

Backlash: The Politics and Real-World Consequences of Minority Group Dehumanization

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Abstract

Research suggests that members of advantaged groups who feel dehumanized by other groups respond aggressively. But little is known about how meta-dehumanization affects disadvantaged minority group members, historically the primary targets of dehumanization. We examine this important question in the context of the 2016 U.S. Republican Primaries, which have witnessed the widespread derogation and dehumanization of Mexican immigrants and Muslims. Two initial studies document that Americans blatantly dehumanize Mexican immigrants and Muslims; this dehumanization uniquely predicts support for aggressive policies proposed by Republican nominees, and dehumanization is highly associated with supporting Republican candidates (especially Donald Trump). Two further studies show that, in this climate, Latinos and Muslims in the United States feel heavily dehumanized, which predicts hostile responses including support for violent versus non-violent collective action and unwillingness to assist counterterrorism efforts. Our results extend theorizing on dehumanization, and suggest that it may have cyclical and self-fulfilling consequences.

Keywords

dehumanization, meta-dehumanization, prejudice, intergroup relations, meta-perceptions, 2016 U.S. Election, Donald Trump

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As the Republican Presidential Primaries unfolded, many expressed concern about the language expressed toward certain minority groups, in particular Mexican immigrants and Muslims. Donald Trump was at the forefront, using statements about immigrant “anchor babies” and Muslim “Trojan horses” in promoting controversial policies such as building a wall between the United States and Mexico and instituting databases to track Muslims. Although Trump’s comments provoked outrage in many quarters, his rhetoric has seemingly not hurt him among his base, leading many to suggest that racial resentment is in fact an important foundation of his support (e.g., Cohn, 2015; McElwee & McDaniel, 2016). Perhaps in an attempt to compete for these same voters, other candidates followed suit, with Ben Carson using the term “rabid dogs” in discussing Syrian refugees, and Ted Cruz talking about the need to patrol and secure Muslim neighborhoods. These trends suggest that negative perceptions of Mexican immigrants and Muslims may be prevalent among some Americans. Much of the language used (e.g., “rabid dogs”; “Trojan horse”) specifically suggests the relevance of blatant dehumanization, which has the potential for particularly far-reaching consequences.

One possibility consistent with prior research is that overt dehumanization of Mexicans and Muslims may stoke

aggressive attitudes and behavior, and motivate endorsement of hostile policies such as the mass deportation of illegal immigrants or the banning of Muslim travel to the United States—policies actually proposed recently by Republican candidates. But the effects of the dehumanization of Mexicans and Muslims might extend even beyond promoting hostility toward these groups: A second concern is how feeling dehumanized might affect minority group members on the receiving end, a question that has not received prior empirical attention. In the current work, we examine attitudes among both majority and minority group members, exploring (a) how majority Americans’ dehumanization of Mexican immigrants and Muslims is associated with their support for the Republican nominees and policies they have proposed, and (b) how minority Americans respond to feeling dehumanized.

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The Consequences of Blatant Dehumanization and Meta-Dehumanization

Recent work outside the context of the current election cycle illustrates why the blatant dehumanization of Latinos and Muslims may be so consequential. Although contemporary research on dehumanization has tended to focus on its more subtle, everyday forms, Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, and Cotterill (2015) have demonstrated that blatant dehumanization continues to be relevant in modern society (see also Haslam, Loughnan, & Sun, 2011; Jackson & Gaertner, 2010). Using a novel measure of blatant dehumanization based on the popular “Ascent of Man” diagram, these authors showed that, on average, samples of British and American participants explicitly rated Muslims as less “evolved” than their own group. Moreover, the degree of reported blatant dehumanization was associated with outgroup aggression (e.g., support for torture) beyond subtle forms of dehumanization (such as denying others uniquely human emotions or traits; for example, Haslam, Bain, Bastian, Douge & Lee, 2005; Leyens et al., 2000) and “mere” dislike (see also Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008; Leidner, Castano, & Ginges, 2013).

Here, we extend the prior work on blatant dehumanization by examining how Americans perceive Mexican immigrants and Muslims, and more importantly, by examining how dehumanization might help explain real trends that have emerged during the current American election cycle. Although many have speculated that outgroup animus may be contributing to the surprising groundswell of support for Republican candidates like Donald Trump (e.g., McElwee & McDaniel, 2016), this has yet to be empirically examined. Moreover, it remains unclear whether blatant dehumanization is in fact associated with support for the actual policy proposals these candidates have advocated for. We shed light on these questions here, highlighting the potential for blatant dehumanization to influence consequential real-world outcomes.

