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The Rhetorical Use of Values to Justify Social and Intergroup Attitudes

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In this article we review research relevant to Rokeach's (1973) suggestion that, by appealing to socially shared conceptions of what is good, people may use values to ego defensively rationalize or justify their attitudes. In line with this value justification hypothesis, research suggests that, although attitudes may originally stem from the relative importance that people ascribe to various values, once formed, attitudes may well produce self-serving biases that affect both the values that people deem relevant to an issue and the complexity or open-mindedness of their reasoning about an issue. In addition, just as people may appeal to values to justify their attitudes toward social issues such as nuclear weaponry or abortion, data suggest that people may exaggerate perceptions of intergroup value differences in an effort to rationalize prejudicial intergroup attitudes and justify discrimination. Aspects of the ego defensive use of values that merit elaboration and have yet to be addressed, as well as the more general implications of a functional approach to the study of values, are discussed.

Guided by the initial wave of research adopting a functional approach to the study of attitudes (e.g., Katz, 1960; Katz, Sarnoff, & McClintock, 1956; Sarnoff, 1960; Smith, Bruner, & White, 1956), Rokeach (1973) stated that "all of a person's values are conceived to maintain and enhance the master-sentiment of self-regard—by helping a person adjust to his society, defend his ego against

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threat, and test reality" (p. 15). Like Shavitt's (1989) suggestion that the functions of attitudes are largely determined by the characteristics of attitude objects, Rokeach (1973) described the functions of values as inextricably tied to their content. Valued end states such as wisdom or a sense of accomplishment, for example, may readily lend themselves to a knowledge function, whereas a value such as social recognition may be tied to adjustment needs. Similarly, given that authoritarians' attitudes tend to serve an ego defensive function (Katz, 1960; Katz et al., 1956), it is conceivable that the values they deem important, such as family and national security (Altemeyer, 1994), fulfill ego defensive needs.

Rokeach also asserted that, irrespective of their content, values are implicated in psychological processes that fulfill knowledge, social adjustive, and ego defensive needs. Research that has established that people's general value priorities determine their attitudes toward more specific issues, and that these attitudes, in turn, guide their behavior (e.g., Ball-Rokeach, Rokeach, & Grube, 1984; Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973, 1979; Schwartz & Inbar-Saban, 1988; Tetlock, 1986),[1] may reflect the knowledge function whereby values impose order and meaning on the world and prepare people for action. And Feather's (1975, 1979) research, which documented that students were happier with school and that workers experienced greater work satisfaction when their own values were congruent with those of their environments, suggests that values may indeed play a social adjustive role.

Our own research has been concerned primarily with the ego defensive use of values. In this regard, Rokeach (1973) described values as

> standards that tell us how to rationalize in the psychoanalytic sense, beliefs, attitudes, and actions that would otherwise be personally and socially unacceptable so that we will end up with personal feelings of morality and competence, both indispensable ingredients for the maintenance and enhancement of self-esteem. An unkind remark made to a friend, for example, may be rationalized as an honest communication, . . . an act of aggression by a nation may be justified on the basis of one human value or another such as national security or the preservation of liberty. The process of rationalization, so crucial a component in virtually all of the defense mechanisms, would be impossible if man did not possess values to rationalize with. (p. 13)

In this paper we review research that examines if, and how, people use values as ego defensive rationalizations of their attitudes toward social issues and social groups. We also address some of the theoretical and empirical issues raised by this research and discuss the more general implications of a functional approach to values.

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[1]In this paper, "values" refer to people's beliefs about obligations, what they *ought* to do and strive for. Although some attitude researchers (e.g., Eagly & Chaiken, 1993) regard values as generalized attitudes in that values, such as equality or freedom, do not define a target or particular behavior, it is the oughtness associated with values that differentiates them from related constructs such as attitudes. Thus, whereas attitudes refer to people's evaluative beliefs, desires, or preferences, values refer to beliefs about what is, ultimately, desirable or preferable (Smith, 1991).

Justifying Attitudes Toward Social Issues

Derived from accentuation theory (Eiser & van der Pligt, 1984), the value justification hypothesis states that people with opposing attitudes toward an issue will appeal to different general values to rationalize or justify their attitudes. Eiser (1987) speculated that such differential appeals to values would be reflected in disparities in people's perceptions of how *relevant* various values are to the consideration of an attitude issue and, importantly, that these differences would occur over and above any differences in the importance people ascribe to these values. So, as exemplified by Ball-Rokeach, Power, Guthrie, and Waring's (1990) documentation of the media's use of values to frame and impose meaning on the abortion debate, people who endorse the availability of abortion might perceive the value of freedom as highly relevant to this issue, while people who oppose abortion may regard traditional values such as the family and religious salvation as more relevant value considerations.

