with the challenges that fighting in the jungle entails (rough environment and tropical climate). The Vietnamese ground forces were well trained in guerrilla warfare and had the support of local people to provide them with intelligence and supplies. After 1968, U.S. ground forces gradually withdrew from Vietnam until U.S. involvement ended in 1973.

In what year did the US involvement in Vietnam end?

    a. 1986

    b. 2003

    c. 1973

What was the name of the strategy to fight communism?

    a. Entertainment

    b. Containment

    c. Red Race

Can you please indicate who was fighting on foreign territory and who was fighting on familiar territory?

<u>Condition 3: Neutral</u>

A story from modern history

The Vietnam War (1955-1975) has been an important episode in American history. U.S. involvement in the war was part of its 'containment' strategy, a fight against the spread of communism. After 1968, U.S. ground forces gradually withdrew from Vietnam until U.S. involvement ended in 1973.

In what year did the US involvement in Vietnam end?

    a. 1986

    b. 2003

    c. 1973

What was the name of the strategy to fight communism?

    a. Entertainment

    b. Containment

    c. Red Race

Can you please indicate which two nations were involved in the conflict?

Chapter 5

General Discussion

If hope is confidence, humiliation is impotence, an emotion that stems above all from the feeling that you are no longer in control of your life either collectively, as a people, a nation, or a religious community, or individually, as a single person (Moïsi, 2009, p. 56).

When people are asked to name the first emotion that spontaneously comes to mind, "humiliation" may not be the most frequently given answer. Humiliation has a highly aversive character and for many people it seems to reflect an extreme instance, more remote from daily life incidents than other emotions. Nevertheless, humiliation can be a very significant part of the emotional life of individuals as well as groups. This is evident not only from clinical and social psychological literature; other disciplines, notably political science, sociology, religion studies and philosophy (e.g., Cook, 2004; Margalit, 1996; Moïsi, 2009; D. Smith, 2008; Stern, 2003, 2004; Zavaleta Reyles, 2007) attest to the significant role of humiliation—whether as an act or a feeling—in people's lives. Moreover, popular culture as reflected in media, politics, literature, art and film abounds with examples of humiliation and its sometimes destructive consequences.

Humiliation may manifest itself in an interpersonal, intragroup, or intergroup context.[33] Interpersonal humiliation is the most studied type of humiliation, in both clinical and social psychological emotion research. This research shows that humiliation is a highly negative, intense emotional experience with a complex structure, consisting of appraisals, feelings, and behavioural tendencies related to shame and embarrassment on the one hand and anger on the other (e.g., Combs, Campbell, Jackson, & Smith, 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández, Saguy, &

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[33] Note that these contexts do not solely determine whether individual or group-based humiliation is experienced. The type of humiliation that is experienced also depends on factors such as the target and nature of the humiliative act, which may affect whether the individual- or group-self becomes salient. For example, humiliation in an intragroup context may be experienced as individual humiliation when only one individual is targeted, but it may be experienced as group-based humiliation when a whole group is targeted and the humiliator is considered to be part of an out-group.

Halperin, 2015; Harter, 2012; Hartling, 2007; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Klein, 1991; Otten & Jonas, 2014; R. H. Smith, Webster, Parrott, & Eyre, 2002).

In an intragroup context, humiliation may become institutionalized in a group. One of the most frequently mentioned examples of humiliation in an intragroup context is the practice of *hazing* in fraternities, sports clubs, or the army (e.g., Hoover, 1999; Keating et al., 2005; Klein, 1991; Winslow, 1999). Because such practices are seen as instrumental for group formation and cohesion, we labelled this type of humiliation "intragroup humiliation." Although humiliation is often mentioned as part of hazing rituals, there is, to our knowledge, no empirical research focusing specifically on experiences of humiliation during these rituals.

A third context in which humiliation can be experienced is the intergroup context. Although people can experience interpersonal humiliation in an intergroup context—depending on whether their individual or their group-identity is salient—we specifically focused on instances of group-based humiliation; that is, humiliation felt on behalf of a group with which one identifies. This may occur either in small groups (a soccer team) or large groups (a whole nation – see for example Doosje, Jasini, Jonas, & Sveinsdóttir, 2016). Group-based humiliation has not received much empirical attention, but is regarded as an important motive for violence (e.g., Baumeister, 2002; Lickel, 2012; Lindner, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2006, 2009; Staub, 1989; Stern, 2003, 2004). Lindner (2002) argues that experienced humiliation can set in motion a series of retaliations creating a "cycle of humiliation." In Moïsi's (2009) socio-political account of humiliation, intense and prolonged experiences of humiliation may turn into a dominating framework over time, affecting the way people view the world and their individual place in the world, thus creating a "culture of humiliation."

In the present dissertation, we studied humiliation in these three different contexts, offering a broad perspective on the phenomenon of humiliation. We studied contextual determinants of interpersonal humiliation (Chapter 2),

determinants and consequences of intra- and intergroup humiliation (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4) and focused in all chapters on emotional correlates of humiliation. In this final chapter, we first present an overview of the main empirical findings. This is followed by a discussion of theoretical and practical implications of these findings and suggestions for future research on humiliation. We also address some important limitations of our research.

Overview of Main Findings

In Chapter 2 we built upon research on interpersonal humiliation (e.g., Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; R. H. Smith et al., 2002), and focused on the potential impact of a specific social-contextual determinant of humiliation, namely the presence of an audience. Previous studies showed that the (imagined) presence of an audience increases reports of humiliation (Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández et al., 2015; R. H. Smith et al., 2002). Thus, the mere public nature of a humiliating episode may increase the experience of humiliation. In addition, participants in Elison and Harter's (2007) study indicated that a typical humiliating situation involves an audience that shows hostile intent. However, these previous studies did not manipulate the *behaviour* of the audience in order to assess its effect on humiliation. An audience witnessing a potentially humiliating situation, such as an insult, may react in different ways: it may show a mocking reaction, for example by laughing at the victim, but it may also offer support to the victim, or it may not show any reaction at all. We expected that a laughing audience would have an adverse effect by increasing the intensity of humiliation, whereas social support from the audience would provide a buffer against those feelings.

In Chapter 2 we report the results of three scenario studies tapping into these issues. Participants read descriptions of insulting episodes in which the reaction of an audience was manipulated. As expected, in Study 2.1 we found that participants

reported more humiliation when they read a scenario in which the audience laughs than when they read a scenario in which the audience does not react. Although participants also reported more shame and marginally more anger after audience laughter, the effect was strongest for humiliation. However, unexpectedly, scenarios in which someone from the audience offers support to the humiliated victim, did not decrease participants' reported experience of humiliation.

Study 2.2 and Study 2.3 focused on different self-related values with regard to the effect of audience laughter on humiliation; we presented scenarios in which the insults were targeted either at the autonomous- or at the social-relational self in the presence of an audience that either laughs or does not respond. Study 2.2 replicated the finding that imagined audience laughter intensifies reports of humiliation (but not shame and anger). However, this only applied to scenarios describing threats to the autonomous self and not to scenarios describing threats to the social-relational self. Importantly, because the participants in this study were all from the Netherlands—a Western, individualistic culture—the results could reflect the fact that for Dutch people autonomy values are more relevant than social-relational values. A third study therefore further explored the role of culture in the effect of audience laughter on humiliation after threats to these different self-related values. Participants from a collectivistic culture (India) and an individualistic culture (the United States) were included in that study. The results showed that a description of a laughing audience increased reports of humiliation for both Americans and Indians when the autonomous self was threatened. Thus, for such self-related values, audience laughter may be an important determinant for humiliation not only for people from a Western, individualistic culture, but also for people from a more collectivistic culture. When the social-relational self was threatened, however, reported intensity of humiliation did not depend on audience laughter for Indians, and only marginally for Americans. Interestingly, Indians' ratings of humiliation were, both after audience laughter *and* after no audience reaction, as high as

Americans' ratings after audience laughter. This could indicate that when social-relational values are at stake, members of a collectivist culture may not consider explicit audience laughter an important determinant of humiliation. That is, audience laughter may not be seen as a necessary element—beyond the mere presence of an audience—to make an episode (more) humiliating. Clearly, more cross-cultural research is needed to examine the role of cultural self-related values in humiliation.

