AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Emotion

ISSN: 1528-3542

2024, Vol. 24, No. 6, 1522–1535
https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0001364

Facing Discomfort: Avoided Negative Affect Shapes the Acknowledgment of Systemic Racism

Kara Murray and Birgit Koopmann-Holm
Department of Psychology, Santa Clara University

Why can some Americans acknowledge the deeply rooted racism in the United States while others cannot? Past research suggests that the more people want to avoid feeling negative ("avoided negative affect; ANA"), the less likely they focus on and even perceive someone's suffering. Because acknowledging racism is one specific instance of noticing and acknowledging that people are suffering, the present research investigates whether ANA might also affect the degree to which people acknowledge racism. We predicted that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less they will acknowledge systemic racism and the more they will deny negative aspects of their country's history and current policies, that is, the more blindly patriotic they will be. In Study 1, 104 undergraduates reported their ANA and patriotism and rated how much racism they perceived in certain situations. As predicted, the more participants wanted to avoid feeling negative, the less they acknowledged systemic racism. These findings held even after controlling for political ideology, ethnicity, moral foundations, and how people actually feel. However, ANA did not predict blind patriotism. In Study 2, we randomly assigned 116 participants to either an increase ANA, decrease ANA, or control condition. As predicted, participants in the increase ANA condition acknowledged systemic racism less than those in the decrease ANA and control conditions. Wanting to avoid feeling negative might be one barrier to dismantling racial inequalities. Given the high degree of ANA in the United States, we discuss the implications of this work.

Keywords: systemic racism, White fragility, avoided negative affect, blind patriotism, affect valuation theory

Supplemental materials: https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0001364.supp

> Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. (James Arthur Baldwin, 1924–1987; Baldwin, 1962, p. 38)

As this quote from American writer James Arthur Baldwin suggests, to change the status quo, we need to acknowledge what is wrong with it. Racial injustice has long existed in the United States, and the recent brutal murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and others have created a wave of activism in the 21st century, forcing people to face the racial injustices embedded in the country. Because acknowledging the problem of racism is uncomfortable and distressing, wanting to avoid feeling negative might be a barrier to acknowledging and ultimately dismantling racism.

The higher people's avoided negative affect (ANA; Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014)—that is, the more they want to avoid feeling negative—the less they notice other people's suffering (Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020). As acknowledging racism is one instance of noticing that people are suffering, we predicted that the higher people's ANA, the less they acknowledge racism, above and beyond variables that past research identified as predictors of racism beliefs (e.g., political ideology, ethnicity, moral foundations; Silver et al., 2022). We tested this prediction in two studies: Study 1 examined the association between ANA and the acknowledgment of systemic racism. In Study 2, to test a causal relationship, we manipulated the desire to avoid negative affect and examined if this shapes the degree to which participants acknowledge systemic racism.

Exploring the relationship between ANA and acknowledging systemic racism is important because accepting feeling negative could serve as a first step toward getting people to face racial injustices, confront issues of racism, and dismantle racial inequalities instead of avoiding conversations about race.

ANA

Although many people want to avoid feeling bad, people differ in the degree to which they want to avoid feeling negative (ANA;

This article was published Online First April 4, 2024.
Birgit Koopmann-Holm https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0819-8862
This research was funded by University Research Grant 14007 and a JEDI Project Award, both awarded to Birgit Koopmann-Holm by the Office of the Provost at Santa Clara University. The authors would like to thank Esveide Gonzalez-Lombera, Ayah Hilali, and Sophia Hartenbaum for their contributions to this project. The authors also thank the Culture Impacts Emotion Laboratory for their feedback. The data sets and syntaxes are available via the following link: https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.25239568.

Kara Murray served as lead for formal analysis, investigation, methodology, project administration, and writing–original draft and served in a supporting role for conceptualization. Birgit Koopmann-Holm served as lead for conceptualization, funding acquisition, supervision, and writing–review and editing and served in a supporting role for formal analysis, investigation, methodology, and project administration.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Birgit Koopmann-Holm, Department of Psychology, Santa Clara University, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95053, United States. Email: bkoopmannholm@scu.edu

Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014). According to affect valuation theory (AVT; Tsai, 2007; Tsai et al., 2006), "avoided affect" differs from "actual affect" (the affective states people actually feel) and "ideal affect" (the affective states people ideally want to feel). While actual affect describes how people actually feel, ideal and avoided affect are affective goals. They describe the affective states people want to approach (ideal affect) or avoid (avoided affect).

ANA is distinct from related constructs such as the avoidance of emotions in general (Maio & Esses, 2001) as well as from prevention focus (see Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014). Moreover, ANA differs from the positivity bias (Jordan, 1953), with the latter focusing on seeking positive information about the self and the environment. In contrast, ANA describes the motivation to avoid feeling negative emotions, which was found to be a separate construct from ideal positive affect, that is, the degree to which people want to feel positive (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014). Hence, according to AVT (Tsai et al., 2006), valuing positive emotions is not the same as wanting to avoid feeling negative emotions (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014). People may value the positive while also accepting or even valuing the negative.

Research on AVT suggests that while temperament shapes actual more than ideal and avoided affect, culture shapes ideal and avoided affect more than actual affect. For example, U.S. Americans want to avoid feeling negative more than people in Germany, China, and Ecuador (e.g., Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014; Larco et al., 2024; Seow et al., 2024). Moreover, research on AVT suggests that both ideal and avoided affect are important predictors of behavior, even after controlling for actual affect. For instance, ANA shapes how people try to relieve the suffering of another person. When asked to imagine sending different sympathy cards (i.e., cards that focus on the positive with phrases such as "Memories will bring comfort" and cards that focus on the negative with phrases such as "Words will not lighten a heavy heart") to an acquaintance who has recently lost a loved one, the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less comfortable they feel sending sympathy cards that focus on the negative (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014). ANA even predicts what people consider to be a compassionate response: The more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less helpful they consider sympathy cards that focus on the negative and the less compassionate they regard faces that mirror someone else's distress (Koopmann-Holm et al., 2021). People who strongly want to avoid feeling negative consider a compassionate face to be one that expresses a slight kind smile instead (Koopmann-Holm et al., 2021).

In addition to shaping how people conceptualize compassion and try to relieve others' suffering, ANA is also associated with the degree to which people notice and acknowledge other people's suffering in the first place. The more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less likely they focus on and perceive someone else's suffering (Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020). People must notice and acknowledge suffering before they can respond in a compassionate way. However, noticing suffering can be distressing as it involves noticing negativity that people with a high degree of ANA want to avoid. Not noticing suffering is one way to reduce this distress. Because of this and because one instance of noticing that people are suffering is to acknowledge racism, we predicted that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less they would acknowledge racism, which we turn to next.

Racism in the United States

White U.S. Americans tend to avoid acknowledging both their country's racist past and its present racial issues (Chotiner, 2020). It is difficult for many White Americans to talk constructively about race because they grew up avoiding such discussions (Loyd & Gaither, 2018). They often minimize or deny the problem of racism to not take responsibility for it (Mekawi et al., 2020). Furthermore, White Americans often avoid interracial interactions because they are worried about making mistakes in talking to and about racial minorities and expect that such interactions will be unpleasant (Apfelbaum et al., 2008; Plant, 2004; Richeson & Shelton, 2007). In fact, the majority of people in interracial settings would prefer to avoid conversations around race unless these topics are instigated in some way (Valentine et al., 2012). White Americans are particularly avoidant of talking about racism due to the fear of appearing racist, the fear of realizing their own racism, the fear of confronting White privilege, and the fear of taking personal responsibility for racism (Sue, 2013). That is, they avoid acknowledging people's suffering to avoid these fears and other negative emotions. In addition, other cultural norms embedded within everyday situations such as stereotypes and microaggressions can perpetuate systemic racism by establishing White superiority and protecting and defending the existing system of racial oppression (Skinner-Dorkenoo et al., 2021). Furthermore, talking about racial progress as something that happens automatically with time is a barrier to actively being antiracist (Kraus et al., 2022). Taken together, avoiding talking about racism, perpetuating existing beliefs and social norms, and narratives of racial progress will prevent people from acknowledging racism and changing the status quo.

In addition, since White people hold high-power "gatekeeping" positions disproportionately more than other racial groups (Boykin et al., 2020), "American society teaches American citizens that Whiteness is superior" (Roberts & Rizzo, 2021, p. 18). This can be seen in the omission of non-White stories in U.S. historical narratives, which is harmful because people are unaware of their knowledge gaps (Fryberg & Eason, 2017). Individuals who are less aware of historical racial injustices also tend to be less aware of contemporary manifestations of systemic racism (Bonam et al., 2019; Nelson et al., 2013). If White people continue to fear conversations around race and refuse to teach and/or learn about history through a non-White point of view, using James Baldwin's words, "nothing can be changed" (Baldwin, 1962, p. 148).