To establish the plausibility of Eiser's (1987) value justification hypothesis, Kristiansen and Zanna (1988) measured university students' attitudes toward two social issues, namely "making abortion available on demand" and "allowing nuclear weapons in Canada." Within a series of randomly ordered questionnaires, these students also completed Rokeach's (1967) terminal Value Survey in which they ranked the importance of 18 desired end states of existence as guiding principles in their lives (e.g., equality, freedom). In addition, perceptions of value relevance were obtained by having participants rank the values in terms of how *relevant* they thought they were to the consideration of each of the two attitude issues.

Analyses of these data revealed that people with different attitudes toward abortion and nuclear weapons displayed many similarities in the values they deemed relevant to each issue. People with negative and positive attitudes toward abortion, for example, both stated that equality, self-respect, and inner harmony were relevant value considerations. Similarly, both the proponents and opponents of nuclear weapons regarded a world at peace as the most relevant value consideration. Nevertheless, and in line with the value justification hypothesis, there were important psychological shifts in the values that people with different attitudes regarded as relevant considerations. People who favored the deployment of nuclear weapons regarded national security as more relevant than did people who opposed nuclear weapons. Similarly, people who approved of abortion on demand regarded freedom as more relevant than did those who opposed abortion.

Consistent with research examining the value–attitude relation, these data also demonstrated that people with different attitudes had different value priorities. The proponents of abortion, for example, assigned more priority to values such as a comfortable life, freedom, and pleasure, whereas opponents placed

more importance on religious salvation. However, the observed attitudinal differences in perceptions of value relevance did not always coincide with attitudinal differences in value importance. And when they did, controlling for value importance did not alter the findings. Thus, consistent with the suggestion that values may be used ego defensively (Eiser, 1987; Rokeach 1973, 1979), people did seem to make special appeals to those values that could be used to rationalize their attitudes.

Using a different methodology, Dickinson (1991) also reported findings consistent with the value justification hypothesis. In her study, undergraduates completed Rokeach's (1967) terminal and instrumental value surveys, a measure of their perception of the wage changes required to restore equity for each of seven jobs, and then gave written justifications for their wage recommendations. Consistent with the guiding impact of values on attitudes, participants' judgments of the wage changes necessary to restore pay equity were a function of their value priorities: participants who made more equitable recommendations, for example, placed more importance on equality and inner harmony and ascribed less importance to a comfortable life, an exciting life, and pleasure. By comparison, the values that participants cited as justifications for their recommendations were largely independent of their value priorities. Unfortunately Dickinson (1991) did not report on the relation between participants' wage recommendations and the values they cited to justify these decisions. Nevertheless, her participants did justify their decisions by appealing to the values articulated in the social rhetoric regarding wage demands rather than their own values.

In sum, and consistent with the speculations of Rokeach (1973, 1979) and Eiser (1987), it seems that people with different attitudes not only hold different value priorities, but the data thus far suggest that people also differentially refer to those values that can justify or rationalize their own attitudinal perspectives. Given this, together with the fact that the values recruited in such social dilemmas are ones that, taken in isolation, are regarded as legitimate moral imperatives by most people, it is not surprising such issues provoke heated moral debate (McGrath, 1985).

Value Justification and Reasoning About Social Issues

Tetlock (1986) reported that people's value priorities were related to the nature of their thoughts and reasoning about social issues. In particular, he observed that the more a social issue aroused a conflict between two values that people regarded as highly and equally important, the more their reasoning was differentiated, in that it acknowledged the contradictory pros and cons of both sides of an issue, and integratively complex, in that ways of coping with the trade-offs between the conflicting values were considered. In view of this, Tetlock suggested that, whereas people may resolve an attitudinal dilemma by using

a simple cognitive solution such as bolstering or the spreading of alternatives (Festinger, 1964) when the conflicting values activated by an issue are of unequal importance, people are more vigilant when evaluating issues that arouse a conflict between highly and equally important values.