Humiliation is familiar to almost everyone, but most people do not experience it on a daily basis. Still, there are certain contexts in which humiliation is seen as "normal" or "part of the game." Chapter 3 focused on the experience of humiliation in such a context, namely initiation rituals in fraternities and sororities. These rituals often contain hazing, which may include practices such as being mocked and laughed at, being tied up, being forced to undress or dress ridiculously, eat or drink repulsive substances, or drink large amounts of alcohol. These practices can be perceived as humiliating, rather than as a funny game. We were interested in the function—if any—of such humiliating practices with regard to group affiliation. Although we asked people about their individual experiences of humiliation, which made the individual self salient, we focused on experiences in an intragroup context.

Three studies using very different methods provided evidence that, in line with previous research (e.g., Lodewijkx & Syroit, 1997, 2001) and contrary to what is often assumed, perceived severity of an initiation is not related to more, but actually to *less* affiliation with fellow group members. Importantly, our research showed that this negative connection could be explained by experienced humiliation (Study 3.1). Furthermore, reported humiliation was strongly related to a tendency to withdraw from the group. Thus, the experience of humiliation may be particularly counterproductive in creating strong group-bonding among novices. Additionally, we found that reported humiliation was higher when participants were derogated (Study 3.2) or imagined to be initiated (Study 3.3) as an individual in front the group, than when they were derogated or imagined to be initiated together with the other

group members. In the latter case, the group may form a buffer against experiences of humiliation because it triggers higher expectations of social support. We observed a similar pattern of results for a tendency to withdraw from the group. Thus, when participants were derogated (Study 3.2) or imagined to be initiated (Study 3.3) as an individual in front of the group, reports of withdrawal tendencies were stronger than when they were derogated or imagined to be initiated as a whole group. Our findings suggest that the use of humiliating practices in an initiation ritual, especially when novices are targeted individually rather than as a group, is counter-productive when it comes to group formation and cohesion.

In Chapter 4 we switched our focus from the intragroup to the intergroup context. Intergroup Emotion Theory (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999) posits that when one self-categorizes as a member of a certain group, and identifies with that group, emotions can be experienced on behalf of the group, depending on whether an event is appraised as relevant to one's own group in relation to an out-group. Group-based humiliation is thus the feeling of humiliation on behalf of one's group. Starting point for this chapter was the theoretical claim that group-based humiliation causes intergroup aggression (e.g., Atran & Stern, 2005; Baumeister, 2002; Fontan, 2006; Klein, 1991; Lickel, 2012; Lindner, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2006, 2009; Scheff, 1994; Staub, 1989; Stern, 2003, 2004; Volkan, 1997, 2004). Although such claims often concern aggression against the humiliating out-group, they may also concern aggression towards other groups, or *scapegoats* (e.g., Baumeister, 2002). We were especially interested in aggressive tendencies toward groups other than those involved in the humiliation-evoking event. Thus, we studied a form of displaced aggression (or scapegoating) as a result of group-based humiliation.

Results of all three studies indicated a positive relation between group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies towards an unrelated out-group. This is in line with the abovementioned theories and with findings by Jonas, Doosje, Lobel, and Pysczcynski (2016), but contradicts research by Ginges and Atran (2008), who

showed that humiliation is associated with inertia in Palestinian participants. However, there are two important differences between our own studies and the research by Ginges and Atran. First, our studies included American participants, who may have more favourable views of their groups' status, and are from a more powerful group than Palestinians. Second, we studied the reaction towards an out-group *other* than the one causing the humiliation, whereas Ginges and Atran (as well as Jonas et al., 2016) studied the reaction towards the humiliator. Both these aspects may explain an aggressive reaction to humiliation rather than a response of inertia.

In line with IET (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), we showed that in-group identification was positively related to reported group-based humiliation and aggressive tendencies. Moreover, reported humiliation could partially explain the relation between in-group identification and aggressive tendencies (Study 4.1). Interestingly, when we replaced the measure of in-group identification (Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995) by measures of in-group attachment and glorification (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006), we found that only glorification was positively related to humiliation, whereas attachment was unrelated to humiliation. Furthermore, glorification predicted aggressive tendencies towards the out-group, whereas attachment did not. The relationship between glorification and aggressive tendencies could be partially explained by humiliation and, in turn, out-group hate. Thus, people who strongly glorify their in-group seem to feel stronger humiliation about a past defeat of their group. In turn, they experience more out-group hate and are more likely to react aggressively towards the out-group, even when that group is unrelated to the source of the humiliation.

In the next section of this chapter we turn to more general theoretical implications that we can draw on the basis of our own studies in relation to earlier research. We discuss contextual determinants of, and action tendencies associated with, humiliation and address the question whether humiliation should be regarded as a distinctive emotional experience.

Theoretical Implications

Contextual Determinants of Humiliation

We know that humiliation is felt when people appraise a situation as a strong devaluation of the self that is unjust (e.g., Hartling & Luchetta, 1999). Such situations may entail getting negative attention, for example, being teased, harassed, ridiculed or put down (Elison & Harter, 2007; Elshout, Nelissen, & Van Beest, 2016; Harter, 2012), or being neglected, excluded or ostracised (Elshout et al., 2016; Hartling, 2007; Veldhuis, Gordijn, Veenstra, & Lindenberg, 2014). In our own studies, some descriptions of antecedent events evoked moderate to intense reports of humiliation. These descriptions included, for instance, being insulted after hesitating to answer a question during a group-discussion, and being mocked for coming up with an idea that turns out to be unoriginal (scenarios Study 2.2). In Study 3.1, respondents who had been initiated to become a member of a fraternity or sorority reported such antecedent events themselves. For example, a female respondent wrote that she had to walk naked through a sauna-complex with the other (female) novices, while the board-members, including the male board-members and male novices, were watching. Another (male) respondent wrote that, at the first day of camp, he had to put his chin on a stage in front of 250 novices after which the board-members emptied ten glasses of beer on his "arrogant shithead."

Such descriptions and reports all reflect antecedents of humiliation. In the current dissertation, we focused specifically on social-contextual factors that may increase or decrease experiences of humiliation during such episodes. We found that one factor, (imagined) audience laughter, intensifies reports of humiliation, possibly depending on the self-related value that is under threat and the cultural background of the person reporting on humiliation (Chapter 2). These findings are in line with literature showing that smiling and laughter are not always positive but can be related to negative emotions, such as contempt (e.g., Darwin, 1872; Ekman & Friesen, 1986; Izard & Haynes, 1988; Ruch & Proyer, 2008; Wagner, 2000) or *Schadenfreude*

(e.g., Ruch & Proyer, 2008; van Dijk, Ouwerkerk, Goslinga, Nieweg, & Gallucci, 2006). Although previous studies have taken into account the role of a public versus private context in self-conscious emotions (e.g., Combs et al., 2010; R. H. Smith et al., 2002), not much research has specifically focused on whether and how laughter can cause or intensify negative emotions in others (for an exception, see recent findings on the neuro-cognitive processing of audience laughter during insults by Otten, Mann, Van Berkum, & Jonas, 2016).

It is interesting that laughter, an emotional display that is usually interpreted as positive and affiliative, and is universally recognized as a signal of joy and amusement (Sauter, Eisner, Ekman, & Scott, 2010), can in other situations trigger negative feelings such as humiliation. An intriguing question is *how* this actually happens. It is most likely that individuals not only respond to the smile as such, but consider this in the context of their own emotions (negative) and the event accompanying the laughter (see also Hess & Fischer, 2013; Van Kleef, 2009).

We also showed that a potentially humiliating event that is experienced together with others, as shared victims, results in lower reports of humiliation compared to an event that is experienced as an individual in front of a group (Chapter 3). We found some evidence suggesting that expectations of social support explain this difference. However, other mechanisms may be at work as well. For example, the fact that the whole group is targeted may make individual feelings of inferiority less salient. If one observes that others are humiliated in the same way as oneself, it is easier to make external, rather than internal attributions. For example, one could argue that the humiliator is frustrated and simply derogates everyone within his or her vicinity. On the other hand, when one is picked out of a group and humiliated in front of the others, this may lead to more self-doubt and the feeling that it is really something about the self that is defective, provoking this derogation.

Action Tendencies in Humiliation

In previous research, humiliation has been associated with both tendencies to avoid others and tendencies to aggress against others (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández et al., 2015). The research in this dissertation corroborates these findings in different contexts. For example, in Chapter 3 we found that higher reports of experienced humiliation were strongly related to reported tendencies to withdraw from the group, but also to more aggressive tendencies towards the humiliator or hazer (as reported in footnote 18). An explanation for these ostensibly opposite reactions is that they were aimed at different targets: The withdrawal concerned the group as a whole, whereas the aggressive response was only targeted towards the humiliator. Another potential explanation for the occurrence of both action tendencies is that they may occur at different moments in time, for example, when one first only feels shame, which is later replaced by anger towards the humiliator.

