



CULTURE *and* GROUP PROCESSES

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Outlier Nation

The Cultural Psychology of American Workways

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Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness.

—THOMAS CARLYLE

America is an outlier nation. This is true in terms of US individualism, religious pluralism, and political organization (Greeley, 1991; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Kingdon, 1999; Lipset, 1996; Schuck & Wilson, 2008; Tocqueville, 1840/1990). Of particular interest to the present chapter, America is also an outlier in terms of a unique cognitive, emotional, and behavioral approach to work and workplace interactions. This highly distinctive orientation toward work has important implications for the dynamics of cross-cultural groups.

Scholars, for over a century and from a variety of fields, have commented on America's unique work values (Lipset, 1996; Tocqueville, 1840/1990; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997; Weber, 1904/1958). However, only in the past decade has there been rigorous experimental evidence able to support, elaborate, and articulate the boundary conditions of prior theorizing (Sanchez-Burks, 2002, 2005; Uhlmann, Poehlman, Tannenbaum, & Bargh, 2011). This chapter reviews the core themes of this experimental research and its implications for the functioning of cross-cultural work groups.

Together this research reveals three important facets of American exceptionalism that help explain how, when, and why Americans appear as an outlier vis-à-vis other cultural groups. Specifically, America is an outlier among other nations in terms of (a) its impersonal approach to work, (b) valorization of work as an end unto itself, and (c) faith in individual merit, all of which reflect the imprint left by the founding

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religious communities. American norms of workplace professionalism are organized around a unique approach to workplace relations, referred to as Protestant Relational Ideology (Sanchez-Burks, 2002), that idealizes unemotional and impersonal workplace interactions. In contrast to many other cultures, where work serves a utilitarian function (e.g., earning money to support one's family), American culture valorizes working beyond material reasons (Uhlmann, Poehlman, & Bargh, 2009; Uhlmann et al., 2011). Finally, America is an outlier in its commitment to individualism and faith in meritocracy, which is manifested in both moral judgments and human resource policies (Biernat, Vescio, & Theno, 1996; Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993; McCoy & Major, 2007; Quinn & Crocker, 1999). The body of experimental evidence we review in this chapter complements findings from other fields and points to exciting directions for future research on cultural divides.

THE LEGACY OF AMERICA'S PROTESTANT HERITAGE

America's heritage as a nation founded by Calvinist Puritans has set it on a different cultural trajectory than other countries. Extremely devout Protestants, often persecuted for their beliefs in their home countries, left Europe for the New World and exerted a profound influence on the evolution of American culture (Fukuyama, 1995; Lipset, 1996; Norris & Inglehart, 2004). In Europe, the Protestant Reformation was associated with enormous economic growth that has continued to covary with the secularization of historically Protestant countries (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Norris & Inglehart, 2004). Due to the founding influence of the ascetic Protestant settlers, however, the United States remains deeply religious. Even today, seven in ten believe in the devil, and more than half are religious fundamentalists who believe that the world is at most 10,000 years old (Baker, 2005; Dawkins, 2006; Harris, 2006; Lipset, 1996; Sheler, 2006). In addition, Americans exhibit values on issues relevant to religious morality (e.g., suicide, homosexuality, and abortion) more similar to impoverished traditional societies than other developed Western democracies (Inglehart, 1997).

The unique elements of the Protestant faith as practiced and passed down by the founding communities of the United States help explain the highly distinctive aspects of the American approach to work described in this chapter. Protestant Relational Ideology stems from influential theologian John Calvin's conviction that a focus on emotions and relationships while working distracts from treating one's work as a moral calling (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). The American valorization of work done beyond material reasons stems from the notion—once explicit in Calvinist Protestantism and now implicit in contemporary American culture—that work represents a path to divine salvation (Uhlmann et al., 2011). Finally, the Protestant emphasis on one-on-one personal relationships with God and view of hard-earned success as a sign of divine favor contributed to the American ethic of individual merit (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Weber, 1904/1958). Cultures outside the United States do not appear to exhibit these implicit norms and values to the same degree as Americans.

One reason Protestantism had such a strong effect on the culture of the United States relative to other communities exposed to Protestantism is a lack of early ideological competition. In Europe, Protestantism had to compete with centuries of history and deeply entrenched preexisting religions. In contrast, the early American colonists were disproportionately Calvinist Protestants. Furthermore, they were comparatively likely to emigrate with their wives and children, and largely exterminated native peoples through war and disease (Zinn, 1980). In addition, the early Protestants specifically desired a psychological and ideological break from the old world, viewing themselves as founders of a "shining city on a hill" (Collins, 1999, p. 65) that would lead and inspire other nations by example (Gelertner, 2007; Morone, 2003; Uhlmann, 2012). Although these early immigrants were eventually joined by many non-Protestants who came to the future United States seeking economic opportunities, they exerted a founding influence on American culture that has yet to dissipate. Such an influence is analogous to founder effects in evolutionary biology, in which early members of a species have a disproportionate genetic influence on descendants (Mayr, 1954). However, it manifests itself at a moral and cultural level rather than a genetic one.