Conceptually, Tetlock's (1986, 1989) value pluralism model of ideological reasoning and Eiser's (1987) value justification hypothesis map neatly on to Abelson's (1959) hierarchy of methods of resolving belief dilemmas. Abelson theorized that people first attempt to resolve dilemmas by denial (denying the negative aspects of an object) and bolstering (associating a desired object with positive attributes). If these methods prove inadequate, Abelson suggested that people may resolve an attitudinal dilemma by differentiation (splitting an object into two parts, one good and one bad) or transcendence (combining the positive and negative attributes of an object into one larger superordinate unit). In the present context, Tetlock's notions of differentiation and integration parallel Abelson's concepts of differentiation and transcendence, respectively, and value justification effects conform to what Abelson (1959) referred to as denial and bolstering. Given this, one would expect people to be more likely to use value justification as a strategy to bolster or rationalize their attitudes when the issue involves values that they regard as either unimportant or differentially important. By comparison, integratively complex reasoning about both sides of an issue should be more likely when an issue arouses tension between highly and equally important values. That is, when people are more strongly motivated to be attentive and open to information.

It should be noted, however, that the complexity of people's reasoning about an issue depends not only on their values, but also varies systematically with their attitudes. Relevant here is Schroder, Driver, and Streufert's (1967) distinction between structurally simple and complex attitudes. Simple attitudes are based on a narrow range of highly salient, attitude-congruent information. Complex attitudes, in contrast, are based on a broader range of both consonant and dissonant information and, as a result, are likely to be less extreme than simple attitudes. Consistent with this distinction, de Vries and Walker (1988) found that the reasoning of students who either favored or opposed capital punishment was less integratively complex in comparison to the reasoning displayed by students with more neutral attitudes toward the death penalty.

Following Tetlock's value pluralism model, de Vries and Walker (1988) speculated that the issue of capital punishment might activate a conflict between the value of law and human life, and that the relative importance of these values might account for the pattern of both participants' attitudes and the complexity of their reasoning regarding capital punishment. Yet it is also possible that, just as attitudes may affect the values that people deem relevant to the consideration of a social issue, attitudes may also be the immediate antecedents of the integrative complexity of people's reasoning about social issues. Thus, although the relative

importance that people ascribe to various values may determine their attitudes, after having formed their attitudes, people may display less complex reasoning about an issue and attempt to defend their attitudes by exaggerating the relevance of values that support their attitudes and minimizing the relevance of values that support the opposite perspective. To assess this possibility, Kristiansen and Matheson (1990) examined the relation between university students' value priorities, attitudes, the extent to which they displayed value justification effects, and the integrative complexity of their reasoning about social issues.

Using Tetlock's (1986) methodology, a pilot study revealed that peace and national security were the two values likely to be brought into conflict by the issue of "allowing nuclear weapons in Canada." In the main study, students were first given five minutes to write down all their thoughts regarding the deployment of nuclear weapons in Canada. Participants next completed items assessing their attitudes toward allowing nuclear weapons in Canada, rated their attitudinal confidence, and ranked both the personal importance of Rokeach's (1967) 18 terminal values and the relevance of these values to the consideration of this nuclear issue.

Again, these students' attitudes were tied to their value priorities: students who assigned more importance to national security and less importance to peace reported more favorable attitudes toward the deployment of nuclear weapons. In accord with the value justification hypothesis, participants with different attitudes also differed in the extent to which they regarded peace and national security as relevant value considerations: students who opposed the deployment of nuclear weapons regarded peace as more relevant than national security, whereas students who favored nuclear weapons had exactly the opposite perceptions of value relevance. And again, these value justification effects held when differences in value importance were controlled statistically. Further, as suggested by Tetlock (1986, 1989) and Abelson (1959), value justification effects occurred more as the conflicting values, peace and national security, became more differentially important to participants. That is, students regarded the value that they personally deemed more important as more relevant to the issue at hand, thereby framing their own attitudinal stance in the most favorable light.

Consistent with de Vries and Walker's (1988) findings, the integrative complexity of participants' reasoning about nuclear weapons, as determined by their thought protocols (Tetlock & Suedfeld, 1988), was a quadratic function of their attitudes. Thus, relative to students with neutral attitudes, those who opposed or favored the deployment of nuclear weapons not only displayed stronger value justification effects, they also displayed less complex reasoning about the issue. And not surprisingly, students who favored or opposed nuclear weapons were also more confident in their attitudes in comparison to the confidence expressed by students with neutral attitudes.

Together, then, the finding that both the integrative complexity of students'

reasoning and their value justification efforts were a function of attitudes lends support to Schroder et al.'s (1967) distinction between structurally simple and complex attitudes. Moreover, these findings endorse the notion that, although attitudes may originally stem from the relative importance with which people hold various values, once formed people's attitudes may produce self-serving biases that affect both their reasoning and the values they deem relevant to an issue.