Beyond promoting hostility among majority Americans, the dehumanization of Mexican immigrants and Muslims could have effects on the dehumanized. In particular, members of these minority groups perceiving that they are viewed as less than fully human may respond with aggression toward majority Americans. Consistent with this possibility, recent research suggests that *feeling* blatantly dehumanized (i.e., meta-dehumanization) can motivate reciprocal hostility. Examining samples of advantaged groups (e.g., Americans, Israelis), Kteily, Hodson, and Bruneau (2016) showed that feeling blatantly dehumanized is separate from feeling disliked (i.e., meta-prejudice), and that meta-dehumanization is uniquely associated with aggressive attitudes and behavior (see also Andrighetto, Riva, Gabbiadini, & Volpato, in press; Bastian & Haslam, 2010, 2011). Moreover, these authors found that Americans who were primed to think (or reported thinking) that they were seen as animals by Muslims were significantly more

likely to reciprocate by dehumanizing Muslims and recommending more hostile anti-Muslim actions.

Despite the contributions of this prior work, one significant shortcoming is that it has focused on just one side of the equation, by examining dehumanization and meta-dehumanization only among members of advantaged groups. Thus, little is known about how members of *disadvantaged* minority groups—historically, the primary targets of blatant dehumanization—may respond to feeling dehumanized.

On one hand, there are reasons to think that minority group members will be less likely than advantaged group members to react with hostility to being dehumanized. It is possible, for example, that some minority group members—for example, those higher on system-justification motives (Jost & Banaji, 1994)—will accept dehumanizing views of the ingroup held by those at the top. Moreover, even if minority group members reject the dehumanization they perceive, their relative lack of power may diminish their likelihood of responding to being dehumanized with aggression, because of a lack of perceived efficacy or a fear of retribution (see also Miranda, Gouveia-Pereira, & Vaes, 2014).

On the other hand, being blatantly dehumanized involves a striking and aversive threat to the ingroup’s social identity (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999) that may well be rejected as illegitimate and stoke strong desires for reciprocation despite any potential consequences. In fact, research among disadvantaged group members outside the context of dehumanization has suggested that they too can respond to negative stereotypes of the group with hostility (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Kamans, Gordijn, Oldenhuis, & Otten, 2009). Thus, it is plausible that members of minority groups will respond as advantaged group members do—with reciprocal dehumanization and increased hostility. Because minority group members are likely the primary targets of dehumanization, better understanding of their responses to feeling dehumanized has important theoretical and practical implications (see also Lyons-Padilla, Gelfand, Mirahmadi, Farooq, & van Egmond, 2015). For example, Muslims are involved in thwarting a significant percentage of the terror plots in the United States (Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, 2013). If potential Muslim allies come to feel dehumanized, they may respond with hostility rather than cooperation. Ironically, if meta-dehumanization predicts aggression among minority group members, this could reinforce the original dehumanizing perceptions that majority group members hold, promulgating a vicious cycle of intergroup hostility.

We directly tackled these questions in the present work, simultaneously examining both the dehumanization of minority group members by majority group members and, for the first time, minority group members’ feelings of meta-dehumanization. Rooting our examination in the actual statements and policy proposals put forward by certain Republican

presidential candidates, we first examined the prevalence and consequences of majority Americans' blatant dehumanization of Mexican immigrants (Study 1a) and Muslims (Study 1b). Subsequently, we tested whether Latino (Study 2a) and Muslim (Study 2b) residents of the United States felt dehumanized (by Trump, Republicans, and majority Americans), and explored how these feelings were uniquely associated (beyond feeling disliked) with feeling integrated into U.S. society and consequential responses such as hostility, aggression, and unwillingness to report terrorism to law enforcement.

Study 1a

Method

Participants. We aimed to collect a large sample of participants, hoping to have at least 300 non-Latino Americans. We thus collected data from 363 participants on Amazon's Mechanical Turk (mTurk), a reliable and diverse platform for subject recruitment (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011), in August 2015. Participants were recruited to participate in a survey about their "social and political attitudes," and were compensated US\$0.75 on mTurk for participating. Twenty Latino American participants and one participant who did not report their ethnicity were excluded, leaving 342 non-Latino American participants ($M_{age} = 33.10$, $SD = 10.43$; 54.7% female; 237 White/Caucasian Americans; 57 Asian Americans; 13 Black/African Americans; two Native Americans; 33 Other).