Robin DiAngelo coined the term "White fragility" (DiAngelo, 2018a) and defined it most simply as "defensive reactions so many White people have when our racial worldviews, positions, or advantages are questioned or challenged" (DiAngelo, 2018b, p. 1). From an emotion and emotion regulation theoretical perspective, White fragility includes (a) the negative emotions White people experience when they realize that they themselves play a role in racism, which is at odds with their goal of being a good person, and (b) the wish to downregulate these negative emotions by disengaging in conversations or situations surrounding race (Ford et al., 2022). For example, White people may endorse a colorblind approach (Lewis, 2004; Phillips & Lowery, 2018) or minimize, distance themselves from, or even deny the prevalence of racism (Ford et al., 2022; Knowles et al., 2014; Shuman et al., 2023). This disengagement from discussions around race as a result of White fragility is a barrier to systemic change (Ford et al., 2022). Past research has shown that

conversations about racism and intergroup contact are important for increasing racism awareness in general and for being invested in campus diversity, for being less anxious about interracial interactions, and for supporting affirmative action more specifically (Case, 2007; Mekawi et al., 2020; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Furthermore, acknowledging racism can increase empathy for disadvantaged members of a society, which in turn can increase prosocial behavior (Batson et al., 2007). Therefore, facing the distress that often comes with acknowledging racism is an important first step to becoming antiracist. In line with this, research suggests that not justifying the status quo (e.g., acknowledging racism) is associated with greater engagement in changing the status quo, partly because people who do not justify the system feel more negative (Jost, 2020). People who downregulate the negative emotions they feel in response to injustices are less supportive of collective action for social change (Ford et al., 2019; Solak et al., 2021).

The avoidance of racism is often linked to a desire to maintain a positive image of one's own country. White Americans, who associate their ethnicity with being "American," have an especially strong national identity (Devos & Banaji, 2005) and motivation to maintain a positive or virtuous image of America. Related to this motivation of wanting to see one's own country in only a positive light are patriotism and nationalism. Patriotism is an attachment to or love for one's nation (Bar-Tal & Staub, 1997; Li & Brewer, 2004), while nationalism is the belief that one's own country is superior to all others (Smith & Kim, 2006). Patriotism and nationalism are integral parts of many U.S. Americans' identities. When compared with 32 other countries in a cross-sectional study, the United States was placed in the top 3 in both patriotism and nationalism in 1995/96 and 2003/04 (Smith & Kim, 2006). Although many countries stayed relatively stable in their patriotism and nationalism rankings over the years, U.S. American patriotism and nationalism increased, bringing them to the top of both charts in 2003/04.

Instead of patriotism and nationalism, other authors have used different terms such as constructive and blind patriotism. Although constructive patriotism is defined as the love for one's country, which includes questioning and criticism of group practices in hopes of positive change, blind patriotism, which is similar to nationalism, is defined as believing one's country is better than all others and should be dominant (Schatz et al., 1999). People high in blind patriotism are intolerant of criticism and practice staunch allegiance to their country. Blind patriotism is positively associated with polarization (Finell & Zogmaister, 2015) and a restriction of the moral values of care and welfare to the ingroup, not outgroups (Staub, 1997). Although constructive patriotism can be compatible with valuing diversity, blind patriotism is not (Li & Brewer, 2004). Because being blindly patriotic includes not allowing criticism of one's own country such as criticizing racist policies and pointing out racism that leads to the suffering of many people, it is possible that blind patriotism is one manifestation of not acknowledging racism. Blind patriotism and not acknowledging racism can be seen as specific instances of not engaging with people's suffering to avoid feeling negative.

A focus on White fragility is central to antiracism efforts given that in a society in which White people hold many powerful positions, their defensive reactions have serious consequences. Still, in addition to White fragility, other reasons exist why people might not acknowledge racism. For instance, some people believe that racism existed only in the past, not in our current society. Because this belief denies racism, among White people, it might be part of a White fragility response. However, even non-White people might not consider racism to be a pervasive problem and not acknowledge it, either because they have internalized negative stereotypes about their own racial group (Myers, 2005) or out of fear of possible retaliation or repercussions (Olson, 2013). Finally, exposure to discrimination is often distressing for non-White individuals, and hence, acknowledging racism can be distressing for non-White people. Because of these additional potential mechanisms for not acknowledging racism, in the present article, we do not just focus on White people. We include participants from all ethnicities, but control for ethnicity given the importance of this variable for our research question.

Wanting to Avoid Feeling Negative: A Broader Motivation for Not Acknowledging Racism Among Whites and Non-Whites?

To address racism, Ford et al. (2022) suggest that "one potential step forward is for White people to build acceptance for their discomfort" (Ford et al., 2022, p. 519). Expanding on this, in the present article, we examine whether the degree of wanting to avoid (vs. accepting) feeling negative influences the acknowledgment of systemic racism among everyone, not just White people. The present research is based on the rationale that wanting to avoid negative emotions not only drives White fragility responses (Ford et al., 2022) but also seems crucial in the other ways people do not acknowledge racism: First, thinking that racism only existed in the past can be a way for people to shield themselves from acknowledging uncomfortable current societal injustices. Second, people might adopt harmful stereotypes about their own racial group to rationalize the injustices they face, aiming to reduce distress. Furthermore, fearing retaliation or repercussions can be seen as wanting to avoid negative consequences for oneself or one's ingroup. Finally, ignoring racism could be a strategy to avoid the negative feelings tied to remembering experiences of discrimination.

The reasons for actually feeling certain negative emotions might be different among Whites and non-Whites. For example, White people might feel sad because they know they are responsible for racism and they might feel angry because conversations around race are difficult. Non-White people might feel sad because they are the target of racism and they might feel angry because they cannot change racist systems alone. However, the motivation to avoid feeling negative focuses on the same goal among Whites and non-Whites, namely eliminating or reducing distress. Therefore, in the present article, we examine whether wanting to avoid feeling negative might be one possible broader, higher-order motivation for not acknowledging racism among both Whites and non-Whites.

Because of the cultural differences in ANA, considering the cultural context in which we examine ANA is important. As mentioned above, people in the United States want to avoid feeling negative emotions more than people in other parts of the world (e.g., Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014; Larco et al., 2024; Seow et al., 2024). This is in line with other work suggesting that people in the United States try to reduce their distress after a negative event (Miyamoto et al., 2014). Because of this tendency to avoid feeling negative in the United States, it is possible that people in the United States are particularly eager to disengage from and avoid topics around race to not face the negative emotions they want to avoid. Interestingly, Germans, who

want to avoid feeling negative less than U.S. Americans do (Koopmann-Holm et al., 2021; Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014; Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020), have reckoned with their horrible history of the Nazi era. For instance, concentration camps function as memorials, all students learn about the rise of the Nazis and their crimes in schools, and acts of remembrance and reparations embody acknowledgment and responsibility (Neiman, 2019). Certainly, how Germans have worked through their sins is not perfect. Also, with Neo-Nazis becoming an increasing problem in Germany, not everyone has learned from the country's past sins. Additionally, it took Germans a long time to work through their history. It was a difficult process. However, as a society, Germans might acknowledge their racist past more compared to U.S. Americans, who tend to avoid recognizing both their country's racist past and its present racial issues (Chotiner, 2020).

The Present Research

Because the higher a person's ANA, the less they notice other people's suffering (Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020) and since acknowledging racism is one instance of acknowledging that people are suffering, we predicted that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less they will acknowledge racism. According to the "avoided affect mismatch" (Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020), ANA will predict how people respond when they are confronted with what they want to avoid. For instance, when people who strongly want to avoid feeling negative are exposed to or imagine situations in which they might have to acknowledge racism, the avoided affect mismatch posits that they will respond in a way that avoids the distress that is associated with admitting people are suffering. A response of not acknowledging racism could prevent that distress.

We predicted that ANA would be particularly negatively associated with acknowledging systemic racism (i.e., racist policies and practices, such as the portrayal of African Americans in the U.S. entertainment media; Bonam et al., 2019), which is bigger and therefore even more painful to acknowledge (Feagin, 2013) compared to isolated racism (i.e., isolated, individual, and obvious acts of racism, such as an agent not giving an African American woman a rental car; Bonam et al., 2019). Whereas systemic racism necessarily implicates the self because one is part of the system, isolated racism can be distanced from the self as the isolated acts of racism can be viewed as committed by someone else. Hence, acknowledging isolated racism may not be as negative as is acknowledging systemic racism. Systemic racism does not just involve feelings and thoughts of individuals, but it involves entire systems that create racism. It is uncomfortable to acknowledge that societal structures and policies are responsible for racial disparities. Part of this discomfort may be feelings of overwhelm and hopelessness about how feasible or possible it is to change such a large-scale problem. Additionally, acknowledging systemic racism requires the consideration of historical truths like colonialism, slavery, and segregation that have contributed to present-day disparities, which is uncomfortable. Because acknowledging systemic racism includes acknowledging particularly distressing facts, it is possible that ANA specifically predicts acknowledging systemic racism.

Because blind patriotism is characterized by denying any wrongdoings from one's own country (including racism), we predicted that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the more blindly patriotic they are. By being blindly patriotic, that is, by overlooking and rejecting the negative aspects of one's country's history, people can avoid the negative feelings that can arise from admitting that one is a citizen of a country that does not only have positive, but also negative aspects. As constructive patriotism does not involve a denial of negative aspects of one's own country, we did not predict an association between ANA and constructive patriotism.