The one surprising result of Kristiansen and Matheson's (1990) study was the failure to replicate Tetlock's (1986) value pluralism model of ideological reasoning: the complexity of students' reasoning about nuclear weapons was not related to the extent to which peace and national security were regarded as highly and equally important. An obvious explanation for this lies in the possibility that value conflict was not aroused by this issue. In this regard, both students who opposed nuclear weaponry and those with neutral attitudes valued peace more than national security, whereas those who endorsed the deployment of nuclear weapons valued peace and national security equally. Further, although peace and national security were equally important to the participants who favored nuclear weapons, their mean importance was at best moderate. It is therefore possible that Kristiansen and Matheson (1990) failed to replicate Tetlock's (1986) finding simply because none of their participants regarded peace and national security as *both* highly and equally important, and so none of them experienced the value conflict necessary to motivate complex reasoning. Because some of their participants did engage in complex reasoning, however, this interpretation implies that contrary to Tetlock's (1986) model people can display complex ideological reasoning in the absence of value conflict.

A more intriguing explanation for Kristiansen and Matheson's failure to replicate Tetlock's (1986) findings lies in Kimmel's (1985) discussion of the two policy perspectives regarding the prevention of nuclear war. The *peace through cooperation perspective* views peace as stemming from international trust and cooperation. This, of course, is the perspective adopted by people who oppose the deployment of nuclear weapons and who view peace and national security through nuclear weapons as incompatible value trade-offs. The second policy perspective is the *peace through strength approach.* Proponents of this view typically favor nuclear weapons because they regard the deployment of nuclear weapons as deterring a nuclear attack and thereby enhancing the likelihood of peace. In the peace through strength perspective, then, national security is regarded as a means of attaining peace. This implies that, although people who favor nuclear weapons may value peace and national security equally, they may not experience value conflict because national security and peace are not regarded as incompatible trade-offs, but rather as inextricably linked.

Such perceptions of the intercontingent relations between values may also account for de Vries and Walker's (1988) finding that students who were pro or

con capital punishment displayed less complex reasoning relative to those with more neutral attitudes. That is, although de Vries and Walker's anti-capital punishment students may have displayed less complex reasoning because they valued human life over the law, their pro-capital punishment students may not have displayed complex reasoning because they regarded the law as a means of protecting human life and so did not experience value conflict. In line with this, Kristiansen (1989) found that university students who favored the reinstatement of capital punishment regarded capital punishment as significantly more instrumental to the protection of human life relative to students with neutral attitudes toward capital punishment.

As Rokeach (1973) speculated, then, terminal values may operate as instrumental values in the sense that a value like national security may be regarded as a means of achieving other desired end states such as peace. Indeed, Kristiansen (1987) found that the consideration of the value of health, both as an end in itself and as a means to other desired values, enhanced the explanation of people's health-related behavioral intentions. Thus, within the present context, perceiving potentially conflicting values as inextricably linked may provide a transcendent way of justifying attitudes and resolving attitudinal dilemmas, particularly when the implicated values are equally important. In view of this, it would be informative to examine when values are regarded as a means to other values in order to reduce value conflict and defend one's attitude and when such perceptions actually determine attitudes.

Using Values to Justify Prejudicial Intergroup Attitudes

Just as values may be used as ego defensive justifications of people's attitudes toward social issues such as nuclear weaponry or abortion, research that has examined the nature of symbolic attitudes suggests that people may appeal to values to justify their attitudes toward social outgroups. Symbolic attitudes have been defined as intergroup attitudes representing abstract ideological symbols and beliefs that outgroup members violate important values (Kinder, 1986; McConahay & Hough, 1976; for a review, see Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Symbolic racism, for example, has been described as "a form of resistance to change in the racial status quo based on moral feelings that blacks violate such traditional American values as individualism and self-reliance, the work ethic, and discipline" (Kinder & Sears, 1981, p. 416). Along these lines, Esses, Haddock, and Zanna (1993) reported findings from a series of studies indicating that abstract symbolic beliefs that social groups facilitate or block cherished values, customs, and traditions were correlated with Canadians' attitudes toward a number of social groups, including French Canadians, homosexuals, and Pakistanis. Moreover, their data indicated that the relation between symbolic beliefs and prejudicial intergroup attitudes occurred over and above any relations between

participants' attitudes and their evaluative trait stereotypes or their emotional experiences with each group.