In Chapter 4 we found that reports of group-based humiliation were related to tendencies to aggress against an unrelated out-group, which may be similar to displaced aggression in interpersonal and intergroup contexts. In that study we did not measure withdrawal tendencies, because withdrawal from an out-group that is not involved—either as a perpetrator or as an audience—would seem unlikely. Additional research is needed to answer the question whether withdrawal from the *humiliator* may be a result of group-based humiliation and, if so, under which conditions that would be the case. Whether withdrawal is more likely than aggression as a response to humiliation is possibly dependent on the power- or status relation between the humiliator group and the humiliated group. As discussed in Chapter 4, the humiliated group may show withdrawal tendencies (or inertia, as was the case in the study of Ginges & Atran, 2008) toward the humiliator group, if that group has more power or status.

Although, in Chapter 4, we did not find an effect of (primed) status, we did find that in-group glorification was positively related to humiliation and to

aggressive tendencies as a result of the confrontation with a humiliating defeat. A similar pattern could be present for withdrawal. Thus, high glorifiers may be less inclined to withdraw from the humiliator-group than low glorifiers. In sum, it may be that high perceptions of status simultaneously lead to stronger aggression towards and less withdrawal from the humiliator.

Our findings with regard to perceived status touch upon broader notions of self-esteem and threat. For example, it is argued that people and groups who either have very low, *or* inflated self-concepts (i.e., narcissists) are more prone to perceive a threat against the self or the group (e.g., Staub, 1989). This would mean that both low self-esteem and narcissism are positively related to experiences of humiliation. However, in line with Bushman and Baumeister (1998), we argue that it is particularly the narcissist, or high glorifier, who responds aggressively to humiliation. People or groups with low self-esteem may be more likely to respond by withdrawing as a result of humiliation. On the other hand, it has been suggested that groups with stable low status (e.g., Scheepers, Spears, Doosje, & Manstead, 2006) or groups with low power or low group efficacy (e.g., Tausch et al., 2011) more easily use violence, because they have nothing to lose. If this is true, the relation between perceived status and aggression would follow a u-curve whereby low perceived status is associated with aggression ("nothing to lose"), but inflated status perceptions are also related to aggression ("too much to lose"). The middle (lower) part of the curve could reflect groups who have average to high status or power and are less inclined to use aggression because they have "something to lose," namely damaging their in-group's image (see Jiménez-Moya, Spears, Rodríguez-Bailón, & de Lemus, 2015). This pattern may also characterize the relation between perceived status, humiliation and aggressive tendencies in an interpersonal context, when the individual self is salient. In sum, humiliation may entail different types of action tendencies, depending on one's coping potential and the focus of the target.

Is Humiliation a Unique Emotion?

Our research shows that the ingredients and consequences of humiliation relate to both shame and anger. This is in line with previous studies that have found positive relations between humiliation, shame, and anger and, to a lesser degree, embarrassment (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Fernández et al., 2015; Leidner, Sheikh, & Ginges, 2012). The analysis of emotional correlates of humiliation, whether in terms of appraisals, feelings or consequences, touches upon the question whether humiliation is a distinctive and unique emotion. In the General Introduction of this dissertation, we already mentioned that humiliation consists of a blend of anger and shame and should therefore be considered a mixed emotion. However, humiliation seems to encompass some unique elements as well. For example, humiliation is associated with specific events, such as being teased, harassed, ridiculed, put down, or socially excluded (Elison & Harter, 2007; Elshout et al., 2016; Harter, 2012; Hartling, 2007; Veldhuis et al., 2014). Although these situations may elicit anger and shame as well, they seem to be more distinctive for humiliation. In our own research we found that a contextual factor, the presence of a laughing audience, had stronger effects on humiliation than on shame or anger (Chapter 2). Thus, not only the presence of an audience (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007), but also audience laughter may be more prototypical for feelings of humiliation than for feelings of shame or anger. Finally, the distinct nature of humiliation is also evident from language use. In many languages, there is a specific word for humiliation (both for the emotion and the act). Thus, rather than saying: "I feel angry and ashamed," people say: "I feel humiliated." Furthermore, the act of humiliating someone is clearly something specific that differs from (although relates to) shaming someone.

Because of the frequently reported relations between humiliation, anger, and shame, in the current studies (Chapter 2 and Chapter 4), we also analysed emotional correlates of humiliation (that is, correlates between the emotion labels) and these other emotions to investigate their relations in different contexts. We found a mixed

pattern. In Chapter 2, studying the interpersonal context, in which the individual self was salient, we found moderate correlations between humiliation and anger (r's of .30, .41, and .27) and significantly higher correlations between humiliation and shame (r's of .58, .69, and .55) in Study 2.1 and Study 2.2. In Study 2.3, we found strong correlations between humiliation and shame (r's of: .68, .64, .87, .85), but also between humiliation and anger (r's of: 79, .67, .89, .85). In Chapter 4, in which we studied group-based humiliation, all studies indicate very strong connections between humiliation and both shame and anger. These strong relations have important consequences, as, for example, they make it difficult (and sometimes impossible) to test whether humiliation can predict aggression above and beyond shame and anger.

On the basis of these and previous findings, we conclude that humiliation, shame, and anger share many elements. Whether humiliation is more strongly associated with shame or with anger depends on the context. Especially in an intergroup context, when the group-self is salient, humiliation may become more closely tied to anger, presumably because of perceived in-group strength (Mackie et al., 2000). Although we did not find that in these intergroup contexts the connection between humiliation and anger becomes *stronger* than the connection between humiliation and shame, we do not preclude this possibility in some situations. For example, instances of humiliation that are not the result of a norm violation by the in-group, but connected to (perceived) unequal treatment of the in-group by an out-group, may not elicit strong feelings of shame. It is more likely that these events elicit strong perceptions of unfairness and thereby increase the connection between humiliation and anger. The specific constellation of shame and anger as part of humiliation, depending on the situation, should be addressed in future studies. On the basis of the current studies we conclude that in an interpersonal context, the connection between humiliation and shame is stronger than the connection between

humiliation and anger, whereas in an intergroup context these relations are equally strong.

Practical Implications

There are also some practical implications that we can draw from the current research. We discuss these implications in line with our distinction between humiliation in an interpersonal, an intragroup, and an intergroup context.

In an interpersonal context, humiliation can take many forms. It can take place in close relationships, at work, at school, or randomly, in public space. As discussed in the General Introduction of this dissertation, clinical research has emphasized the aversive effect humiliation can have on the victim and takes into account its severe consequences (e.g., Farmer & McGuffin, 2003; Gilbert, 1997; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Kendler, Hettema, Butera, Gardner, & Prescott, 2003; Klein, 1991; Torres & Bergner, 2010; Walker & Knauer, 2011). Some special attention has been paid to the potential role of humiliation in *school-shootings*, mass shootings at a school or university by one or more of its students (e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012; Leary, Kowalski, Smith, & Phillips, 2003; Torres & Bergner, 2010). In many of these cases the perpetrators had been bullied and they felt strongly rejected, humiliated, and excluded by their classmates and sometimes by a romantic partner. In line with this, it is often the case that the school shooter specifically targets those students and teachers that they felt had caused their humiliation (e.g., Leary et al., 2003).

Although in our studies we did not focus on such grave and prolonged incidents of humiliation, we think that some of our findings may be helpful in combatting humiliation and its consequences. For example, the finding that audience laughter may often increase humiliation, combined with previous findings that the presence of an audience is typical for humiliation (Elison & Harter, 2007), may be helpful for schools or organisations trying to prevent bullying and its negative effects. When someone is bullied, bystanders may underestimate the effect of their

own behaviour on the victim. For example, they may have the idea that their laughter is harmless, or that their laughing response is not really targeted at the victim, that is, they just laugh about a joke made by the humiliator. However, the victim may interpret this laughter as a sign that everyone agrees with the derogatory remarks made by the humiliator. This not only increases feelings of humiliation, but may also instil a sense of loneliness. When other people refrain from laughing when a bully makes fun of someone, this may at least prevent the victims' feeling that others support the humiliator.