We conducted two studies to test these ideas. Study 1 examined how ANA relates to acknowledging systemic racism and being blindly patriotic. In Study 2, we explored causality by manipulating ANA and observing its effects on acknowledging systemic racism.

Analysis Plan for Studies 1 and 2

In the present article, we wanted to examine the association between ANA and acknowledging systemic racism above and beyond variables that previous research has identified as important predictors for racism beliefs. For instance, past research has found that moral foundations (i.e., individualizing foundations, which focus on preventing harm and promoting fairness for every individual in a group, and binding foundations, which focus on respecting authority, loyalty to ingroup members, and purity/sanctity, binding a group together) predict systemic racism beliefs (Silver et al., 2022).

Furthermore, political ideology and ethnicity have also been found to be related to systemic racism beliefs. The more politically conservative people are, the less they endorse systemic racism beliefs (Silver et al., 2022). Furthermore, non-Latino White participants are less likely to endorse systemic racism beliefs compared to other ethnicities (Silver et al., 2022). Hence, to assess the independent effect of ANA on acknowledging systemic racism, in the present article, we controlled for moral foundations, political ideology (as moral foundations are measured independently of political ideology, Graham et al., 2011), and ethnicity. Also, we always controlled for isolated racism when looking at systemic racism (and vice versa) to control for acquiescence to any item in the racism scale and to examine the effect of ANA on systemic racism specifically. In the same vein, we always controlled for constructive patriotism when examining blind patriotism and vice versa. We considered it important to include the aforementioned variables in our analyses as statistical controls, which is why we report the analyses with these covariates in the models. However, the results did not change when we excluded these covariates from our analyses.

Lastly, in line with past research on AVT (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014; Koopmann-Holm, Sze, et al., 2020; Tsai et al., 2006), we always controlled for actual negative affect when examining ANA to determine their independent effects.[1] We also initially included gender in our analyses, but it either did not emerge as a significant predictor or, when it did emerge as a significant predictor, it did not change the pattern of results. Therefore, we dropped gender from our final analyses.

Study 1: Relationship Between ANA and the Acknowledgment of Systemic Racism

We hypothesized that the more participants wanted to avoid feeling negative, the less they would acknowledge systemic racism, even after

[1] We also ran additional analyses in which we controlled for ideal positive affect as well as actual positive affect to examine whether the results are specific to ANA. Across the two studies, the results did not change and are available in the online supplemental materials.

controlling for moral foundations, political ideology, ethnicity, acknowledging isolated racism, and actual negative affect (Hypothesis 1). We also predicted that the more people wanted to avoid feeling negative, the more blindly patriotic they would be, even after controlling for moral foundations, political ideology, ethnicity, constructive patriotism, and actual negative affect (Hypothesis 2).

Method

Transparency and Openness

For Studies 1 and 2, we report how we determined our sample sizes, all manipulations, and all data exclusions. In addition to the measures reported below, we included a few other measures in the studies to collect pilot data for new projects. The complete surveys are available as online supplemental materials. The studies' designs and analyses were not preregistered. Data were analyzed using SPSS Version 28. The data sets and syntaxes are available via the following link: https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.25239568.

Participants and Design

Sample size was determined using G*Power software: Ensuring a power of 0.80 to detect medium-size effects ($f^2 = 0.15$) using regression with seven predictors (ANA, actual negative affect, political ideology, ethnicity, binding foundations, individualizing foundations, isolated racism) and an alpha error probability of .05, we needed 103 participants. We aimed for approximately 120 participants because we expected that we would not be able to include data from around 15% of participants due to failed attention checks.

One hundred seventeen U.S. undergraduate students completed the study during January and February of 2021. However, after excluding 13 participants who failed one or more attention checks, our sample consisted of 104 undergraduate students from Santa Clara University (72.12% female, 24.04% male, 1.92% genderqueer; 47.12% White, 21.15% Asian, 9.62% Latinx/Hispanic, 8.65% Mixed, 4.81% Black, 0.96% Alaskan Native, 0.96% Pacific Islander; $M_{age} = 19.30$ years; $SD = 1.70$). They participated in an online "Emotions Study" and received course credit for their participation.

Materials and Procedure

All participants completed the measures listed below (in that order) at a place and time convenient for them. Because this study was conducted online, we added two attention check items to the racism scale and two to the patriotism scale (e.g., "Please select '2' as your response for this item." For more information about these attention checks, see the online supplemental materials). We excluded those participants who did not pass all four attention checks. The study was approved by Santa Clara University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), and we obtained informed consent from all participants. At the end of the study, all participants were debriefed.

Global Affect Valuation Index (Global AVI). To assess actual, ideal, and avoided affect, participants completed the extended version (as described in Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014) of the AVI (Tsai et al., 2006). Participants rated how often they actually felt, how often they ideally wanted to feel, and how often they wanted to avoid feeling (in that order) 37 different affective states over the course of a typical week on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*all the time*). In line with past work (e.g., Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014; Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020; Koopmann-Holm et al., 2021) and to examine the degree to which people want to avoid feeling negative affect (rather than the degree to which people want to avoid feeling any affective state; Maio & Esses, 2001), we created mean-deviated aggregate scores. That is, we computed participants' mean-deviated scores for ANA by subtracting the average degree to which participants wanted to avoid feeling each of the 37 affective states from the average degree to which participants wanted to specifically avoid feeling negative affective states, which included sad, unhappy, lonely, fearful, hostile, nervous, dull, sleepy, and sluggish. For actual negative affect, we combined the same affective states, but this time from the actual affect portion of the AVI, and subtracted from that the average degree to which participants reported actually feeling each of the 37 affective states. For ideal and actual positive affect, we combined enthusiastic, excited, elated, happy, content, satisfied, calm, relaxed, and serene from the ideal and actual affect portion, respectively. We created mean-deviated scores by subtracting the average degree to which people ideally wanted to feel or reported actually feeling each of the 37 affective states. Cronbach's alphas (means and standard deviations in parentheses) were .77 for ANA ($M = 1.35$, $SD = 0.35$), .84 for actual negative affect ($M = 0.15$, $SD = 0.50$), .81 for ideal positive affect ($M = 1.68$, $SD = 0.46$), and .88 for actual positive affect ($M = 0.16$, $SD = 0.61$).

Blind and Constructive Patriotism. Using a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 6 (*agree strongly*), participants rated how much they agreed or disagreed with 19 items aimed to measure blind and constructive patriotism (Schatz et al., 1999). Twelve items assessed blind patriotism ($M = 1.73$, $SD = 0.58$), that is, people's unquestioning positive evaluation of the United States. An example item included, "People who do not wholeheartedly support America should live somewhere else." Cronbach's alpha was .80. The remaining seven items assessed constructive patriotism ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 0.75$), that is, people's support for criticizing the United States to instigate positive change. An example item included "If I criticize the United States, I do so out of love for my country." Cronbach's alpha was .82.

Perceptions of Racism. Participants rated the extent to which they perceived racism in the actions of people in 14 scenarios on a 7-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*certainly*) (Bonam et al., 2019). Nine of the scenarios described systemic manifestations of racism (e.g., "High rates of poverty among African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans," "The portrayal of African Americans in U.S. entertainment media"). The remaining five scenarios described isolated incidents of racism (e.g., "An African American man goes to a real estate company to look for a house. The agent takes him to look only at homes in low income neighborhoods," "An African American woman made reservations for a rental car over the phone, but when she arrived in person to collect the car, the agent informed her that no cars were available"). Cronbach's alphas (means and standard deviations in parentheses) were .81 for systemic racism ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 1.12$) and .58 for isolated racism ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 0.99$).

Moral Foundations Questionnaire. We used the 30-item Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ-30; Graham et al., 2011) to assess five moral foundations (harm/care, fairness/reciprocity, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity). First, participants indicated the relevance of each moral foundation for how they decide whether something is right or wrong on a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all relevant*) to 6 (*extremely relevant*). Example items include "whether or not someone suffered emotionally" and "whether or not

some people were treated differently than others." In the second half, participants indicated their agreement with items reflecting different moral foundations such as "compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue" and "when the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly" on a scale ranging from 1 (*disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). In line with past research (e.g., Bruchmann et al., 2018; Silver et al., 2022), we created means for individualizing foundations (12 items assessing care/harm, fairness/cheating; Cronbach's alpha = .70, $M = 4.92$, $SD = 0.53$) and binding foundations (18 items assessing loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, sanctity/degradation; Cronbach's alpha = .84, $M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.73$).

Demographics Questionnaire. Participants completed a demographics questionnaire assessing their gender, age, ethnicity, and political ideology.

Results

Does ANA Predict Acknowledgment of Systemic Racism Above and Beyond Previously Established Predictors?