Measures. Primary measures were assessed in the order described below, unless otherwise specified.

Political Conservatism was measured using three items: economic and social conservatism (1 = *liberal*; 7 = *conservative*) and party preference (1 = *strong democrat*; 7 = *strong republican*; $\alpha = .79$).

Next, participants responded to measures assessing blatant dehumanization and prejudice, which were presented in randomized order.

Prejudice was assessed using a feeling thermometer rating of Mexican immigrants on a 0 (*very cold*) to 100 (*very warm*) scale (Haddock, Zanna, & Esses, 1993). Scores were reversed, such that higher scores indicate greater prejudice. Other groups assessed were Americans, Europeans, Arabs, Iranians, Muslims, Doctors, and Welfare recipients.

Blatant Dehumanization was assessed as in Kteily, Bruneau, et al. (2015; Kteily, N., Hodson, et al., 2016). Specifically, we created a composite formed from the (reverse-scored) rating of Mexican immigrants on the 0 to 100 Ascent scale of blatant dehumanization (Kteily et al., 2015; see Figure 1) and ratings of Mexican immigrants on nine items adapted from Bastian, Denson, and Haslam (2013) that assess animalistic dehumanization. Specifically, participants were asked to "Please rate how well the following terms describe Mexican immigrants" on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*

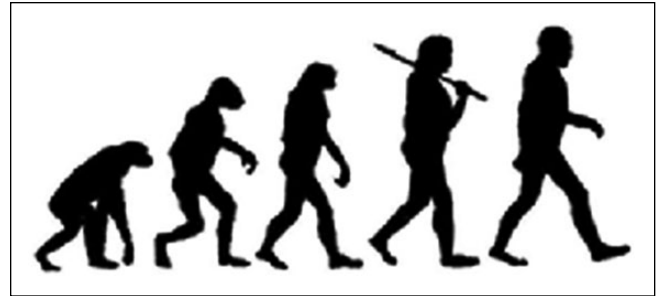


Figure 1. The "Ascent of Man" measure of blatant dehumanization.

Source. This figure was originally published in Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, and Cotterill (2015).

Note. Scores are provided using a slider scale ranging from 0 to 100, with 0 corresponding to the left side of the image (i.e., quadrupedal human ancestor), and 100 corresponding to the right side of the image ("full" modern-day human).

much so) scale: "savage, aggressive," "backward, primitive," "lacking morals," "barbaric, cold-hearted," "refined and cultured" (reverse coded), "rational and logical" (reverse coded), "scientifically/technologically advanced" (reverse coded), "capable of self-control" (reverse coded), and "mature, responsible" (reverse coded). Scores on these nine items were averaged ($\alpha = .82$; $M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.95$) and standardized, and then combined with the standardized ratings of Mexican immigrants on the Ascent scale ($M = 24.22$, $SD = 26.16$) to create a composite of blatant dehumanization ($r = .48$, $p < .001$). We also obtained animalistic trait ratings for the ingroup (i.e., Americans), as well as Ascent ratings for Americans, Europeans, Arabs, Iranians, Muslims, Doctors, and Welfare recipients (see Supplemental Table 1). Results reported below were similar if we computed prejudice and dehumanization as (ingroup–outgroup) difference scores.

Anti-Immigration Attitudes were assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement with a series of 10 statements on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale. These statements reflected several related aspects of anti-immigration sentiment, with an emphasis on illegal immigration from Mexico in particular (see Supplemental Materials for full scale). These included a lack of sympathy for undocumented immigrants (e.g., "Undocumented immigrants are just unfortunate people doing their best under difficult circumstances" [reverse coded]), the belief that immigrants pose a realistic threat to Americans (e.g., "People are coming from all over that are killers and rapists and they're coming into this country [illegally]"; "Cheap foreign labor holds down salaries, keeps unemployment high, and makes it difficult for poor and working-class Americans to earn a middle-class wage"), the belief that borders should be tightened and immigrants expelled (e.g., "All these illegals need to be deported") and thinking that Mexico should be held responsible (e.g., "The Mexican government has taken the U.S. to the cleaners. They are responsible for this problem [illegal

immigration] and they must help pay to clean it up”). Several of these statements were direct quotes from Donald Trump (including the second and last items listed above). One of the items, capturing hostility toward and support for expulsion of immigrants, was assessed on a 0 to 100 scale: “Which language do you think illegal immigrants understand better: the language of reason or the language of detention and expulsion?” assessed on a 0 (*definitely the language of reason*) to 100 (*definitely the language of detention and expulsion*) scale. All items were converted to a 0 to 100 scale and averaged ($\alpha = .89$).¹