As Esses et al. stated, the causal relations responsible for the observed correlations between symbolic beliefs and intergroup prejudice have yet to be established. According to realistic conflict theory (Sherif, 1966), for example, actual intergroup value conflict may foster intergroup antagonism. And Rokeach's belief congruence hypothesis may also apply. In a series of experiments, Rokeach (1968) manipulated both the racial similarity of a stimulus person to a research participant (e.g., black vs. white) and levels of perceived belief similarity. Rokeach's results indicated that belief similarity was a more powerful determinant of interpersonal attraction than was racial similarity, leading him to conclude that it is perceived belief congruence, rather than race per se, that affects interpersonal attraction.

Extending the belief congruence model to intergroup rather than interpersonal relations, Struch and Schwartz's (1989) field study of Israelis' intergroup relations with an ultraorthodox Jewish outgroup revealed that the relation between the degree of perceived intergroup conflict and the amount of aggression directed at the outgroup was largely mediated by Israelis' perceptions that the outgroup possessed different values. Struch and Schwartz therefore concluded that people may attempt to justify intergroup aggression, and thereby counter the negative implications that such hostile behavior might have for self-regard, by dehumanizing the outgroup and viewing "them as lacking the moral sensibilities that distinguish humankind" (Struch & Schwartz, 1989, p. 365).

As Struch and Schwartz (1989) pointed out, their finding that the relation between perceptions of religious intergroup conflict, attributed value differences, and intergroup aggression were moderated by the strength of respondents' identification with their own religious group also implicates the social identity theory of intergroup relations. A basic postulate of this theory is that, to achieve a distinct and positive social identity, people perceive homogeneity within groups and heterogeneity between groups and compare their own group with outgroups along dimensions that allow the ingroup to be evaluated positively (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner et al., 1987). Using the minimal group paradigm, Allen and Wilder (1979) randomly assigned participants into one of two artificially created, noninteracting, laboratory groups. In spite of being assigned arbitrarily to groups, participants nevertheless attributed more similar beliefs to ingroup relative to outgroup members. Thus the mere existence of groups was sufficient to generate attributions of intergroup belief dissimilarity. Further, Lemyre and Smith (1985), again using the minimal group paradigm, found that the opportunity to discriminate against outgroup members enhanced ingroup members' self-esteem. Thus, the social identity theory of intergroup relations suggests that, rather than perceptions of value dissimilarity causing intergroup prejudice and discrimination, people may attribute different values to social outgroups in an

effort to affirm the worth and distinctiveness of their ingroup. If so, beliefs that an outgroup violates important values may be defensive rationalizations of already extant prejudicial attitudes rather than the causal antecedents of such attitudes. (For a discussion of this and other ways that the two components of symbolic attitudes, namely affect and values, may be causally related, see Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986a,b).

To examine the proposition that values may be used to justify prejudicial intergroup attitudes, Kristiansen (1990) examined the attitudes, values, and value attributions of lesbians and gay men. Despite the fact that both groups are members of the same minority group, namely homosexuals, there is a substantial rift between lesbians who are involved primarily in the women's movement and the other members of the gay community. Like the intergroup situation that exists between some heterosexual feminist women and men (Williams & Giles, 1978), feminist lesbians tend to evaluate gay men negatively (Ettorre, 1980). To the extent that these attitudes stem from perceptions that their group identity as women is unjustly subordinated to that of men, and strivings for a positive and distinct social identity as women, feminist lesbians' attitudes toward gay men may constitute intergroup attitudes. Thus, if intergroup attitudes are symbolically justified by unfounded projections of value differences, then feminist lesbians' attitudes toward gay men should be tied to their beliefs that gay men violate important values.

In this study, gay men and lesbians completed measures of their attitudes to each other, amount of intergroup contact, perceptions of common fate in terms of each groups' oppression by society, and how much they thought lesbians and gay men should work together in campaigns for homosexual equality. Lesbians were also asked to categorize themselves as gay movement or women's movement lesbians, depending on their involvement with each group. Respondents then ranked the personal importance of Rokeach's (1967) terminal values and were asked to complete the value survey "in the order that you think gay men (lesbians), on average, would rank them."

Like other research (Ettorre, 1980), relative to gay movement lesbians, feminist lesbians had less favorable attitudes to gay men, associated with fewer gay men, perceived less common fate, and had less desire to cooperate with gay men. These indicators imply that, as expected, feminist lesbians shared an intergroup relationship with gay men, whereas gay movement lesbians perceived themselves as part of the same social group as gay men, acting together to oppose heterosexual oppression.

