

Proposal for invited submission to *European Review of Social Psychology*

Proposed title: Attributing and denying humanness to individuals and groups

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The proposed contribution will review our growing body of work on the attribution of humanness to individuals and groups, and in particular the attribution of lesser humanness to others. This is a topic that has important but largely neglected implications for social perception, and it has received only scattered attention over the years. The primary exception in recent European social psychology is Leyens and colleagues' work on infra-humanization, which was reviewed several years ago in *ERSP* (Demoulin et al., 2004). Our own work takes a quite different perspective, and we believe it has reached a point where an integrated review is a priority. The proposed article would set out our theoretical approach to the study of humanness, review the large body of empirical and theoretical work that embodies this approach, and propose new directions for the study of dehumanization. We are confident that the article would be of significant interest to many readers of the journal, drawing on an established line of European research but departing from it in a number of original ways.

Overview

The work that we will review is programmatic, and can be distinguished from infra-humanization research and theory in several respects. Each of these distinctive features will be the focus of one section of our review.

1. Our work is based on a comprehensive empirical examination of the meanings of “humanness”, in which we have on multiple occasions asked participants to judge the degree to which psychological attributes reflect humanness (Haslam, Bastian & Bissett, 2004; Haslam et al., 2005). Whereas infrahumanization research defines humanness as that which is unique to humans, and focuses on the affective domain (i.e., primary vs. secondary emotions), we have consistently obtained evidence of two distinct senses of humanness in multiple domains, notably personality traits, emotions and values. In addition to those attributes that are uniquely human, there are those that constitute our shared and essential “human nature”. The former reflect sophistication, civility, refinement and culture, whereas the latter reflect what is inborn, universal, deep-seated and vital. Contrary to a key claim of infra-humanization theory, we consistently find that it is the latter sense of humanness that is essentialized (Bastian & Haslam, 2006; Haslam et al., 2006). In the first section of the review we will therefore review our work on the composition of the two senses of humanness, prior to demonstrating the implications of this distinction for social perception. In addition to reviewing the studies cited above, we will present unpublished work (Kashima, Haslam & Loughnan, 2006) that shows how the two senses distinguish humans from

- different kinds of nonhuman: uniquely human attributes separate us from animals, whereas human nature attributes separate us from automata or machines.
2. Infracommunication research represents an important advance in the study of group perception, but it does not claim to offer an encompassing theoretical model of dehumanization. In contrast, we have developed such an integrative model (Haslam, 2006), based on the two senses of humanness mentioned in the previous paragraph. Briefly, we argue that two distinct forms of dehumanization exist, corresponding to the denial of the two types of humanness. When others are denied uniquely human attributes (e.g., refinement and intellect) they are implicitly or explicitly likened to animals, and when they are denied human nature (e.g., emotional warmth and openness) they are similarly likened to automata or objects. Previous research on dehumanization across the disciplines can be fitted into this schema, and we have speculated on the social cognitive bases of the two forms of dehumanization. This work will be reviewed in the article's second section.
 3. Infracommunication is a phenomenon in group perception, which has primarily been investigated in studies of the perception of national groups. In the third section of our article we will review our own work on group perception, which departs from this work in examining both senses of humanness and in exploring perceptions of a somewhat broader array of groups (e.g., national, gender, vocational). First, we have found evidence that both senses of humanness are

- denied to some groups, and not just uniquely human attributes (Bain, Haslam & Kashima, 2006). Second, we have found that in some cases, in direct contrast to the usual pattern of European-based infrahumanization research, outgroups are ascribed *more* uniquely human attributes than ingroups by our Australian participants, pointing to possible cultural variation in the attribution of humanness (Bain et al., 2006). Third, we have found in unpublished work (Lumby & Haslam, 2005) that the two dimensions of humanness help to clarify stereotype content with approximately equal power as Fiske's warm and competence dimensions (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu, 2002), with which they are only partially redundant.
4. Infra-humanization has been conceptualized as an intergroup phenomenon, and researchers have found no evidence that it applies in interpersonal contexts: the self is not perceived as more (uniquely) human than others (Cortes et al., 2005). However, equipped with our two senses of humanness we have shown in multiple studies that the self is attributed more human nature traits than others, a phenomenon that we have dubbed "self-humanizing" (Haslam et al., 2005). This phenomenon is independent of self-enhancement, and is mediated in part by the ascription of greater depth (i.e., more essentialized properties) to the self. This demonstration that humanness is an important dimension in interpersonal comparisons and self-perception significantly broadens the scope of humanness research, and opens up new lines of work on dehumanization outside of intergroup contexts. We will review studies that establish the robustness and mediators of self-humanizing (Haslam et al., 2005), as well as new studies

(Haslam & Bain, in press) that demonstrate moderators of the effect, specifically abstract construal, focalism, egocentrism, and the failure to individuate the other. We will also speculate on possible motivational bases of self-humanizing in light of evidence that the effect is stronger for undesirable traits: one's own failings reflect one's essential humanness, but others' do not.

5. Infracommunication research has primarily employed explicit methodologies, often involving the selection of emotions to characterize groups. Although some of this work has employed implicit social cognition methods (e.g., IAT: Paladino et al., 2002), our own work is increasingly relying on such methods. People are likely to deny seeing others as less than humanness than themselves, or as more like nonhumans, so this methodological preference has a solid basis. We will review a series of studies that have used a more flexible refinement of the IAT – the Go/No go Association Task (Nosek & Banaji, 2001) to examine our theoretical model. One study (Loughnan & Haslam, in press) demonstrated that different social categories are differentially associated with the two senses of humanness, and with the corresponding form of nonhuman (e.g., businesspeople with low human nature and with automata, artists with low uniquely human and animals). A follow-up study indicated that ingroup stimuli (“us”) were more associated with human nature and uniquely human traits than were outgroup stimuli (“them”) (Loughnan & Haslam, 2006). A third study found that the self is implicitly associated with human nature traits more than others, consistent with our work on self-humanizing (O'Connor & Haslam, 2006). A final study (Reynolds & Haslam,

2006) examined perceptions of gender, showing that women were more strongly associated with human nature and with animals, and men more with automata, although no corresponding gender differences were apparent on an explicit rating task. We believe that this line of research offers a very promising perspective on the “automatic” perception of lesser humanness in others.

6. The final focus of our review will be some work on the broader implications of human nature beliefs, beyond their relevance to group perception. In particular, we will review work by Bain, Kashima and Haslam (2006), which shows that values are important to the degree that they are implicitly understood to be grounded in human nature. When values are believed to have this grounding they are seen as more personally important, more rhetorically powerful, and less readily traded off. By implication, the relevance of humanness beliefs is potentially quite extensive, and certainly untapped within social psychology.

In sum, we propose to write a review with broad coverage that integrates a vigorous program of work. This work has been appearing in many of the most prestigious journals in the field in the last three years – although much of it is yet to be published – but it has yet to be surveyed. Besides reviewing our research, we intend to make concrete proposals for future research, and to speculate on how this work might be advanced across cultures. We are confident that our review article would be of significant interest to social psychologists in Europe and beyond, as dehumanization and related issues are rapidly becoming hot topics on both sides of the Atlantic and, we would add, the Pacific.

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