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Feeling Hopeful Inspires Support for Social Change

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Hope is an emotion that has been implicated in social change efforts, yet little research has examined whether feeling hopeful actually motivates support for social change. Study 1 (N = 274) confirmed that hope is associated with greater support for social change in two countries with different political contexts. Study 2 (N = 165) revealed that hope predicts support for social change over and above other emotions often investigated in collective action research. Study 3 (N = 100) replicated this finding using a hope scale and showed the effect occurs independent of positive mood. Study 4 (N = 58) demonstrated experimentally that hope motivates support for social change. In all four studies, the effect of hope was mediated by perceived efficacy to achieve social equality. This research confirms the motivating potential of hope and illustrates the power of this emotion in generating social change.

KEY WORDS: Hope, social change, perceived efficacy, intergroup relations

People have long recognized the power of emotions in motivating social action, although research has typically focused on the role of negative emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt (e.g., Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Wohl, Branscombe, & Klar, 2006). In a refreshing new direction, calls have been made to consider the motivating potential of positive emotions as catalysts for social change, particularly among advantaged group members who are typically regarded either as passive beneficiaries of inequality or active combatants of social change (Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009). The present research focuses on *hope* as a positive emotion that has the potential to propel people into social action. In particular, hope may hold the key to motivating advantaged groups to assist in achieving social change.

What Is Hope?

Hope is a future-oriented emotion that is experienced in the present when an individual believes that current circumstances can and should change (Baumgartner, Pieters, & Bagozzi, 2008). It involves generating future alternatives to compare against present circumstances and feeling good about those future alternatives (Staats & Stassen, 1985). Hope is therefore an emotion that pairs positive feelings about the future with a desire for present circumstances to change (Lazarus, 1991, 1999).

Research has identified appraisals that generate hope and action tendencies that follow from experiencing hope (Frijda, 1986). In terms of appraisals, hope is experienced when one visualizes a future goal that has at least a moderate chance of being achieved (Lazarus, 1999). Although researchers have speculated that hope should be associated with readiness to take action directed toward achieving a desired outcome (Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990), the specific action tendencies that stem from hope are less clear (Lazarus, 1999).

Hope and Social Change

Emerging research has begun to investigate hope in the context of intractable intergroup conflicts (e.g., Halperin, Crisp, Husnu, Dweck, & Gross 2012). Feeling hopeful in the context of such conflicts is associated with positive intergroup outcomes. For example, in the case of intractable conflicts, hope predicts lower desire for retaliation (Moeschberger, Dixon, Niens, & Cairns, 2005), support for concessions (Cohen-Chen, Halperin, Crisp, & Gross, 2013), willingness to provide intergroup aid (Halperin & Gross, 2011), and reduced dehumanization of out-groups (Halperin, Bar-Tal, Nets-Zehngut, & Almog, 2008). We investigate hope in relation to intergroup contexts that involve ongoing inequality with clear advantaged majority and disadvantaged minority groups. We are particularly interested in methods of encouraging advantaged groups to take action on behalf of disadvantaged groups. This can be difficult to achieve, given that advantaged groups are often motivated to inhibit, rather than support, social change (e.g., Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). A critical question, therefore, is how to motivate advantaged groups to support social action that ultimately threatens their privileged position.

There are reasons to expect that hope might inspire support for social change. Anecdotally, political leaders successfully generate support for social change by using messages of hope to inspire their followers (Branzei, 2012; Obama, 2006). Indeed, Barack Obama was elected as the first African American President of the United States after campaigning on a platform of hope and change. Likewise, Martin Luther King Jr. appealed to hope to mobilize support for the civil rights movement (Washington, 1991). Although researchers have begun to take an interest in hope in intergroup contexts, most studies to date investigate hope as an outcome or treat it as a mediator (e.g., Halperin & Gross, 2011). While research has shown that a belief in change generates feelings of hope (e.g., Cohen-Chen et al., 2013), the opposite path has not been investigated. It is therefore unclear whether hope can be used to generate support for social change or if it is merely a by-product of believing change is possible, or whether both processes operate.

What Kind of Hope?

It is possible to experience hope about a specific situation or event (e.g., hoping an intergroup relationship will become more equal), although individuals may also vary in their general tendency to hope. In the present research, we investigate whether hope must be connected specifically to an intergroup context in order to inspire support for social change. It seems intuitive that people must hope that intergroup relations can get better in order to be willing to work towards achieving that end.

Yet theory suggests that incidental hope that is unconnected to an intergroup context might also “spill over” into a general desire for things to change (Lazarus, 1991, 1999). We therefore investigated hope that is unconnected to a specific intergroup relationship (Studies 1, 2, and 4), as well as hope with a specific intergroup referent (Studies 3 and 4) to investigate whether hope increases support for social change.

In the present research, we focus on individual feelings of hope and their implications for collective behavior. Although collective feelings of hope for the future of one’s own group may motivate a similar desire for social change, we investigate how feeling hopeful might lead advantaged group members to support disadvantaged group members in their efforts to achieve social equality. In addition to testing whether and what type of hope motivates support for social change, we also aim to uncover a mechanism of this effect.