To test Hypothesis 1, that the higher people's ANA, the less they will acknowledge systemic racism, even after controlling for variables that previous research has identified as important predictors of systemic racism beliefs, we regressed the mean for systemic racism onto ANA, controlling for acknowledging isolated racism, actual negative affect, individualizing moral foundations, binding moral foundations, political ideology (9-point scale ranging from 1 =[*extremely liberal*] to 9 [*extremely conservative*]), and ethnicity (non-White = 0, White = 1). In line with Hypothesis 1, the more people reported wanting to avoid feeling negative, the less they acknowledged systemic racism (see Table 1), Cohen's $f^2 = 1.01$ for the whole model. We also examined whether ANA was associated with acknowledging isolated racism, but it was not (see the online supplemental materials).

Does ANA Predict Blind Patriotism?

To test Hypothesis 2, that the higher people's ANA, the more blindly patriotic people will be, we regressed the mean for blind patriotism onto ANA, controlling for constructive patriotism, actual negative affect, individualizing moral foundations, binding moral foundations, political ideology, and ethnicity. We did not find support for our prediction. ANA was not statistically significantly associated with blind patriotism ($p = .28$; for more information, see the online supplemental materials).[2]

Discussion

As predicted, we found that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less they acknowledge systemic racism. This is in line with the avoided affect mismatch (Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020). When people, who highly want to avoid feeling negative, are confronted with issues that bring about negative affect, they respond in a way that reduces this negative affect. More specifically, not acknowledging systemic racism is a specific manifestation of not wanting to face negative affect that has implications and ramifications that go beyond the individual. The fact that ANA emerged as a significant predictor even after controlling for a set of variables previously identified as predictors of systemic racism beliefs (e.g., moral foundations, political ideology, ethnicity) suggests that ANA is an important additional variable to consider when trying to understand barriers to working toward racial justice.

In line with our reasoning that ANA would be particularly negatively associated with acknowledging systemic racism, which is bigger and therefore even more painful to acknowledge than isolated racism, ANA was negatively related to acknowledging systemic racism, but not to isolated racism. Different explanations for this exist: First, ANA might be associated with perceptions of suffering only when the suffering is caused by systemic injustices, which are even more difficult to admit than isolated instances of racism (Feagin, 2013). In support of this interpretation, people acknowledged isolated racism ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 0.99$) statistically significantly more than systemic racism ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 1.12$), $F(1, 103) = 6.89$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Hence, it is possible that ANA only matters when injustices are very difficult to admit.

The second possible explanation is that we did not find a relationship between ANA and acknowledging isolated racism because the internal consistency of the isolated racism aggregate was lower compared to the internal consistency of the other aggregates in our study. If future work replicated the null relationship between ANA and acknowledging isolated racism using an isolated racism aggregate with a higher internal consistency, it would underline the importance of differentiating between the degree to which people acknowledge isolated and systemic forms of racism. Different psychological processes might be at play.

We did not find support for our prediction that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the more blindly patriotic they will be. Upon a closer examination of the items for blind patriotism, we noticed that a few of these items seem to include negative responses (e.g., hostility) toward outgroup members (e.g., "People who do not wholeheartedly support America should live somewhere else."). When people highly want to avoid feeling negative (including hostility, which is part of the ANA aggregate), they might not endorse these items.[3] It is possible that only wanting to avoid feeling negative states other than hostility predicts blind patriotism. Future research could examine this.

Although this study demonstrated an association between ANA and acknowledging systemic racism, even above and beyond other previously established predictors, we do not know whether this relationship is causal. Does increasing people's ANA cause people to acknowledge systemic racism less? Furthermore, when we decrease people's ANA, will they acknowledge systemic racism more? This is what we set out to examine in Study 2.

Study 2: Does ANA Directly Influence the Degree to Which People Acknowledge Systemic Racism?

To investigate whether the degree of ANA directly influences people's degree to which they acknowledge systemic racism, we conducted an experiment, in which we randomly assigned participants

[2] We also examined whether ANA was associated with constructive patriotism (controlling for blind patriotism, actual negative affect, individualizing and binding moral foundations, political ideology, and ethnicity), but it was not (all *p*s in the model > .05).

[3] Because of this, and because past research suggests that ideally wanting to feel high arousal negative states such as hostility is associated with increased negative (e.g., harmful) responses towards outgroup members (Clobert et al., 2022), in the online supplemental materials, we report the results of a post hoc analysis, in which we included ideal high arousal negative states as additional control variable in the regression model predicting blind patriotism. In this post hoc analysis, ANA emerged as a significant predictor.

Table 1

Regression Coefficients of Avoided Negative Affect on Acknowledging Systemic Racism, Controlling for Acknowledging Isolated Racism, Actual Negative Affect, Individualizing Moral Foundations, Binding Moral Foundations, Political Ideology, and Ethnicity

Effect	*B*	*SE*	95% CI *LL*	95% CI *UL*	β	*t*	*p*
Constant	3.33	0.98	1.37	5.28		3.38	.001
Avoided negative affect	−0.59	0.24	−1.07	−0.11	−.19	−2.42	.02
Isolated racism	0.36	0.10	0.17	0.55	.31	3.77	<.001
Actual negative affect	0.20	0.17	−0.14	0.54	.09	1.15	.25
Individualizing moral foundations	0.40	0.19	0.03	0.78	.19	2.16	.03
Binding moral foundations	−0.14	0.13	−0.39	0.11	−.10	−1.09	.28
Political ideology[a]	−0.28	0.07	−0.41	−0.15	−.38	−4.21	<.001
Ethnicity[b]	−0.27	0.17	−0.60	0.07	−.12	−1.60	.11

Note. $N = 97$. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.
[a] 9-point scale ranging from 1 (*extremely liberal*) to 9 (*extremely conservative*). [b] Non-White = 0, White = 1.

to one of three conditions. One condition was designed to increase people's ANA, one to decrease people's ANA, and one served as the control condition. In the increase ANA condition, we motivated participants to try to avoid feeling negative. We designed the decrease ANA condition to do the opposite, namely to motivate participants to try to accept feeling negative.

In the present article, based on research by Messina et al. (2021), we define emotional acceptance as the absence of emotional avoidance motivations. More specifically, we conceptually define wanting to avoid/accept negative emotions as affective goals (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014). We predicted that participants in the increase ANA condition would acknowledge systemic racism less than those in the other two conditions (Hypothesis 1). We also predicted that participants in the decrease ANA condition would acknowledge systemic racism more than those in the other two conditions (Hypothesis 2). Finally, we hypothesized that ANA would mediate the effect of condition on the acknowledgment of systemic racism (Hypothesis 3).

To test Hypothesis 3 and to examine whether we successfully altered ANA, we assessed affective goals. However, asking people to try to either accept or avoid negative emotions and then asking them about the degree to which they wanted to avoid feeling negative might induce experimental demand and hence, elicit socially desirable responses in some people. Therefore, we also included a social desirability measure to be able to control for this variable. We reasoned that if we found a condition effect on ANA even after controlling for social desirability, it would support the effectiveness of the manipulation. Finally, as in Study 1, we assessed moral foundations, political ideology, and ethnicity. We wanted to be able to examine whether we were effective in our random assignment regarding these previously established predictors of systemic racism beliefs. When group differences on any of these variables despite random assignment occurred, we controlled for them. The results did not change even when we controlled for any of these variables that did not differ between groups.

Method

Participants and Design

Sample size was determined using G*Power software: Ensuring a power of .80 to detect medium-size effects ($f = 0.30$; we used this effect size because we found a medium-sized effect for ANA on systemic racism acknowledgment in Study 1) using an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) with three groups, between zero and six covariates (in case we were not effective in our random assignment regarding key variables such as political ideology or ethnicity), and an alpha error probability of .05, we needed 111 participants overall. We aimed for 45 participants in each condition, with a total of 135 participants, because we expected that we would not be able to include data from around 15% of participants due to failed attention checks.

One hundred thirty-eight U.S. undergraduate students participated in an online "Emotions Study" between November 2021 and January 2022. They received partial course credit for their participation. However, we had to exclude 22 participants who failed one or more attention checks. The number of people we had to exclude (six from the increase ANA condition, eight from the decrease ANA condition, and eight from the control condition) did not differ by condition to which they were assigned, $\chi^2(2, 138) = 0.54$, $p = .76$. Our final sample consisted of 116 undergraduate students from Santa Clara University (72.41% female, 22.41% male, 1.72% transgender, 0.86% genderqueer, 0.86% other; 48.28% White, 22.41% Asian, 14.66% Latinx/Hispanic, 6.90% Mixed, 4.31% Black; $M_{age} = 19.07$ years; $SD = 1.05$).

Of these, 41 participants were randomly assigned to the increase ANA condition, 38 to the decrease ANA condition, and 37 to the control condition. Participants in the three conditions did not differ in gender, $\chi^2(8, 114) = 7.41$, $p = .49$, ethnicity, $\chi^2(8, 112) = 5.57$, $p = .70$, individualizing moral foundations, $F(2, 111) = 0.53$, $p = .59$, binding moral foundations, $F(2, 110) = 0.06$, $p = .94$, and social desirability, $F(2, 112) = 1.14$, $p = .32$.