Rank order correlations revealed that the overall value systems of all three groups were remarkably similar. To examine perceptions of value similarity, the correlations between each respondents' own values and those that they attributed their countergroup were calculated (Feather, 1975, 1979). Although both gay movement lesbians and gay men did tend to underestimate the degree of actual

value similarity, feminist lesbians perceived absolutely no similarity between their own values and those of gay men. Further, and in accord with the suggestion that symbolic attitudes are tied to values central to the self-concept (Herek, 1986; Shavitt, 1989), feminist lesbians saw gay men as giving less priority to freedom, inner harmony, and happiness, values that feminists ranked fourth, seventh, and ninth in their hierarchy of 18 values. These findings therefore endorse the tenability of social identity theory's claim that group members will underestimate the similarity between their own values and those of an outgroup in order to achieve a distinct and positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

To examine whether feminist lesbians' intergroup attitudes were tied to their perceptions that gay men violate important values, value difference scores were calculated by subtracting the value importance scores that respondents attributed to a potential outgroup from the importance that they themselves placed on these values. Although none of these 18 difference scores was able to account for the attitudes of gay movement lesbians or gay men, 36% of the variance in feminist lesbians' attitudes toward gay men was explained by their perceptions of value dissimilarity. Thus, these findings are congruent with the claim that intergroup attitudes are systematically tied to perceptions that the outgroup blocks important values (Kinder, 1986; Kinder & Sears, 1981). Further, as this relation between feminist lesbians' attitudes toward gay men and their perceptions of value incongruence occurred over and above their contact with gay men, it is unlikely that a lack of knowledge of gay men's values was responsible for the symbolic nature of feminist lesbians' attitudes. Rather, these finding provide some support for the notion that symbolic attitudes might be usefully construed as rationalizations of prejudicial attitudes in the form of appeals to traditional, socially approved, values (Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986a,b). Thus, just as people appeal to values to justify their attitudes toward social issues, people also appear to exaggerate perceptions of intergroup value differences, presumably to defensively bolster the distinctiveness and positivity of their own identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and to minimize the negative implications of their prejudicial attitudes for self-regard (Struch & Schwartz, 1989).

Empirical and Theoretical Issues

Research concerning the value justification hypothesis suggests that people may well appeal to values to justify both their attitudes toward social issues and their intergroup attitudes. Indeed, as socially shared conceptions of the desirable, values may provide an ideal vehicle with which to rationalize such attitudes. Thus far, then, the findings of research concerning the value justification hypothesis are consistent with Rokeach's claim that values serve ego defensive needs by providing "an Aesopian language of self-justification on the one hand and of self-deception on the other" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 13). Nevertheless, several elements

of the ego defensive function of values have yet to be addressed and, more generally, the implications of adopting a functional approach to the study of values merit elaboration.

Issues Regarding Ego Defensive Appeals to Values

Although the value justification hypothesis assumes that people's attitudes determine the values they deem relevant to the construal or framing of an issue, perceptions of value relevance may also determine which values people use as attitudinal and behavioral guides. Indeed, our own research (Kristiansen & Zanna, 1991) supports this contention in that participants' perceptions of the relevance of Rokeach's terminal values to the issues of affirmative action and capital punishment moderated the magnitude of the relation between their values and attitudes. That is, people held more positive attitudes toward attitude objects that were perceived as more instrumental to attaining values, but only to the extent that these values were perceived as relevant to the attitude object. Similarly, Ostrom and Brock (1968) argued that attitudinal ego involvement varies as a function of the extent to which the attitude is deemed relevant to important values; Kristiansen (1985) found that the value of health was more closely tied to preventive behaviors that were more directly relevant to health; and Lydon and Zanna (1990) reported that students who viewed their volunteer projects as relevant to their values, and hence diagnostic of the self (Rokeach, 1973, 1979; Steele, 1988), were more likely to maintain their commitment to these projects when faced with adversity. Given that perceptions of value relevance may be used to either defensively bolster one's attitude or to determine which values should serve as attitudinal and behavioral guides, an important issue that requires explication is when and for whom each process is likely. And rather than asking whether perceptions that an outgroup challenges cherished values cause prejudice or whether attributions of intergroup value differences stem from the ego defensive justification of already existing prejudice, it might be more fruitful to consider when and for whom each process is likely.