Importantly, the influence of America's Protestant heritage is often implicit in nature. Both cross-cultural researchers and experts on implicit social cognition have argued that cultural influences are frequently unconscious and automatic (Banaji, 2001; Cohen, 1997; Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001; Rudman, 2004; Sperber, 1985). This occurs because people have difficulty rejecting culturally learned associations when it comes to their spontaneous, automatic reactions (Banaji, 2001; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Although Americans' work morality can manifest itself in explicitly stated beliefs and values, it can also be activated implicitly and shape judgments and behaviors outside of conscious awareness. Thus, although Americans who have been raised in strong traditions of Protestant Calvinism are especially likely to evidence some of the judgments and behaviors we identify (Sanchez-Burks, 2002), even non-Protestant and less religious Americans often display an implicit orientation toward work consistent with their American heritage (Lenski, 1961; Sanchez-Burks, 2005; Uhlmann et al., 2009, 2011).

PROTESTANT RELATIONAL IDEOLOGY

Protestant Relational Ideology (PRI) refers to the explicit or implicit belief that a focus on emotions and relationships while at work is inappropriate (Sanchez-Burks, 2005). In contrast to the then prevailing sentiment that earthly work is demeaning, early Protestant theology elevated work to a moral calling with spiritual significance akin to prayer (McNeil, 1954). Rather than a debasing activity best left to one's social inferiors, work became a moral imperative done for the glory of God (Weber, 1904/1958). Consistent with this Protestant work ethic, influential theologian John Calvin argued that individuals ought to maintain an unsentimental impersonality while working. In his view, a focus on affect and relationships in work contexts "is evil because it detracts from the active

performance of God's will in a calling" (Bendix, 1977, p. 62). Outside of work contexts, however, socio-emotionality was not only allowed but even encouraged in early Protestant communities (Daniels, 1995; Fischer, 1989; Weber, 1947).

Although one might expect that such seemingly quaint beliefs would have faded away by modern times, today's Americans (especially those raised in a tradition of Calvinist Protestantism) continue to implicitly uphold an ethic of impersonal work relations (Sanchez-Burks, 2005). Further consistent with traditional Protestant norms, outside of work contexts individuals with a high degree of exposure to Protestantism remain as sensitive as others to interpersonal concerns (Sanchez-Burks, 2002).

For instance, experimental studies show that PRI powerfully shapes the extent to which employees implicitly focus on and respond to emotional information while at work. One particularly insightful investigation found that Americans raised in traditions of Calvinism are less attentive to emotional cues when work, rather than nonwork, contexts are subtly primed (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). Self-identified individuals raised in a Calvinist Protestant tradition (i.e., Methodist and Presbyterian, two specifically Calvinist denominations within Protestantism well represented in the contemporary United States) or a non-Protestant tradition (e.g., Catholic, Atheist, Buddhist) were recruited for the experiment. Participants were then either primed for work contexts (by having them wear business attire and discuss a business school case) or a social context (by having them wear Hawaiian shirts and play a card game). Subsequently all participants completed an emotional Stroop task (Kitayama & Howard, 1994) assessing the extent to which they spontaneously attended to the emotional tone of words. Consistent with PRI, Calvinist Protestants were significantly less likely than non-Protestants to implicitly attend to emotional information in the work prime condition, but not in the nonwork condition.

American Calvinist Protestants' nonverbal behavior further indicates they are less relationally attentive to others at work than are members of other faiths and cultures (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). Research on behavioral mirroring and subconscious mimicry demonstrates people spontaneously adopt the body posture and mannerisms of interaction partners (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999). Sanchez-Burks (2002) primed American Calvinists (Methodists and Presbyterians) and non-Protestants with either a work context (by having them dress for a job interview) or a social context (by having them dress for the beach) and examined their nonverbal behaviors. Calvinist Protestants were less likely than non-Protestants to nonconsciously mimic the confederate's nonverbal behavior, but only when they had first been primed with a work context. When a social, nonwork context was primed, Calvinist Protestants were just as likely as non-Protestants to engage in nonverbal mimicry.

An inattention to relational and emotional cues among individuals high in exposure to PRI can lead to decrements in the job performance of coworkers raised in other cultural and religious traditions. In a field study, Latino American and Anglo American employees (the latter of whom presumably had a greater degree of prior exposure to Calvinist Protestantism) participated in a professional interview (Sanchez-Burks, Bartel, & Blount, 2009). The interviewer (actually a

research confederate) either subtly mimicked the participant's nonverbal behavior or did not. In the absence of the positive relational cues provided by the nonverbal mimicry, Latino Americans suffered from anxiety and decrements in interview performance. In contrast—and consistent with their comparatively greater degree of exposure to PRI—the performance of Anglo Americans was unaffected by whether their interaction partner engaged in nonverbal mimicry.