Anti-Immigrant Policy Support was assessed by asking participants to indicate their support with each of six policies on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale. These focused on specific policy proposals intended to reduce immigration, including via surveillance, exclusion, aggressive forms of detention, and deportation. These policies were as follows: “We should triple the number of Immigration and Customs enforcement agents,” “We need to build a wall to keep out illegal immigrants from Mexico and elsewhere,” “The U.S. should restrict visas to Mexicans,” “Unless Mexico pays for a wall to keep out immigrants, we should increase fees on all worker visas from Mexico,” “Illegal aliens apprehended crossing the border must be detained until they are sent home, no more catch-and-release,” and “Mexican immigrants caught crossing the border illegally should be kept in solitary confinement until they are deported.” Several of these policies were taken directly from Donald Trump’s official immigration platform (on his campaign website; see Supplemental Materials for further details). One further item assessed support for deportation by asking participants whether those staying illegally in the United States should receive (a) pathway to citizenship, (b) legal status, or (c) deportation; participants were given a score of 0 if they chose either option (a) or (b), and a score of 100 if they chose option c. All items were converted to a 0 to 100 scale, and then averaged ($\alpha = .92$).

Signing Anti-Immigration Petitions was assessed as in Kteily et al. (Kteily, Bruneau, et al., 2015; Kteily, N., Hodson, et al., 2016) by giving participants the opportunity to actually sign in support of or opposition to each of six petitions urging congress to implement the types of anti-immigration policies assessed earlier. These were as follows: “Urge congressional members to support building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico,” “Urge congressional members to increase the number of Immigration and Customs enforcement agents,” “Urge congressional members to immediately deport any illegal immigrants captured,” “Urge congressional members to grant permanent residency to any illegal Mexican immigrants who have not committed any crimes in the U.S.” (reverse coded), “Urge congressional members to heavily restrict the number of immigrant visas to the U.S.,” and “Urge congressional members to stop automatically granting citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants who are born in the U.S.” Participants could choose to add

their online signature in opposition to the petition (coded -1), choose not to sign the petition (coded 0), or choose to sign in support of the petition (coded +1; $\alpha = .82$).

Candidate Support. For exploratory purposes, we were interested in assessing the extent to which dehumanization was associated with supporting several of the political candidates for the U.S. presidency who were prominent at the time of data collection. These items were assessed immediately after political conservatism. Specifically, we asked participants to indicate the extent to which they supported each of the following candidates on a 1 (*do not support at all*) to 7 (*strongly support*) scale (participants were told not to respond to any candidate they were not aware of): Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Scott Walker, and Rand Paul.

Finally, we also assessed levels of intergroup contact with people of Mexican background and inhumanization; these items are beyond the scope of the current work and are not discussed further.²

Results

We observed high levels of prejudice and dehumanization toward Mexican immigrants, as well as support for anti-immigration attitudes and policy support: For example, on the feeling thermometer Mexican immigrants were rated almost 40 points below the scale maximum, and on the Ascent scale of blatant dehumanization they were rated almost 25 points below the scale maximum (see Supplemental Table 2 for full variable descriptives and intercorrelations). By way of comparison, participants rated Americans, on average, about 18 points higher than Mexican immigrants on the feeling thermometer, and about 12 points higher on the Ascent scale (both these ratings were significantly higher than those for Mexican immigrants; $ps < .001$).

Our central research interest was in assessing the unique association between blatant dehumanization and anti-immigration attitudes and behavior. Thus, we conducted a series of multiple regression analyses, in which we regressed each of our attitudinal outcome measures (Anti-Immigration Attitudes; Anti-Immigrant Policy Support) and our behavioral measure (Signing Anti-Immigrant Petitions) on blatant dehumanization, controlling for political conservatism and prejudice.