Hope and Efficacy

We propose that hope inspires support for social change through heightened perceived efficacy to change the status quo. According to Snyder (2002), hope acts through processes of agency and planning—key characteristics of the efficacious individual (Bandura, 1982). In addition, hope is associated with a range of processes linked with perceived efficacy, including beliefs that goals are achievable (Lazarus, 1999) and engagement in goal-directed thinking and behavior (Chartrand & Cheng, 2002; Oettingen & Gollwitzer, 2002; Vohs & Schmeichel, 2002). Work by Cohen-Chen and colleagues (2013, 2014) shows that believing a situation can change inspires feelings of hope and efficacy. However, other theorizing suggests that efficacy may be an outcome or process of hope, insofar as hope is thought to operate through pathways of agency and planning (Averill et al., 1990; Snyder, 2002; Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991). Consistent with this theorizing, we conceptualize hope as a positive emotion that has the capacity to generate perceived efficacy to bring about desired outcomes.

Efficacy and Social Change

Considerable research demonstrates that efficacy beliefs play a critical role in motivating people to collective action (e.g., Tausch & Becker, 2013; Thomas, Mavor, & McGarty, 2012; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008); people must believe change is possible in order to be motivated to achieve it (Bandura, 1982). Much of the research that investigates the role of efficacy in social change efforts has focused on disadvantaged group members attempting to improve their group’s position (e.g., Van Zomeren et al., 2008). However, research also demonstrates that enhancing efficacy beliefs among *advantaged* group members increases their willingness to work to achieve social equality (e.g., Cohen-Chen, Halperin, Saguy, & Van Zomeren, 2014; Stewart, Latu, Branscombe, & Denney, 2010; Stewart, Latu, Branscombe, Phillips, & Denney, 2012). Indeed, efforts at collective action will have a better chance at succeeding if advantaged group members can be motivated to act alongside disadvantaged groups.

The Present Research

The present research seeks to contribute to the literature on hope and bring this emotion to bear on the important social problem of how to motivate support for social change among advantaged members of society. First, we integrate the work on hope as an emotion with the social change literature. Second, drawing on previous research, we test efficacy as a mechanism through which hope operates to influence support for social change. We assess both perceived *advantaged* and *disadvantaged* group efficacy as mediators of the relationship between hope and support for social change and propose that

only when advantaged groups believe themselves to be efficacious—regardless of how efficacious they believe the disadvantaged group to be—will they support social change.

Study 1

Study 1 tested whether hope is associated with support for social change among advantaged group members in two countries with different social and political climates: the Netherlands and the United States. In the Netherlands, the study focused on relations between Turkish-Dutch (disadvantaged) and native-Dutch (advantaged) groups. To avoid cueing an Obama-inspired association in the American sample, Hispanic Americans were chosen as the disadvantaged group rather than African Americans. Participants completed the same survey in both samples, differing only in terms of the reference groups.

Method

Participants

Participants in the Netherlands ($N = 84$; 72 female; $M_{\text{age}} = 18.81$, $SD = 1.68$) were native Dutch psychology students who received course credit for their participation. Participants in the United States ($N = 110$, 72 female; $M_{\text{age}} = 35.29$, $SD = 13.74$) were non-Hispanic community members recruited from the website *Amazon Mechanical Turk*.

Materials and Measures

Efficacy. Three items measured efficacy beliefs about the *advantaged* group (e.g., “[Advantaged group members] can effectively achieve the goal of reducing inequality between [disadvantaged group] and [advantaged group]”; Van Zomeren, Leach, & Spears, 2010), $\alpha = .92$.¹ The same three items were reworded to measure efficacy beliefs about the *disadvantaged* group, $\alpha = .90$. Items were scored on a scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*).

Social change. Nine items measured support for social change. Three items assessed general support (e.g., “In order for intergroup inequality to be reduced, we need significant social change at the level of [nation] as a whole”; Subašić & Reynolds, 2009). Three items tapped specific behavioral intentions (e.g., “I would participate in a protest rally aimed at bettering the position of [disadvantaged group]”; Subašić & Reynolds, 2009). Three items measured support for political actions (e.g., “I think universities should try to increase the number of [disadvantaged group members] in their applicant pool”; Leach et al., 2007). The items were scored on a scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*), and together formed a reliable scale of support for social change, $\alpha = .90$.

Hope. Hope was measured using a single item: “Right now, to what extent do you feel hopeful?” on a scale from 1 (*Not at All*) to 7 (*Very Much*). Means, standard deviations, and correlations are presented in Table 1.

Results

We conducted a series of multiple regressions predicting first, perceived advantaged and disadvantaged group efficacy, and second, support for social change. In this second, hierarchical, regres-

¹ Our original aim was to expose advantaged group members to an emotional message from a disadvantage group and measure attitude change. Participants were exposed to manipulations that varied the emotional content (hope vs. fear) and frame of the message (about the disadvantaged group vs. the national group). Those manipulations had no effect on the measured variables, and controlling for the manipulations does not change the results.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), and Correlations Among Focal Variables in Study 1

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Country (U.S. = 1, Netherlands = -1)	0.13 (0.99)	.01	-.32***	-.04	-.18
2. Hope		4.45 (1.53)	.26***	.26***	.25**
3. Advantaged efficacy			4.36 (1.40)	.28***	.54***
4. Disadvantaged efficacy				4.72 (1.23)	.15*
5. Social change					3.84 (1.11)