Related research finds that Anglo Americans are less than half as likely as Mexicans and Mexican Americans to remember relationship-relevant information from a workgroup meeting (Sanchez-Burks, Nisbett, & Ybarra, 2000). In contrast, there were no cultural differences in memory for the task-relevant information the group was discussing. Consistent with their greater degree of exposure to PRI, Anglo Americans seemed to focus entirely on the task at hand and were virtually oblivious to the interpersonal cues so carefully monitored by Mexicans and Mexican Americans.

Importantly, although some subgroups within the United States conform to PRI to a greater extent than others (e.g., Calvinist Protestants vs. Catholics, Anglo-Americans vs. Mexican-Americans), PRI is also a phenomenon that characterizes American society more broadly. Thus, when comparing cross-nationally, American workplace norms are far less likely to emphasize interpersonal and relational concerns than are workplaces norms in other cultures. Uhlmann, Heaphy, Ashford, Zhu, and Sanchez-Burks (in press) asked a multicultural sample of MBA students based in the United States to describe the workspaces of a professional and unprofessional employee. "Unprofessional" workplaces were significantly more likely to include objects referencing personal relationships (e.g., family photos). Moreover, the more time participants had spent in the United States, the more likely they were to define workplace professionalism in a manner consistent with PRI.

Further experimental research demonstrates that in workplace contexts (but not in social contexts) Americans adopt a direct communication style that deemphasizes socioemotional cues such as tone of voice. In contrast, East Asian cultures are characterized by an indirect communication style both inside and outside the workplace (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2003). American, Korean, and Chinese managers were provided with negative performance feedback couched in face-saving indirect cues and asked to interpret the meaning of the message. The feedback read, "Overall the evaluation indicates your strengths are in communication skills, anticipating events, and creativity. The other areas are not as strong as these—some are poor, but it's difficult to evaluate those areas. Good job!" In one condition, participants were told the feedback came from an annual performance evaluation and in the other condition that it come from one friend giving another friend feedback on the results of the latter's personality test. Korean and Chinese managers correctly inferred the feedback was actually quite negative, regardless of whether they believed it came from a work supervisor or a friend. In the friend condition, Americans likewise inferred the communicator was trying to soften objectively harsh feedback. However, in the work evaluation condition, Americans ignored the face-saving cues and incorrectly concluded the performance evaluation was relatively positive.

In an increasingly multicultural world, many individuals are raised in more than one cultural tradition. Do bicultural Americans exhibit implicit work values and norms consistent with American culture or with the other culture to which they have been exposed? Consistent with the dynamic constructivist model of culture (Hong, Chui, & Kung, 1997; Hong, Morris, Chiu & Benet-Martinez, 2000), this appears to depend on which cultural identity is made salient. Sanchez-Burks et al. (2003) primed bicultural Thai Americans with either their Thai or American identity and then examined their tendency to rely on direct versus indirect workplace communication. Participants' attention to socioemotional cues showed remarkable plasticity, such that they relied on indirect workplace communication when primed with their Thai identity, and direct communication when primed with their American identity. This indicates the activation of different cultural identities can lead to corresponding shifts in the tendency to conform to PRI.

Another manifestation of PRI is that Americans tend to be unrealistic about the consequences of relational conflict in workgroups, believing that such interpersonal conflict is compatible with healthy team functioning (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2008). This belief is in fact inaccurate: Relational conflict is detrimental to the performance of both American and non-American work groups (see De Dreu & Weingart, 2003, for a meta-analytic review). Regardless, Americans were more than twice as willing as East Asians to join a team likely to experience relational conflict. Thus, Americans, due to a culturally specific relational ideology, may be more likely to optimistically join work teams that are destined for interpersonal conflict and failure.

Of course, there are many cases in which one has little option other than to be part of a work group fraught with relational conflict. In such circumstances, PRI may be conducive to group success. Specifically, PRI may facilitate cooperation and collaboration between individuals who dislike each other personally. When emotions and interpersonal concerns are minimized at work, individuals with a history of negative feelings can more effectively function as part of the same team. Thus, there are likely situations in which the benefits of PRI greatly outweigh its drawbacks.

The cultural imprint of PRI extends into the very fabric of Americans' social and professional lives. For example, Americans are much less likely than non-Americans to socialize outside of work with people they know from their job (Kacperczyk, Baker, & Sanchez-Burks, 2011; Mor Barak, Findler, & Wind, 2003; Morris, Podolny, & Ariel, 2000). Further evidence for the real-world relevance of the PRI construct comes from the effects of intercultural training on performance in actual cross-cultural teams. American MBA students about to be assigned to work in either China or Chile were exposed to informational instruction and experiential exercises designed to increase their awareness of cultural differences in relational sensitivity (Sanchez-Burks, Nisbett, Lee, & Ybarra, 2007). Americans exposed to cultural training based on PRI experienced less awkward interactions with their Chilean and Chinese peers and more positive affective experiences during their foreign assignment. Participants trained in PRI were also more effective at eliciting positive responses from contacts in their host company

and in obtaining information necessary for success on their projects. Remarkably, training based on PRI was significantly more effective at improving cross-cultural teamwork than training using the extensively validated Cultural Assimilator (CA) approach (Bhawuk, 2001). In the CA, the most widely studied training method in intercultural awareness, participants are presented with descriptions of workplace incidents and receive feedback on whether their subjective interpretations correspond with the modal response of people from another culture. Future research should examine whether increasing awareness of cultural differences in relational sensitivity can be effectively incorporated as a standard aspect of the CA approach.

