

# Culture, Individual Differences, and Support for Human Rights: A General Review

Sam McFarland  
Western Kentucky University

Cultural and individual differences in support for universal human rights are reviewed. Cross-cultural studies suggest a common international understanding of human rights, and international surveys indicate strong global endorsement of human rights. However, country-specific events can affect support within a country, and a country's historical culture affects whether civil and political rights, or economic, social, and cultural rights receive stronger support. Individual differences in support for human rights are strongly predicted positively by a sense of identification with all humanity and by concern for other global issues, and negatively by generalized prejudice, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and right-wing political ideology. Many other individual differences more weakly predict human rights support. Little is known about how concern for human rights develops, and this issue merits sustained research.

**Keywords:** human rights, ethnocentrism, culture, identification with all humanity

"People only live full lives in the light of human rights."

—U.N. Chronicle Title, March, 1988

The list of human rights violations in 2013 seems inexhaustible. As Human Rights Watch has documented, in the Syrian civil war, civilians were killed with sarin gas, and strong evidence indicates that the government was responsible. Both the government and rebels executed captured enemy combatants. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, rebel groups forced hundreds of children to serve as child soldiers. Religious minorities are often persecuted: In Burma, an estimated 180,000 Rohingya Muslims have been ethnically cleansed by Buddhist forces. In Indonesia, Islamic militants attacked Christians and minority Muslim groups. In the Central African Republic, both Christian and Muslim militia killed civilians of the other faith. Arbitrary detention

and torture were used in many countries, and freedom of information, assembly, and religion were widely suppressed (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The World Health Organization reported that in 2012, while great progress has been made, 162 million children under the age of 5 were stunted (low height), 51 million others were wasted (low body weight), and 12 million were severely wasted due to malnutrition (World Health Organization, 2013). Malnutrition contributed to an estimated 45% of deaths of children under age 5 in 2012 (United Nations Children's Fund, 2012). Many more human rights violations could be cited.

The struggle to end these abuses and to advance human rights around the world is not just against tyrants and fanatics. The struggle is also for the commitment of the world's citizens. Without their commitment, national political leaders will rarely give priority to advancing human rights, especially beyond their own borders. For that reason, public attitudes toward human rights are of great importance. By increasing our understanding of both cultural and individual differences in human rights attitudes, perhaps we can create a world that honors human rights more completely.

With that hope, this paper offers a review of public support for human rights. The first section considers whether human rights, specifically as expressed in the seminal *Universal*

---

SAM MCFARLAND holds a PhD and is a professor emeritus of the Department of Psychology at Western Kentucky University. His areas of research interest include human rights, identification with all humanity, ethnocentrism, and prejudice.

CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING THIS ARTICLE should be addressed to Sam McFarland, Department of Psychology, Western Kentucky University, 1906 College Heights Boulevard, Bowling Green, KY 42101-1030. E-mail: [sam.mcfarland@wku.edu](mailto:sam.mcfarland@wku.edu)

*Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR; United Nations General Assembly, 1948), are understood similarly across cultures, and whether there are country-to-country variations in support for human rights. The second section reviews the measures of human rights attitudes that researchers have used. The third section considers strong predictors of human rights support, while the fourth summarizes individual differences that have smaller associations with human rights support.

### Cultural Variations in the Understanding and Importance of Human Rights

The world's cultures vary widely. With that variety, it is important to ask if human rights have a shared common meaning and are valued similarly around the world.

### Do Various Cultures Share a Common Understanding of Human Rights?

If one examines the five regional human rights conventions and declarations,<sup>1</sup> the overall impression is that, with limited variations, these all endorse the same basic rights, although not as comprehensively as the UDHR. However, because the UDHR is their common predecessor, their common rights may suggest a greater common understanding of human rights around the world than actually exists.

This issue was investigated by Willem Doise and his colleagues, following the theory of social representations (Moscovici, 1988). To examine the social representations of human rights, Doise, Spini, and Clémence (1999) asked almost 3,000 respondents from 35 countries representing most major world regions to evaluate each of the 30 articles of the UDHR on eight scales (e.g., agreement, importance, self-relevance, readiness to help defend). Cluster analyses of rights within the different countries found that members of different national and cultural groups organize their understanding of the different articles of the UDHR in a similar way. These clusters generally replicated the five categories of rights as described by French jurist René Cassin, one of the UDHR's key writers.<sup>2</sup> Doise et al. also found that "individuals who were more (or less) in favor of one group of articles also favored more (or less) the other groups" (p. 25). In a later study across five

nations, Clémence, Devos, and Doise (2001) also found that "respondents organize their understanding of human rights violations in similar ways across nations" (p. 89). See also Spini and Doise (2005) for similar studies. To Doise and his colleagues, these results indicate a "common understanding" across countries of the meanings of human rights.

However, these comparable clusters across cultures do not firmly prove that the meaning of each right is interpreted similarly across the world. No study was located that directly asked persons in different countries or cultures to interpret the meaning of particular rights in the UDHR (e.g., "What does 'the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion' mean to you?").

### Do People in All Countries Value Human Rights Similarly?

Even if peoples around the world understand the meaning of human rights similarly, are there national differences in the importance of human rights? At the end of 2011, the Council on Foreign Relations<sup>3</sup> published *Public Opinion on Global Issues*, a comprehensive summary of polling data on global public attitudes on many major issues. Chapter 8 reviewed world opinion on human rights (Council on Foreign Relations, 2011).

According to this review, people across the globe express strong support for human rights. In 2008, across all nations surveyed, which included Western democracies, Russia and China, Middle Eastern, and African countries, 66% felt that the right "to express any opinion, including criticisms of the government or religious leaders" was "very important," with another 22%

<sup>1</sup> These five are the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (1950), the *American Convention on Human Rights* (1969), the *African Charter on Human and People's Rights* (1981), the *Arab Charter on Human Rights* (2004), and the *Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Human Rights Declaration* (2012).

<sup>2</sup> These clusters consisted of the Foundation principles of dignity and equality (Articles 1–2), basic rights (Articles 3–5), individual rights (9–11, 14), social rights (12–13, 15–27), and societal order (28–30). See the UDHR at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/> for these rights.

<sup>3</sup> The Council on Foreign Relations is a prominent U.S. nongovernmental organization whose studies focus on U.S. foreign policy and international relations.

rating this right as “important.” A full 75% believed in the right to “demonstrate peacefully against the government.” Fifty-seven percent rejected torture, even of suspected terrorists. Strong majorities felt that it was “very important” that there be equal treatment for women (59%), “people of different races and ethnicities” (69%), and “people of different religions” (64%), with about another 20% rating each of these as “important.” In a 2007 survey across 47 countries, a median 56% felt that it was “very important” for governments to “take care of very poor people who cannot take care of themselves,” with another 32% rating this as “important.” On the 2008 survey, 87% believed that governments are responsible for ensuring that citizens can meet their basic needs for food, while 92% believed that governments should ensure access to health care.

Despite this evidence of strong global support for human rights, country-to-country differences were substantial, and interpreting these differences is often difficult. They may reflect problems of method. For example, in the 2008 survey cited above, face-to-face interviews were conducted in some countries and random telephone samples in others, casting some doubt on the sample equivalence. Difficulties in equating the meanings of questionnaires across languages are well known (e.g., Behling & Law, 2000). This issue also extends to response options (Paquin, Bruni, Sandow, & Alexander, 2011); for example, the option of “somewhat important,” used in several human rights surveys, might not possess identical subjective weighting in all languages.

Further, disentangling stable country-to-country variations in human rights attitudes from the influence of within-country events is difficult. Surveys that repeat the same questions across countries and time would help, but only one such repetition was located by this author. On the topic of torture, in 2006 and 2008 respondents in 16 common countries were asked, “Most countries have agreed to rules that prohibit torturing prisoners. Which position is closer to yours?” Respondents were asked to choose between, “Clear rules against torture must be maintained . . .,” and “Terrorists pose such an extreme threat that governments should now be allowed to use some degree of torture if it may gain information that saves innocent lives” (Kull et al., 2008).