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

Table 2. Regression Results in Studies 1–3

	Disadvantaged Group Efficacy			Advantaged Group Efficacy			Support for Social Change		
	S1	S2	S3	S1	S2	S3	S1	S2	S3
Step 1									
Hope	.26***	.09	.31*	.26***	.25*	.46***	.25***	.24**	.45***
Happiness	–	.27*	–.05	–	.08	–.38**	–	.09	–.38**
Anger	–	.07	.17	–	.03	–.25	–	.17	.03
Sadness	–	.04	.02	–	.21	.36*	–	.14	.33*
Fear	–	.02	–.02	–	–.12	–.15	–	–.16	–.08
Positive affect	–	–	.22	–	–	.23*	–	–	.32*
Negative affect	–	–	–.17	–	–	–.09	–	–	–.14
Step 2									
Advantaged group efficacy	–	–	–	–	–	–	.52***	.46***	.28*
Disadvantaged group efficacy	–	–	–	–	–	–	–.03	–.09	–.08

Note. Entries are standardized regression coefficients for Study 1 (S1), Study 2 (S2), and Study 3 (S3). * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

sion hope was entered at the first step followed by the two perceived efficacy measures at the second step. All results remain significant when controlling for country of origin. Results of the regression analyses for Studies 1–3 are presented in Table 2.

Efficacy

Hope predicted greater perceived *advantaged* group efficacy, $R^2 = .07$, $F(1,192) = 14.23$, $\beta = .26$, $p < .001$, and greater perceived *disadvantaged* group efficacy, $R^2 = .07$, $F(1,192) = 13.83$, $\beta = .26$, $p < .001$.

Social Change

Hope predicted greater support for social change in Step 1, $R^2 = .06$, $F(1,192) = 12.41$, $\beta = .25$, $p < .001$. Efficacy beliefs accounted for a significant amount of variance in Step 2, $R^2_{\Delta} = .25$, $F_{\Delta}(2,190) = 33.19$, $p < .001$. Only perceived advantaged group efficacy was a significant predictor of greater support for social change, $\beta = .52$, $p < .001$. Perceived disadvantaged group efficacy was nonsignificant, $\beta = -.03$, $p = .703$. The relationship between hope and social change became nonsignificant in Step 2, $\beta = .12$, $p = .069$.

Indirect Effects

Bootstrapping analyses with 10,000 resamples were conducted to test the indirect effect of hope on support for social change through advantaged and disadvantaged group efficacy (Hayes, 2013).

Figure 1. The effect of hope on support for social change via perceived advantaged and disadvantaged group efficacy (Studies 1–3). Figure reports standardized coefficients for Study 1 (S1), Study 2 (S2), and Study 3 (S3). Effects in S2 and S3 control for other emotions. The total effects are presented in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

There was a significant indirect effect of hope on support for social change through perceived advantaged group efficacy ($IE = 0.09$, $SE = .03$, bias-corrected 95% CI : .043, .170). The indirect effect controlled for perceived disadvantaged group efficacy, although the effect remains significant without this control variable. The indirect effect through perceived disadvantaged group efficacy was nonsignificant ($IE = -0.00$, $SE = .01$, bias-corrected 95% CI : -.036, .021; see Figure 1).

We tested an alternative model in which perceived advantaged group efficacy increased support for social change via hope (controlling for perceived disadvantaged group efficacy). This model was nonsignificant ($IE = .02$, $SE = .02$, bias-corrected 95% CI : -.002, .062).

Discussion

As expected, hope predicted support for social change among advantaged group members. The relationship was mediated by perceived efficacy of the advantaged group to achieve social change. Hope was associated with greater perceived efficacy of advantaged *and* disadvantaged groups. However, only perceived advantaged group efficacy significantly predicted support for social change. Research shows that perceived *in-group* efficacy increases willingness to engage in collective action (Stewart et al., 2010; Van Zomeren et al., 2004), while we found no evidence for perceived *out-group* efficacy increasing one's own engagement in collective action. This finding underlines the importance of promoting efficacy among advantaged group members, who could otherwise be unmotivated to change the status quo.

Study 2

In Study 2, we investigated whether hope accounts for variance over and above other emotions linked with social change or that share cognitive or affective features of hope. We included fear as

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), and Correlations Among Focal Variables in Study 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Hope	4.78 (1.60)	.63***	-.09	-.14	-.19*	.27**	.24**	.27**
2. Happiness		4.37 (1.62)	-.17*	-.30***	-.40***	.16*	.29***	.17*
3. Fear			1.72 (1.28)	.66***	.55***	-.02	.03	-.01
4. Anger				1.66 (1.30)	.72***	.04	.01	.11
5. Sadness					2.14 (1.61)	.09	-.04	.09
6. Advantaged efficacy						4.88 (1.27)	.31***	.49***
7. Disadvantaged efficacy							4.55 (1.39)	.16
8. Social change								4.56 (1.10)

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

a predictor because hope and fear are both anticipatory emotions experienced at the prospect of a future event (Baumgartner et al., 2008). We included happiness because hope and happiness are matched on valence (both are positive emotions) but differ on temporal focus (hope is a future-oriented and happiness a present-oriented emotion). We also measured anger and sadness, which are relevant emotions in collective action research (e.g., Livingstone, Spears, Manstead, Bruder, & Shepherd, 2011; Smith, Cronin, & Kessler, 2008).