Achieving such increased awareness is an important goal, given that cultural differences in relational orientation pose a significant challenge for the functioning of cross-cultural work groups. Non-Americans may be offended by their American colleagues' seeming lack of interest in a personal relationship with them, and their work performance may suffer as a result of such negative cues. Conversely, American employees may perceive non-American coworkers as overly focused on emotions and personal issues, and even as unprofessional. Miscommunication and misunderstandings can likewise result from Americans' focus on direct workplace communication versus the more indirect communication found in East Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean cultures. Finally, the inaccurate American belief that interpersonal conflict is not harmful to team effectiveness is problematic in the face of not only cross-cultural differences in folk theories of conflict but of human nature as well.

THE AMERICAN VALORIZATION OF WORK

As noted earlier, an important source of America's distinctive work morality is the link drawn in Protestant theology between hard work and divine salvation (McNeil, 1954; Tocqueville, 1840/1990; Weber, 1904/1958). John Calvin and other early Protestant thinkers viewed work as a spiritual calling, believing that individuals who achieved material success through productive labor enjoyed the grace of God. Although early Calvinist theological perspectives emphasized predestination, in practice American Protestant communities allowed a person to signal that he or she was likely "chosen" by virtue of his or her labor and accomplishments on Earth. Thus, for all intents and purposes Protestant cultures prescribed hard work as a moral imperative. Indeed, the early Puritans even spoke of the "Gospel of work" (Gelertner, 2007, p. 61).

Traveling through the United States in the 1800s, Alexis de Tocqueville (1840/1990) marveled at Americans' long work hours and high work productivity. Consistent with this traditional Protestant work ethic, today's Americans spend more time at work than the citizens of most other economically developed democracies (Friedman, 2008; Linstedt, 2002; Wessel, 2003). One can contrast this state of affairs with comparatively negative attitudes toward work in Western Europe, where "postmaterialist" values emphasizing the importance of leisure and quality of life are more common (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

Negative cultural attitudes toward work in France are reflected institutionally in a legally mandated 35-hour work week, 5–8 weeks of paid vacation a year, retirement between the ages of 50 and 60 years with most of one's salary, generous unemployment benefits, and frequent labor strikes (Bonoli, 2000; Nadeau & Barlow, 2004; Schludi, 2005). Indeed, France provides an excellent comparison with the United States because it is an economically developed Western democracy with only modest Protestant influence.

Why do Americans spend so much time at work, despite a level of economic development conducive to reduced work hours and increased leisure time? The Protestant ethic moralizes and valorizes work done for noninstrumental reasons. A "good person" is expected to work hard and for long hours even when he or she has no material need to do so. Other cultures that strongly value work tend to do so for more practical reasons, such as the need in poor countries to meet basic survival needs (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). In contrast, Protestantism views work as something that should be pursued for its own sake. Reflecting the implicit legacy of this ideology, empirical studies show Americans intuitively valorize individuals who work for no material reasons (Uhlmann et al., 2009). For example, in one study, Americans were found to be more likely than Mexicans to praise a young postal worker who continued working after winning the lottery.

Much prior theorizing suggests the Protestant work ethic has become secularized in modern times (e.g., Fischer, 1989; Weber, 1904/1958). However, recent evidence indicates that, for contemporary Americans, work continues to be implicitly linked to religious cognition (Uhlmann et al., 2011). American, Canadian, Argentinian, German, and Italian participants completed a scrambled-sentences puzzle (Bargh, Chen, & Burrows, 1996; Srull & Wyer, 1979) containing words related to either divine salvation (e.g., heaven, saved) or neutral concepts. Reflecting the Protestant link between work and divine salvation, only American participants responded to the implicit salvation prime by working harder on a subsequent task. A multistep funneled debriefing (Bargh & Chartrand, 2000) indicated that participants were not aware their work behavior was influenced by the salvation primes.

Because work is so heavily moralized in America, and sexuality is moralized in many cultures, American work and sex attitudes are functionally intertwined (Uhlmann et al., 2009). The implicit link between work and sex morality in American cognition has its roots in basic pressures for cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1957; Greenwald et al., 2002; Heider, 1958). To the extent that work is associated with moral purity, and sexual restraint is associated with moral purity, hard work and sexual restraint should in turn be linked with one another. As a result, priming traditional work values should activate traditional sexually conservative morality and vice versa. To test this hypothesis, Uhlmann et al. (2011) primed bicultural Asian Americans with either their Asian cultural identity or their American cultural identity and then with either words related to work or with neutral concepts. As expected, bicultural Asian Americans responded to an implicit work prime by endorsing a restrictive dress code, but only when their American identity was salient.

