**Rationale Section**

Humans have tended to favor individuals they view as “similar” to themselves while denigrating those that they view as “different”. Historically this has led to many conflicts across the globe and has likely resulted in countless atrocities. One must look no farther than Germany in the 1930s or Rwanda in the 1990s to see examples of this type of favoritism and denigration play out in recent history at its most extreme.

Research by Levine, Prosser, Evans and Reicher (2005) bear this phenomenon out by showing that in-group bias research typically finds that individuals prefer their own groups while also showing a negative bias towards members of out-groups. Mullen, Brown and Smith (1992) also suggest that such in-group and out-group dynamics show up consistently. They may even manifest is something as trivial as a sports rivalry (Wann & Grieve, 2005). As such, it would not be a stretch to suggest that these same dynamics show up with respect to religious beliefs.

Research by Cowgill, Rios and Simpson (2017) suggests partial support for this affect in their study that suggested Christians give more money to their Christian counterparts whereas Atheists do not show an in-group bias. This result is not surprising given research tends to indicate that highly religious individuals have negative views of atheists and atheists have negative views of Christians (Johnson, Rowatt & Wade, 2017; Shiller & Manager, 2017).

Given the increasing diversity appearing across the globe, it is important to understand how group processes develop, change and manifest within populations. One might expect given the seemingly universal nature of helping behavior, that such group processes with respect to in-group and out-group behavior would be minimal at best (Shariff, et al., 2014). This might especially be the thought to be the case for religious ideologies are supposedly meant to be able peace. However, this does not appear to be the case (Cook, et al., 2015; Gervais, et al., 2011; Johnson, et al., 2017; Shiller & Manager, 2017; Cowgill, Rios & Simpson, 2017). As such, it is worth investigating how members of religious groups perceive members of their own in-groups compared to dissimilar out-group in addition to what types of behaviors these same groups are willing to engage in between in-group and out-group members.

*Hypotheses:*

1. Christians would be more apt to help and hold favorable views towards Christian targets than they would be towards Non-Christian targets

2. Non-Christians would be more apt to help and hold favorable views towards Non-Christian targets than they would be towards Christian targets

**Methods Section**

**Participants**

This study consisted of 333 participants who were enrolled in Introductory Psychology courses at Eastern Michigan University during the Fall 2018 and Winter 2019 semesters. Of those 333 participants, 313 remained after removing participants for failing to notice the desire manipulations. The remaining participants consisted of xxx females and xxx males ranging in age from xx to xx (M = xx). Of the 313 participants, 111 self-identified as Christian and 102 self-identified as Non-Christian.

**Procedures**

Prospective participants were invited to partake in a study looking to investigate how easily someone can make trait attributions about a hypothetical person after reading a description about that individual and seeing a photograph of the person. Participants interested in the study were instructed to read a consent form and provide consent if they decided to continue with the study. Upon providing consent, participants were given a demographic survey asking a wide range of questions including age, academic major and religious self-identification among others. Following the demographic survey, participants told they would be shown a photograph of a hypothetical person (named Jeremy) and then given a description to read. Participants were instructed to look over the photograph and read the description. Unbeknownst to participants, they were presented one of three different photos at random with each photograph either implicitly or explicitly identifying Jeremy as a Christian, Atheist or religiously neutral person. Following the presentation of one of the three photographs, participants read the same description of Jeremy and were asked to make trait attributions about Jeremy as well as indicate the participants willingness to engage in certain behaviors with “Jeremy”. Participants were then asked to fill out a series of scales to assess the participant’s political feelings, the role of religiosity in their lives, their degree of conservatism, and their Big Five personality facets. Participants were then asked to answer some questions to assess whether participants paid attention to the manipulation. Finally, participants were debriefed on the nature of the experiment and asked whether they would like to receive a SONA credit to be used for potential course credit at the discretion of their instructors.

**Manipulations**

**Christian T Shirt Condition.** This condition involved a picture of a white, college-aged, male wearing a black t shirt with white lettering. The lettering spelled out the phrase “JESUS JUST BELIEVE IN HIM” on the front in block lettering. The backdrop behind the student wearing the t shirt was a cream-colored wall.

**Neutral T Shirt Condition.** This condition involved a picture of a white, college-aged, male wearing a deep red t shirt with no lettering. The backdrop behind the student wearing the t shirt was a cream-colored wall.

**Atheist T Shirt Condition.** This condition involved a picture of a white, college-aged, male wearing a black t shirt with white lettering. The lettering spelled out the phrase “THIS IS WHAT an atheist LOOKS LIKE” on the front with a mix of block lettering and cursive lettering. The backdrop behind the student wearing the t shirt was a cream-colored wall.

**Measures**

**Trait Attributions.** Various trait attributes were assessed with respect to the participants degree of agreement that specific traits were expressed by the hypothetical target named Jeremy. Participants were asked to rate on an 11-point Likert scale from 0 (Not At All Expressed) to 10 (Completely Expressed) the degree to which the participant felt Jeremy expressed the following traits: Hostile, Aggressive, Combative, Short Tempered, Friendly, Mild, Accommodating, Patient, and Giving.

**Prosocial Behaviors.** Various hypothetical behaviors were assessed with respect to how willing participants reported they would be in engaging in a specified behavior with Jeremy if Jeremy was a real person. Participants were asked to indicate their willingness to engage in the behaviors with Jeremy on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Not At All Willing) to 5 (Extremely Willing). Participants were asked to assess their willingness to say hello, shake hands, sit next to, loan a pencil, walk away from, ostracize, talk badly about or refuse help Jeremy.

**SECS Scale.** The 12 Item Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS) was used as a measure of the participant’s conservative values. The scale consists of 12 item topics including Abortion, Religion, Gun Ownership, Traditional Marriage, Traditional Values, The Family Unit, Patriotism, Military and National Security, Limited Government, Fiscal Responsibility, Business, and Welfare Benefits. Of those 12 items, only 5 of the items (Abortion, Religion, Traditional Marriage, Traditional Values, and The Family Unit) from the SECS were used in the study. Participants were asked to rate from 0 to 100 how positively or negatively they felt about each of the topics. Scores of 0 represented extremely negative views, 50 represented neutral views and 100 represented extremely positive views for each given topic. Initial research by Everett (2013) found that the scale had good external validity with pre-established measures that correlate with conservative ideology as well as good overall reliability with a Cronbach alpha = .88.

**NIROR Scale.** The New Indices of Religious Orientation Revised (NIROR) scale was used as a measure of religious orientation for participants. The scale consists of three different subscales or religious orientations which include an intrinsic orientation, extrinsic orientation or quest orientation. The NIROR consists of 6 items for each subscale and responses are scored on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Initial findings by Francis, Fawcett, Robbins & Stairs (2016) suggest that the NIROR has good construct validity, internal validity. Additionally, the NIROR also appears to have good internal reliability with the intrinsic, extrinsic and quest orientations having Cronbach alphas of .82, .65 and .75 respectively. The present study used all 18 items to assess an individual’s religious orientation.

**TIPI Scale.** The TIPI was created to be a short form version of the Big Five personality inventory consisting of 10 items asking individuals to assess the degree to which people see themselves as “extraverted; enthusiastic”, “critical; quarrelsome”, “dependable; self-disciplined”, “anxious; easily upset”, “open to new experiences; complex”, “reserved; quiet”, “sympathetic; warm”, “disorganized; careless”, “calm; emotionally stable”, and “conventional; uncreative” (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann, 2003). The items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). Initial research by Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann (2003) suggests that the TIPI has good convergent and external validity in addition to a moderately strong test retest reliability of r = .72.