Method

Participants

Study 2 focused on relations between Native Americans (disadvantaged group) and non-Native Americans (advantaged group). One hundred and sixty-five non-Native Americans completed the study (82 female; $M_{\text{age}} = 37.18$, $SD = 13.47$). Participants were recruited from *Mechanical Turk* and were paid to complete the study.

Materials and Measure

The dependent and mediating variables were measured as in Study 1 ($\alpha_s > .88$), reworded to refer to this intergroup context.² Current emotions were measured by asking participants the degree to which they felt five emotions ("Right now, to what extent do you feel: hopeful/fearful/happy/angry/sad?") on a scale from 1 (*Not at All*) to 7 (*Very Much*). Means, standard deviations, and correlations are presented in Table 3.

Results

Efficacy

Together, the emotions predicted a significant amount of variance in advantaged efficacy, $R^2 = .10$, $F(5,158) = 3.55$, $p = .005$. Of the five emotions, hope was the only significant predictor of advantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .25$, $p = .013$. No other emotion was significant, $\beta_s < .21$, $p_s > .068$.

² Participants in Study 2 were exposed to the same manipulation described in Study 1. The manipulations had no effects on the measured variables, and controlling for the manipulations does not change the results.

Together, the emotions predicted a significant amount of variance in disadvantaged efficacy, $R^2 = .10$, $F(5,158) = 3.41$, $p = .006$. Happiness positively predicted perceived disadvantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .27$, $p = .011$; no other emotion was significant, β s $< .09$, p s $> .373$.

Social Change

Together, the emotions predicted a significant amount of variance in social change, $R^2 = .11$, $F(5,158) = 3.87$, $p = .002$. Of the five emotions, hope was the only significant predictor of support for social change in Step 1, $\beta = .24$, $p = .014$. No other emotion was significant, β s $< .17$, p s $> .108$. Efficacy beliefs accounted for a significant amount of variance in Step 2, $R^2_{\Delta} = .18$, $F_{\Delta}(2,156) = 19.50$, $p < .001$. Only advantaged group efficacy was a significant predictor of support for social change, $\beta = .46$, $p < .001$. Perceived disadvantaged group efficacy was nonsignificant, $\beta = -.09$, $p = .246$. The relationship between hope and social change became nonsignificant in Step 2, $\beta = .13$, $p = .134$.

Indirect Effects

Bootstrapping analyses with 10,000 resamples tested the indirect effect of hope on support for social change through perceived advantaged and disadvantaged group efficacy, controlling for the other emotions. The indirect effect of hope on support for social change through advantaged group efficacy was significant (controlling for other emotions and disadvantaged efficacy; $IE = 0.08$, $SE = .06$, bias-corrected 95% CI : .009, .185; see Figure 1). The indirect effect remains significant without including the covariates. The indirect effect through disadvantaged group efficacy was nonsignificant (controlling for other emotions and advantaged efficacy; $IE = -0.01$, $SE = .01$, bias-corrected 95% CI : $-.036$, .010). The effect of the alternative model of advantaged group efficacy increasing social change through hope was also nonsignificant ($IE = 0.02$, $SE = .02$, CI : $-.008$ to .069).

Discussion

Replicating the findings of Study 1 with Native Americans as the target, hope was associated with greater support for social change, and this relationship was mediated by greater perceived advantaged group efficacy. The relationships persisted even when adjusting for emotions typically associated with support for social change (such as sadness, anger, and fear) or another positive emotion (i.e., happiness). Hope was the only emotion that independently predicted perceived advantaged group efficacy and support for social change.

Study 3

A limitation of the first two studies is that hope was measured using a single item. Study 3 addressed this issue by employing multiple items to measure hope and assess its impact on support for social change. Moreover, hope as measured in Studies 1 and 2 had no specific intergroup referent. In Study 3, we included a measure of hope that referred explicitly to the intergroup context.

Another issue is that hope may predict support for social change not only because it increases perceived efficacy but also because of shared variance with positive affect. In Study 2 we measured happiness, another positive emotion, and after controlling its variance shared with hope, we found that hope alone predicted support for social change. Nevertheless, in Study 2 happiness was positively correlated with support for social change. To rule out the positive affect alternative explanation, in Study 3 we measured general positive affect and controlled for its effects.

Method

Participants

Study 3 again focused on relations between Native Americans (disadvantaged group) and non-Native Americans (advantaged group). One hundred non-Native Americans completed the study (43 female; $M_{\text{age}} = 38.48$, $SD = 13.47$). Participants were recruited from *Mechanical Turk*.

Materials and Measures

Emotions. Participants reported their emotions about the intergroup relationship between Native and non-Native Americans by responding to the stem “When you think about relations between Native and non-Native Americans, to what extent do you feel” by rating several emotions. Four synonyms were chosen for each emotion of interest: hope (hopeful, aspiration, positive expectation, wishful; $\alpha = .91$), happiness (happy, content, glad, satisfied; $\alpha = .96$), anger (angry, outraged, exasperated, irritated; $\alpha = .92$), fear (fearful, worried, uncertain, concerned; $\alpha = .91$), and sadness (sad, unhappy, depressed, sorrowful; $\alpha = .90$).

To rule out the possibility that the effects of hope on support for social change are driven by general positive mood, we included a measure of mood in the form of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Participants reported their feelings on 10 indicators of positive affect (e.g., enthusiastic; $\alpha = .91$) and negative affect (e.g., hostile; $\alpha = .92$). All emotion items were scored on a scale from 1 (*Not at All*) to 7 (*Very Much*).