Another finding with important practical implications is that (imagined) social support did not reduce reported humiliation in this context. We do not think that support fails to reduce humiliation in every situation. To the contrary, we think that many forms of support are paramount to prevent feelings of depression or aggression in these instances. However, the kind of support that we manipulated, calling on the humiliator directly after the humiliating episode, may not be helpful. In some instances this may even increase humiliation in the victim, because it suggests that the victim is unable to stand up for him or herself. These insights may, together with previous research, be important for bystanders and other people to fully grasp the effect of their behaviour (or lack of behaviour) in a bullying situation.

With regard to the intragroup context we focused on the effect of humiliation in fraternities. However, humiliation also often happens as part of soldiers' training in the army (e.g., Winslow, 1999). As mentioned in Chapter 3, the goals that are pursued by fraternities and the army may differ in important ways. Although in the army there is also a focus on creating strong bonds between recruits, another goal is to toughen the recruits, not only physically but also emotionally. For example, the Dutch documentary "The chosen ones" ("De uitverkorenen", Lassche, 2012) shows how recruits of the marine corps—an elite-unit of the Dutch army—are trained. This training is not only physically tough, but also, at times, very humiliating. Especially those who make mistakes or slow the group down are harshly derogated. This seems

cruel, but the recruits are fully aware that this is part of their training and they seem to agree on its functionality. For example, one of them explains: "[…] the shouting…, it is part of it. They have to discipline you and this is how they do it. You have to be able to endure stress. That's why they do it. If you cannot cope with stress and you are in a war situation, you are not of any use." Thus, in such situations humiliation may have a clear function, namely to toughen recruits physically and mentally and to filter out recruits who turn out to be unable to cope with severe physical and mental stress. Nevertheless, trainers should be aware of the different effects of humiliating people individually in front of the group, and humiliating the whole group. The first seems much more detrimental in terms of group affiliation, which, as mentioned before, is also an important aim of the army training.

The current research also points to some practical implications with regard to the intergroup context. An important finding of the present research is that in-group glorification is positively related to humiliation and to a potential aggressive reaction following this humiliation, whereas attachment is unrelated to humiliation and aggressive tendencies. This indicates that it is not the sense of belonging to one's group or having a good feeling about one's group that triggers (a proneness for) humiliation and aggressive tendencies. Instead, feelings of superiority of the group over other groups predict these feelings and tendencies. Awareness of this distinction can help combat the negative effects of potentially humiliating incidents on some vulnerable groups in society. For example, in the Netherlands, some intervention programs are focused on preventing radicalisation in young Muslims (e.g., SIPI, Foundation for Intercultural Participation and Integration[34]). These youngsters often suffer from feelings of discrimination and humiliation of their group in the Netherlands and of the wider Muslim community in the world (*Ummah*). Such interventions programs would do well to address feelings of in-group superiority, rather than trying to prevent in-group attachment in these youngsters.

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[34] See: http://www.s-ipi.nl/

Of course, we do not think that people should never feel humiliated after unfair treatment, discrimination, or other potentially humiliating incidents, only because this could lead to aggression. However, we do think that when such incidents happen to one's group, emotions such as anger and indignation, rather than humiliation, could be effective to change an unequal status quo. For example, anger is related to normative collective action such as protests (Tausch et al., 2011). This could be more effective than showing (non-normative) aggression or retaliation, which may instigate or perpetuate a "cycle of humiliation" (Lindner, 2002).

Future Directions

In the previous sections we have already suggested some avenues for future research. In this section we focus more specifically on a few routes that we think may be pursued in future studies. An important aspect that received some attention is this dissertation, but needs further study, is the role of culture. In Chapter 2, we explored whether different self-related values play a role in the intensity of humiliation depending on audience laughter. As our data include participants from only two countries, India and the United States, and one language, English (which has clear advantages, but also some disadvantages), broad generalizations with respect to culture cannot be made. However, one conclusion from this study could be that, depending on culture (e.g., individualistic versus collectivistic), specific determinants of humiliation, such as audience laughter, become more important *only* when the value that is under threat is more distant from the self-concept of the victim. That is, for values that play a more central role in certain cultures (e.g., family values in India), audience laughter seems less required to evoke the (or a stronger) experience of humiliation, whereas in other cultures these determinants *do* affect humiliation. Note that this idea goes somewhat against our initial expectations in Chapter 2, which were that elements of humiliation, such as a hostile audience reaction, are more important when the humiliating episode is related to values that are more

(rather than less) central to the self. It might turn out that this actually depends on the culture people are from. This should be further investigated, ideally with people from different individualistic and collectivistic cultures to also address the potential role of other cultural dimensions (e.g., equality versus hierarchy or power distance).

More generally, questions that have been raised in the study of cultural differences and similarities in (self-conscious) emotions also pertain to humiliation. Although humiliation seems to be recognized and experienced in many different cultures (e.g., Ginges & Atran, 2008; Leidner et al., 2012), it is not clear whether and how culture impacts the appraisals of humiliating events or situations. For example, humiliation seems a more prevalent part of emotional life in honour cultures (e.g., Fattah & Fierke, 2009; Fontan, 2006; Kruglanski, Chen, Dechesne, Fishman, & Orehek, 2009; Miller, 1993; Rodriguez Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer, 2002), because of the larger emphasis on one's reputation and social status (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Concepts of honour may include aspects such as masculinity (Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle, & Schwarz, 1996) or the preservation of a woman's purity (Fontan, 2006; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2002), which are less significant in more individualistic cultures. Because of the stronger emphasis on one's integrity and reputation, people from honour cultures may appraise events more readily as humiliating than people from other cultures.

Concepts of honour could also be relevant with regard to the consequences of humiliation. For example, Cohen and colleagues (1996) showed that people from honour cultures react more aggressively to insults than people from non-honour cultures. Research by Rodriguez Mosquera, Fischer, Manstead, and Zaalberg (2008) indicated that shame felt after an insult was associated with verbal disapproval towards the wrongdoer among people for whom honour was a core cultural value, but not among people who were not strongly concerned with honour. Finally, Doosje et al. (2016) studied national humiliation (which is close to group-based humiliation). These researchers found that people from Albania (an honour culture), Hong Kong,

and India (face-keeping cultures) reported more national humiliation after reading scenarios in which their nation is degraded than people from the Netherlands (a dignity culture). Furthermore, Albanians reported more aggressive tendencies following this humiliation than Dutch people. In contrast, people from Hong Kong and India reported more withdrawal tendencies than the Dutch.

Thus, in honour cultures, aggressive tendencies and behaviour such as taking revenge may be a more common reaction to humiliation than withdrawal (tendencies). This aggression is perceived as instrumental to restore the injured honour and pride, whether individually or at the group level (see also Fattah & Fierke, 2009; Fontan, 2006). Withdrawal, on the other hand, may be interpreted as weak or as a sign of acknowledgment of the humiliation as justified or as congruent with one's self-concept. However, in face-keeping cultures, withdrawal may be a more common and valued response to humiliation, because people from these cultures are more concerned with maintaining harmonious relations with others.

Another cultural dimension that may be related to humiliation is power distance. Power distance refers to the degree to which members of a society accept an unequal power-distribution in institutions and organisations within that society (Hofstede, 1985). Countries with a large power distance include Malaysia, the Philippines, Panama and Guatemala (Hofstede, 1985). There are two potential directions of an effect of this cultural value on experienced humiliation. On the one hand, people from a culture with a large power distance may be more accepting of inequalities and therefore feel less humiliated after a humiliation-evoking incident than when the same incident would happen in a culture with a small power distance. On the other hand, humiliation may be more prevalent in high power-distance cultures because people from such cultures are more often confronted with humiliation-evoking events. This may lead to strong experiences of humiliation, in particular when people become familiar with global notions of human rights (e.g.,

Lindner, 2001a). Future research might fruitfully examine the validity of these two options.

Another open question concerns differences in consequences of interpersonal versus group-based feelings of humiliation. Speculating on this, we would argue that, in line with our ideas about the emotional correlates of humiliation in different contexts, group-based humiliation may be more strongly related to aggressive tendencies against the humiliator than interpersonal humiliation. One reason for this is that the perceived efficacy or strength of one's group may be higher than the perceived efficacy of the self as an individual. As a consequence, the use of aggression may be seen as a more successful strategy after group-based humiliation. This could also depend on cultural factors. For example, people from individualistic cultures may feel less humiliated and react with less aggression or withdrawal after group-based humiliation than people from collectivistic cultures (e.g., Doosje et al., 2016), but such a difference may be less pronounced when it concerns interpersonal humiliation. In sum, some (cultural) contexts or causes of humiliation may elicit more avoidance, whereas others elicit more aggression, either towards the humiliator or other people present in the situation, or towards people or groups not associated with the humiliating act(s). Future studies should address these potential consequences of humiliation in different contexts.