The results indicate that responses are influenced both by country-specific events and stable between-country differences. Across the 16 countries, support for torture increased from 28% to 34% between 2006 and 2008, but this change was almost entirely explained by increases in three countries of 20% or more: India (from 32% to 59%), Turkey (24% to 51%), and South Korea (31% to 51%). These sharp increases are likely due to major terrorist episodes affecting these countries: During this interval, Kashmiri separatists and Kurdish rebels engaged in attacks in India and Turkey, respectively, while Taliban rebels in Afghanistan kidnapped 23 South Korean missionaries, executing two and holding the rest as hostages for 6 weeks (Kull et al., 2008). Still, the rank-order correlation of support for torture across countries for 2006 and 2008, calculated by this author, was .58. With these three countries removed, this correlation was .67, indicating rather stable between-country differences. Spanish respondents were the least likely to endorse torture across the surveys ( $M = 13.5\%$ ), followed by the French ( $M = 15.5\%$ ), while, apart from the three countries noted above, U.S. ( $M = 40\%$ ) and Russian ( $M = 36.5\%$ ) respondents were consistently more likely to endorse it than participants from most other nations.

Country-to-country variations appear influenced by traditional cultural values. Given the extensiveness of these survey results, which are available online (Council on Foreign Relations, 2011), only illustrative results are presented here. These compare U.S. attitudes with those of countries with differing cultural and religious traditions on the dimensions of freedom of speech and religion, gender equality, and the government’s role in economic rights (help for the poor, guaranteed access to food and health care).

In keeping with traditional U.S. political freedoms and individualism, in the 2008 survey cited above, U.S. respondents agreed with the right to express any opinion far more than the international average (76% vs. 66% “very important”); Egyptians (48%) and Russians (34%), with their far more totalitarian traditions, as examples, were much less likely to see this right as “very important.” Similarly, in contrast to the world average of 53%, 75% of U.S. citizens believed “The media should have the

right to publish news and ideas without government control”; just 45% of Russians and 49% of Egyptians agreed. Ninety-four percent of U.S. citizens agreed that people should have the right to demonstrate peacefully, contrasted with 76% of Russians, 55% of Egyptians, and the global average of 75%. While 77% in the United States felt it “very important” that all religions be treated equally, as did an international average of 64%, just 34% of Russians, with its entrenched Orthodoxy, and 29% of Egyptians, where Islam is the official state religion, felt the same. And while 77% of U.S. citizens felt that “women have full equality of rights compared to men” was “very important,” as did 59% internationally, just 35% of Russians and 31% of Egyptians did so, likely due to the secondary roles of women in both Orthodox Christianity and Islam.

However, for economic rights, in contrast with the international average of 56%, just 28% of U.S. citizens thought it “very important” that governments help the poorest who can’t help themselves, and U.S. citizens were less likely than world averages to support government ensuring food (74% vs. 87%) and health care (77% vs. 92%). More U.S. citizens opposed the government guaranteeing access to food (25%) and health care (21%) than in any other country surveyed. By contrast, Chinese and Argentines, given their respective communist and social rights traditions, were more likely than others to support their governments helping the poorest (90% and 89%, respectively), ensuring food (96% and 94%), and guaranteeing health care (96% and 97%).

Similar results were found in other studies not included in the Council of Foreign Relations review. From 2005 to 2008, the Group on International Perspectives on Governmental Aggression and Peace (GIPGAP) asked participants in more than 40 countries in all world regions their attitudes toward the right of peaceful protest, the right of governments to torture, and the right to peace, among other issues. Despite small and inconsistent samples, responses on the right of protest and a government’s right to torture mirror the representative survey described earlier. Across all countries, from 82% to 97% endorsed the right of peaceful protest (Malley-Morrison, Cogan, St. Germain, & Potter, 2013), with the highest endorsement in Latin America (97%) and Western Europe

(95%), and lower endorsement found in Russia (84%) and East Asia (82%), similar to the representative survey. A strong majority rejected government use of torture, with the strongest rejection found in Spain, as in the representative survey (Corgan, Oh, & Malley-Morrison, 2009).

Although the UDHR implies a “right to peace,” in that “Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized” (Art. 28), there is no right to peace in international law.<sup>4</sup> Still, most participants in the GIPGAP study agreed that “All human beings have a basic right to peace,” with that agreement above 90% in half of the countries (Corgan et al., 2009). Still, just 61% of U.S. citizens of European origin agreed (Soldz & Shalom, 2009).

In a 1998 study, university students in five European countries (Germany, Finland, Yugoslavia, Norway, and the Netherlands) rated the importance of most human rights similarly. However, students in Yugoslavia, then a socialist country, rated the right of protection from unemployment much higher than the Western countries’ average (95% vs. 22% “very important”), and the right to seek asylum much lower (37% vs. 73%; Sommer & Stellmacher, 2009). In a study with national representative samples, participants from East Germany, formerly Communist, identified economic, social, and cultural rights (“How confident are you that the presented right is a human right?”) significantly more successfully than West German participants, although there was no difference in identifying civil and political rights (Sommer & Stellmacher).

In summary, while peoples around the world generally endorse human rights, this endorsement can be affected by country-specific events. Moreover, country-to-country variations in the importance given to political versus economic rights appear to reflect the political traditions of the countries.

<sup>4</sup> The Advisory Committee to the U.N. Human Rights Council prepared a Draft Declaration on the Right to Peace in 2012, but it has not been adopted by the Council or the U.N.’s General Assembly.

## Measuring Support for Human Rights

While the survey studies presented above mainly used single-item measures to assess support for different human rights, psychological studies have typically used more thorough multi-item measures. These are described in this section, and the individual-level correlates of these measures are reviewed in the next. As will be seen later, individual differences that correlate with human rights support vary substantially, depending on how this support is measured.

This review is limited to attitudes toward human rights in general. Many studies have examined individual differences in attitudes toward the rights of specific groups, including children (e.g., [Cherney, Greteman, & Travers, 2008](#)), migrant workers (e.g., [Ruhs, 2012](#)), persons with disabilities (e.g., [Crowson, Brandes, & Hurst, 2013](#)), and other groups. Many other studies have focused on specific violations of human rights, including torture (e.g., [Viki, Osgood, & Phillips, 2013](#)) and female genital mutilation (e.g., [Onuh et al., 2006](#)). Still others have addressed attitudes toward specific rights, such as freedom of speech (e.g., [Downs & Cowan, 2012](#)) and environmental rights (e.g., [McConochie, 2011](#)). Attitudes toward the rights of each of these groups, and toward each of these abuses and issues, are beyond the range of this review.

## Agreement With Human Rights Principles

In the earliest known study of human rights attitudes, conducted shortly after the HDHR was adopted, [Grace and Van Velzer \(1951\)](#) asked college students to rate their agreement with its 30 articles, presented in “close to verbatim form” (p. 552). From that one study until the mid-1970s, no new measures or studies of attitudes toward universal human rights were located.

[Moghaddam and Vuksanovic’s \(1990\)](#) 21-item Human Rights Scale (HRS) and [Diaz-Veizades, Widaman, Little, and Gibbs’s \(1995\)](#) 38-item Human Rights Questionnaire (HRQ) also measure self-rated agreement with human rights principles, although not with verbatim statements of UDHR rights. The HRQ responses loaded on four intercorrelated factors, termed Social Security (e.g., “People have a

right to security if they lose their means for making a living due to circumstances beyond their control”), Equality (e.g., “A person’s race or sex should not block the person’s access to basic rights and freedoms”), Privacy (e.g., “Everyone has a right to privacy”), and Civilian Constraint (e.g., “There are times when people should be kept from expressing their opinion”). The first three factors were highly related (all  $r_s > .58$ ), consistent with [Doise et al.’s \(1999\)](#) finding that individuals who support one kind of rights generally support others as well. However, all correlated negatively less than  $-.25$  with Civilian Constraint.

A major difficulty with self-rated agreement with human rights statements is that many reflect strong cultural norms (e.g., “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion” from the HRQ). For that reason, self-rated agreement may indicate only a superficial endorsement of cultural norms and not reflect any true commitment to these rights. To illustrate, [Zellman and Sears \(1971\)](#) found that 60% of a youth sample agreed that, “I believe in free speech for all no matter what their views might be,” but when asked later if a Communist should be allowed to speak in their city, just 21% agreed [see also [Abrams, Houston, Van de Vyver, & Vasiljevic \(2015\)](#) in this issue].