Two personality variables that might differentiate between these two processes are self-monitoring (Snyder, 1987) and authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1988, 1994). Compared to the attitudes of high self-monitors, low self-monitors' attitudes are more strongly determined by their values (Snyder & DeBono, 1989). This suggests that Kristiansen and Zanna's (1988) finding that low, but not high, self-monitors displayed value justification effects may have occurred because low self-monitors' attitudes are more closely tied with the importance they assign to those values that they deem relevant, rather than irrelevant, to the issue at hand (Kristiansen & Zanna, 1991). Thus, rather than stemming from ego defensive needs, low self-monitors' differential perceptions of value relevance may reflect the knowledge function of values whereby values are used to impose

order and meaning on the world and thereby prepare people for action. This interpretation gains some plausibility from Jamieson, Lydon, and Zanna's (1987) finding that experimentally manipulated perceptions of value-laden attitudes affected interpersonal attraction, particularly among low relative to high self-monitors.

Esses et al. (1993), Haddock and Zanna (1994), and Haddock, Zanna, and Esses (1993) all observed a relation between authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1988, 1994) and appeals to values to justify intergroup attitudes. Esses et al. (1993) noted that, relative to low authoritarians, high authoritarians' attitudes toward social groups were more strongly tied to their symbolic beliefs that the outgroup violated important values. Likewise, Haddock and Zanna's (1994) data indicated that, in comparison to low authoritarian males, high authoritarian males expressed more negative attitudes toward feminists and perceived feminists as maintaining values more different from their own. Given that authoritarians are known to have ego defensive attitudes and to assign priority to values whose content may fulfill defensive needs (Altemeyer, 1994; Katz, 1960; Katz et al., 1956; Rokeach, 1973; Smith et al., 1956), it is likely that authoritarians' appeals to values serve an ego defensive rather than knowledge function.

The work of Esses and her colleagues (Esses et al., 1993; Haddock et al., 1994) also hints at situational parameters that may be relevant to the defensive use of values. Their findings indicated that intergroup attitudes were more strongly related to symbolic, value-laden beliefs when the intergroup attitude was more unfavorable and under conditions of minority group challenges to the status quo of majority–minority group relations. It is therefore conceivable that defensive appeals to values are more likely when intergroup relations are antagonistic and unstable, or more generally, when the self is threatened.

In addition to research examining the ego defensive as opposed to knowledge-based processes underlying people's perceptions of value relevance, research might also evaluate the psychological consequences of value justification processes, such as the claim that people rationalize their attitudes by appealing to values in order to maintain or enhance self-regard (Eiser, 1987; Rokeach, 1973, 1979; van der Pligt & van Dijk, 1979). Several ways of doing so come to mind. Steele (1988), for example, presented evidence that it is the inconsistency between people's desire to regard themselves as moral and competent beings and their inconsistent behavior that motivates the attitude change observed following counterattitudinal behavior. Steele and Lui (1983) found that the opportunity to affirm oneself as morally competent by expressing important values eliminated dissonance-induced attitude change. In Steele's research, the values that participants expressed were not only important to them, they were also irrelevant to the attitude issue. The value justification hypothesis, however, predicts that the opportunity to express values that are both important *and* that justify the newly formed attitude may enhance, rather than eliminate, dissonance-induced attitude

change. And in an intergroup context, one might use Lemyre and Smith's (1985) minimal group paradigm to test whether, especially under conditions of threat to group identity or self-esteem more generally, the opportunity to attribute different, perhaps less humane (Struch & Schwartz, 1989), values to an outgroup increases self-regard. Findings of this sort would suggest that value justification effects do indeed protect the ego and maintain self-regard (Eiser, 1987; Rokeach 1973, 1979).

Research might also consider the consequences of value justification processes for social influence. In this regard the value justification perspective may, for example, have implications for understanding the magnitude and consequences of group polarization, the phenomenon whereby group discussion makes like-minded people's attitudes more extreme (Lamm & Myers, 1978). In this context, the value justification hypothesis predicts that attitudes will polarize more to the extent that during discussion group members frame a social issue in terms of self-determined, attitude-congruent values rather than, for example, the needs and values of the people directly affected by the issue (Gilligan & Attanucci, 1988; Kristiansen & Hotte, in press). Further, if group members justify their attitudes by biased perceptions of value relevance, it is conceivable that they will not only display less open-minded reasoning about the issue (Tetlock, 1979), but that they may also regard their group decision as more morally competent (Janis, 1982), and thereby develop attitudes that are more resistant to change (Ostrom & Brock, 1968).

Implications of a Functional Approach to Values

The perspective afforded by a functional approach to the study of values draws attention to other, more general, issues. For one, if values and attitudes fulfill similar functions (Rokeach, 1973, 1979), findings that stem from the functional study of attitudes may usefully inform our understanding of values. Research indicating that persuasive messages are more effective in changing attitudes when they address the primary function underlying attitudes (Shavitt, 1989; Snyder & DeBono, 1989), for example, implies that communications designed to change values may prove more effective if they engage the particular needs fulfilled by people's values.