Consistent with expectations (see Table 1), blatant dehumanization of Mexican immigrants was uniquely associated with more support for the anti-immigration statements and policies, controlling for levels of political conservatism and prejudice. Thus, individuals who dehumanized Mexican immigrants to a greater extent were more likely to cast them in threatening terms, withhold sympathy from them, and support measures designed to send and keep them out, such as surveillance, detention, expulsion, and building a wall between the United States and Mexico. Importantly, these associations held not only for individuals’ expressed attitudes but also for their behavior: Individuals who dehumanized

Table 1. Simultaneous Regression Predicting Anti-Immigrant Attitudes and Behavior in Study 1a.

	Anti-immigration attitudes $R^2 = .57$		Anti-immigrant policy support $R^2 = .49$		Signing anti-immigrant petitions $R^2 = .30$	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Political conservatism	.36***	[0.28, 0.43]	.33***	[0.25, 0.42]	.32***	[0.22, 0.42]
Prejudice	.27***	[0.18, 0.36]	.22***	[0.12, 0.31]	.16**	[0.04, 0.27]
Blatant dehumanization	.33***	[0.24, 0.43]	.33***	[0.23, 0.43]	.22***	[0.10, 0.34]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

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

Mexican immigrants to a greater extent were more likely to actually sign petitions in favor of these policies, many of which were taken directly from Donald Trump's campaign platform.

Finally, we assessed the association between blatant dehumanization of Mexican immigrants and candidate support (see Table 2). In our analyses, we examined both zero-order relationships between blatant dehumanization of Mexican immigrants and candidate support, as well as results from a series of regressions in which we regressed support for each candidate on dehumanization, controlling for prejudice and conservatism (to isolate the dehumanization-specific associations).

Interestingly, we observed that blatant dehumanization was correlated with supporting each of the candidates, with the exception of Hillary Clinton. Specifically, support for Bernie Sanders was associated with *less* dehumanization of Mexican immigrants, whereas support for each of the Republican candidates (Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Scott Walker, and Rand Paul) was associated with greater dehumanization. This was especially true when it came to Donald Trump: Using Steiger's (1980) test for differences in dependent correlations among the 282 participants who provided data for all candidates, we found that the relationship between dehumanization of Mexican immigrants and candidate support was stronger for Donald Trump than for any of the other Republican candidates (all z s > 3.57 , $ps < .001$).

These patterns were similar when controlling for conservatism and prejudice, especially with respect to the Republican candidates. We observed no unique association between dehumanization and supporting Bernie Sanders, and a positive association with supporting Hillary Clinton (a suppressor-variable effect, given that there was no zero-order correlation). However, dehumanization positively predicted support for each of the Republican candidates, with the exception of Rand Paul. Again, this relationship was numerically higher for Donald Trump.

Discussion

Study 1a highlighted the relevance of blatant dehumanization to anti-Mexican immigration attitudes and policies, beyond

Table 2. Relationship Between Candidate Support and Blatant Dehumanization of Mexican Immigrants, Controlling for Prejudice and Conservatism, in Study 1a.

Candidate	Zero order r	β	M (SD)	n
Hillary Clinton	-.04	.23*** ^a	3.79 (2.15)	340
Bernie Sanders	-.37***	-.09	4.26 (2.17)	312
Donald Trump	.46***	.32***	2.83 (2.09)	331
Ted Cruz	.26***	.14*	2.58 (1.76)	305
Jeb Bush	.25***	.17*	2.72 (1.82)	322
Scott Walker	.29***	.18*	2.67 (1.88)	295
Rand Paul	.25***	.10	3.03 (1.89)	318

Note. Sample sizes (n) vary because participants were instructed to rate only candidates with whom they were familiar. Standardized beta coefficients reflect the effects of dehumanization on support for each candidate (separately), controlling for prejudice and conservatism.

^aReflects a suppressor-variable effect.

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

political conservatism and prejudice. Those who dehumanized Mexican immigrants to a greater extent were significantly more likely to endorse firm measures (many taken directly from Donald Trump's actual campaign platform) to restrict immigration, such as tightening border control and the detention and expulsion of existing illegal immigrants. Moreover, our findings suggest that support for the Republican candidates, particularly for Donald Trump, is associated with blatant dehumanization of Mexican immigrants. In Study 1b, we extended our examination to blatant dehumanization of a second outgroup that has been the target of Republican candidate rhetoric and policy proposals: Muslims.