[Getz \(1985\)](#) tried to address this problem with her 40-item Attitudes Toward Human Rights Index (ATHRI). The ATHRI matches each of 10 “platitudinous” statements of rights, with which most U.S. citizens would agree (e.g., “Freedom of speech should be a basic human right”), with three controversial applications of each right (e.g., “Books should be banned that are written by people who have been involved in un-American activities”). Getz reasoned that agreement with both statements would indicate a facile endorsement of the abstract right of free speech, but not a commitment to support free speech for unpopular groups or causes. Nevertheless, these scales yielded a single factor, and the ATHRI has usually been scored as the sum of all 40 items. However, [Crowson \(2004\)](#) found three correlated factors for the ATHRI, labeled Personal Liberties, Social Security, and Civilian Constraint, largely replicating the factors found by [Diaz-Veizades et al. \(1995\)](#) for the HRQ.

The ATHRI presents a second problem in attempting to measure legally recognized rights,

as it includes several items on issues that are not contained in either the UDHR or later international human rights law (e.g., permitting abortion and euthanasia). Similarly, [Moghaddam and Vuksanovic's \(1990\)](#) HRS contains several items not now recognized as international human rights (e.g., legalized prostitution). As a result, the ATHRI and HRS confound attitudes toward legal human rights under international law with a broader libertarianism.

### Political Tolerance

Political tolerance is a significant facet of support for human rights, and measures of tolerance have often been used to study human rights attitudes. Early studies measured tolerance for unpopular leftist groups in the United States such as Communists ([Stouffer, 1963](#); [Zellman & Sears, 1971](#)). Later, [Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus \(1982\)](#), realizing that tolerance for leftist groups might not reflect tolerance toward all, asked respondents to identify their “least-liked group” from a list that included both left- and right-wing groups (e.g., Communists on the left; Ku Klux Klan on the right). They then measured tolerance toward the self-selected least-liked group (e.g., “Members of the [least-liked group] should be allowed to make a speech in this city”). [Avery \(1988\)](#) also allowed participants to name a different group in addition to the 13 she listed, and then asked about granting this group each of 12 rights drawn from the UDHR (e.g., “A [member of the group] should NOT be allowed to vote”). This method of measuring tolerance has been used extensively.

However, tolerance for disliked groups may indicate only a passive acceptance of human rights. It may not embrace a commitment to advancing human rights or to ending major human rights abuses such as those cited in the opening of this paper.

### Importance of Human Rights

In 1974, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (now Chicago Council on Global Affairs, CCGA) and Gallup, Inc. began regularly asking U.S. citizens to rate the importance of “promoting and defending human rights in other countries” as a goal of U.S. foreign policy. This goal is always embedded in a list of other goals, up to 20 in some surveys. When asked in

February 2013, 52% of U.S. citizens rated this goal as “very important” and an additional 33% rated it as “important” ([Gallup, 2013a](#)). These percentages have usually been similarly high across the years. In reviewing these studies, however, [McFarland and Mathews \(2005a\)](#) noted that while expressed support for human rights appears high, this support consistently ranks among the least important of the goals listed, always below goals expressing American self-interests (e.g., “Protecting the jobs of American workers,” “Maintaining superior military power worldwide”). In the February 2013 survey, support for this goal ranked seventh of the nine presented. In a similar 2012 survey, support for promoting and defending human rights ranked 10th of 11 goals presented ([Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2012](#)). These results again indicate that simple agreement with human rights goals, including rating their importance, may overestimate sincere commitment to human rights. [McFarland and Mathews](#) found no trend toward greater support for this goal across the years; a finding still true, taking into account more recent surveys. However, they noted that the importance ascribed to promoting and defending human rights fluctuates with major events: Its importance was rated highest during the euphoria of the fall of the Berlin wall in 1990 and lowest after the loss of American lives in Somalia in 1993. [Cohrs, Maes, Moschner, and Kielmann \(2007\)](#) also developed a 5-item measure of ratings of the importance of human rights activities (e.g., “The work of human rights organizations such as Amnesty International is worth being supported without qualification”).

### Human Rights Commitment

In an effort to distinguish facile endorsement from genuine commitment to human rights, [McFarland and Mathews \(2005b\)](#) developed two measures that assess how participants weigh human rights concerns versus national self-interests. The assumption of these measures is that commitment to human rights is only clearly identified when it is pitted against competing concerns.

[McFarland and Mathews' \(2005b\)](#) 11-item Human Rights Choices Questionnaire (HRCQ) offers choices between pairs of goals, with one expressing an international human rights con-

cern, the other, an American self-interest. The form is as follows:

On the following items, pairs of issues are presented. Please rate what you see as the relative importance of the two items according to the following scale:

- A = Item *a* is *much more important* than item *b*.
  - B = Item *a* is *somewhat more important* than item *b*.
  - C = Items *a* and *b* are of *equal importance*.
  - D = Item *b* is *somewhat more important* than item *a*.
  - E = Item *b* is *much more important* than item *a*.
1. a. Preventing crimes against humanity (mass killings and genocide) around the world.
  - b. Being sure that only the right people are allowed to immigrate to America.

Their Human Rights Scenarios measure (HRScene) provides descriptions of historical and current events and offers respondents choices that range from acting on national self-interest to investing national resources, including troops, to promoting or defending international human rights. A sample item reads as follows:

In the central African country of Rwanda, rival tribal groups, Hutu and Tutsi, had a growing hatred. In 1994, the Hutu extremists began killing all Tutsi, including women, children and babies. It quickly became evident that a deliberate genocide was beginning. U.N. personnel in the country urged the United Nations to send troops to stop the genocide and said that such a mission could succeed. However, the mission would be dangerous and costly. Do you think the President of the United States should have

- A. sent American troops along with other nations to stop the genocide?
- B. offered supplies and transportation to troops from other nations, but not sent American troops?
- C. not become involved if no vital American interests were at stake?

McFarland and Mathews (2005b) regarded the HRCQ and HRScene, which consistently correlate above .50, as assessing “human rights commitment,” in contrast with scales that assess “human rights endorsement” by asking for simple agreement with human rights principles. They found that human rights commitment (the factor score determined by the HRCQ and HRScene) correlated just .20 with a measure of human rights endorsement comprised of items from Diaz-Veizades et al.’s (1995) HRQ.

## Human Rights Restriction

Using 16 items from Diaz-Veizades et al.’s (1995) Civilian Constraint factor, McFarland and Matthews (2005b) measured willingness to restrict human rights (e.g., “Loyal citizens should be given full constitutional rights but disloyal citizens should not expect to be given all those rights”). Crowson, DeBacker, and Thoma (2006) used 28 items to assess a desire to restrict human rights as part of the “war on terror” (e.g., “Police should not have to obtain search warrants when investigating suspected terrorists”). Crowson et al.’s measure also included the government’s right to use torture to obtain information from terrorist suspects. Crowson and his colleagues have used modified versions of this measure in several later studies (e.g., Crowson, 2009; Crowson & DeBacker, 2008).

## Military Enforcement of Human Rights

Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle (1994) measured willingness to engage in wars for human rights and humanitarian purposes (e.g., “to ensure that human rights were respected in that country,” “to ensure that emergency food supplies could reach civilians”). Fetchenhauer and Bierhoff (2004) developed a 10-item Attitude Toward Military Enforcement of Human Rights scale (ATMEHR) designed to measure willingness to use military force to protect human rights (e.g., “It is still better to go to war for a few months than to sit back and accept long-term violations of human rights”). This willingness is also expressed by four of nine items of the HRScene (McFarland & Mathews, 2005b), which describe specific and severe human rights abuses such as the Rwandan genocide.

## Human Rights Behaviors

Very few studies have assessed human rights behaviors and how individual differences predict them. Stellmacher, Sommer, and Brähler (2005) and Cohrs et al. (2007) each measured self-reported behaviors in support of human rights. Stellmacher et al. asked whether participants had engaged in each of four behaviors (e.g., donated money to a human rights organization, participated in a demonstration to protest human rights violations) from *never* to *often*

across the past 5 years. Cohrs et al. asked participants if they had engaged in each of seven behaviors across the past 5 years. No study was found that directly measured human rights behavior rather than rely on self-report.

Studies that have used multiple measures of human rights support typically have found that the measures load on correlated factors. Cohrs et al. (2007) found that ratings of importance, restriction, and military enforcement of human rights loaded on three factors; ratings of human rights importance positively predicted human rights behaviors. The measures used by McFarland and Mathews (2005b) also loaded on three factors, labeled human rights endorsement, restriction, and commitment. Human rights restriction is negatively related to rated human rights importance and behaviors (Cohrs et al.) and to human rights commitment (McFarland & Mathews).