Support for social change and perceived efficacy were measured as in Study 2 ($\alpha s > .88$). Means, standard deviations, and correlations are presented in Table 4.

Results

The emotion scales were entered simultaneously in a standard multiple regression to assess their unique association with perceived efficacy and support for social change, controlling for any shared variance. For the mediation analyses, the emotion scales were entered in Step 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression followed by perceived advantaged and disadvantaged group efficacy in Step 2.

Efficacy

Together, the seven emotion scales significantly predicted perceived advantaged group efficacy, $R^2 = .25$, $F(7,92) = 4.32$, $p < .001$. The hope scale was the strongest significant positive predictor of advantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .46$, $p < .001$, although sadness, $\beta = .36$, $p = .028$, and positive mood, $\beta = .23$, $p = .040$, were also significant positive predictors. The happiness scale was a significant *negative* predictor of perceived advantaged group efficacy, $\beta = -.38$, $p = .004$. Anger, fear, and negative mood were nonsignificant, $\beta s < -.25$, $ps > .225$.

Together, the seven emotion scales significantly predicted perceived disadvantaged group efficacy, $R^2 = .18$, $F(7,92) = 2.85$, $p = .010$. The hope scale was the only significant positive predictor of disadvantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .31$, $p = .017$. Positive mood was a nonsignificant positive predictor, $\beta = .22$, $p = .059$, and all of the other emotion scales were nonsignificant, $\beta s < -.17$, $ps > .11$.

Support for Social Change

Together, the seven emotion scales significantly predicted support for social change in Step 1, $R^2 = .26$, $F(7,92) = 5.93$, $p < .001$. The hope scale was the strongest positive predictor of support for

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), and Correlations Among Focal Variables in Study 3

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Hope scale	4.26 (1.54)	.63***	-.09	-.27**	-.20*	.39***	-.04	.32**	.32**	.27**
2. Happiness scale		3.27 (1.75)	-.13	-.35***	-.27**	.40***	-.01	.01	.17	-.06
3. Fear scale			2.84 (1.48)	.67***	.51***	.06	.29**	-.14	.05	-.06
4. Anger scale				2.63 (1.59)	.80***	.07	.43***	-.09	.05	.21*
5. Sadness scale					2.73 (1.52)	-.12	.29**	.03	.02	.24*
6. Positive mood						3.42 (1.33)	.17	.18	.30**	.27**
7. Negative mood							1.74 (0.96)	-.11	-.07	-.01
8. Advantaged efficacy								4.64 (1.27)	.55***	.41***
9. Disadvantaged efficacy									4.51 (1.23)	.24*
10. Social change										4.41 (1.12)

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

social change, $\beta = .45$, $p < .001$, although sadness, $\beta = .33$, $p = .035$, and positive mood, $\beta = .32$, $p = .004$, were also significant positive predictors. The happiness scale was a significant *negative* predictor of social change, $\beta = -.38$, $p = .002$. Anger, fear, and negative mood were nonsignificant, β s $< -.14$, $ps > .146$. Together, the two perceived efficacy scales predicted support for social change in Step 2, $R^2_{\Delta} = .05$, $F_{\Delta}(2,90) = 3.13$, $p = .048$. Perceived advantaged group efficacy was the only significant predictor of support for social change, $\beta = .28$, $p = .017$. The effect of perceived disadvantaged group efficacy was nonsignificant, $\beta = -.08$, $p = .474$.

Indirect Effects

Indirect effects of the hope scale on support for social change through perceived advantaged and disadvantaged group efficacy were tested with 10,000 bootstrapped resamples. The indirect effect of hope on support for social change through advantaged group efficacy was significant (controlling for other emotions, mood, and disadvantaged efficacy; $IE = .09$, $SE = .05$, bias-corrected 95% CI : .013, .223; see Figure 1). The indirect effect remains significant without including the covariates. The indirect effect through disadvantaged group efficacy was nonsignificant (controlling for other emotions and advantaged efficacy; $IE = -.02$, $SE = .03$, bias-corrected 95% CI : $-.084$, .031). The effect of the alternative model of advantaged group efficacy increasing social change through hope was also nonsignificant ($IE = .03$, $SE = .03$, CI : $-.005$ to .116).

Discussion

Study 3 replicated the effects of Studies 1 and 2 using a hope measure with multiple items and a specific intergroup referent. Hope was strongly positively associated with support for social change via perceived advantaged group efficacy while perceived disadvantaged group efficacy was not significantly associated with support for social change. These findings speak against the possibility that the relationship between hope and support for social change was driven by positive mood: Hope predicted support for social change over and above general positive affect. In addition, happiness—another positive emotion—was found to be a significant *negative* predictor of support for social change after accounting for the variance shared with the other emotions. If people feel contented with the current relationship between advantaged and disadvantaged groups, they might be unwilling to act to change the nature of that relationship. It is not the case, then, that all positive emotions can be relied upon to increase support for social change.

Study 4

Three studies have demonstrated that hope is associated with support for social change. Although these correlational results provide support for our hypothesis, they do not allow for causal inference. Therefore, Study 4 manipulated feelings of hope. We compared a hope induction to a happiness induction and a control condition. We aimed to test experimentally whether experiencing hope, rather than happiness, leads individuals to support social change.