Study 1b

Method

Participants. As in Study 1a, we aimed to collect a large sample of participants. We thus collected data from 463 participants on Amazon's mTurk, a reliable and diverse platform for subject recruitment (Buhrmester et al., 2011), in December 2015. Participants were recruited to participate in a survey about their "social and political attitudes," and were compensated US\$1

on mTurk for participating. Six participants reported being Muslims, and two participants did not report their religion. These participants were thus excluded, leaving 455 non-Muslim residents of the United States ($M_{age} = 34.15$, $SD = 10.54$; 50.9% female; 332 White/Caucasian Americans; 36 Asian Americans; 49 Black/African Americans; 26 Hispanic Americans; six Native Americans; six Other).

Measures. Primary measures were assessed in the order described below, unless otherwise specified.

Political Conservatism was measured using two items from Study 1a: economic and social conservatism ($r = .63$, $p < .001$).

Next, we assessed prejudice and blatant dehumanization, presented in randomized order.

Prejudice was assessed as in Study 1a, here with respect to Muslims. Other target groups were Americans, Europeans, Arabs, Swedes, Nigerians, and Muslim refugees.

Blatant Dehumanization was assessed as in Study 1a, here with respect to Muslims. Scores on the nine animalistic traits were averaged ($\alpha = .94$; $M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.41$) and standardized, and then averaged with the standardized reverse-scored ratings of Muslims on the Ascent scale ($M = 26.59$, $SD = 29.34$) to create a composite of blatant dehumanization ($r = .67$, $p < .001$). We also obtained Ascent ratings for the groups included in the Prejudice Rating scale (see Supplemental Table 3) and ratings on the set of animalistic trait ratings for the ingroup (i.e., Americans). Results were consistent if we computed prejudice and dehumanization as (ingroup–outgroup) difference scores. As in Study 1a, infra-humanization was measured but did not affect the interpretation of the results and is not discussed further.

Next, participants responded to statements assessing their anti-Muslim attitudes and policy support, assessed in randomized order.

Anti-Muslim Attitudes were assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement with six statements reflecting a perception of Muslims as a threat to American security on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale: “Muslims are a potential cancer to this country,” “Muslims are looking to hurt Americans the first chance they get,” “A significant number of Muslims in the U.S. secretly support ISIS,” “The attacks in San Bernardino prove it: Muslims are a threat to people from this country,” “Those who stand behind Muslims are putting everyone at risk,” and “Those who stand behind Muslims in this country are betraying their fellow Americans” ($\alpha = .98$).

Anti-Muslim Policy Support was assessed by asking participants to indicate their support with each of nine policies targeting Muslims on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale. These policies ranged from restricting Muslim entry to the United States (“We should stop giving out visas to Muslims to enter the U.S.”; “We need to stop accepting Muslim refugees into this country, period”; “No more political correctness: Muslim refugees need to go”), to imposing

surveillance on Muslims in the United States (“We should tap the phones of any Muslims in the United States who make calls to Middle Eastern countries on a frequent basis”; “We should institute a database that keeps track of Muslims in this country”), and restricting the religious freedom of Muslims in the United States (“We should ban the opening of any new Mosques in this country”; “We should ban the wearing of the Islamic veil (or ‘headdress’)”; “We should allow Muslims to practice their religion with no restrictions in the U.S.” [reverse coded]; $\alpha = .96$). As in Study 1a, several of these policies were adapted from Donald Trump’s campaign statements (see Supplemental Materials for further details).

Signing Anti-Muslim Petitions was assessed as in Study 1a, by giving participants the opportunity to actually sign six petitions urging congressional members to implement the types of policies described above. These were as follows: “Urge congressional members to deny entry to any Muslim refugees who seek to come to the U.S.,” “Urge congressional members to deny welfare benefits to any Muslim refugees who enter the U.S.,” “Urge congressional members to increase federal spending on investigating the background of refugees from Muslim countries,” “Urge congressional members to support a ban on visas to Muslims,” “Urge congressional members to introduce surveillance programs targeting Mosques in the U.S.,” and “Urge congressional members to create a database to track Muslims in the U.S.” ($\alpha = .93$).

Next, we assessed anti-Islamic extremism fund disbursement and support for Arab immigration, which were presented in randomized order.