### The Strong Predictors of Human Rights Support

With these many measures, we now know a significant amount about how individual differences predict support for human rights. While these individual differences are many, those reviewed in this section are consistently strongly associated with human rights support. Given the range of predictors and measures, the results are summarized as a general review, not as a statistical metaanalysis.<sup>5</sup>

### Generalized Prejudice and Its Roots: Authoritarianism and Social Dominance

The general tendency to reject all outgroups is often called *ethnocentrism* (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), although Allport (1954) preferred the term “generalized prejudice” (p. 66), as this tendency includes nonethnic prejudices (e.g., religious prejudices and antigay attitudes). By its very nature, generalized prejudice would seem antithetical to support for human rights. Altemeyer’s (1998) Manitoba Ethnocentrism Scale (MES), which measures negative attitudes toward an array of outgroups (e.g., Russians, Asians, members of non-Christian religions) has been used in studies of human rights attitudes by McFarland and his colleagues (McFarland & Mathews, 2005b; McFarland, 2010a;

McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012). Across these studies, the MES has correlated from  $-.48$  to  $-.63$  with human rights commitment as assessed by the HRCQ and HRScene. McFarland and Mathews also found that generalized prejudice correlated  $.53$  with human rights restriction, but did not significantly correlate with mere agreement with human rights principles on the HRQ,  $r = -.12$ , *ns*. That is, individuals who are high and low in generalized prejudice may agree that human rights are nice ideals, but only those low in ethnocentrism appear committed to protecting and not restricting human rights. No other studies of ethnocentrism and human rights support were located.

### Right-Wing Authoritarianism

According to Duckitt’s (2001) dual-process model, and supported by many studies (e.g., Altemeyer, 1998; McFarland, 2010b), the two most important roots of generalized prejudice are right-wing authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1981) and social dominance orientation (SDO; Pratto et al., 1994). For that reason, it is not surprising that many studies have found that each of these is substantially negatively related to support for human rights.

The construct of authoritarianism was developed to understand the psychological roots of ethnocentrism (Adorno et al., 1950). Altemeyer defined authoritarianism as the covariation of “a high degree of submission to authorities,” “a general aggressiveness [toward persons] perceived as sanctioned by authorities,” and “a high degree of adherence to social conventions” (Altemeyer, 1981, p. 148). All identified studies of authoritarianism and human rights have used versions or translations of Altemeyer’s (1981, 1988, 1996) Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale.

Moghaddam and Vuksanovic (1990) found that Canadian students’ RWA scores correlated  $-.42$  to  $-.66$  with six ratings of the importance of human rights across two studies. Cohrs et al. (2007) found a similar correlation of  $-.52$ , while Stellmacher, Petzel, and Sommer (2003)

<sup>5</sup> All studies reported in this paper by McFarland, Crowson, and their coauthors were conducted in the United States, while those by Cohrs and colleagues, Sommer and Stellmacher were in Germany. The nations where other studies were conducted are noted as reported.

found that RWA correlated  $-.53$  with the importance of civil and political rights and  $-.24$  with the importance of economic, social, and cultural rights. McFarland and colleagues (McFarland & Mathews, 2005b; McFarland, 2010a, 2012; McFarland, Webb, & Brown, 2012) have found correlations from  $-.24$  to  $-.42$  between RWA and the HRCQ and HRScene. Across eight studies, authoritarianism has correlated with a willingness to restrict human rights from  $.46$  to  $.71$  (Cohrs et al., 2007; Crowson, 2007, 2009; Crowson & DeBacker, 2008; Crowson, DeBacker, & Thoma, 2005, 2006; McFarland & Mathews, 2005b; Swami et al., 2012).

Cohrs et al. (2007) found that RWA correlated  $-.25$  with human rights behaviors. Stellmacher et al. (2005) also reported that RWA negatively predicted in regression analyses the willingness to donate money ( $\beta = -.06$ ), sign a petition ( $\beta = -.08$ ), or demonstrate in support of human rights ( $\beta = -.16$ ). Cohrs et al. also found that RWA correlated  $-.18$  with the number of human rights that participants could name.

Authoritarianism has yielded opposing correlations with a willingness to enforce human rights militarily, depending upon the measure. In two studies, the ATMEHR correlated with authoritarianism  $.21$  (Fetchenhauer & Bierhoff, 2004) and  $.43$  (Cohrs et al., 2007). However, as noted above, authoritarianism correlates negatively with HRScene, which includes a willingness to send troops to end the genocides in Rwanda and Darfur. These opposing correlations were replicated in a single sample by McFarland (2012), with correlations of  $.25$  with the ATMEHR but  $-.36$  with the HRScene. Why this difference? The ATMEHR emphasizes the use of military force, albeit for the generic defense of human rights, while the HRScene focuses on specific genocides and mass killings, and then asks if the United States should join the international community to end or prevent these horrors. Authoritarians, it appears, are disposed toward the use of military force for human rights purposes in the abstract—but not, it seems, to save African or perhaps other foreign peoples from genocide.

However, authoritarianism, like generalized prejudice, does not appear to predict simple agreement with human rights principles. McFarland and Mathews (2005b) found that RWA and the HRQ were uncorrelated,  $r = .01$ , *ns*.

Authoritarians and nonauthoritarians may agree equally that human rights are nice ideals. However, research shows that those lower in authoritarianism are more committed to advancing and protecting human rights and less willing to restrict human rights for national security.

### Social Dominance Orientation

Social dominance orientation is defined as “the extent that one desires that one’s in-group dominate and be superior to out-groups” (Pratto et al., 1994, p. 742). The correlations between the SDO and support for human rights are similar to those for authoritarianism, perhaps slightly stronger as a whole. Cohrs et al. (2007) found that SDO correlated  $-.54$  with the rated importance of human rights. Across many samples, McFarland and colleagues found correlations from  $-.37$  to  $-.54$  with the HRCQ, from  $-.24$  to  $-.41$  with the HRScene. Across six study samples, SDO has predicted the willingness to restrict human rights from  $.45$  (Crowson et al., 2006) to  $.61$  (Crowson, 2009). Cohrs et al. (2007) found that SDO correlated  $-.33$  with human rights behaviors, and Stellmacher et al. (2005) found in regression analysis that it negatively predicted a willingness to be involved in human rights organizations ( $\beta = -.12$ ).

As with authoritarianism, the SDO positively predicted willingness to use military force on the ATMEHR,  $r = .45$  (Cohrs et al., 2007), but unwillingness to support military action to end genocide and war crimes as measured by HRScene, with correlations from  $-.30$  to  $-.41$  (McFarland, 2010a; McFarland & Mathews, 2005b; McFarland et al., 2012). This difference appears to parallel Pratto et al.’s (1994) study, conducted in the United States, where SDO correlated  $.31$  with support for wars for national dominance, but  $-.41$  for support for wars fought for human rights or humanitarian goals.

Unlike for ethnocentrism and authoritarianism, however, those high in social dominance do not agree that human rights are desirable ideals. McFarland and Mathews (2005b) found that SDO and human rights endorsement on the HRQ correlated  $-.25$ .

### Identification With All Humanity

McFarland and his colleagues (McFarland, 2010a; McFarland et al., 2012) recently reported a measure of “Identification with all Hu-

manity” (IWAH), a scale designed to assess a deep concern and caring for all human beings, as expressed in a statement widely attributed to Gandhi, “All humanity is one undivided and indivisible family” (see also [McFarland, Brown, & Webb, 2013](#)). The IWAH consists of nine items in the following form:

1. How much do you identify with (that is, feel a part of, feel love toward, have concern for) each of the following?
  - a. People in my community
  - b. Americans (or applicable nationality)
  - c. All humans everywhere

Because the three identifications correlate positively, the other two identifications are used as statistical controls to examine the unique effects of identification with all humanity (the sum of the c. items).

Across many samples, the IWAH has correlated an average of .50 with the HRCQ and .30 with HRScene. Identification with fellow U.S. citizens and with one’s community does not correlate with these measures of human rights commitment.<sup>6</sup>

### Globalism and Universalism

In both national surveys and smaller studies, support for international human rights has been strongly related to concern for other global issues. On the CCGA surveys, U.S. citizens’ ratings of the importance of promoting human rights have consistently correlated positively with ratings of “supporting democracy abroad,” “combating world hunger,” “improving standards of living of other nations,” and “protecting the global environment.” These correlations have averaged about .60 among elite opinion leaders and .35 in general public surveys (members of the general public typically display lower ideological consistency than do opinion leaders; [Holsti, 2000](#)). Similarly, [Barrows \(1981\)](#) found in a U.S. nationwide survey of college freshmen and seniors that ratings of the seriousness of “denial of basic human rights” around the world correlated with seriousness ratings of “malnutrition and inadequate health care,” of “depletion of natural resources,” and of other humanitarian and environmental issues. [McFarland and Mathews \(2005b\)](#) found that a

general measure of concern for global issues correlated .56 with the factor of human rights commitment for a large sample of students and nonstudent adults.