Reflecting the implicit influence of Protestant beliefs on the judgments and actions of contemporary Americans, not only devout American Protestants but even non-Protestant and less religious Americans exhibited these effects, which we have referred to as manifestations of implicit Puritanism (Uhlmann et al., 2009, 2011). In other words, even non-Protestant Americans praised a lottery winner who kept working for no material reasons, responded to an implicit salvation prime by working harder, and implicitly linked work and sex morality. It is noteworthy that although the differences are small, American Calvinist Protestants are more likely to act in line with Protestant Relational Ideology than are American Catholics (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). However, the Sanchez-Burks (2002) studies on PRI recruited Presbyterians and Methodists, the two central Calvinist denominations among American Protestants. In contrast, research on implicit Puritanism has relied on convenience samples varying enormously in choice of faith, Protestant denomination, and level of religiosity. It seems likely that although Americans in general implicitly conform to Protestant values, individuals raised in a strong tradition of Calvinist Protestantism (e.g., devout Presbyterians and Methodists) are especially likely to do so.

Although the valorization of work in America is conducive to high productivity, it can lead to conflict with members of cultures who view work in more instrumental terms. As noted earlier, the French greatly valorize leisure and quality of life, values reflected in labor laws that mandate 5–8 weeks of paid vacation per year and norms and regulations discouraging long work hours. This can cause resentment and conflict in cross-national collaborations between American and French colleagues. The Americans tend to resent the periodic absences of French team members at seemingly critical points in the project and can even perceive them as outright lazy (Beyene & Delong, 2008). The French, in contrast, may deeply resent the higher salaries paid to counterparts in the US branch of the company based on the latter's greater number of work hours (Beyene & Delong, 2008).

THE ETHIC OF INDIVIDUAL MERIT

We now turn to a third major way in which America's Protestant heritage has shaped American work morality: the distinct emphasis placed on individual merit. One of the roots of American individualism is the Protestant emphasis on a personal relationship with God. At the same time, the Calvinist Protestant notion of earthly reward and punishment contributes to the American belief in meritocracy.

Cross-national surveys highlight American individualism, even relative to other Western cultures (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993; Henrich et al., 2010). A history of open frontiers, and persistently high levels of geographic mobility and immigration, contribute to this exceptional individualism (Kitayama, Ishii, Imada, Takemura, & Ramaswamy, 2006; Nisbett et al., 2001; Oishi & Kisling, 2009). Another important factor is America's continued devotion to the Protestant religion. Catholicism has traditionally focused on the role

of the Church in mediating between individual believers and God. In contrast, Protestantism advocates an individual relationship with God not dependent on any religious collective. Martin Luther wrote that each individual is "a perfectly free lord, subject to none" (as quoted in Sampson, 2000, p. 1427). This theological emphasis derived in part from the Protestant reformers' disgust with the corrupt selling of indulgences and other perceived heresies of the Catholic Church (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Weber, 1904/1958). Even today, higher levels of individualism are observed in historically Protestant countries than in historically Catholic countries (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993; Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

The Calvinist notion of earthly reward and punishment further contributes to America's uniquely strong faith in individual merit. Catholicism promises only heavenly rewards, often consigning the virtuous to material deprivation in this world. In contrast, John Calvin argued that hard-earned success is evidence of divine favor. Thus, achieving material wealth is a sign the person is one of the select few chosen by God to go to heaven.

In keeping with traditional Protestant beliefs, 96% of Americans believe the principle that "with hard work... anyone can succeed" should be taught to children (Baker, 2005). More so than members of other wealthy countries, Americans are convinced people generally get what they deserve in life (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997). This belief in merit is reflected in attributions for success and failure. Only a third of Americans believe that when a person fails in life it is mainly due to forces outside his or her control, but two-thirds of Germans, French, and Italians make such external attributions (Schuck & Wilson, 2008).

Americans widely view their country as a land of equal opportunity where hard work is rewarded with professional success. However, this is a shared belief unsupported by the empirical evidence. International comparisons indicate the United States actually has less income mobility than Canada and most of Western Europe (Burtless & Haskins, 2008; DeParle, 2012). Nevertheless, over half of Americans, as opposed to only one-third of Spaniards and the French, consider high levels of economic competition important in order to motivate people to work hard and achieve (Schuck & Wilson, 2008). Americans are further more likely than citizens of other countries to believe remuneration and continued employment should be based entirely on job performance (Lipset, 1996). In one international survey, 77% of American managers believed that an incompetent employee should be fired immediately (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993). In contrast, only 42% their British counterparts favored this option. The figures were even lower for the other comparison countries: a mere 31% of German managers, 27% of Italian managers, 26% of French managers, and 19% of Korean managers considered it appropriate to terminate an unsatisfactory employee after 15 years of loyal service to the company (see also Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

Cultural differences in a belief in personal merit are reflected in striking discrepant regulations and practices regarding firing employees (Asselin, 2000; Nadeau & Barlow, 2004). In France and the United Kingdom, for example, terminating an employee requires an independent tribunal with the burden of proof resting

on the organization. Rather than fire an incompetent or otherwise undesirable employee in this manner, many firms prefer to place the employee in show positions with little to no power or responsibility (a practice called "cupboarding" or "putting them in the cupboard"; in France, there is even a popular comedic movie by this name). In many cases, the organization's goal is simply to limit the damage caused by an ineffective employee. In others, the hope is the employee will "get the message" that he or she is not wanted and leave voluntarily.