Anti-Islamic Extremism Fund Disbursement was assessed using a measure adapted from Kteily et al. (2015), in which participants were asked to distribute funds proportionally between two different programs aimed at decreasing extremism in Muslim communities in the United States: one based on punishment and control, and the other based on education and outreach. Specifically, participants read,

In an effort to give back to some of the communities that are targets of our studies, we have received a small grant that allows us to distribute some money to anti-terrorism efforts. We’re giving each of our participants the opportunity to decide where this money should be distributed. Please indicate below what percent of the money you would like distributed to each of the projects in the U.S.—we will then base our contributions on participants’ recommendations. Please make sure that the choices add up to 100%.

Participants could then allocate funds in any proportion to either of the following two options: “Build libraries and schools in Muslim majority communities throughout the U.S.,” and “Increase surveillance and policing capabilities in Muslim majority communities throughout the U.S.” We took the proportion of funds distributed to surveillance and policing as our dependent variable.

Support for Arab Immigration was assessed using an item adapted from Kteily et al. (2015), in which we examined the percentage of immigration visas that participants would be willing to grant to Arabs (participants could distribute a limited number of visas in any proportion to Arabs, Mexicans, Chinese, Western Europeans, Russians, and Vietnamese).

Candidate Support was assessed as in Study 1a, but toward the candidates most prominent at the time of the study: Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Ben Carson, Rand Paul, Carly Fiorina, Chris Christie, and Marco Rubio. Participants were told not to respond to a particular candidate if they were not aware of them. These items were assessed immediately after political conservatism.

Beyond the main variables described above, we assessed participants' media consumption. These items are beyond the scope of the current work and are not discussed further. We also assessed non-Muslim Americans' own sense of being dehumanized (i.e., meta-dehumanization) and disliked (i.e., meta-prejudice) by Muslims. Although our focus here is on non-Muslim Americans' dehumanization of Muslims (rather than their own sense of being dehumanized), the results from these items replicate the findings of Kteily et al. (2016): Specifically, non-Muslim Americans who felt dehumanized by Muslims were more likely to themselves dehumanize Muslims (see Supplemental Materials for full analyses). Moreover, including meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice as covariates does not change the interpretation of the analyses reported below.

Results

As in Study 1a, we observed high levels of prejudice and dehumanization toward Muslims. Muslims were rated approximately 50 points below the scale maximum on the feeling thermometer, and almost 30 points below the scale maximum on the Ascent scale of blatant dehumanization (see Supplemental Table 4 for full variable descriptives and intercorrelations). By way of comparison, participants rated Americans, on average, about 27 points higher than Muslims on the feeling thermometer, and about 16 points higher on the Ascent scale (both these ratings were significantly higher than those for Muslims; $ps < .001$).

As in Study 1a, we conducted a series of multiple regression analyses, regressing each of the attitudinal (anti-Muslim attitudes, anti-Muslim policy support, and support for Arab immigration) and behavioral (anti-Islamic extremism fund disbursement and signing anti-Muslim petitions) outcome measures on the blatant dehumanization of Muslims, controlling for political conservatism and anti-Muslim prejudice. As with the results in Study 1a, we observed that blatant dehumanization was uniquely associated with each of the aggressive attitudes and behaviors, with the exception here of support for Arab immigration (see Table 3). Thus, controlling for prejudice and conservatism, non-Muslim residents of

the United States who dehumanized Muslims to a greater extent, were more likely to cast them in threatening terms and endorse policies such as increasing surveillance of Muslims, restricting their entry into the United States, and restricting their religious freedom. Importantly, and as with Study 1a, this pattern extended not only to participants' reported attitudes but also to their actions, with those dehumanizing Muslims to a greater extent more likely to actually sign anti-Muslim petitions and divert funds to policing Muslim communities rather than investing in their education. Again, many of the policies examined were taken directly from policy proposals endorsed by Donald Trump as part of his campaign for the Republican nomination.