Similarly, [Cohrs et al. \(2007\)](#) found that [Schwartz’s \(1992\)](#) value of “universalism”—assessed by ratings of the importance of a number of global and abstract values (e.g., “a world at peace,” “protecting the environment,” “social justice”)—positively predicted ratings of the importance of human rights and human rights behaviors, .64 and .45, respectively. [McFarland et al. \(2012, Study 6\)](#) found (but did not report) that this measure of universalism correlated .45 with the HRCQ. [Doise et al. \(1999\)](#) also found that universalism strongly predicted favorable evaluations of the articles of the UDHR across 35 countries, “independently of national group membership” (p. 26), although exact correlations were not reported.

### Political Ideology and Political Party Support

[Cohrs et al. \(2007\)](#) found that right-wing political ideology, based on ratings of five German political parties, correlated .58 with support for military enforcement of human rights and .45 with willingness to restrict human rights, but  $-.49$  and  $-.36$ , respectively, with the rated importance of human rights and human rights behaviors. Comparing six parties in their representative sample, [Sommer and Stellmacher \(2009\)](#) found that, when voters were asked to name all human rights they knew, Green Party voters were able to name the most civil and political rights, while Left party voters named the most economic, social, and cultural rights. Green Party voters expressed the greatest willingness to support human rights.

In the February 2013 U.S. poll on the importance of “promoting and defending human rights” cited earlier, 64% of Democrats rated this goal as “very important,” in contrast to 44% of Republicans ([Gallup, 2013b](#)). This difference appears greater than in earlier decades, as [Holsti](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Hackett, Omoto, and Matthews \(2015\)](#) report studies with their measure of a Psychological Sense of Global Community (PSGC). [McFarland \(2013\)](#) found the IWAH and PSGC to be virtually interchangeable, correlating on a large adult sample .72 with each other, .63 and .65, respectively, with the HRCQ, and equally with four other relevant measures.

(2000) found that, across polls from 1974 to 1998, self-rated liberals and members of the Democratic Party were about 10% more likely than conservatives and Republicans to rate this goal as “very important.” This greater difference likely reflects the well-documented growing polarization of the two major U.S. political parties (Hetherington & Weiler, 2009).

### Weaker Predictors of Support for Human Rights

A number of other factors also predict support for, or opposition to, human rights, but the strength of their predictions is generally weaker. These are summarized in this section.

#### Schwartz's Values: Benevolence, Self-direction, Security, Power, and Hedonism

As stated above, Schwartz's “universalism” positively predicted ratings of the importance of human rights and human rights behaviors. For the remainder of his (Schwartz, 1992) classification of 10 values, concern for human rights appears positively related to benevolence (e.g., helpful) and self-direction (e.g., independent), and negatively to security (e.g., making one's country safe), power (e.g., authority), and hedonism (e.g., gratification of desires). However, these correlations are generally smaller than those for universalism. Benevolence has correlated .37 with the rated importance of human rights, but only .25 with human rights behaviors (Cohrs et al., 2007) and .16 with the HRCQ (McFarland et al., 2012). Security correlated most strongly with the desires to use military power to enforce human rights, .42, but also .37 with the willingness to restrict human rights (Cohrs et al.) and  $-.33$  with the HRCQ (McFarland et al.). Correlations with the values of self-direction, power, and hedonism, while consistently significant, have all been less than .30 (Cohrs et al.; McFarland et al.; Spini & Doise, 1998).

#### Nationalism and Blind Patriotism

Diaz-Veizades et al. (1995) found that Kosterman and Feshbach's (1989) measure of nationalism (e.g., “the first duty of every young American is to honor the national American

history and tradition”) correlated .50 with their factor of Civilian Constraint (a measure of willingness to restrict human rights), but not with their other human rights subscales. McFarland et al. (2012) found that Schatz, Staub, and Lavine's (1999) measure of “blind patriotism” (e.g., “I would support my country right or wrong”) correlated  $-.37$  with the HRCQ and  $-.30$  with HRScene. However, Schatz et al.'s measure of constructive patriotism (e.g., “If you love America, you should notice its problems and work to correct them”) correlated weakly with the HRScene, .19, and did not correlate with the HRCQ. No other studies of the relationship of patriotism or nationalism to human rights support were located.

#### Dispositional Empathy

Across five samples, using Davis's (1983) measure, McFarland and colleagues found dispositional empathy to correlate from .21 to .34 with human rights commitment on the HRCQ and HRScene (McFarland & Mathews, 2005b; McFarland, 2010a; McFarland et al., 2012). Dispositional empathy also correlated .42 with the endorsement of human rights on the HRQ, but not with the desire to restrict human rights,  $r = -.15$ , *ns* (McFarland & Mathews, 2005b).

#### Principled Moral Reasoning

In his developmental studies, Kohlberg (1969) described a progression of moral reasoning as one passes from childhood to maturity. At the highest or “principled” level, individuals see the limitations of their own culture's morality, appreciate cultural diversity and relativity, and possess an ethical reasoning based on abstract principles such as justice and human rights.

In an early study, Candee (1976) found that U.S. students with high moral reasoning referred to human rights (the rights of life, fair trials, political rights) in considering the moral issues raised by the trial of Lt. William Calley for the My Lai massacre in Vietnam and by the Nixon Watergate scandal. Those with lower moral reasoning focused mainly upon preserving social conventions and institutions rather than upon human rights.

All later studies of principled moral reasoning and human rights attitudes have used Rest's (1986) Defining Issues Test (DIT) or revised

test (DIT2; Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999). Getz (1985) found that principled moral reasoning (P-scores) on the DIT correlated .41 with her ATHRI, while Rest (1999) reported correlations with the ATHRI ranging from .48 to .55. Importantly, those high in principled moral reasoning were more likely to apply human rights principles consistently, even when the applications were controversial. Getz found that only 12% of those with high P-scores were inconsistent in their responses to the platitudinous and controversial items, whereas 64% of those with low P-scores were inconsistent, generally agreeing with the noncontroversial human rights items but disagreeing with their controversial applications.

For other human rights measures, Avery (1988) found that U.S. teenagers with more developed principled moral reasoning were more willing to extend human rights to their least-liked groups. McFarland and Mathews (2005b) found that P-scores on the DIT2 correlated .29 with human rights commitment and  $-.28$  with the desire to restrict human rights, but were uncorrelated with more superficial human rights endorsement. McFarland et al. (2012, Study 1) obtained a correlation of .37 between the DIT2 and HRCQ.

### **Belief in the Possibility of Creating a Better World**

Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu (1997) found that those who believe that the world can be improved through human effort were prone to judge moral actions according to moral principles such as human rights. In contrast, those with a fatalistic view (e.g., “Our world has its basic and ingrained dispositions, and you really can’t do much to change it”) were prone to view morality as loyalty to social conventions and duties. Those with this fatalistic view were prone to see violations of social norms as worse than violations of rights, while those who viewed the world as improvable by human effort saw the violations of rights as worse. McFarland and Mathews (2005b) found that Chiu et al.’s (1997) measure of optimism about creating a better world correlated .30 with human rights commitment and  $-.29$  with a desire to restrict human rights. However, this optimism versus fatalism did not correlate with endorsing human rights statements on the HRQ. As with

ethnocentrism and authoritarianism, those who are fatalistic about improving our world may agree that human rights are nice ideas, but their fatalism appears to inhibit their commitment to improving human rights.

### **Formal Education**

Several studies have found that greater formal education is associated with stronger agreement with human rights statements. Barrows (1981) found that college seniors rated human right violations, as well as other global issues, as more serious concerns than did freshmen. Getz (1985) found that overall ATHRI scores correlated .34 with adults’ level of formal education.

However, formal education may have a stronger effect upon agreement with human rights statements than upon a deeper commitment to human rights. McFarland and Mathews (2005b) found that participants’ level of formal education significantly predicted agreement with human rights principles on the HRQ,  $r = .21$ , but not commitment to human rights,  $r = .12$ , *ns*. McFarland (2010a, Study 1) also found (but did not report) that adults’ level of formal education failed to correlate significantly with human rights commitment,  $r = .12$ , *ns*.