Although it can increase the motivation to achieve positive personal and organizational outcomes, the Protestant notion that God rewards the good with earthly prosperity and punishes wrongdoers with material suffering also has the effect of promoting prejudice against those less fortunate (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Katz & Hass, 1988; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). In experimental studies, priming Protestant work values led Americans to endorse negative stereotypes of Black Americans (Biernat et al., 1996; Katz & Hass, 1988), led obese women to feel negatively about themselves (Quinn & Crocker, 1999), and led to increased psychological rationalizations for the unfair treatment of low-status individuals (McCoy & Major, 2007).

The kind of behaviors encouraged and elicited by Protestant work values such as individualism and a belief in merit have likely contributed to the structure of the economy of the United States, which is characterized by free competition, skewed distribution of wealth, and weak social welfare. Thus, we again find American work morality is a double-edged sword. The ethic of individual merit facilitates free competition by acting against nepotism and corruption. However, it also promotes prejudice against individuals who fail to obtain employment as well as low-status groups such as the obese and racial minorities.

Different beliefs about the importance and relevance of individual merit can lead to conflict in multicultural workplaces. For example, personnel selection practices that are perceived as "efficient" from an American point of view may not be from other cultural perspectives. Indeed, removing noncontributing or otherwise unqualified group members may be perceived as disloyal and inappropriate in some cultural contexts. For example, Mexican bank employees are more likely than American bank employees to report they would include an incompetent friend in their work group (Zurcher, Meadow, & Zurcher, 1965). Tellingly, rather than perceive themselves as choosing friendship over moral principles, Mexicans saw themselves as upholding a different moral principle. When asked what the study was about, Americans perceived it as a survey about honesty. In contrast, Mexicans construed it as a survey about loyalty. Disagreements in cross-cultural teams can result when members of different cultures form such profoundly different construals of the same situation or decision.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH ON AMERICAN WORK MORALITY

The research described in this chapter complements prior work in sociology, political science, and related disciplines by providing the first experimental evidence

of the influence of Calvinist Protestantism on the judgments and behaviors of contemporary Americans and its implications for cross-cultural collaborations. At the same time, these studies raise unanswered questions that point to exciting future research directions.

Similarities and Differences Between Protestant Relational Ideology and Implicit Puritanism

PRI and implicit Puritanism can both be broadly described as ideologies, defined as a "body of doctrine, myth, belief, etc., that guides an individual, social movement, institution, class, or large group" (Ideology, n.d.; Kennedy, 1979). In addition, PRI and implicit Puritanism share deep roots in Calvinist Protestant theology (Weber, 1904/1958) and the tendency for individuals' implicit cognitions to strongly reflect traditional cultural values (Banaji, 2001; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995).

At the same time, however, there are important differences in focus and underlying psychological processes between implicit Puritanism and PRI. Research on implicit Puritanism seeks to explain why Americans valorize hard work as an end unto itself. PRI, by contrast, deals with the process of working well, prescribing impersonal and unemotional workplace relationships. Moreover, while implicit Puritanism is based in a person's sense of what is morally right versus wrong, PRI deals with notions of what is normatively appropriate and professional. Thus, while Americans view individuals who lack a strong work ethic as bad people (Uhlmann et al., 2009), employees who frequently refer to their family while at work are seen as unprofessional rather than immoral (Uhlmann et al., in press).

There are a number of means by which this theoretical distinction between norms regarding workplace professionalism and personal moral values could be tested more directly. We hypothesize that Americans high in self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974; Snyder & Gangestad, 2000) or for whom normative concerns are temporarily salient (Epley & Gilovich, 1999) should be more likely to conform to the impersonal work relations prescribed by PRI. In contrast, Americans' moral judgments of individuals who fail to uphold the traditional work ethic should be more strongly influenced by manipulations of moral outrage (Tetlock et al., 2007) than by concerns about what is normatively appropriate.

How Secular Are American Work Values?

Most prior theorizing suggests that once deeply religious Protestant ideals have, over time, become secularized in American culture (e.g., Fischer, 1989; Weber, 1904/1958). However, that implicitly priming divine salvation leads both religious and nonreligious Americans to work harder (Uhlmann et al., 2011) suggests that at least some historically Protestant beliefs remain nonsecular in that they are

still linked to religious concepts. If American work morality were wholly secular, activating thoughts about salvation would have no effect on contemporary Americans' work behavior (or at the very least, it would not influence the work behavior of nonreligious Americans).