However, there were marginally significant differences across the three conditions in terms of age, $F(2, 111) = 2.47$, $p = .09$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, and political ideology, $F(2, 110) = 2.58$, $p = .08$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. Pairwise comparisons were not statistically significant ($ps > .10$) except for two: Participants in the increase ANA condition were statistically significantly older ($M = 19.35$, $SD = 1.27$) than participants in the control condition ($M = 18.83$, $SD = 0.78$; $p = .03$). Furthermore, participants in the increase ANA condition were statistically significantly more liberal ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.45$) than participants in the control condition ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.93$; $p = .03$). Therefore, we controlled for age and political ideology in the analyses reported below.

Materials and Procedure

All participants completed the measures listed below (in that order) at a place and time convenient for them. Because this study was conducted online, we added seven attention check items throughout the survey (see the online supplemental materials). As in Study 1, we excluded participants who did not pass all attention checks. The study was approved by Santa Clara University's IRB and we obtained informed consent from all participants. At the end of the study, all participants were debriefed.

ANA Manipulation.[4] After completing the consent form and seeing a reminder to please answer the following questions thoughtfully and honestly, participants in the "increase ANA" condition were shown the following instructions: "Research indicates that feeling negative emotions is counterproductive for information processing. Therefore, while you complete this survey, we ask you to try to avoid feeling negative emotions. For example, if you are starting to feel frustrated, stressed, anxious, sad, bored, or any other negative emotion while completing the survey, please try to push these feelings away. Please try your best to follow this instruction as we are studying the effects of you trying to avoid feeling negative emotions."

In the "decrease ANA" condition, participants were shown the following instructions: "Research indicates that feeling negative emotions is productive for information processing. Therefore, while you complete this survey, we ask you to try to accept feeling negative emotions. For example, if you are starting to feel frustrated, stressed, anxious, sad, bored, or any other negative emotion while completing the survey, please try to embrace these feelings. Please try your best to follow this instruction as we are studying the effects of you trying to accept feeling negative emotions."

Lastly, participants in the control condition were shown the following instructions: "Research indicates that feeling emotions is sometimes productive and sometimes counterproductive for information processing. Therefore, while you complete this survey, we ask you to try to select the option that best describes you. For example, if you are unsure about a question in the survey, please try to select the response that is closest to representing your views. Please try your best to follow this instruction as we are studying the effects of information processing."

Before completing a new portion of the survey, participants were reminded of their instructions. In the "increase ANA" condition, participants saw, "Friendly reminder: Please try to avoid feeling negative emotions while completing this portion of the survey." In the "decrease ANA" condition, participants saw, "Friendly reminder: Please try to accept feeling negative emotions while completing this portion of the survey." Finally, in the control condition, participants saw, "Friendly reminder: Please select the option that best describes you while completing this portion of the survey."

Momentary Affect Valuation Index (Momentary AVI). As in Study 1, we used the extended version (as described in Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014) of the AVI (Tsai et al., 2006). However, to assess participants' affective goals as a result of our manipulations, instead of using global ratings (average ratings over the course of a typical week), participants in this study rated their actual, avoided, and ideal affect (in that order) at that moment (i.e., "rate how you actually feel/want to avoid feeling/would ideally like to feel right now"). They rated the same 37 different affective states as in Study 1, but this time, they used a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). We created the same mean-deviated aggregate scores for avoided negative (Cronbach's alpha = .87, $M = 1.26$, $SD = 0.42$), actual negative (Cronbach's alpha = .81, $M = 0.01$, $SD = 0.52$), ideal positive (Cronbach's alpha = .88, $M = 1.58$, $SD = 0.53$), and actual positive affect (Cronbach's alpha = .86, $M = 0.24$, $SD = 0.62$) as in Study 1.

Perceptions of Racism. Like in Study 1, participants rated the extent to which they perceived systemic and isolated racism in 14 scenarios on a 7-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*certainly*) (Bonam et al., 2019). However, because we were interested in acknowledging racism toward all people of color, we made a few adjustments to the wording of some of the isolated racism items, most of which were specifically about Black people. We also made these changes hoping that the internal consistency of the isolated racism subscale would increase. The updated items read "A person of color was pulled over for speeding by a White highway patrol officer. Unknown to the man, his registration had expired earlier that month. Rather than give him a ticket and let him continue, the officer impounded the vehicle at the man's expense" and "A person of color made reservations for a rental car over the phone, but when she arrived in person to collect the car, the agent informed her that no cars were available." Because most of the original systemic racism items referred to people of color in general, we made no changes to those items. Cronbach's alphas (means and standard deviations in parentheses) were .85 for systemic racism ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.23$) and .62 for isolated racism ($M = 5.09$, $SD = 1.10$). Hence, the internal consistency for isolated racism was slightly higher compared to in Study 1, but so was the internal consistency for systemic racism.

Social Desirability Scale. Because we instructed participants to try to avoid or accept negative emotions and then asked them about their ANA, we could have induced demand characteristics. Therefore, to control for participants' tendency to complete the survey in a socially desirable manner, participants completed 14 items from the Marlowe–Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960), which assesses participants' desire for social approval using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all true*) to 5 (*extremely true*). Items include statements like "Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates." Cronbach's alpha (mean and standard deviation in parentheses) was .66 for the scale ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 0.46$).

Moral Foundations Questionnaire. As in Study 1, we used the 30-item Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ-30; Graham et al., 2011) and created the same means for individualizing (Cronbach's alpha = .82, $M = 4.72$, $SD = 0.66$) and binding (Cronbach's alpha = .81, $M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.65$) moral foundations.

Demographics Questionnaire. Participants completed the same demographics questionnaire as in Study 1 assessing their gender, age, ethnicity, and political ideology.

Results

Manipulation Check: Did the Manipulations Change ANA?

To examine whether our manipulation was effective, we ran an ANCOVA on ANA with condition as the independent variable,

[4] In the online supplemental materials, we discuss how our avoided negative affect manipulations differ from previously used experimental manipulations of emotional acceptance, suppression, reappraisal, and distraction.

controlling for actual negative affect, social desirability, political ideology, and age. Supporting the effectiveness of our manipulation, we found a main effect of condition, $F(2, 105) = 5.33$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$ (see Figure 1). As expected, participants in the increase ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = 1.44, $SE = 0.07$) reported higher ANA than participants in the control condition (estimated marginal mean = 1.22, $SE = 0.07$; $p = .03$, 95% confidence interval [CI] for difference [−0.42, −0.02]) and the decrease ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = 1.11, $SE = 0.07$, $p = .002$, 95% CI for difference [−0.53, −0.12]). However, there was no significant difference between the decrease ANA condition and the control ($p = .30$).

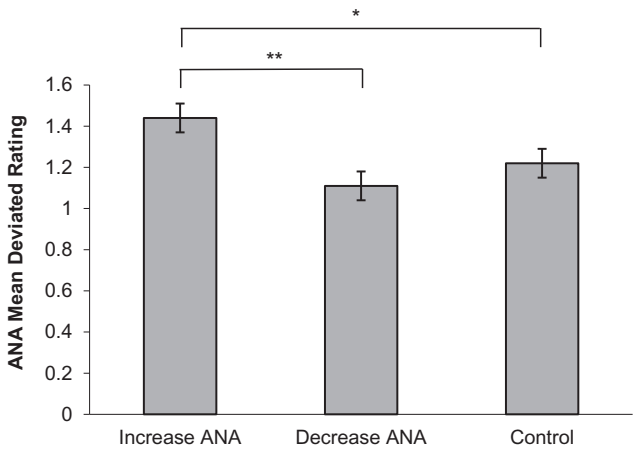
Did the Manipulations Change Other Types of Affect?

To examine whether condition specifically altered ANA or also actual negative and actual positive affect, we examined the condition effect separately on actual negative and actual positive affect, controlling for social desirability, political ideology, and age. For actual negative affect, we found a significant main effect of condition, $F(2, 106) = 6.82$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.11$. Participants in the decrease ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = 0.25, $SE = 0.08$) actually felt more negative than participants in the increase ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = −0.18, $SE = 0.08$; $p < .001$) and in the control condition (estimated marginal mean = −0.02, $SE = 0.09$; $p = .03$). There was no significant difference between the increase ANA condition and the control ($p = .20$).

For actual positive affect, we found a significant main effect of condition, $F(2, 106) = 6.05$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$. Participants in the decrease ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = −0.03, $SE = 0.10$) actually felt less positive than participants in the increase ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = 0.44, $SE = 0.10$; $p < .001$) and in the control condition (estimated marginal mean = 0.28, $SE = 0.10$; $p = .03$). There was no significant difference between the increase ANA condition and the control ($p = .25$).[5]

Figure 1

Effect of Condition on the Mean-Deviated Rating of Avoided Negative Affect (Estimated Marginal Mean) in Study 2



Note. ANA = avoided negative affect.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Does ANA Directly Affect the Degree to Which People Acknowledge Systemic Racism?