### **Global and Human Rights Knowledge**

Endorsing human rights is modestly related to greater global knowledge, as well as to greater knowledge of human rights concerns in particular. Grace and Van Velzer (1951) found that students with greater self-reported knowledge of 10 nations (e.g., Liberia, USSR, Egypt) were more likely to endorse the articles in the UDHR. Barrows (1981) measured U.S. college students’ knowledge on 13 important global issues, including human rights (e.g., the meaning of genocide, the UDHR, the 1975 Helsinki Accords). Knowledge of human rights correlated positively with knowledge on other global issues, yielding a single “global knowledge” score that correlated .30 with the seriousness students accorded to “violations of basic human rights.”

McFarland and Mathews’ (2005b) 31-item quiz of global knowledge correlated .18 and .16 with human rights endorsement and commitment, respectively. Cohrs et al. (2007) found that knowledge of human rights, measured by how many rights one could name,

correlated .17 with ratings of importance of human rights,  $-.17$  with a willingness to restrict rights, and  $.32$  with self-reported behaviors in support of human rights.

### Need for Structure and Belief That the Structure of Knowledge Is Simple

Crowson et al. (2006) found that the need for structure (e.g., “I become uncomfortable when the rules in a situation are not clear”) correlated  $.21$  with their measure of human rights restriction, but not beyond the effects of authoritarianism and social dominance. Crowson and DeBacker (2008) also found that belief that the structure of knowledge is simple (e.g., “If professors would stick more to the facts and do less theorizing, one could get more out of college”) correlated  $.30$  with this willingness to restrict rights and contributed to it in regression analysis beyond the effects of authoritarianism (Crowson & DeBacker, 2008).

### Religious Faith

A few studies have examined the relationship between Christian religious faith and support of human rights. These studies have generally found weak or nonexistent relationships. In a U.S. national survey of Christian believers, Wuthnow and Lewis (2008) found that neither religious identity (e.g., Catholic, evangelical, other) nor church attendance predicted ratings of the CCGA goal of “promoting and defending human rights in other countries,” or related humanitarian goals (e.g., “combating world hunger”). However, in regression analyses that included all religious indices and many control measures, those Christians who were actively engaged in “helping the poor, the sick, or the elderly” were more likely to support both goals.

Moghaddam and Vuksanovic (1990) found that Canadian students’ ratings of “how active you are in religious practice” predicted lower endorsement of human rights on the HRS,  $r = -.30$ .

McFarland and Mathews (2005b), however, found that neither religious faith nor conservative religious beliefs predicted human rights commitment,  $.05$  and  $.04$ , *ns*, and in recent data collected by this author on a large adult sample, neither the HRCQ nor HRSScene correlated with any of six measures of Christian religiosity (belief in God or in the divinity of Christ, Christian fundamentalism, the self-rated importance of religion, fre-

quency of church attendance and frequency of prayer), with all correlations  $.11$  or less, *ns*. By contrast, the ATHRI has correlated negatively with conservative Christian beliefs  $-.47$  (Getz, 1985) and  $-.63$  (Narvaez, Getz, Rest, & Thoma, 1999). These large correlations are likely due to the inclusion of items supporting homosexual rights, abortion rights, and other issues that are not found in international human rights conventions and are opposed by conservative Christians.

In summary, research indicates that North American Christians’ religious faith and conservatism have, at most, small negative impacts upon human rights support, but that Christians who actively volunteer to help those in need are more likely than other Christians to support human rights and global humanitarian goals. The positive relationship between volunteering and support for human rights may also be true among those of other religious faiths and non-believers, but that remains untested.

### Big-Five Personality Factors of Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness

To date, only one study has reported relations between the Big-Five personality factors and human rights attitudes. Swami et al. (2012) found, among a large sample of adults in Austria and Germany, that openness to experience, measured by the Mini-International Personality Item Pool (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006), correlated  $-.35$  with Crowson’s (2007) measure of the willingness to restrict human rights. Extraversion and conscientiousness correlated just  $-.12$  and  $.19$ , respectively, with this willingness.

### Conclusions

To summarize, studies by Doise and colleagues indicate that human rights generally possess common meaning around the world. International surveys indicate global support for human rights, although the strength of that support is not uniform across countries. The historical culture of a country appears to influence which rights are ascribed greater importance. For example, U.S. citizens, in keeping with traditional U.S. values, are more likely to place great value on free speech and freedom of religion than are citizens of most other countries. However, U.S. citizens are much less likely to value social rights, such as the government

helping the poor or insuring access to health care, than are citizens of most countries.

Measures of human rights support vary substantially, from those that ask for simple agreement with human rights principles to those that pit concern for human rights against significant concerns of national self-interest. Ethnocentrism and its roots in authoritarianism and social dominance orientation predict valuing national self-interests more than human rights.

Individual differences in support for human rights are linked to a variety of dispositions, values, and outlooks. Individuals' support for human rights is most strongly positively predicted by a sense of identification with all humanity and by other global and universalistic concerns, and negatively by generalized prejudice and its roots, and by right-wing political ideology. Other positive predictors of concern for human rights include principled moral reasoning, dispositional empathy, optimism about creating a better world, the values of benevolence and self-direction, formal education and global knowledge, and openness and agreeableness from the Big-Five personality factors. Concern for human rights appears negatively related to nationalism, the values of security, power, and hedonism, the need for structure, and conscientiousness on the Big-Five.

At this time, we have no full mapping of the interrelationship of all these constructs, or of their joint effects upon one another and upon human rights support. However, a few of the ways these correlates relate to one another have been mapped. *Cohrs et al. (2007)*, for example, reported that "SDO, RWA, political ideology, universalism values, and security values were closely intertwined" (p. 456). They further cross-validated a model in which universalism, authoritarianism, the need for power, and political ideology each contributed to the rated importance of human rights. In turn, the importance of human rights, together with knowledge of human rights, predicted human rights behaviors (p. 458). *Stellmacher, Sommer and Imbeck (2003)* similarly found in a path analysis that RWA and SDO reduced the rated importance of human rights, while the rated importance of human rights increased the willingness to support for human rights. While both RWA and SDO reduced support for human rights, their effects were fully mediated through reduced ratings of the importance of human rights.

*McFarland (2010a)* tested on two samples a structural model in which RWA and SDO are treated as exogenous variables, affecting ethnocentrism and identification with all humanity, which in turn affect human rights commitment (the factor score of the HRCQ and HRScene). In both samples, in about equal strength, the IWAH directly and positively predicted human rights commitment and ethnocentrism negatively predicted human rights commitment. In both samples, ethnocentrism directly reduced identification with all humanity, as well. The effects of RWA upon human rights commitment were fully mediated through ethnocentrism, while the effects of SDO were largely mediated in the same way. In both samples, however, SDO retained a small direct negative effect upon human rights commitment (see pp. 1755 and 1757).

Among the predictors, it appears that social dominance orientation reduces empathy, while authoritarianism reduces principled moral reasoning. Further, authoritarianism and social dominance directly increase generalized prejudice, while empathy and principled moral reasoning directly reduce it (*McFarland, 2010b*).

These are, however, just fragments of the mapping that is needed to fully understand how these many values, traits, and dispositions affect one another and support for human rights. Further modeling and testing of these relationships could prove valuable.

The existing literature on support for human rights has further limitations. At this time, there is no guiding theory, but simply a collection of empirical results. International surveys have seldom been repeated across time in the same countries, making it difficult to disentangle the influence of country-specific events from stable between-country differences. Almost all studies of individual differences in human rights support have been conducted in the Western world (mainly the United States and Germany), leaving uncertainty about the universality of the reported relationships. Few studies have measured actual human rights behaviors, and even fewer have studied human rights activism. Most importantly, little is now known about why some develop a strong support for human rights while others do not. As almost all factors that are known to relate to human rights support are based on concurrent data, longitudinal studies that include the critical correlates of human rights support could greatly enrich our understanding of its development.

While longitudinal studies are needed, in a retrospective study, Jennings (1996) asked U.S. human rights activists to describe the processes that led to their activism. According to the participants' own accounts, their activism arose from an increasing criticism of U.S. society (specifically for its parochialism and exclusionary tendencies) and an emerging view of oneself as connected with all human beings, including victims of oppression. These led, in turn, to a self-identity as one who cares about human rights and to feelings of moral responsibility to champion human rights. Jennings' (1996) interviewees clearly possessed the prerequisite ingredients of low ethnocentrism and an identification with all humanity. But how did they acquire these?