Limitations

The current research adds to the existing literature in several ways. However, there are also some important limitations that we should address. First, although we also used other methods, a large part of the data reported in this dissertation is based on scenario studies. The choice for scenarios is partly borne out of ethical issues tied to the study of humiliation. One should be very careful with manipulating these kind of extreme, negative emotions. In Study 3.2 we manipulated a mild form of humiliation. Even then, such studies should be conducted with great care and

attention and are thus time-consuming. Furthermore, it is generally more difficult to manipulate self-conscious emotions in the lab than it is to manipulate basic emotions. One reason for this is that the elicitors of self-conscious emotions are more psychologically complex and more dependent on individual differences than the elicitors of basic emotions (Tracy & Robins, 2007).

Although we think scenarios are a valid way to study emotions and the results of our scenario studies are in line with results of other methods (see Chapter 3), we acknowledge that we should be careful with direct generalizations of these results to real-life emotional experiences (see Parkinson & Manstead, 1993). However, even if we assume that the scenarios did not actually manipulate *feelings* of humiliation, our results are still informative, because they reflect people's *expectations* about what makes them feel humiliated in a given situation.

A second limitation is that, in all studies, we used self-report measures of humiliation and other emotions. Although we have no reason to assume that people are unable to judge what they would feel or (want to) do during or after a given emotional episode, we do think that they may underreport the intensity of their actual feelings of humiliation in a given situation. However, a difference in intensity does not necessarily imply a difference in nature. Furthermore, we should emphasize that it is difficult, if not impossible, to study humiliation without relying on verbal reports of internal experience. For example, there is no clear way to identify humiliation via a discrete facial expression. Although there is some evidence for different patterns of brain activity in participants after reading humiliating scenarios compared to scenarios inducing shame, anger or happiness (Otten & Jonas, 2014), it is also unlikely that discrete emotions are represented by specific regions in the brain (e.g., Barrett, 2009). Therefore, we think that relying on self-reports of humiliation is, to date, the most valid way to measure this emotion.

A third limitation is that we only considered humiliation "on the spot" and not the development of humiliation and its related action tendencies over time. For

example, right after a humiliating incident, the victim could feel ashamed and strongly inclined to withdraw. However, after a period of rumination this person could start to feel angrier and develop a wish to take revenge. With the current studies we could not investigate this issue, but it would be worthwhile to address this in future research.

Together these issues limit what we can conclude about humiliation in real life. Nevertheless, we think that the present research gives some important insights on the basis of which future studies could be developed. Ideally, such studies should include carefully designed lab-experiments as well as longitudinal research focusing on the development of humiliation and its related action tendencies over time.

Concluding Thoughts

Humiliation is an intensely aversive and complex emotional experience. The quote in the beginning of this chapter refers to humiliation as the feeling of a loss of control over one's life. This perceived loss can be experienced collectively, as a nation or community, or individually, as a single person. Whether humiliation is experienced collectively or individually is likely dependent on the context—interpersonal or intergroup—in which the event takes place. This dissertation focused on several aspects of humiliation in interpersonal and intergroup-contexts, and additionally focused on humiliation in an intragroup context.

Taken together, our findings suggest that humiliation is a maladaptive emotional experience, at least when it comes to forming and maintaining good relationships, either between individuals, within a group, or between groups. Future research should take into account cultural aspects in the experience of humiliation, study whether and how the constellation of feelings and action tendencies generally associated with humiliation depend on the context, and focus on the development of humiliation and its consequences over time.

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English summary

ON FEELING HUMILIATED

The Experience of Humiliation in Interpersonal, Intragroup, and Intergroup Contexts

Humiliation is an intense emotion that seems less common than many other emotions. Yet, most people are familiar with the feeling of humiliation. This is illustrated by the fact that in many different cultures there is a word referring to humiliation (Ginges & Atran, 2008). The word humiliation not only connotes an emotion, it also refers to an act. In this dissertation we studied the *emotion* humiliation and more specifically, the subjective experience of humiliation. We followed Hartling and Luchetta (1999) in their definition of humiliation as "the deep dysphoric feeling associated with being, or perceiving oneself as being unjustly degraded, ridiculed, or put down—in particular, one's identity has been demeaned or devalued" (p. 264).

Humiliation can have severe negative consequences. For example, the emotion is associated with low self-esteem, depression, anxiety disorders, suicide, homicide and violence (see e.g., Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999). Additionally, at the group level, humiliation is related to war, mass violence, genocide, and terrorism (e.g., Baumeister, 2002; Klein, 1991; Lindner, 2001b; Staub, 1989). Humiliation is also a complex, "mixed" emotion. On the one hand, humiliation is related to the emotions of shame and embarrassment and their associated avoidance tendencies, such as the wish to disappear or to hide. On the other hand, a relation has been found between humiliation and anger and the tendency to aggress and take revenge (e.g., Combs, Campbell, Jackson, & Smith, 2010; Fernández, Saguy, & Halperin, 2015; Leidner, Sheikh, & Ginges, 2012).

Humiliation can manifest itself in different contexts. In an *interpersonal context* humiliation occurs between individuals, for example at school or at work, between romantic partners, or in friendships. Another context in which humiliation can be felt

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is the *intragroup context*, for example as part of an initiation ritual in a fraternity or during a training in the army. Finally, humiliation can be experienced in an *intergroup context*. This may concern feelings of humiliation at a national level, or between ethnic, religious, or political groups. Yet, members of smaller groups, such as a soccer team, may also feel humiliated by another group. In this dissertation we studied the determinants, strength, emotion relations, and consequences of feelings of humiliation in these three contexts.

In Chapter 2 we built on research on interpersonal humiliation and studied the influence of a specific social-contextual factor on experiences of humiliation, namely the behaviour of others who are present during a humiliating episode. Previous research showed that the presence of an audience during a potentially humiliating episode intensified reported humiliation (e.g., Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; R. H. Smith, Webster, Parrott, & Eyre, 2002). We studied the effect of two behavioural responses of such an audience, namely laughter and support. In three scenario studies we asked participants to imagine themselves in a situation in which the protagonist is insulted in the presence of an audience. This audience either laughs after the insult or it shows no response. In the first study, Study 2.1, we also included a situation in which someone from the audience supports the protagonist after the insult. As expected, participants reported stronger humiliation when the audience laughs than when it does not respond. This effect was stronger for humiliation than for shame and anger. The presence of a laughing audience thus seems to be a typical determinant of humiliation, more so than of other negative emotions. At the same time, support from the audience for the humiliated person did not lead to *less* strong reports of humiliation, which disconfirmed our predictions. Possibly, the public nature of the support increases the salience of the humiliating act which may cause a humiliated person to view him or herself as more, rather than less, victimized. This could be an interesting avenue for future research.

A laughing audience is typical for humiliation, but does this apply to every potentially humiliating situation? We expected that the effect of a laughing audience on humiliation particularly occurs when the situation is relevant for the person in question, such as when the episode concerns a threat to central and stable aspects of one's identity (i.e., the autonomous self). To study this, we explored the effect of a laughing audience on humiliation in relation to different types of self-related values, namely autonomy values and social-relational values. Autonomy values refer to independence, individualism, and self-determination and are focused on the individual. Social-relational values refer to relationships with others, for example, respect for tradition, family bonds, and care for the elderly (e.g., Schwartz, 2006). We asked participants to imagine themselves in situations in which their autonomous or their social-relational self is threatened. For example, the protagonist in a scenario is insulted by someone because he or she has no own opinion (threat to autonomous self) or has no respect for his or her father (threat to social-relational self). We also described the presence of an audience in these episodes, which either laughs or shows no response.

In Study 2.2 we found that a laughing audience intensified humiliation when the situation concerned a threat to the autonomous self, but not when it concerned a threat to the social-relational self. However, this study only included Dutch respondents. The Netherlands is a country with an individualistic culture, where autonomous values are generally considered more important than social-relational values. In collectivistic cultures, on the other hand, social-relational values are generally regarded more central to the self (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Therefore, we conducted another study (Study 2.3) with American (individualistic culture) and Indian (collectivistic culture) participants. We found that a laughing audience intensified reports of humiliation for both groups of participants when the autonomous self was threatened. Thus, for autonomous self-related values a laughing audience could be an important determinant of humiliation for both people

from an individualistic culture and people from a collectivistic culture. However, when the social-relational self was threatened there was only a marginal effect of a laughing audience on humiliation for Americans, and there was no effect for Indians. For Indians, reported humiliation in both conditions (laughing audience or no reaction) was as high as for Americans in the laughing-condition. Possibly, Indians have internalised social-relational values more strongly which could mean that a laughing audience is not "necessary" to intensify humiliation (to a similar level as for Americans). However, more cross-cultural research is needed to further test these ideas.