To test Hypothesis 1 (that participants in the increase ANA condition would acknowledge systemic racism less than participants in the other two conditions) and Hypothesis 2 (that participants in the decrease ANA condition would acknowledge systemic racism more than participants in the other two conditions), we ran an ANCOVA on the acknowledgment of systemic racism with condition as the independent variable, controlling for isolated racism, political ideology, and age. As predicted, we found a main effect of condition, $F(2, 107) = 4.06$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$ (see Figure 2). Supporting Hypothesis 1, participants in the increase ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = 4.46, $SE = 0.14$) acknowledged systemic racism less than participants in the control condition (estimated marginal mean = 5.05, $SE = 0.15$; $p = .007$, 95% CI for difference [−1.004, −0.17]). Interestingly though, participants in the increase ANA condition did not differ from participants in the decrease ANA condition (estimated marginal mean = 4.65, $SE = 0.14$, $p = .37$).

We did not find support for Hypothesis 2. In fact, rather than acknowledging systemic racism more, participants in the decrease ANA condition acknowledged systemic racism less than participants in the control condition ($p = .049$). Because we did not just manipulate ANA with our manipulation, but also ideal positive affect as well as actual positive and actual negative affect, we ran an additional ANCOVA in which we also controlled for these three types of affect. The results did not change (see the online supplemental materials).

Does ANA Mediate the Condition Effect on the Acknowledgment of Systemic Racism?

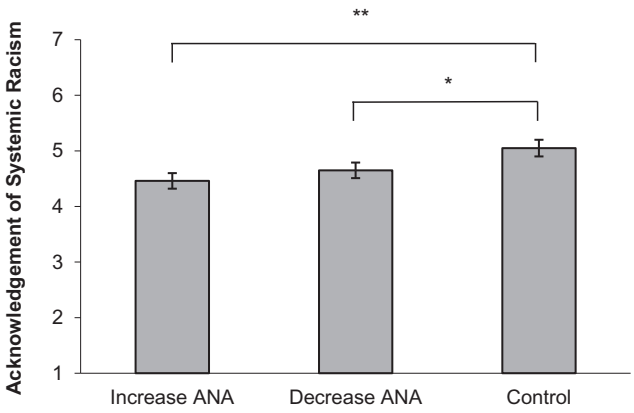
To test Hypothesis 3 (that ANA mediates the condition effect on the acknowledgment of systemic racism), we ran a mediation analysis using Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 4) for SPSS (Hayes, 2013). Condition was entered as the multicategorical independent variable using Helmert coding (categorical X1: increase ANA = −.67, decrease ANA = .33, control = .33; categorical X2: increase ANA = 0, decrease ANA = −.5, control = .5), acknowledging systemic racism was entered as the outcome variable, and ANA was entered as the mediator. We also added acknowledging isolated racism, actual negative affect, political ideology, and age as covariates. Supporting Hypothesis 3, we found a significant relative indirect effect of the X1 condition variable (comparing the increase ANA condition with the two other conditions) through ANA on acknowledging systemic racism. It was estimated to lie between −.221 and −.003 with 95% CI using Hayes' (2013) bootstrapping macro with 10,000 bootstrap samples. The relative direct effect of the X1 condition variable on acknowledging systemic racism was no longer statistically significant ($B = .33$, 95% CI [−0.04, 0.71], $SE = 0.19$, $\beta = .27$, $t(105) = 1.75$, $p = .08$), indicating full mediation.

Because we were not effective at decreasing participants' ANA, it is not surprising that we did not find a significant relative indirect effect of the X2 condition variable (comparing the decrease ANA condition with the control condition) through ANA on acknowledging systemic

[5] We found a main effect of condition on ideal positive affect as well (see the online supplemental materials).

Figure 2

Effect of Condition on the Acknowledgment of Systemic Racism (Estimated Marginal Mean) in Study 2



Note. ANA = avoided negative affect.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

racism. It was estimated to lie between −.04 and .14 with 95% CI using Hayes' (2013) bootstrapping macro with 10,000 bootstrap samples. The relative direct effect of the X2 condition variable on acknowledging systemic racism remained statistically significant ($B = .47$, 95% CI [0.07, 0.87], $SE = 0.20$, $\beta = .39$, $t(105) = 2.34$, $p = .02$).[6]

Discussion

Supporting Hypothesis 1, participants in the increase ANA condition acknowledged systemic racism less than participants in the control condition. Using mediation analyses, we demonstrated that participants' higher ANA in the increase ANA condition explained this finding. Hence, it is unlikely that we manipulated some other variable in the control condition, which then made participants in the control condition acknowledge systemic racism more compared to participants in the increase ANA condition. Rather, these findings support our prediction that increasing ANA specifically makes people acknowledge systemic racism less.

In our analyses, we controlled for variables that past research identified as predictors of systemic racism beliefs, isolating the effects of ANA even more. We also controlled for social desirability in our analyses, which makes it improbable that our findings are due to socially desirable responding. The fact that participants in the decrease ANA condition did not report a lower ANA compared to participants in the control condition (which would be the socially desirable response) makes the finding that participants in the increase ANA condition did report a higher ANA than participants in the other two conditions even less likely due to socially desirable responding.

Given that we were not able to decrease participants' ANA in the present study (i.e., participants in the decrease ANA condition did not differ in their ANA from participants in the control condition), it makes sense that we did not find support for Hypothesis 2, which stated that participants in the decrease ANA condition would acknowledge systemic racism more than participants in the other two conditions. We in fact found the opposite: Participants in the decrease ANA condition acknowledged systemic racism less than participants in the control condition. Why might this be?

Although we increased ANA in the increase ANA condition, the decrease ANA condition had an effect on actual positive and actual negative affect rather than ANA. It is possible that the decrease ANA instruction to try to accept feeling negative emotions caused people to actually feel more negative (and less positive) compared to the other two conditions because they embraced their negative affect. However, participants in the increase ANA condition (which instructed participants to try to avoid feeling negative) did not report actually feeling less negative (and more positive) affect compared to the control condition. Hence, the instruction to try to avoid feeling negative did not have an effect on participants' actual negative and positive affect compared to the baseline/control condition, only on their ANA. This could suggest that there is something specific about the decrease ANA condition that made people feel more negative and less positive compared to the other two conditions. Although participants in the decrease ANA condition might have actually felt more negative affect (and less positive affect) because they embraced their negative affect, another explanation is possible.

It might be that trying to decrease ANA in a cultural context in which people highly want to avoid feeling negative (such as in the United States; Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014) makes people actually feel more negative and less positive. Going against the cultural norm of wanting to avoid feeling negative might be unpleasant, which is in line with previous work suggesting that people feel uncomfortable with unfamiliar practices (e.g., Beamer, 1992). Feeling more negative and less positive in turn might make people not be able or want to face even more discomfort that is associated with acknowledging systemic racism (see Footnote 6), possibly to protect themselves. No matter why people actually felt more negative and less positive in the decrease ANA condition, they acknowledged systemic racism less, similar to people in the increase ANA condition. Future research could examine whether in addition to ANA, actually feeling more negative and/or less positive leads people to acknowledge systemic racism less as well.

General Discussion

Our research suggests that wanting to avoid feeling negative is a barrier to acknowledging systemic racism. In Study 1, we found that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the less they acknowledge systemic racism. In Study 2, we found that specifically increasing ANA caused participants to acknowledge systemic racism less compared to participants in a control condition.

ANA Shapes the Acknowledgment of Systemic Racism Above and Beyond Other Variables

Importantly, we found that ANA affects the degree to which people acknowledge systemic racism after controlling for individualizing and binding moral foundations, political ideology, and

[6] Although we were not able to decrease people's ANA, the decrease ANA instructions made participants feel more negative and less positive compared to participants in the other two conditions. Therefore, in the online supplemental materials, we report the results of a post hoc analysis suggesting that actually feeling more negative in the decrease ANA condition can explain why people in this condition acknowledged systemic racism less compared to participants in the control condition.

ethnicity, variables that previous research has identified as important predictors of systemic racism beliefs. In Study 1, we demonstrate an association between ANA and acknowledging systemic racism while including these covariates. In Study 2, we demonstrate—by increasing ANA—that this relationship is causal and, via mediation analyses, show that wanting to avoid feeling negative is the active ingredient in our manipulation.

Manipulating ANA

ANA is an individual-level variable that is culturally shaped and therefore learned and changeable, which suggests that interventions designed to make people become antiracist could include targeting ANA. Our increase ANA manipulation increased participants' ANA compared to the other two conditions. However, we were not effective at decreasing ANA. Decreasing people's ANA may be hard in a U.S. American cultural context as such an intervention goes against the strong cultural norm of wanting to avoid feeling negative (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014).

Although we were not able to directly examine whether decreasing ANA leads to more acknowledgment of systemic racism (because we were not able to decrease ANA in our sample), it is possible that decreasing ANA makes people acknowledge systemic racism more as a first step to becoming antiracist. However, our research suggests that trying to decrease ANA in a U.S. American cultural context leads people to feel more negative, which in turn makes them acknowledge systemic racism less. Is it counterproductive then to try to decrease people's ANA in a culture where people highly want to avoid feeling negative? Will such attempts only lead to more negative affect?