Psychological models abound for some of the apparent precursors of concern or lack of concern for human rights. For example, Duckitt's (2001) dual-process model proposes that authoritarianism and social dominance, the precursors of ethnocentrism, arise in early child socialization. In this model, authoritarianism begins with strong parental punitiveness, which promotes a sense that the world is threatening, which in turn leads to the development of authoritarianism. Social dominance begins with an absence of early affection, which inspires, in turn, a cold competitiveness and social dominance orientation. Participants' memories of their own child rearing were consistent with the dual-process model. To the degree that authoritarianism and social dominance are so shaped, they predispose one to greater generalized prejudice and less concern for human rights.

For the positive precursors, little is known about why some develop global concerns and a strong identification with all humanity while others possess only more local concerns and identifications. McFarland et al. (2012) have offered speculations derived from Maslow's (1954) theory of self-actualization and from research on moral development, but these lack research confirmation.

It should be noted, however, that Sommer and Stellmacher (2009; see also Stellmacher & Sommer, 2008) found that devoting sessions to human rights education in university seminars, in comparison to control seminars without these sessions, increased human rights knowledge, ratings of the importance of human rights, willingness to support human rights, and decreased prejudice.

Public support is vital for the advance of human rights. For that reason, a clearer under-

standing of how a concern for human rights develops or could be taught is a worthy goal for psychological research.

## References

- Abrams, D., Houston, D. M., Van de Vyver, J., & Vasiljevic, M. (2015). Equality hypocrisy, inconsistency, and prejudice: The unequal application of the universal human right to equality. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 21, 28–46. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pac0000084>
- Adorno, T. W., Frenkel-Brunswick, E., Levinson, D. J., & Sanford, R. N. (1950). *The authoritarian personality*. New York, NY: Harper.
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Garden City, NY: Addison Wesley.
- Altemeyer, B. (1981). *Right-wing authoritarianism*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press.
- Altemeyer, B. (1988). *Enemies of freedom: Understanding right-wing authoritarianism*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Altemeyer, B. (1996). *The authoritarian specter*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Altemeyer, B. (1998). The other "authoritarian personality". *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 30, 47–91. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60382-2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60382-2)
- Avery, P. G. (1988). Political tolerance among adolescents. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 16, 183–201. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00933104.1988.10505564>
- Barrows, T. S. (Ed.). (1981). *College students' knowledge and beliefs: A survey of global understanding*. New Rochelle, NY: Change Magazine Press.
- Behling, O., & Law, K. S. (2000). *Translating questionnaires and other research instruments: Problems and solutions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Candee, D. (1976). Structure and choice in moral reasoning. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34, 1293–1301. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.34.6.1293>
- Cherney, I. D., Greteman, A. J., & Travers, B. G. (2008). A cross-cultural view of adults' perceptions of children's rights. *Social Justice Research*, 21, 432–456. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11211-008-0079-7>
- Chicago Council on Global Affairs. (2012). *Foreign policy in the new millennium: Results of the 2012 Chicago Council Survey of American Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from [http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/Task%20Force%20Reports/2012\\_CCS\\_Report.pdf](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/Task%20Force%20Reports/2012_CCS_Report.pdf)
- Chiu, C., Dweck, C. S., Tong, J. Y., & Fu, J. H. (1997). Implicit theories and conceptions of mo-

- ality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 923–940. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.73.5.923>
- Clémence, A., Devos, T., & Doise, W. (2001). Social representations of human rights violations: Further evidence. *Swiss Journal of Psychology*, 60, 89–98. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1024//1421-0185.60.2.89>
- Cohrs, J. C., Maes, J., Moschner, B., & Kielmann, S. (2007). Determinants of human rights attitudes and behavior: A comparison and integration of psychological perspectives. *Political Psychology*, 28, 441–469. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2007.00581.x>
- Corgan, M., Oh, D. Y., & Malley-Morrison, K. (2009). An integrative conclusion for the set. In K. Malley-Morrison (Ed.), *State violence and the right to peace: An international survey of the views of ordinary people* (Vol. 4, pp. 257–263). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International.
- Council on Foreign Relations. (2011). *Public opinion on global issues*. Retrieved from <http://www.cfr.org/thinktank/iigg/pop/>
- Crowson, H. M. (2004). Human rights attitudes: Dimensionality and psychological correlates. *Ethics & Behavior*, 14, 235–253. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327019eb1403\\_2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327019eb1403_2)
- Crowson, H. M., Brandes, J. A., & Hurst, R. J. (2013). Who opposes rights for persons with physical and intellectual disabilities? *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 43, E307–E318. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12046>
- Crowson, H. M., & DeBacker, T. K. (2008). Belief, motivational, and ideological correlates of human rights attitudes. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 148, 293–310. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.148.3.293-310>
- Crowson, H. M., DeBacker, T. K., & Thoma, S. J. (2005). Does authoritarianism predict post-9/11 attitudes? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 39, 1273–1283. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2005.06.005>
- Crowson, H. M., Debacker, T. K., & Thoma, S. J. (2006). The role of authoritarianism, perceived threat, and need for closure or structure in predicting post-9/11 attitudes and beliefs. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 146, 733–750. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.146.6.733-750>
- Crowson, M. A. (2007). Authoritarianism and human rights attitudes in US law students: A brief look. *Individual Differences Research*, 5, 260–266.
- Crowson, M. A. (2009). Right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation as mediators of worldview beliefs on attitudes related to the war on terror. *Social Psychology*, 40, 93–103. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1027/1864-9335.40.2.93>
- Davis, M. H. (1983). Measuring individual differences in empathy: Evidence for a multidimensional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44, 113–126. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.44.1.113>
- Díaz-Veizades, J., Widaman, K. F., Little, T. D., & Gibbs, K. W. (1995). The measurement and structure of human rights attitudes. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 135, 313–328. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00224545.1995.9713961>
- Doise, W., Spini, D., & Clémence, A. (1999). Human rights studied as social representations in a cross-national context. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, 1–29. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-0992\(199902\)29:1<1::AID-EJSP909>3.0.CO;2-#](http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(199902)29:1<1::AID-EJSP909>3.0.CO;2-#)
- Donnellan, M. B., Oswald, F. L., Baird, B. M., & Lucas, R. E. (2006). The mini-IPIP scales: Tiny-yet-effective measures of the Big Five factors of personality. *Psychological Assessment*, 18, 192–203. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.18.2.192>
- Downs, D. M., & Cowan, G. (2012). Predicting the importance of freedom of speech and the perceived harm of hate speech. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 42, 1353–1375. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2012.00902.x>
- Duckitt, J. (2001). A dual-process cognitive-motivational theory of ideology and prejudice. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 33, 41–113. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(01\)80004-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(01)80004-6)
- Fetchenhauer, D., & Bierhoff, H. W. (2004). Attitudes toward a military enforcement of human rights. *Social Justice Research*, 17, 75–92. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1023/B:SORE.0000018093.23790.0d>
- Gallup Organization. (2013a). *Americans say preventing terrorism top foreign policy goal*. Retrieved from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/160628/americans-say-preventing-terrorism-top-foreign-policy-goal.aspx>
- Gallup Organization. (2013b). *Republicans, Democrats agree on top foreign policy goals: Partisans disagree most on importance of working to achieve world cooperation*. Retrieved from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/160649/republicans-democrats-agree-top-foreign-policy-goals.aspx>
- Getz, I. (1985). *Moral reasoning, religion, and attitudes toward human rights* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.
- Grace, H. A., & Van Velzer, V. (1951). Attitudes toward the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. *International Journal of Opinion & Attitude Research*, 5, 541–552.
- Hackett, J. D., Omoto, A. M., & Matthews, M. (2015). Human rights: The role of psychological sense of global community. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 21, 47–67. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pac0000086>