As indicated before, humiliation can also be felt within a group, for example as part of a ritual. In Chapter 3 we studied such a ritualised type of humiliation in an intragroup context, namely during initiation rituals in student fraternities. In these contexts, humiliation is often considered functional because it is thought to result in strong group affiliation. Within social psychology the *severity-attraction hypothesis* (Aronson & Mills, 1959) and the *severity-affiliation-attraction hypothesis* (based on Schachter, 1959) explain an alleged group-affiliation effect of severe initiations. However, humiliation is an emotion that is not associated with affiliation, but rather with withdrawal and avoidance of others (e.g., Harter, 2012). Our prediction was therefore that when initiation rituals (or comparable situations) are experienced as humiliating, they will not lead to more group affiliation, but instead to more distance between the group members.

To test this idea, we conducted three studies using very different methods. For Study 3.1 we asked (former and current) members of Dutch fraternities and sororities who had experienced an initiation ritual to report on their experiences during this initiation. The results indicated a negative relation between perceived severity of the initiation and affiliation between novices. This relation could be explained by experienced humiliation. Perceived severity of the initiation was positively related to

withdrawal from the group and this effect could also (partially) be explained by humiliation.

In Study 3.2 we simulated an initiation ritual in the lab. We asked groups of three participants to do a dance-assignment. Some participants received denigrating feedback by the experimenter on their dance performance. This feedback was either directed at the whole group of participants or at only one participant in the group. We found that participants who received the denigrating feedback as an individual in front of the group, reported stronger feelings of humiliation in this situation than participants who received this denigrating feedback together with the others in the group. In addition, participants who received the feedback as an individual in front of the group indicated a stronger tendency to withdraw from the situation. This effect could be explained by reported humiliation. We replicated these effects in a third scenario study (Study 3.3) in which we asked participants to imagine themselves in typical initiation rituals. This study showed as well that the effect of social context on humiliation—that is: stronger humiliation when a protagonist was initiated alone rather than together with others—could be explained by expected social support by those others. This could indicate that the group forms a "buffer" by enhancing the expectation of social support, by which it may, in turn, prevent strong feelings of humiliation. Together, these findings indicate that initiation rituals that evoke humiliation are less functional than initiations that are not experienced as humiliating when the aim of such a ritual is to create strong group affiliation. This is particularly true for initiations targeted at only one individual in the group.

In Chapter 2 and 3 we studied humiliation in an interpersonal and an intragroup context. These studies concerned experiences of humiliation at an individual level. However, humiliation can also be felt on the basis of one's group membership. *Intergroup Emotions Theory* (IET; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999) predicts that group-based humiliation can be experienced by an individual if his or her membership of the humiliated group is salient. Chapter 4

focused on this type of humiliation. In particular, we studied the hypothesized relation between group-based humiliation and aggression (e.g., Baumeister, 2002). We expected that the group member's perception of his or her groups' status plays an important role in this relation.

Interpersonal research (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998) shows that people with an inflated (i.e., high, but unstable) self-esteem feel more quickly insulted and react more aggressively to an insult than people with low self-esteem or people with high, but stable self-esteem. In line with this, we hypothesized that people who consider their group as superior to other groups are more prone to group-based humiliation and aggression as a response to that humiliation than people who consider their group as not or less superior to other groups.

In our studies we predicted that people (for example, Americans) confronted with a defeat of their group (for example, the withdrawal by the U.S. army from Vietnam) will experience stronger feelings of group-based humiliation when their perceived group-status is high than when their perceived group-status is low(er). In addition, we expected that when people are confronted with such a defeat they will respond more aggressively towards another group if their perceived group-status is high rather than low. In this context, we studied aggression towards another group that is not involved in the defeat.

In three scenario studies we found that humiliation caused by a defeat of one's own group (the *in-group*) was related to aggressive action tendencies towards another group (the *out-group*) that was not involved in the defeat. We did not find an effect of a manipulation of participants' group-status (high versus neutral) on aggressive tendencies. However, in line with IET (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), participants' identification with the in-group was positively related to reported group-based humiliation and to aggressive tendencies towards the out-group. Humiliation could partially explain this latter relation (Study 4.1). In Study

4.2 and 4.3 we used different measures of in-group identification, namely attachment to the in-group and glorification of the in-group (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006). We found that only glorification of the in-group positively predicted humiliation, whereas attachment to the in-group turned out not to be predictive of humiliation. In addition, aggressive tendencies were only predicted by glorification of the in-group and not by attachment to the in-group. This relation could be partially explained by humiliation and out-group hate. It thus seems that people who strongly glorify their group are more prone to feeling humiliated about a past defeat of their group. This humiliation, in turn, causes them to feel more hate towards an out-group and to be more inclined to respond aggressively towards that out-group, even though the out-group was not involved in the humiliating defeat.

Conclusion

Humiliation is an intensely negative and complex emotion, which is experienced by many people. Although humiliation can be considered a "mixed" emotion, containing elements of both shame and anger, it is also a unique emotion that is essentially different from other (negative) emotions. In this dissertation we studied the emotion humiliation in an interpersonal, an intragroup, and an intergroup context.

We found that a number of social-contextual factors play a role in intensifying or decreasing feelings of humiliation. In an interpersonal context, we found evidence for the idea that humiliation is felt more strongly if there is an audience present which laughs after an insult. In addition, in an intragroup context, we found that humiliation is felt more strongly when someone is humiliated alone, in front of others in the group, than when they are humiliated together with other group members. With regard to consequences of this emotion we found that humiliation is related to the tendency to withdraw from the group and avoidance of others, but also to aggressive tendencies towards the humiliator or towards an unrelated out-group. These findings indicate that humiliation is dysfunctional when it comes to the

formation and maintenance of good relationships, whether this is between individuals, within a group, or between groups.

Although this dissertation offers insight in the nature and consequences of humiliation, the reported studies also invoke a number of new questions. For example, it is still unclear whether and how the strength of the relationship between humiliation and the emotions of shame and anger, and their associated action tendencies, depend on the context. We would anticipate that humiliation in an interpersonal context is more strongly related to shame and the tendency to withdraw, whereas humiliation in a group-context is more likely to evoke anger and aggression. This, however, should be investigated in future research. In addition, future studies may investigate the role of culture in the experience of and the response to humiliation, and investigate the development of humiliation over time. With the current dissertation we hope to have contributed to knowledge about and insight in humiliation and to motivate further research on this aversive, complicated, but very relevant emotion.

Nederlandse samenvatting

ON FEELING HUMILIATED

The Experience of Humiliation in Interpersonal, Intragroup, and Intergroup Contexts

Vernedering is een intense emotie die minder alledaags lijkt dan veel andere emoties. Toch kennen de meeste mensen het gevoel van vernedering. Dit wordt geïllustreerd door het feit dat er in veel culturen een woord bestaat dat verwijst naar vernedering (Ginges & Atran, 2008). Het woord vernedering staat niet alleen voor een emotie, het verwijst ook naar een handeling. Voor dit proefschrift onderzochten we de *emotie* vernedering en meer specifiek, het subjectieve gevoel van vernedering. We volgden Hartling en Luchetta (1999) in hun definitie van vernedering als "het diepe dysforische gevoel dat is geassocieerd met de (waarneming van) het onterecht worden gedegradeerd, bespot of gekleineerd—in het bijzonder, iemands identiteit is omlaag gehaald of gedevalueerd" (p. 264).

Vernedering kan ernstige negatieve gevolgen hebben. Zo wordt deze emotie bijvoorbeeld geassocieerd met een laag zelfbeeld, depressie, angststoornissen, (zelf)moord en geweld (zie bijv. Elison & Harter, 2007; Harter, 2012; Hartling & Luchetta, 1999). Daarnaast wordt vernedering op groepsniveau in verband gebracht met oorlog, massageweld, genocide, en terrorisme (bijv. Baumeister, 2002; Klein, 1991; Lindner, 2001b; Staub, 1989). Vernedering is tevens een complexe, "gemixte" emotie. Enerzijds is vernedering gerelateerd aan de emoties schaamte en gêne en het daarbij horende neigen naar vermijding, zoals de wens te verdwijnen of zich te verstoppen. Anderzijds is er een verband gevonden tussen vernedering en woede en de geneigdheid tot agressie en wraak (bijv. Combs, Campbell, Jackson, & Smith, 2010; Fernández, Saguy, & Halperin, 2015; Leidner, Sheikh, & Ginges, 2012).