We also measured hope and other emotions experienced about the intergroup relationship to replicate the correlational findings of the previous studies. We anticipated that over and above these associations, the hope manipulation would increase perceived efficacy and support for social change. This method allowed us to directly compare different types of hope to test whether hope must be experienced in a specific intergroup context in order to be associated with support for social change. If hope in general elicits readiness to take action, then this emotion should be associated with support for social change even when hope is experienced independent of the

intergroup context. We hypothesized that both specific feelings of hope (related to intergroup relations) and general feelings of hope (unrelated to intergroup relations) would motivate support for social change.

Method

Participants and Design

Sixty non-Native Americans completed the study (25 female; $M_{\text{age}} = 34.66$, $SD = 12.20$). Participants were recruited from *Mechanical Turk*. Two participants were excluded because they failed attention checks, resulting in a final sample of 58.

Materials and Measures

Manipulated emotion. Participants in the *hope* condition wrote about a feature of their lives that made them feel hopeful. Participants in the *happy* condition wrote about a feature of their lives that made them feel happy. We checked that participants in both conditions did not write about social change and, thus, confound interpretation of the results. Most participants in the hope condition wrote about family or work ($n = 12$), and positive experiences (e.g., travel, $n = 4$). Most participants in the happy condition wrote about family ($n = 16$) and positive experiences (e.g., hot showers, $n = 4$). Participants in the *control* condition merely answered the dependent variables. We coded the hope condition as 1, the control condition as 0, and the happy condition as -1 .

Measured emotion. Emotions about the intergroup relationship were measured using five items: “When you think about relations between Native and non-Native Americans, to what extent do you feel: Hopeful/happy/fearful/angry/sad?” Responses were scored on a scale from 1 (*Not at All*) to 7 (*Very Much*). The dependent and mediating variables were measured as in Study 2 ($\alpha s > .90$). Means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables are presented in Table 5.

Results

Because we manipulated and measured hope, we can perform dual tests of our hypothesis that hope increases support for social change.³ We performed a series of multiple regressions, predicting, first, perceived advantaged and disadvantaged group efficacy and second, support for social change from general (manipulated) hope, specific (measured) hope, and the other measured emotions.⁴ For the analyses involving social change, manipulated and measured emotions were entered at the first step followed by the two perceived efficacy measures at the second step. Results of the regression analyses are presented in Table 6.

³ The general hope manipulation actually served to *lower* specific hope ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.51$) compared to the happy condition ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 1.50$, $p = .035$) but not compared to the control condition ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.60$, $p = .087$), $F(2,55) = 2.53$, $p = .089$, $\eta_p^2 = .084$. This makes it necessary to control for measured hope when investigating the effects of manipulated hope and vice versa.

⁴ In addition to the regression analyses, ANCOVAs were conducted to test the differences between experimental conditions on the outcome variables. There was a significant effect of the manipulation on perceived advantaged group efficacy, $F(2,50) = 3.31$, $p = .045$, $\eta_p^2 = .117$. Pairwise comparisons revealed that the hopeful participants perceived the advantaged group to be more efficacious than happy participants, $p = .014$, and more efficacious, although not significantly so, than control participants, $p = .089$.

There was a significant effect of the manipulation on perceived disadvantaged group efficacy, $F(2,50) = 3.90$, $p = .027$, $\eta_p^2 = .135$. Hopeful participants perceived the disadvantaged group to be more efficacious than happy participants, $p = .008$, but not more efficacious than control participants, $p = .210$.

There was a significant effect of the manipulation on support for social change, $F(2,50) = 3.59$, $p = .035$, $\eta_p^2 = .126$. Hopeful participants reported significantly more support than happy participants, $p = .011$, and more support than control participants, $p = .060$, albeit nonsignificantly.

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), and Correlations Among Focal Variables in Study 4

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Hope vs. other conditions (manipulated)	-0.17 (1.35)	-.48***	-.29*	-.06	.01	-.15	-.12	.13	.18	.11
2. Happy vs. other conditions (manipulated)		0.14 (1.47)	.18	.08	.04	-.13	-.14	.19	-.24	-.22
3. Hope (measured)			4.22 (1.58)	.55***	.01	-.06	-.12	.30*	.34*	.21
4. Happiness (measured)				2.64 (1.56)	.18	-.07	-.22	-.05	.26*	-.11
5. Fear (measured)					1.98 (1.22)	.52***	.41**	-.10	-.04	.08
6. Anger (measured)						2.50 (1.61)	.75***	.12	-.08	.36**
7. Sadness (measured)							3.41 (1.89)	.13	.05	.45***
8. Advantaged efficacy								4.68 (1.67)	.34**	.66***
9. Disadvantaged efficacy									4.24 (1.22)	.29*
10. Social change										4.43 (1.12)

Note. Contrast 1 coded as hope = 2, control = -1, happy = -1; Contrast 2 coded as hope = -1, happy = 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 6. Regression Results in Study 4

	Disadvantaged Group Efficacy	Advantaged Group Efficacy	Support for Social Change
Step 1			
Manipulated hope	.35**	.31*	.29*
Measured hope	.37*	.55***	.47***
Measured happiness	.15	-.27	-.23
Measured anger	-.27	.15	.11
Measured sadness	.35	.08	.41
Measured fear	-.06	-.16	-.10
Step 2			
Advantaged group efficacy	—	—	.52***
Disadvantaged group efficacy	—	—	.03