To effectively decrease ANA in a culture that scores high on ANA, it might be important to give people the opportunity to practice embracing negative emotions and to experience negative emotions. The more people want to avoid feeling negative, the more unpleasant negativity is for them (Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020), possibly because their avoidance behavior prevents them from having opportunities to learn that they can handle uncomfortable situations, similar to people with phobias (Skinner, 1958). Therefore, successful interventions to decrease ANA might not only include teaching people about the usefulness of negative emotions so that people embrace them (similar to what we did in Study 2), but also exposing people to negative emotions so they can learn that negative emotions are not as threatening as they might seem. Initially, when people try to embrace negative emotions more, they might become self-protective because of the increased negative affect they experience. However, over time, people could learn that they can face these feelings, which might lower their ANA. This in turn might make them more likely to acknowledge systemic racism. In other words, longer and stronger interventions to reduce ANA, which may include opportunities for people to face discomfort, might be a way to overcome one barrier to acknowledging systemic racism. Alternatively, we might be able to decrease ANA if instead of focusing on embracing negative emotions, we only focused on the utility of negative emotions (our manipulation did both—we told participants about the usefulness of negative emotions so they would be motivated to embrace them). Future research could test these ideas.

The more people want to avoid feeling negative, the more negatively they perceive negative stimuli (Koopmann-Holm, Bartel, et al., 2020). Hence, it is possible that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the more they do not only disengage from topics around race, but, when forced to face these topics, the more distressing these topics are for them. This in turn might make them want to avoid these conversations even more, which could be a vicious cycle. Decreasing ANA could be one possible way to break this cycle, which would be interesting to examine. Finally, although we did not intend to manipulate actual affect, we found that feeling more negative and less positive also made people acknowledge systemic racism less. Future work could examine the effects of actual affect on systemic racism acknowledgment and possible interactions with ANA.

ANA and Blind Patriotism

We did not find support for our prediction that the more people want to avoid feeling negative, the more blindly patriotic they are. Blind patriotism seems to be multifaceted in that it includes the denial of negative aspects of one's country as well as hostility toward people who are not blindly patriotic. Future research could examine how different affective goals predict different facets of blind patriotism.

Implications for Interventions to Become Antiracist

White fragility often arises in prejudice-reduction interventions (Ford et al., 2022). These interventions have modest effect sizes (Paluck et al., 2021), possibly because White fragility is a barrier to their effectiveness. White fragility in turn might be especially pronounced in people and cultures high in ANA. Therefore, prejudice-reduction interventions might benefit from incorporating trainings on how to accept negative affect. Even when people ideologically support diversity, high ANA might still be a barrier. Working toward racial justice is challenging and can be uncomfortable. When people are aware of this as well as of the finding that culturally shaped affective goals can interfere with this work, they might be able to better understand their own and other people's emotional responses. It would be interesting to explore if/how ANA changes among people who actively and continuously work toward racial justice. They might have lower ANA to begin with and/or their ANA decreases over time.

Implications for AVT

Whenever we looked at the effect of ANA, we controlled for actual affect, suggesting that affective goals such as ANA are important predictors above and beyond how people actually feel, which is in line with AVT (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014; Tsai et al., 2006). In fact, while past research has focused on affect as a consequence of system justification (e.g., Ford et al., 2019; Jost, 2020; Solak et al., 2021), the present work focuses on affective goals (and affect elicited by manipulations to change these affective goals) that can be viewed as antecedents of system justification. They shape the degree to which people acknowledge injustices (e.g., systemic racism).

Our work is in line with another premise of AVT, namely that affective goals are culturally shaped. Our research suggests that changing those affective goals that dominate in a specific cultural context might be difficult. It might be beneficial to not only try to change affective goals that dominate in a certain cultural context by focusing on changing individuals' affective goals, but by also changing cultural practices and products to which people are

exposed. For example, in the United States, memorials could be erected that remind people of their country's negative past, students could learn more about the negative aspects of their country's history in school, and the media could make these negative aspects of the United States more salient. Such cultural practices and products could then shape the psyche of the individuals living in that culture (e.g., Chotiner, 2020; Markus & Kitayama, 2010).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although we were able to increase people's ANA, we were not able to reduce people's ANA with our manipulation. Because of this, we do not know whether decreasing people's ANA will cause people to acknowledge systemic racism more. This is an important topic for future research. Future research could examine longer manipulations (lasting for several days or even weeks) and/or stronger manipulations of ANA (and possibly different components such as teaching about the usefulness of negative affect, embracing negative affect, and exposure to negative affect) to see whether these can decrease ANA among people in the United States. Future research can also examine whether the manipulation we used in our study might be effective in other cultural contexts (e.g., Germany, China, Ecuador), where people's motivation to avoid feeling negative is not as high as in the United States (Koopmann-Holm & Tsai, 2014; Larco et al., 2024; Seow et al., 2024).

It is also possible that the more power and privilege people have, the more they want to avoid feeling negative and the less they acknowledge systemic racism. Furthermore, even though we found that ANA shapes the acknowledgment of systemic racism, people's avoidance of racism might also shape ANA. These would be interesting topics for future research. Moreover, future research could use different measures of perceptions of racism, especially of isolated racism, as the internal consistency of the isolated racism measure we used was fairly low in both studies, even after changing some of the items in Study 2. Bonam et al. (2019) also reported a lower internal consistency for isolated compared to systemic racism, possibly due to the fact that the isolated racism composite only includes five items. Finally, even though we determined our sample sizes using G*Power software, correlations stabilize with sample sizes approaching 250 (Schönbrodt & Perugini, 2013). Future research with larger samples should examine the size of the effect of ANA.

Constraints on Generalizability

Another limitation of our studies was that the samples consisted of undergraduate students at a predominantly liberal college in the San Francisco Bay Area. Future research should include other samples from the United States but also from other countries. Furthermore, our samples were predominantly female. Altthough gender either did not emerge as a significant predictor in our analyses or did not change the pattern or results, it remains to be seen whether studies that include more males and people with other genders find effects of gender on the relationships we studied. Finally, more than 40% of participants in our studies were White. Although it makes sense to study White participants when examining the acknowledgment of systemic racism in the context of White fragility, it will be important to examine other identities and intersections of identities that hold privileges and how they acknowledge systemic inequalities.

Conclusion

In James Baldwin's words, "It is certain, in any case, that ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have" (Baldwin, 2007, p. 149). One way to not be ignorant is to acknowledge systemic racism. The present work demonstrates that people's motivation to avoid feeling negative is a barrier to acknowledging systemic racism and that interventions to decrease this motivation need to be implemented carefully while considering cultural norms, which might go against facing discomfort. Future work could examine ways to help people face discomfort, without becoming self-protective, so they can work toward changing the status quo.

References

Apfelbaum, E. P., Sommers, S. R., & Norton, M. I. (2008). Seeing race and seeming racist? Evaluating strategic colorblindness in social interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *95*(4), 918–932. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0011990

Baldwin, J. (1962, January 14). As much truth as one can bear. *The New York Times*.

Baldwin, J. (2007). *No name in the street*. Vintage Press.

Bar-Tal, D., & Staub, E. (1997). Patriotism: Its scope and meaning. In D. Bar-Tal & E. Staub (Eds.), *Patriotism in the lives of individuals and nations* (pp. 1–19). Nelson-Hall.

Batson, C. D., Eklund, J. H., Chermok, V. L., Hoyt, J. L., & Ortiz, B. G. (2007). An additional antecedent of empathic concern: Valuing the welfare of the person in need. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *93*(1), 65–74. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.1.65

Beamer, L. (1992). Learning intercultural communication competence. *Journal of Business Communication*, *29*(3), 285–303. https://doi.org/10.1177/002194369202900306

Bonam, C. M., Nair Das, V., Coleman, B. R., & Salter, P. (2019). Ignoring history, denying racism: Mounting evidence for the Marley hypothesis and epistemologies of ignorance. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *10*(2), 257–265. https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550617751583

Boykin, C. M., Brown, N. D., Carter, J. T., Dukes, K., Green, D. J., Harrison, T., Hebl, M., McCleary-Gaddy, A., Membere, A., McJunkins, C. A., Simmons, C., Singletary, W. S., Smith, A. N., & Williams, A. D. (2020). Anti-racist actions and accountability: Not more empty promises. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, *39*(7), 775–786. https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-06-2020-0158

Bruchmann, K., Koopmann-Holm, B., & Scherer, A. (2018). Seeing beyond political affiliations: The mediating role of perceived moral foundations on the partisan similarity-liking effect. *PLoS ONE*, *13*(8), Article e0202101. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0202101

Case, K. A. (2007). Raising white privilege awareness and reducing racial prejudice: Assessing diversity course effectiveness. *Teaching of Psychology*, *34*(4), 231–235. https://doi.org/10.1080/00986280701700250

Chotiner, I. (2020, July 6). How to confront a racist national history. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved October 3, 2022, from https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/how-to-confront-a-racist-national-history

Clobert, M., Sasaki, J., Hwang, K.-K., & Tsai, J. L. (2022). Valuing high arousal negative states increases negative responses toward outgroups across cultures. *Emotion*, *22*(7), 1450–1472. https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0001101

Crowne, D. P., & Marlowe, D. (1960). A new scale of social desirability independent of psychopathology. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, *24*(4), 349–354. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0047358

Devos, T., & Banaji, M. R. (2005). American=White? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*(3), 447–466. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.88.3.447

DiAngelo, R. (2018a). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism*. Beacon Press.