Future research should examine whether US individualism and belief in meritocracy are secularized vestiges of Calvinist Protestantism or continue to be linked to and shaped by religious ideas from American cultural history. We predict that nonconsciously priming religious concepts (e.g., God, heaven, saved) will lead Americans (but not members of comparison cultures) to behave in an individualistic manner and seek to uphold the merit principle in their decisions regarding whom to include in their work groups.

It also has yet to be examined whether PRI is a secular or nonsecular ideology. The original theory proposed by Sanchez-Burks (2002, 2005) suggests that impersonal work norms in the United States no longer have the same religious overtones they held in Puritan New England. However, the salvation prime effects on American work behavior observed by Uhlmann et al. (2011) raise the possibility that priming religious concepts can likewise influence Americans' standards for workplace professionalism. For example, nonconsciously activating words like God, heaven, and saved might reduce the extent to which Americans engage in nonwork referencing while at their job.

Exposure to, or Identification With, American Culture?

Another key question for future research is whether a person must actively self-identify as an American to be influenced by American work values or whether exposure to and knowledge of American culture is in some cases sufficient. This issue is particularly relevant given the global presence of American media. Is this sort of indirect cultural exposure implicitly Americanizing the world, or are cultures retaining their own work values and relational styles? Consider, for example, that despite generous government subsidies for French films, the average French person watches more American movies than French movies (Lange, 1998). Is a French person with a high degree of exposure to American media, but who does not self-identify with America in any way, any more likely to favor impersonal work relations and moralize work as an end unto itself? This question holds implications for the extent to which citizens of an increasingly global world are coming to implicitly adopt the norms and values present in American work groups.

Consider also the effects of cultural identity primes on the judgments and behaviors of bicultural individuals. Bicultural Thai-Americans utilize an impersonal workplace communication style when their American identity is salient, but not when their Thai identity is salient (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2003). Also, bicultural Asian Americans exhibit implicit Puritanism only when their American identity is primed (Uhlmann et al., 2011). Is it truly necessary to identify with two cultures at once to show such effects, or is mere knowledge of American work values sufficient to lead individuals to respond to primes associated with US culture

in this way? For example, would a French person well aware of the influence of the Protestant work ethic on the contemporary United States respond to a subliminally flashed American flag by implicitly conforming to the norms of American work groups? This remains an open question for future empirical inquiry.

Individual Differences in Implicit Work Cognitions

Research on PRI and implicit Puritanism has relied primarily on experimental designs such as the prime-to-behavior paradigm popularized by Bargh and his colleagues (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). This use of experimental manipulations complements scholarship from other fields (Lipset, 1996; Tocqueville, 1840/1990; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997; Weber, 1904/1958) by allowing for confident causal inferences about the influence of Protestant work values on contemporary Americans. However, individual differences measures of implicit attitudes and beliefs have also been developed, among these the Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998), evaluative priming tasks (Fazio, Sanbonmatsu, Powell, & Kardes, 1986), and Affect Misattribution Procedure (AMP; Payne, Cheng, Govorun, & Stewart, 2005). Such implicit measures could be profitably employed to assess individual differences in implicit cognitions related to work.

For example, the extent to which Americans implicitly associate work with divine salvation on the IAT may moderate the extent to which they respond to nonconsciously primed words related to salvation with improved performance on collaborative work tasks. One could additionally examine whether a person's degree of exposure to US culture predicts the extent to which he or she associates work with religious concepts, as well as potential longitudinal changes in implicit associations with work among recent immigrants to the United States. Of particular interest is whether there exists a critical period for the absorption of not only explicit (Cheung, Chudek, & Heine, 2011) but also implicit cultural values.

Implicit attitudes toward work could also be treated as an outcome measure in experimental studies. Although originally thought to be stable and difficult to change, empirical investigations indicate that automatic associations are in fact highly plastic, shifting readily in response to situational factors (Blair, 2002). For example, being deprived of nicotine causes smokers to exhibit more favorable associations with cigarettes (Sherman, Rose, Koch, Presson, & Chassin, 2003), and hungry participants exhibit more positive automatic evaluations with food-related words (Seibt, Häfner, & Deutsch, 2007). This raises the possibility that, for Americans, implicit associations with emotionality may shift between work and nonwork contexts. Consistent with PRI, Americans may automatically associate emotion words with "inappropriate" on an Implicit Association Test completed at work, but not when the IAT is completed at home (Yoshida, Peach, Zanna, & Spencer, 2012). Members of cultures not steeped in a tradition of Calvinist Protestantism should be less likely to exhibit workplace-specific negative associations with emotional expression.

Regional Variability and Subcultural Enclaves Within the United States

Empirical studies on PRI and implicit Puritanism have utilized samples of American students and lay adults collected primarily (although not exclusively) in the Midwest, New England, Los Angeles, and New York areas. Some of these studies relied on student samples at Yale University, the University of Southern California, and the University of Michigan, who come from diverse regions of the United States. However, future research should more systematically compare the extent to which the work values and norms of Americans from different regions of the United States are influenced by traditional Protestant beliefs. Southern norms of interpersonal warmth and graciousness, for example, could reflect a reduced influence of Calvinist Protestantism brought about by geographic distance from New England. Notably, significant regional differences in individualism are observed within the United States (Vandello & Cohen, 1999) as well as Japan (Kitayama et al., 2006), raising the possibility of similar regional variability in PRI and implicit Puritanism.