Note. Contrast 1 coded as hope = 2, control = -1, happy = -1; Contrast 2 coded as hope = -1, control = -1, happy = 2. Entries are standardized regression coefficients. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Efficacy

Together the emotion manipulation and measures predicted advantaged efficacy, $R^2 = .28$, $F_{\Delta}(6,51) = 3.26$, $p = .009$. The general hope manipulation independently predicted advantaged efficacy beliefs such that the hope condition predicted greater perceived advantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .31$, $p = .015$. Specific hope for intergroup relations also significantly predicted greater perceived advantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .55$, $p = .001$. No other variable was significant, $\beta_s < -.16$, $ps > .276$.

Together, the emotion manipulation and measures predicted disadvantaged efficacy, $R^2 = .29$, $F_{\Delta}(6,51) = 3.44$, $p = .006$. The general hope manipulation independently predicted advantaged efficacy beliefs such that the hope condition predicted greater perceived disadvantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .35$, $p = .007$. Specific hope also predicted greater perceived disadvantaged group efficacy, $\beta = .37$, $p = .015$. No other variable was significant, $\beta_s < -.27$, $ps > .162$.

Social change. Together the emotion manipulation and measures predicted social change, $R^2 = .39$, $F_{\Delta}(6,51) = 5.51$, $p < .001$. There was a significant effect of general hope on support for social change such that the hope condition predicted greater support for social change, $\beta = .29$, $p = .014$. Likewise, specific hope was a significant predictor of greater support for social change in Step 1, $\beta = .47$, $p = .001$. Sadness also significantly predicted support for social change, $\beta = .41$, $p = .020$. No other variable was significant, $\beta_s < -.23$, $ps > .113$.

The efficacy variables together predicted support for social change in Step 2, $R^2_{\Delta} = .05$, $F_{\Delta}(2,90) = 3.13$, $p = .048$, although advantaged group efficacy was the only significant independent predictor, $\beta = .52$, $p < .001$. Disadvantaged group efficacy was unrelated to support for social change, $\beta = .03$, $p = .796$. The relationship between general hope and support for social change became nonsignificant in Step 2, $\beta = .12$, $p = .267$, as did the relationship between specific hope and support for social change, $\beta = .17$, $p = .203$.

General Hope Indirect Effects

There was a significant indirect effect of the hope manipulation on support for social change through perceived advantaged group efficacy (controlling for disadvantaged efficacy and measured emotions; $IE = 0.22$, $SE = .11$, bias-corrected 95% $CI: .048, .494$). The indirect effect remains significant without including the covariates. The effect through disadvantaged group efficacy was nonsignificant (controlling for advantaged efficacy and measured emotions; $IE = 0.01$, $SE = .07$, bias-corrected 95% $CI: -.105, .164$).

Specific Hope Indirect Effects

Bootstrapping analyses with 10,000 resamples confirmed there was a significant indirect effect of specific (measured) hope on support for social change through perceived advantaged group efficacy (controlling for disadvantaged efficacy, other measured emotions, and general hope; $IE = 0.20$, $SE = .08$, bias-corrected 95% CI : .082, .390). The indirect effect remains significant without including the covariates. There was no significant effect through perceived disadvantaged group efficacy (controlling for advantaged efficacy, other measured emotion, and general hope; $IE = 0.01$, $SE = .04$, bias-corrected 95% CI : $-.057$, .091). The effect of the alternative model of advantaged group efficacy increasing social change through hope was also nonsignificant ($IE = .01$, $SE = .04$, CI : $-.062$, .103).

Discussion

As predicted, hope increased support for social change both when experienced in relation to and separate from the intergroup context. This indicates that inspiring hope among advantaged group members, even when unrelated to intergroup relations, can have positive consequences for willingness to equalize status relations. General feelings of hope were sufficient to increase an advantaged group's willingness to engage in social change and their perceived efficacy to do so. This relationship occurred over and above the effects of other emotions on support for social change.

General Discussion

Our findings show that in addition to promoting reconciliation (Cohen-Chen et al., 2013; Halperin & Gross, 2011), hope also promotes willingness to equalize unequal status relations. This relationship was observed in two countries with different intergroup contexts (Study 1) and occurred over and above the effect of other emotions (Studies 2 and 3). In Study 4, hope increased support for social change when measured and manipulated and when related and unrelated to the intergroup context. In all four studies, the effect of hope was mediated by the perception that advantaged group members were efficacious and capable of achieving social change. Although hope also predicted perceived disadvantaged group efficacy, it was advantaged group efficacy that was reliably associated with support for social change.

Theoretical Implications

The present work has implications for research on emotions in intergroup contexts as well as collective action more broadly. In this research, we demonstrate that hope predicts efficacy and collective action tendencies among advantaged group members. We do not mean to imply that hope is the only positive emotion to predict efficacy or support for social change. In fact, we found other positive emotions to be collective action predictors as well. For example, in Study 3, positive mood also independently predicted support for social change. Relatively few studies have considered the role of positive emotions in promoting social change (e.g., Thomas et al., 2009). Our findings underline the importance of hope as one positive emotion with the power to increase support for social change.