Vernedering kan optreden in uiteenlopende context. In een *interpersoonlijke context* gaat het om vernedering tussen individuen, bijvoorbeeld op school, op de werkvloer, tussen partners, of in vriendschappen. Vernedering kan ook binnen een

groep, in een *intragroeps context*, plaatsvinden, bijvoorbeeld tijdens een ontgroening bij een studentenvereniging of een training voor het leger. Tot slot kan vernedering in een *intergroeps context* plaatsvinden. Het kan dan gaan om gevoelens van vernedering op nationaal niveau, tussen natiestaten, of tussen etnische, religieuze, of politieke groepen. Echter, ook leden van kleinere groepen, zoals een voetbalteam, kunnen zich vernederd voelen door een andere groep. In dit proefschrift onderzochten we de determinanten, sterkte, emotie-relaties, en consequenties van gevoelens van vernedering in deze drie contexten.

In Hoofdstuk 2 bouwden we voort op onderzoek naar interpersoonlijke vernedering en onderzochten we de invloed van een specifieke sociaal-contextuele factor op gevoelens van vernedering, namelijk het gedrag van aanwezige anderen tijdens een vernederende episode. Uit eerder onderzoek bleek dat de aanwezigheid van publiek tijdens een potentieel vernederende situatie gerapporteerde vernedering versterkte (bijv. Combs et al., 2010; Elison & Harter, 2007; R. H. Smith, Webster, Parrott, & Eyre, 2002). Wij onderzochten de invloed van twee gedragingen die door dat publiek kunnen worden vertoond, namelijk lachen en het bieden van hulp. In drie scenariostudies vroegen we deelnemers zich in te leven in een situatie waarin een persoon wordt beledigd in het bijzijn van een publiek. Dit publiek lacht na de belediging of reageert niet. In de eerste studie, Studie 2.1, voegden we ook een situatie toe waarin iemand uit het publiek opkomt voor de hoofdpersoon nadat deze is beledigd. Naar verwachting rapporteerden deelnemers meer vernedering als het aanwezige publiek lacht dan als het publiek niet reageert. Dit effect trad sterker op voor vernedering dan voor schaamte en woede. De aanwezigheid van een lachend publiek lijkt dus een typische determinant te zijn van vernedering, meer dan van andere negatieve emoties. Tegelijkertijd bleek ook dat het bieden van steun aan de vernederde er niet voor zorgde dat mensen *minder* vernedering rapporteerden, terwijl we dit wel verwachtten. Mogelijk ligt dit aan het publieke karakter van de steun, waardoor de vernederende handeling extra opvalt en de vernederde zichzelf

juist meer als slachtoffer ziet. Dit zou een interessante invalshoek kunnen zijn voor vervolgonderzoek.

Een lachend publiek is typisch voor vernedering, maar geldt dit voor elke potentieel vernederende situatie? Onze voorspelling was dat het effect van een lachend publiek op vernedering vooral optreedt als het om een situatie gaat die relevant is voor de betreffende persoon, zoals wanneer de situatie een bedreiging van centrale en stabiele aspecten van de identiteit (i.e., het autonome zelf) betreft. Om dit te onderzoeken exploreerden we het effect van een lachend publiek op vernedering in relatie tot verschillende typen zelf-gerelateerde waarden, namelijk autonome waarden en sociaal-relationele waarden. Autonome waarden refereren aan onafhankelijkheid, individualisme, en zelfbeschikking en zijn gericht op het individu. Sociaal-relationele waarden hebben betrekking op relaties met anderen, bijvoorbeeld respect voor traditties, familiebanden, en zorg voor ouderen (bijv. Schwartz, 2006). We vroegen deelnemers zich in te leven in situaties waarin hun autonome zelf of hun sociaal-relationele zelf werd bedreigd. Zo wordt de hoofdpersoon in een scenario bijvoorbeeld beledigd door een ander omdat hij of zij geen eigen mening heeft (bedreiging van het autonome zelf) of geen respect heeft voor zijn of haar vader (bedreiging van het sociaal-relationele zelf). We beschreven ook weer een aanwezig publiek in deze situaties, dat lacht of niet reageert.

In Studie 2.2 vonden we dat een lachend publiek vernedering versterkte als het om een bedreiging van het autonome zelf ging, maar niet als het sociaal-relationele zelf werd bedreigd. Echter, aan deze studie namen alleen Nederlandse respondenten deel. Nederland is een land met een individualistische cultuur waar autonome waarden over het algemeen van groter belang worden geacht dan sociaal-relationele waarden. In collectivistische culturen staat het sociaal-relationele zelf juist meer centraal (bijv. Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Daarom voerden we nog een studie (Studie 2.3) uit waaraan Amerikanen (individualistische cultuur) en Indiërs (collectivistische cultuur) deelnamen. We vonden dat een lachend publiek

rapportages van vernedering versterkte voor beide groepen deelnemers als het autonome zelf werd bedreigd. Dus voor autonome zelf-gerelateerde waarden zou een lachend publiek een belangrijke determinant van vernedering kunnen zijn voor zowel mensen uit een individualistische cultuur als voor mensen uit een collectivistische cultuur. Echter, voor bedreiging van het sociaal-relationele zelf was er slechts een marginaal effect van een lachend publiek op vernedering voor Amerikanen en was er geen effect voor Indiërs. Voor Indiërs was gerapporteerde vernedering in beide condities (wel of geen lachend publiek) net zo hoog als voor Amerikanen in de lach-conditie. Mogelijk hebben Indiërs sociaal-relationele waarden sterker geïnternaliseerd waardoor een lachend publiek niet meer "nodig" is om vernedering te versterken (tot op een gelijk niveau als bij Amerikanen). Er is echter meer cross-cultureel onderzoek nodig om deze ideeën verder te testen.

Zoals gezegd kan vernedering ook binnen een groep plaatsvinden, bijvoorbeeld als onderdeel van een ritueel. In Hoofdstuk 3 onderzochten we een dergelijke rituele vorm van vernedering in een intragroeps context, namelijk tijdens ontgroeningen in studentenverenigingen. Vernedering wordt in dergelijke contexten vaak beschouwd als functioneel omdat het zou leiden tot sterkere groepsbinding. Binnen de sociale psychologie verklaren de *severity-attraction hypothesis* (Aronson & Mills, 1959) en de *severity-affiliation-attraction hypothesis* (gebaseerd op Schachter, 1959) een vermeend groepsbinding-effect van zware initiaties. Echter, vernedering is een emotie die niet geassocieerd wordt met affiliatie, maar die juist gerelateerd is aan terugtrekking en vermijding van anderen (bijv. Harter, 2012). Onze voorspelling was daarom dat wanneer ontgroeningen (of vergelijkbare situaties) als vernederend worden ervaren ze niet zullen leiden tot meer groepsbinding, maar juist tot meer afstand tussen de groepsleden.

Om dit te testen voerden we drie studies uit waarin we heel verschillende methoden gebruikten. Voor Studie 3.1 vroegen we (voormalig en huidige) leden van Nederlandse studentenverenigingen die een ontgroening hadden meegemaakt naar

hun ervaringen tijdens deze ontgroening. De resultaten wezen op een negatief verband tussen waargenomen zwaarte van de ontgroening en affiliatie tussen nieuwelingen en dat verband kon worden verklaard door ervaren vernedering. Waargenomen zwaarte van de ontgroening was juist positief gerelateerd aan terugtrekking uit de groep en ook dat effect kon (gedeeltelijk) worden verklaard door vernedering.