At the same time, subcultural enclaves within the United States may promote values and norms that counteract or even replace traditional American work morality. The extent to which individuals raised in such environments exhibit implicit workways consistent with the broader culture, with those of their local subculture, or (perhaps most interestingly) alternate between the two (Hong et al., 1997, 2000; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2003; Uhlmann et al., 2011) has yet to be fully addressed.

Workplace Relational Ideologies of Historically Protestant But Now Secular Cultures

Also worthy of further investigation is the implicit work values of historically Protestant cultures that have since secularized. Implicit Puritanism effects (e.g., the tendency to respond to an implicit salvation prime by working harder; Uhlmann et al., 2011) are readily observed in the United States, but not Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom, suggesting that Protestant cultural roots are not sufficient to produce such effects. Although cultural uniqueness is practically impossible to establish definitively (Norenzayan & Heine, 2005), this does raise the possibility that implicit Puritanism is a uniquely American phenomenon.

To provide the most conservative test possible of the hypothesis that exposure to Calvinist Protestantism promotes impersonal work relations, the empirical studies that first established the existence of PRI compared subgroups within the United States (i.e., American Calvinist Protestants vs. American Catholics; Sanchez-Burks, 2002). Subsequent cross-national PRI studies have relied on comparisons between the United States and non-Protestant cultures (e.g., Mexico, Korea, China, and Thailand). Future cross-cultural comparisons should examine whether members of historically Protestant, but now secular cultures

(e.g., Germany and the United Kingdom), endorse impersonal workplace relations. It remains an empirical question whether workgroups including both Americans and Germans will exhibit clashing or compatible relational norms.

Psychological Underpinnings of the Asian Work Ethic

Finally, future research should seek to better understand the implicit roots of Asian workways. With regard to our earlier distinction between valuing hard work and norms of workplace professionalism, Americans and East Asians most clearly differ in the latter. East Asians with exposure to US culture are less likely to approve of nonwork referencing in professional contexts (Uhlmann et al., in press), and Americans aware of cultural differences in workplace relational norms are more successful in East Asian business environments (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2007). Moreover, bicultural Asian Americans are more likely to rely on direct and decontextualized communication when their American identity is salient (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2003). Thus, individuals from the United States and East Asian countries display starkly different professional norms with regard to socio-emotional displays at work.

At the same time, many East Asian cultures are characterized by a strong work ethic. This is clear from demographic data on number of hours worked per year by the typical employee (Friedman, 2008; Linstedt, 2002; Wessel, 2003). Of particular interest, the Japanese work only slightly fewer hours per year than Americans do (Miller, 2010). Anecdotal evidence, such as the famous "sleep capsule hotels" used by exhausted businessmen to avoid the commute home, further attest to the Japanese work ethic (Tabuchi, 2010). Indeed, *karoshi*, or "death by overwork," is legally recognized as a cause of death in Japan, and 40% of all Japanese workers are concerned they might become victims of *karoshi* (Rowley, 2009).

It is very interesting to consider potential cross-cultural differences in the reasons for lengthy working hours. Suggesting noteworthy differences in implicit work values, East Asians do not exhibit the implicit link between work and sex morality so clearly evident among Americans (Uhlmann et al., 2011). We speculate that while US work morality finds its ultimate roots in America's religious heritage, Asian cultural mores regarding work find their roots in more secular concerns such as familial duty and the fear of social exclusion at one's organization. If so, then priming religious concepts should lead Americans (but not East Asians) to contribute more work to collaborative projects and praise a lottery winner who continues to work at a menial job. Conversely, activating concepts related to duty and/or concerns about social rejection should increase East Asians' commitment to hard work, but not that of Americans. In addition, bicultural Asian Americans should be more likely to exhibit an association between work and salvation on an Implicit Association Test when their American identity is salient compared to when their Asian identity is salient. These and many other as-yet-untested hypotheses have the potential to shed considerable new light on the psychological underpinnings of the cultural moralization of work.

CONCLUSION

America's exceptional cultural orientation toward work reflects the profound imprint left by the founding religious communities (Weber, 1904/1958). Unique aspects of the Protestant faith, in particular Calvinist beliefs, help account for impersonal American work norms (Sanchez-Burks, 2005), the valorization of noninstrumental work in America (Uhlmann et al., 2009, 2011), and the American ethic of individual merit (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; McCoy & Major, 2007). The influence of traditional Protestant beliefs on the judgments and actions of contemporary Americans is often implicit in nature. As a result, Protestantism shapes the work-related behaviors not only of devout American Protestants but also of less religious and non-Protestant Americans. These highly distinctive norms, values, and behaviors related to work represent unique challenges for cross-cultural groups.

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