DiAngelo, R. (2018b, August 11). *Transcript of Zeit campus interview in English*. Retrieved October 3, 2022, from https://robindiangelo.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/zeit-campus-transcript.pdf

Feagin, J. (2013). *Systemic racism: A theory of oppression*. Routledge.

Finell, E., & Zogmaister, C. (2015). Blind and constructive patriotism, national symbols and outgroup attitudes. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, *56*(2), 189–197. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjop.12193

Ford, B. Q., Feinberg, M., Lam, P., Mauss, I. B., & John, O. P. (2019). Using reappraisal to regulate negative emotion after the 2016 U.S. Presidential election: Does emotion regulation trump political action? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *117*(5), 998–1015. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000200

Ford, B. Q., Green, D. J., & Gross, J. J. (2022). White fragility: An emotion regulation perspective. *American Psychologist*, *77*(4), 510–524. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000968

Fryberg, S. A., & Eason, A. E. (2017). Making the invisible visible: Acts of commission and omission. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *26*(6), 554–559. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721417720959

Graham, J., Nosek, B. A., Haidt, J., Iyer, R., Koleva, S., & Ditto, P. H. (2011). Mapping the moral domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *101*(2), 366–385. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021847

Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional analysis: A regression-based approach*. Guilford Press.

Jordan, N. (1953). Behavioral forces that are a function of attitude and of cognitive organization. *Human Relations*, *6*(3), 273–287. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872675300600304

Jost, J. T. (2020). *A theory of system justification*. Harvard University Press.

Knowles, E. D., Lowery, B. S., Chow, R. M., & Unzueta, M. M. (2014). Deny, distance, or dismantle? How white Americans manage a privileged identity. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *9*(6), 594–609. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691614554658

Koopmann-Holm, B., Bartel, K., Bin Meshar, M., & Yang, H. E. (2020). Seeing the whole picture? Avoided negative affect and processing of others' suffering. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *46*(9), 1363–1377. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167220903905

Koopmann-Holm, B., Bruchmann, K., Fuchs, M., & Pearson, M. (2021). What constitutes a compassionate response? The important role of culture. *Emotion*, *21*(8), 1610–1624. https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0001007

Koopmann-Holm, B., Sze, J., Jinpa, T., & Tsai, J. L. (2020). Compassion meditation increases optimism towards a transgressor. *Cognition and Emotion*, *34*(5), 1028–1035. https://doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2019.1703648

Koopmann-Holm, B., & Tsai, J. L. (2014). Focusing on the negative: Cultural differences in expressions of sympathy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *107*(6), 1092–1115. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037684

Kraus, M. W., Torrez, B., & Hollie, L. (2022). How narratives of racial progress create barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizations. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *43*, 108–113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2021.06.022

Larco, S. S., Romo, M. G., Garcés, M. S., & Koopmann-Holm, B. (2024). People in Ecuador and the United States conceptualize compassion differently: The role of avoided negative affect. *Emotion*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0001356

Lewis, A. E. (2004). "What group?" Studying whites and whiteness in the era of "color-blindness". *Sociological Theory*, *22*(4), 623–646. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0735-2751.2004.00237.x

Li, Q., & Brewer, M. B. (2004). What does it mean to be an American? Patriotism, nationalism, and American identity after 9/11. *Political Psychology*, *25*(5), 727–739. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2004.00395.x

Loyd, A. B., & Gaither, S. E. (2018). Racial/ethnic socialization for White youth: What we know and future directions. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *59*, 54–64. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2018.05.004

Maio, G. R., & Esses, V. M. (2001). The need for affect: Individual differences in the motivation to approach or avoid emotions. *Journal of Personality*, *69*(4), 583–614. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6494.694156

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (2010). Cultures and selves: A cycle of mutual constitution. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *5*(4), 420–430. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610375557

Mekawi, Y., Todd, N. R., Yi, J., & Blevins, E. J. (2020). Distinguishing "I don't see color" from "Racism is a thing of the past": Psychological correlates of avoiding race and denying racism. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *67*(3), 288–302. https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000427

Messina, I., Grecucci, A., & Viviani, R. (2021). Neurobiological models of emotion regulation: A meta-analysis of neuroimaging studies of acceptance as an emotion regulation strategy. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, *16*(3), 257–267. https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsab007

Miyamoto, Y., Ma, X., & Petermann, A. G. (2014). Cultural differences in hedonic emotion regulation after a negative event. *Emotion*, *14*(4), 804–815. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036257

Myers, K. A. (2005). *Racetalk: Racism hiding in plain sight*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Neiman, S. (2019). *Learning from the Germans: Race and the memory of evil*. Farrar. Straus and Giroux Books.

Nelson, J. C., Adams, G., & Salter, P. S. (2013). The Marley hypothesis: Denial of racism reflects ignorance of history. *Psychological Science*, *24*(2), 213–218. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612451466

Olson, E. D. (2013). *'Why blame me?' Interpreting counselor student resistance to racially themed course content as complicity with White racial hegemony* [Doctoral dissertation]. The University of New Mexico. https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/educ_ifce_etds/10

Paluck, E. L., Porat, R., Clark, C. S., & Green, D. P. (2021). Prejudice reduction: Progress and challenges. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *72*(1), 533–560. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-071620-030619

Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *90*(5), 751–783. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751

Phillips, L. T., & Lowery, B. S. (2018). Herd invisibility: The psychology of racial privilege. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *27*(3), 156–162. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721417753600

Plant, E. A. (2004). Responses to interracial interactions over time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *30*(11), 1458–1471. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167204264244

Richeson, J. A., & Shelton, J. N. (2007). Negotiating interracial interactions: Costs, consequences, and possibilities. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *16*(6), 316–320. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.2007.00528.x

Roberts, S. O., & Rizzo, M. T. (2021). The psychology of American racism. *American Psychologist*, *76*(3), 475–487. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000642

Schatz, R. T., Staub, E., & Lavine, H. (1999). On the varieties of national attachment: Blind versus constructive patriotism. *Political Psychology*, *20*(1), 151–174. https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00140

Schönbrodt, F. D., & Perugini, M. (2013). At what sample size do correlations stabilize? *Journal of Research in Personality*, *47*(5), 609–612. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2013.05.009

Seow, J. H., Du, H., & Koopmann-Holm, B. (2024). *What is a compassionate face? Avoided negative affect explains differences between U.S. Americans and Chinese* [Manuscript under revision]. Department of Psychology, Santa Clara University.

Shuman, E., Hebel-Sela, S., Zipris, I., Hasson, Y., Hameiri, B., & Halperin, E. (2023). Advancing support for intergroup equality via a self-affirmation campaign. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *26*(8), 1888–1908. https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302221128505

Silver, E., Goff, K., & Iceland, J. (2022). Social order and social justice: Moral intuitions, systemic racism beliefs, and Americans' divergent attitudes toward Black Lives Matter and police. *Criminology*, *60*(2), 342–369. https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12303

Skinner, B. F. (1958). Reinforcement today. *American Psychologist*, *13*(3), 94–99. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0049039

Skinner-Dorkenoo, A. L., Sarmal, A., Andre, C. J., & Rogbeer, K. G. (2021). How microaggressions reinforce and perpetuate systemic racism in the United States. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *16*(5), 903–925. https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916211002543

Smith, T. W., & Kim, S. (2006). National pride in comparative perspective: 1995/96 and 2003/04. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *18*(1), 127–136. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edk007

Solak, N., Tamir, M., Sümer, N., Jost, J. T., & Halperin, E. (2021). Expressive suppression as an obstacle to social change: Linking system justification, emotion regulation, and collective action. *Motivation and Emotion*, *45*(5), 661–682. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-021-09883-5

Staub, E. (1997). Blind versus constructive patriotism: Moving from embeddedness in the group to critical loyalty and action. In D. Bar-Tal & E. Staub (Eds.), *Patriotism in the lives of individuals and nations* (pp. 213–228). Nelson-Hall.

Sue, D. W. (2013). Race talk: The psychology of racial dialogues. *American Psychologist*, *68*(8), 663–672. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033681

Tsai, J. L. (2007). Ideal affect: Cultural causes and behavioral consequences. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *2*(3), 242–259. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6916.2007.00043.x

Tsai, J. L., Knutson, B., & Fung, H. H. (2006). Cultural variation in affect valuation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *90*(2), 288–307. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.2.288

Valentine, K., Prentice, M., Torres, M. F., & Arellano, E. (2012). The importance of student cross-racial interactions as part of college education: Perceptions of faculty. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *5*(4), 191–206. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030109

Received October 12, 2022
Revision received January 27, 2024
Accepted February 4, 2024 ■