In Studie 3.2 simuleerden we een ontgroeningsritueel in het lab. We vroegen groepjes van drie deelnemers een dansoefening te doen. Sommige deelnemers kregen hierop denigrerende feedback van de aanwezige proefleider. Deze feedback was ofwel gericht tegen de hele groep ofwel tegen één deelnemer uit de groep. We vonden dat deelnemers die als enigen uit de groep denigrerende feedback ontvingen, aangaven zich sterker vernederd te voelen in deze situatie dan deelnemers die samen met de anderen in de groep denigrerende feedback kregen. Ook gaven deze deelnemers aan sterker de neiging te hebben zich terug te trekken uit de situatie. Dat effect kon worden verklaard door gerapporteerde vernedering. Deze effecten repliceerden we in een derde scenariostudie (Studie 3.3) waarin we deelnemers vroegen zich in typische ontgroeningssituaties in te leven. Tevens vonden we in deze studie dat het effect van sociale context op vernedering—i.e., sterkere vernedering als een protagonist alleen ontgroend werd dan wanneer dit samen met anderen gebeurde—kon worden verklaard door verwachte sociale steun van die anderen. Dit kan betekenen dat de groep een "buffer-functie" vervult door het versterken van de verwachting van sociale steun, en op die manier sterke gevoelens van vernedering kan voorkomen. Tezamen laten deze bevindingen zien dat ontgroeningen die vernedering opwekken minder functioneel zijn dan ontgroeningen die niet als vernederend worden ervaren, als het doel van een dergelijke ontgroening is om sterke groepsbinding te creëren. Dit geldt in het bijzonder voor ontgroeningsrituelen die gericht zijn op één individu uit de groep.

In Hoofdstuk 2 en 3 onderzochten we vernedering in een interpersoonlijke- en een intragroeps context. Het ging daar steeds om individuele ervaringen van vernedering. Echter, vernedering kan ook ervaren worden op basis van groepslidmaatschap. *Intergroup Emotions Theory* (IET; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999) voorspelt dat groeps-gebaseerde vernedering door een individu kan worden gevoeld als het lidmaatschap van de vernederde groep saillant is voor dit individu. Hoofdstuk 4 is gericht op deze vorm van vernedering. In het bijzonder onderzochten we het veronderstelde verband tussen groeps-gebaseerde vernedering en agressie (bijv. Baumeister, 2002). We verwachtten dat de door het groepslid waargenomen status van zijn of haar groep een belangrijke rol speelt in dit verband.

Uit interpersoonlijk onderzoek (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998) blijkt dat mensen met een "opgeblazen" (i.e., hoog, maar instabiel) zelfbeeld zich sneller beledigd voelen en ook sneller agressief reageren op een belediging dan mensen met een laag zelfbeeld of mensen met een hoog, maar stabiel zelfbeeld. Hierop aansluitend was onze hypothese dat mensen die hun groep superieur achten ten opzichte van andere groepen, gevoeliger zijn voor groeps-gebaseerde vernedering en agressie als reactie op die vernedering dan mensen die geen of een minder superieur beeld hebben van hun groep.

In onze studies voorspelden we dat wanneer mensen (bijv. Amerikanen) geconfronteerd worden met een nederlaag van hun groep (bijv. de terugtrekking van het Amerikaanse leger uit Vietnam) dit tot sterkere gevoelens van groeps-gebaseerde vernedering leidt als de waargenomen status van de groep hoog is dan als deze status lager is. Ook verwachtten we dat bij een confrontatie met een groepsnederlaag, mensen zich agressiever zullen opstellen naar een andere groep als zij uit een (door hen waargenomen) hoge status-groep komen dan als ze uit een lagere status-groep komen. We keken daarbij naar agressie ten opzichte van een andere groep die niets te maken heeft met de nederlaag.

In drie scenariostudies vonden we dat vernedering over een nederlaag van de eigen groep (de *in-group*) samenhing met de neiging tot agressie naar een andere groep die niets met de nederlaag te maken had (de *out-group*). We vonden echter geen effect van een manipulatie van hoge (versus neutrale) groepsstatus bij deelnemers op de geneigdheid tot agressie. Wel vonden we dat, aansluitend op IET (Mackie et al., 2000; E. R. Smith, 1993, 1999), identificatie met de in-group positief gerelateerd was aan gerapporteerde groeps-gebaseerde vernedering en de neiging tot agressie naar de out-group. Vernedering kon deze laatstgenoemde relatie gedeeltelijk verklaren (Studie 4.1). In Studie 4.2 en 4.3 gebruikten we andere maten voor in-group-identificatie, namelijk gehechtheid aan de in-group en verheerlijking van de in-group (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006). We vonden dat alleen verheerlijking van de in-group vernedering positief voorspelde, terwijl gehechtheid aan de in-group geen voorspeller bleek van vernedering. Tevens werd de neiging tot agressie alleen voorspeld door verheerlijking van de in-group en niet door gehechtheid aan de in-group. Deze relatie kon gedeeltelijk worden verklaard door vernedering en haat ten opzichte van de out-group. Het lijkt er dus op dat mensen die hun eigen groep sterk verheerlijken zich meer vernederd voelen over een nederlaag van hun groep uit het verleden. Door die vernedering ervaren ze vervolgens meer haat jegens een out-group en zijn ze sterker geneigd agressief te reageren naar deze out-group, zelfs als die out-group geen rol speelde bij de vernederende nederlaag.

Conclusie

Vernedering is een intens negatieve en complexe emotie, die door veel mensen wordt ervaren. Weliswaar kan vernedering worden beschouwd als een "gemixte" emotie, met elementen van zowel schaamte als woede, het is ook een unieke emotie die wezenlijk verschilt van andere (negatieve) emoties. In dit proefschrift onderzochten we de emotie vernedering in een interpersoonlijke-, een intragroeps-, en een intergroeps context.

We vonden dat een aantal sociaal-contextuele factoren een rol speelt bij vernedering. In een interpersoonlijke context vonden we bewijs voor het idee dat vernedering sterker wordt ervaren als een aanwezig publiek lacht na een belediging. Tevens vonden we in een intragroeps context dat vernedering sterker gevoeld wordt wanneer een persoon alleen wordt vernederd, voor het oog van anderen in de groep, dan wanneer deze persoon samen met de anderen uit de groep wordt vernederd. Wat betreft consequenties van deze emotie vonden we dat vernedering gerelateerd is aan de geneigdheid tot terugtrekking uit de groep en vermijding van anderen, maar ook aan de neiging tot agressie naar de vernederaar of naar een ongerelateerde out-group. Deze bevindingen wijzen erop dat vernedering dysfunctioneel is als het aankomt op het aangaan en onderhouden van goede relaties, of dat nu tussen individuen is, binnen een groep, of tussen groepen.

Hoewel dit proefschrift inzicht biedt in wat vernedering precies is en waar het toe kan leiden, roepen de gerapporteerde studies ook weer een aantal nieuwe vragen op. Zo is bijvoorbeeld nog onduidelijk of en hoe de sterkte van associaties tussen vernedering en de emoties schaamte en woede, en daaraan gerelateerde gedragsgeneigdheden, afhangt van de context. We verwachten dat vernedering in een interpersoonlijke context sterker samenhangt met schaamte en de geneigdheid tot terugtrekken, terwijl vernedering in een groepscontext eerder woede en agressie zal opwekken. Dit moet echter in vervolgonderzoek worden getest. Toekomstig onderzoek zou tevens gericht kunnen zijn op de rol van cultuur in de ervaring van en reacties op vernedering, en op de ontwikkeling van vernedering over langere tijd. Met dit proefschrift hopen we een bijdrage te hebben geleverd aan kennis en inzicht over vernedering en een aanzet te hebben gedaan tot meer onderzoek naar deze aversieve, ingewikkelde, maar zeer relevante emotie.

Contributions to empirical chapters

Chapter 2

Mann, L., Feddes, A. R., Leiser, A., Doosje, B., & Fischer, A. H. (2016). *When laughing hurts: Humiliation, audience behaviour, and the self.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

The studies were designed by all authors. Data were collected and analysed by L.M. and A.L. The article was written by L.M. and A.R.F., B.D., and A.H.F. provided valuable comments on the manuscript.

Chapter 3

Mann, L., Feddes, A. R., Doosje, B., & Fischer, A. H. (2015). Withdraw or affiliate? The role of humiliation during initiation rituals. *Cognition and Emotion*, *30*, 80-100. doi: 10.1080/02699931.2015.1050358

The studies were designed by all authors. Data were collected and analysed by L.M. The article was written by L.M. and all co-authors provided valuable comments on the manuscript.

Chapter 4

Mann, L., Jetten, J., Haslam, A., Doosje, B., and Fischer A. H. (2016). *Group-based humiliation and intergroup aggression: The role of perceived in-group status.* Manuscript in preparation.

The studies were designed by L.M., J.J., and A.H. Data were collected and analysed by L.M. The article was written by L.M. and all co-authors provided valuable comments on the manuscript.

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