As an example, consider Ball-Rokeach et al.'s (1984) *Great American Values Test* that used the value self-confrontation procedure to change people values, attitudes, and behavior. In this television broadcast, viewers were confronted with the values and attitudes of other Americans concerning ecology, racism, and sexism. They were also given the opportunity to review their own values and attitudes. Relative to nonviewers in a control city, uninterrupted viewers subsequently increased their valuation of freedom and equality, developed more favor-

able attitudes toward ecology and blacks, and donated more money to related organizations.

Although Ball-Rokeach et al. believe this value self-confrontation procedure promoted value-attitude-behavior consistency because such congruence enhanced self-regard, Rokeach's (1973, 1979) own functional analysis suggests alternative motives. For example, because the value self-confrontation procedure provided information about the values, attitudes, and behavior of other Americans, subsequent value, attitude, and behavior change may have been motivated by social adjustive needs. An additional explanation comes from Schwartz's (1982, cited in Ball-Rokeach et al., 1984) suggestion that the procedure provides people with knowledge about which values are relevant guides to their attitudes and behavior. In this sense, the value self-confrontation procedure may engage the knowledge function, helping people use their values to organize information. Thus, the process by which the value self-confrontation procedure enhances value-attitude-behavior consistency might be clarified by research that, like Rokeach (1973, 1979), adopts a more comprehensive approach to the potential functions of values.

Because the functional approach to values is explicitly concerned with how values fulfill a range of needs, it also draws attention to the possibility that some value-laden processes may be more common or pronounced than others. In this regard, findings that value justification effects occurred over and above attitudinal differences in value priorities (Kristiansen & Matheson, 1990; Kristiansen & Zanna, 1988) suggest that values play a stronger role as defensive justifications of already established attitudes rather than as guides to the development of people's attitudes and related behaviors. This tendency to use values rhetorically is, perhaps, most salient in intergroup contexts (Esses et al., 1993; Haddock et al., 1993, 1994; Kristiansen, 1990; Struch & Schwartz, 1989). Along these lines, and consistent with Haddock and Zanna's (1994) finding that authoritarian males' negative attitudes toward feminists were tied to their beliefs that feminists violated cherished values, Faludi's (1991) journalistic exposé of the American New Right led her to comment that their

> Orwellian wordplay . . . served to conceal their anger at women's rising independence. This was a fruitful marketing tool, as they would draw more sympathy from the press and more followers from the public if they marched under the banner of traditional family values. In the 20s, the Klu Klux Klan had built support with a similar rhetorical maneuver, downplaying their racism and recasting it as patriotism; they weren't lynching blacks, they were moral reformers defending the flag. (pp. 238–239)

To the extent that such appeals to values succeed in reframing the way in which social and intergroup issues are construed (e.g., Ball-Rokeach et al., 1990), and thereby affect other people's attitudes and behavior, one wonders whether the very notion of values has become morally bankrupt. If so, the

potential utility of alternatives and supplements to a morality based on values, such as the contextual relativism of Gilligan's ethic of responsiveness and care (Gilligan & Attanucci, 1988), merit consideration (for a discussion, see Kristiansen & Hotte, in press). Before dismissing the deontological utility of values, however, it is important to note that the data thus far indicate that ego defensive appeals to values and the use of values as attitudinal and behavioral guides are not all-or-none, either-or, processes. This further highlights the need to examine the factors that affect the extent to which values are used as rhetorical devices as opposed to guiding principles.

Concluding Comments

As Rokeach put it some 20 years ago,

> the proposition that values are standards that can be employed in so many different ways raises many difficult questions. . . . Under what conditions will a value be employed as one kind of standard rather than another? Are there reliable individual differences in the way values are employed? Do some people typically employ certain values as standards of actions, others as standards of judgement or evaluation, and yet others as standards to rationalize with? (Rokeach, 1973, p. 13)

Clearly the functional relations between values, attitudes, and behavior are complex. It is our hope that research that endeavors to unweave this web of value, attitude, and behavior relations, and thereby attempts to answer such functional questions, will go some distance toward identifying ways of increasing the critical, open-minded nature of people's reasoning, attitudes, and behavior in regard to social issues and social groups. Given that these issues involve nuclear weaponry, ecology, civil liberties, and social oppression, issues that have fundamental implications for us all, we believe this research is well worth pursuing.

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