By showing hope effects on efficacy and social action, we contribute theoretical insight into the action tendencies of hope. These have been traditionally fuzzy (Lazarus, 1999), but researchers tend to agree that hope should promote agency and planning that inspires people to achieve their goals (Averill et al., 1990; Oettingen & Gollwitzer, 2002; Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991). We provided concrete evidence of these action tendencies in the form of enhanced efficacy beliefs and greater

willingness to act for social change when hope is experienced. In this, we investigated hope as an independent driver of social action with its own mediating mechanisms. Previous work in this area has been correlational, measuring hope and its associations with intergroup attitudes. Our research represents the first work we know of to experimentally manipulate hope and assess its effects in an intergroup context.

The effects of the manipulation in Study 4 demonstrated that hope need not be related to the intergroup context in order to promote support for social change. While feelings of hope about a specific intergroup relationship should promote action relevant to that particular intergroup context, it is noteworthy that hope has these effects even when induced independent of the intergroup context.

An interesting question and direction for future research is whether hope fosters development of shared identity between advantaged and disadvantaged groups. Shared emotion facilitates self-categorization processes that lead to common in-group identity (Livingstone et al., 2011). This may be part of the process by which hope increases support for social change. Substantial research has demonstrated that shared social identity inspires collective action on behalf of those less fortunate (Tausch & Becker, 2013; Thomas et al., 2012). Although we did not measure the degree to which advantaged group members believe that disadvantaged groups share their hope for the future, it is possible such a perception would magnify the effects observed here.

Limitations

It is important to be cautious in interpreting the mediation analyses that locate efficacy as a mediator in this work. Appraisals of efficacy could also influence feelings of hope and for this reason increase support for social change (Cohen-Chen et al., 2013). Without experimental data, we cannot provide definitive evidence for a causal mediating chain (Bullock, Green, & Ha, 2010). Yet, considerable research indicates that efficacy is a key driver of collective action (Tausch & Becker, 2013; Thomas et al., 2012; Van Zomeren et al., 2008), which encourages us that this is an appropriate ordering of the variables.

There was some variability in the pattern of associations between emotions and support for social change across the studies. Happiness is particularly curious—it correlated positively with support for social change in Study 2 but negatively in Study 3. Happiness also reduced support for social change when experimentally induced in Study 4. Previous research too has demonstrated that happiness is not an effective emotion for motivating collective action (Livingstone et al., 2011). It is also consistent with the broader literature on emotion and motivation where low-intensity positive emotions, such as feeling content, are associated with reduced motivation in general (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2011). Indeed, it makes sense that if people feel satisfied with existing intergroup relations, they might see little reason to seek out opportunities to change them.

Considering that anger is typically a strong predictor of collective action, it might also seem surprising that it did not independently predict support for social change. With advantaged groups, anger has sometimes been associated with resistance to social change and may not be relevant to the type of support for social change that we assessed. Anger may be more important for inspiring specific actions to address social injustice, particularly among those suffering from it.

Given that sadness is typically considered to be a deactivating emotion, it was somewhat surprising that it was a positive predictor of support for social change (Study 3). Yet, previous research has found sadness to be positively associated with willingness to protest unequal status relations (Smith et al., 2008). Although we did not measure guilt directly, feelings of sadness in this intergroup context may reflect guilt, which is associated with desire to change the circumstances that elicited that emotion.

Despite variation in the zero-order relationships involving different emotions, we found repeatedly that hope significantly positively predicted support for social change, even when controlling for

shared variance with other emotions. The consistency of this finding across different contexts and different measures of hope speaks to the robustness of the effect.

Political Implications

We have shown that hope motivates people to social action. However, employing hope to effect change by politicians may warrant caution. Looking to the long term, if these change efforts are thwarted, people could become discouraged from further change efforts. There is some evidence for such an effect after President Obama's first election to office. Non-African Americans showed a significant drop in support and willingness to work towards social justice after his election compared to before (Kaiser, Drury, Spalding, Cheryan, & O'Brien, 2009). This phenomenon of "dashed hopes" could do more to damage a social cause than if hopes had not been raised in the first place. Hope appeals therefore must be coupled with concrete action and visible gains to maintain willingness to achieve social change in the long term.

People may also resist attempts to induce hope if they appear heavy-handed or manipulative. Although we successfully manipulated hope in Study 4 and showed that this significantly increased support for social change, it should be noted that hope was induced in a personal domain and showed spill-over to the intergroup domain. There is no guarantee that explicit attempts to increase hope about social relations will be accepted in a similar manner. A long literature in the social identity tradition warns of the resistance people can show when exposed to information that they believe undermines their positive group identity or is perceived as a threat to in-group advantage (e.g., Branscombe, Schmitt, & Schiffhauer, 2007). Further research is needed to determine the ideal methods of inducing hope before the political applications of this research can be fully understood and put into practice.

To be maximally effective, messages of hope must come from in-group members if they are to be acted upon. Emotional appeals are typically more effective when presented by someone who belongs to the same group (e.g., Reicher, Cassidy, Wolpert, Hopkins, & Levine, 2006). This may explain Obama's success in 2008. In presenting a message of hope, he did so for all Americans—uniting different groups under a banner of hope for change. Hope in the context of a shared identity may hold the key to bringing advantaged and disadvantaged groups together in a spirit of striving for social equality.

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