- Hetherington, M. J., & Weiler, J. D. (2009). *Authoritarianism and polarization in American politics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511802331>
- Holsti, O. (2000). Public opinion on human rights in American foreign policy. In D. P. Forsythe (Ed.), *The United States and human rights* (pp. 131–174). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Human Rights Watch. (2014). *World report 2014: Events of 2013*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014>
- Jennings, T. (1996). The developmental dialectic of international human-rights advocacy. *Political Psychology*, 17, 77–95. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3791944>
- Kohlberg, L. (1969). Stage and sequence: The cognitive-developmental approach to socialization. In D. Goslin (Ed.), *Handbook of socialization theory and research* (pp. 347–480). Chicago, IL: Rand McNally.
- Kosterman, R., & Feshbach, S. (1989). Toward a measure of patriotic and nationalistic attitudes. *Political Psychology*, 10, 257–274. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3791647>
- Kull, S., Ramsay, C., Weber, S., Lewis, E., Brouwer, M., Ciolek, M., & Medoff, A. (2008). *World public opinion on torture*. Retrieved from [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/jun08/WPO\\_Torture\\_Jun08\\_packet.pdf](http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/jun08/WPO_Torture_Jun08_packet.pdf)
- Malley-Morrison, K., Cogan, C., St. Germain, L., & Potter, A. (2013). Perspectives on peace and reconciliation: A final integration. In K. Malley-Morrison, A. Mercurio, & G. Twose (Eds.), *International handbook of peace and reconciliation* (pp. 655–665). New York, NY: Springer. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5933-0\\_43](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5933-0_43)
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- McConochie, W. A. (2011). Psychological correlates of pro-environmental attitudes. *Ecopsychology*, 3, 115–123. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1089/eco.2010.0068>
- McFarland, S. (2010a). Personality and support for universal human rights: A review and test of a structural model. *Journal of Personality*, 78, 1735–1764. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2010.00668.x>
- McFarland, S. (2010b). Authoritarianism, social dominance, and other roots of generalized prejudice. *Political Psychology*, 31, 453–477. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00765.x>
- McFarland, S. (2012). Support for humanitarian military intervention. In D. J. Christie (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of peace psychology* (pp. 518–522). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- McFarland, S. (2013, May). *Identification with all humanity as an ethical concept and psychological construct*. Paper presented at the Conference on Identity in a Globalized World, Vilm, Germany.
- McFarland, S., Brown, D., & Webb, M. (2013). “Identification with all humanity” as a moral concept and psychological construct. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22, 194–198. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0963721412471346>
- McFarland, S., & Mathews, M. (2005a). Do Americans care about human rights? *Journal of Human Rights*, 4, 305–319. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14754830500257539>
- McFarland, S., & Mathews, M. (2005b). Who cares about human rights? *Political Psychology*, 26, 365–385. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2005.00422.x>
- McFarland, S., Webb, M., & Brown, D. (2012). All humanity is my ingroup: A measure and studies of identification with all humanity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103, 830–853. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0028724>
- Moghaddam, F. M., & Vuksanovic, V. (1990). Attitudes and behavior toward human rights across different contexts: The role of right-wing authoritarianism, political ideology, and religiosity. *International Journal of Psychology*, 25, 455–474. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00207599008247877>
- Moscovici, S. (1988). Notes toward a description of social representations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18, 211–250. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180303>
- Narvaez, D., Getz, I., Rest, J. R., & Thoma, S. J. (1999). Individual moral judgment and cultural ideologies. *Developmental Psychology*, 35, 478–488. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.35.2.478>
- Onuh, S. O., Igberase, G. O., Umeora, J. O. U., Okogbenin, S. A., Otoide, V. O., & Gharoro, E. P. (2006). Female genital mutilation: Knowledge, attitude and practice among nurses. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 98, 409–414.
- Paquin, A. R., Bruni, J. R., Sandow, A., & Alexander, J. D. (2011). Translating response anchors in cross-cultural research. In D. Chadee & A. Kostić (Eds.), *Social psychological dynamics* (pp. 355–376). Kingston, Jamaica: University of West Indies Press.
- Pratto, F., Sidanius, J., Stallworth, L. M., & Malle, B. F. (1994). Social dominance orientation: A personality variable predicting social and political attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67, 741–763. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.4.741>
- Rest, J. (1986). *Moral development: Advances in research and theory*. New York, NY: Praeger.
- Rest, J. (1999). *Postconventional moral thinking: A neo-Kohlbergian approach*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Rest, J., Narvaez, D., Thoma, S. J., & Bebeau, M. J. (1999). DIT2: Devising and testing a revised instrument of moral judgment. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 91*, 644–659. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.91.4.644>
- Ruhs, M. (2012). The human rights of migrant workers: Why do so few countries care? *American Behavioral Scientist, 56*, 1277–1293. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0002764212443815>
- Schatz, R. T., Staub, E., & Lavine, H. (1999). On the varieties of national attachment: Blind versus constructive patriotism. *Political Psychology, 20*, 151–174. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00140>
- Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content of structure and values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (pp. 1–65). New York, NY: Academic Press. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60281-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60281-6)
- Soldz, S., & Shalom, S. R. (2009). The United States: European Americans. In K. Malley-Morrison (Ed.), *State violence and the right to peace: An international survey of the views of ordinary people* (Vol. 4, pp. 257–263). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International.
- Sommer, G., & Stellmacher, J. (2009). *Menschenrechte und Menschenrechtsbildung* [Human rights and human rights education]. Wiesbaden, Germany: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-91898-3>
- Spini, D., & Doise, W. (1998). Organizing principles of involvement in human rights and their social anchoring in value priorities. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 28*, 603–622. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-0992\(199807/08\)28:4<603::AID-EJSP884>3.0.CO;2-P](http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(199807/08)28:4<603::AID-EJSP884>3.0.CO;2-P)
- Spini, D., & Doise, W. (2005). Universal rights and duties as normative social representations. In N. J. Finkel & F. M. Moghaddam (Eds.), *The psychology of rights and duties: Empirical contributions and normative commentaries* (pp. 21–28). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/10872-002>
- Stellmacher, J., Petzel, T., & Sommer, G. (2003). Autoritarismus und Einstellung zu Menschenrechten im Ost-West-Vergleich. [Authoritarianism and attitudes toward human rights in East and West Germany] In K. Boehnke, D. Fuß & J. Hagan (Hrsg.), *Jugendgewalt und rechtsextremismus* (pp. 93–118). [Youth violence and right-wing extremism] Weinheim, Germany: Juventa.
- Stellmacher, J., & Sommer, G. (2008). Human rights education: An evaluation of university seminars. *Social Psychology, 39*, 70–80. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1027/1864-9335.39.1.70>
- Stellmacher, J., Sommer, G., & Brähler, E. (2005). The cognitive representation of human rights: Knowledge, importance, and commitment. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 11*, 267–292. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327949pac1103\\_4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327949pac1103_4)
- Stellmacher, J., Sommer, G., & Imbeck, J. (2003). Psychologische Ansätze zu einer positiven Menschenrechtserziehung—Determinanten der Einsatzbereitschaft für die Einhaltung von Menschenrechten. In E. H. Witte (Hrsg.), *Sozialpsychologie politischer prozesse* [Social psychology of political processes] (pp. 143–166). Lengerich, Germany: Pabst.
- Stouffer, S. A. (1963). *Communism, conformity, and civil liberties: A Cross-section of the nation speaks its mind*. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith.
- Sullivan, J. L., Piereson, J., & Marcus, G. E. (1982). *Political tolerance and American democracy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Swami, V., Nader, I. W., Pietschnig, J., Stieger, S., Tran, U. S., & Voracek, M. (2012). Personality and individual difference correlates of attitudes toward human rights and civil liberties. *Personality and Individual Differences, 53*, 443–447. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2012.04.015>
- United Nations Children's Fund. (2012). *Levels and trends in child mortality: Report 2012*. Retrieved from [http://www.who.int/maternal\\_child\\_adolescent/documents/levels\\_trends\\_child\\_mortality\\_2012/en/](http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/levels_trends_child_mortality_2012/en/)
- United Nations General Assembly. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved from United Nations Website: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>
- Viki, G. T., Osgood, D., & Phillips, S. (2013). Dehumanization and self-reported proclivity to torture prisoners of war. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 49*, 325–328. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2012.11.006>
- World Health Organization. (2013). UNICEF-WHO-The World Bank: 2012 Joint child malnutrition estimates—Levels and trends. Retrieved from [http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/jme\\_2012\\_summary\\_note\\_v2.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/jme_2012_summary_note_v2.pdf?ua=1)
- Wuthnow, R., & Lewis, V. (2008). Religion and altruistic U.S. foreign policy goals: Evidence from a national survey of church members. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 47*, 191–209. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5906.2008.00402.x>
- Zellman, G. L., & Sears, D. O. (1971). Childhood origins of tolerance for dissent. *Journal of Social Issues, 27*, 109–136. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1971.tb00656.x>