Next, we examined the association between blatant dehumanization and candidate support, looking both at zero-order relationships and at regression coefficients from analyses in which candidate support was regressed on blatant dehumanization controlling for prejudice and conservatism. As can be seen in Table 4, the pattern of results was similar to that from Study 1a. Specifically, in zero-order terms, blatant dehumanization of Muslims was negatively correlated with support for the Democratic candidates (here, both Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders) and positively correlated with support for all of the Republican candidates. As in Study 1a, blatant dehumanization of Muslims was more strongly correlated with support for Donald Trump than any of the other Republican candidates (all Steiger's z s > 3.32 , $ps < .001$). When controlling for conservatism and prejudice (i.e., examining regression coefficients rather than zero-order correlations), we observed a negative association between dehumanization and supporting Bernie Sanders but no association with support for Hillary Clinton. On the contrary, dehumanization significantly predicted greater support for Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Ben Carson, and Marco Rubio (the associations with support for Carly Fiorina, Chris Christie, and Rand Paul were non-significant). Controlling for conservatism and prejudice, dehumanization of Muslims was numerically most strongly associated with support for Donald Trump but comparable in magnitude to support for Ted Cruz and Jeb Bush.

Discussion

The results of Study 1b converge with the results of Study 1a to suggest that blatant dehumanization is a potent predictor of aggressive intergroup attitudes and behavior toward marginalized groups in the United States. Notably, the policies we examine are far from hypothetical: Most were directly pulled from Republican candidate platforms and speeches. Indeed, our data suggest a striking association between anti-Muslim dehumanization and support for several of the Republican political candidates (including the eventual nominee, Donald Trump), even controlling for dislike of Muslims and political conservatism.

Table 3. Simultaneous Regressions Predicting Anti-Muslim Attitudes and Behavior in Study 1b.

	Anti-Muslim attitudes $R^2 = .68$		Anti-Muslim policy support $R^2 = .62$		Support for Arab immigration $R^2 = .17$		Anti-Islamic extremism fund disbursement $R^2 = .52$		Signing anti-Muslim petitions $R^2 = .26$	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Political conservatism	.27***	[0.21, 0.33]	.26***	[0.20, 0.33]	-.20***	[-0.30, -0.10]	.33***	[0.26, 0.40]	.23***	[0.14, 0.33]
Prejudice	.22***	[0.14, 0.30]	.19***	[0.10, 0.28]	-.21**	[-0.34, -0.08]	.16**	[0.06, 0.26]	.14*	[0.02, 0.27]
Blatant dehumanization	.49***	[0.41, 0.57]	.49***	[0.40, 0.58]	-.09	[-0.22, 0.05]	.39***	[0.29, 0.49]	.24***	[0.12, 0.37]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

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

Table 4. Relationship Between Candidate Support and Blatant Dehumanization of Muslims, Controlling for Prejudice and Conservatism in Study 1b.

Candidate	Zero order r	β	$M (SD)$	n
Hillary Clinton	-.25***	-.06	3.39 (2.06)	453
Bernie Sanders	-.37***	-.13*	4.47 (2.20)	441
Donald Trump	.52***	.26***	2.46 (2.07)	452
Ted Cruz	.40***	.22***	2.34 (1.75)	432
Jeb Bush	.25***	.20**	2.26 (1.58)	444
Ben Carson	.33***	.13*	2.46 (1.83)	433
Rand Paul	.25***	.07	2.44 (1.65)	434
Carly Fiorina	.20***	.04	2.05 (1.45)	422
Chris Christie	.28***	.09	2.13 (1.48)	432
Marco Rubio	.33***	.14*	2.39 (1.63)	428

Note. Sample sizes (n) vary because participants were instructed to rate only candidates with whom they were familiar. Standardized beta coefficients reflect the effects of dehumanization on support for each candidate (separately), controlling for prejudice and conservatism. CI = confidence interval.

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

In Studies 2a and 2b, we examined the other side of the dehumanization equation, by investigating the extent to which Latino and Muslim Americans *felt* dehumanized, and how this “meta-dehumanization” (Kteily et al., 2016) was associated with their own attitudes and behavioral intentions. In Study 2a, we examined perceptions of being dehumanized by Donald Trump and Republicans among Latino residents of the United States. In Study 2b, we examined meta-dehumanization with respect to Donald Trump and non-Muslim Americans among Muslim residents of the United States.

Study 2a

Method

Participants. As in earlier studies, we aimed to collect a large sample of participants. We recruited participants through the Instantly (previously uSamp) data collection service in September 2015 (see also Aribarg, Arora, Henderson, & Kim, 2014; Cacioppo, Cacioppo, Gonzaga, Ogburn, & Vanderwee, 2013). Participants first completed a prescreening

questionnaire, which asked participants to report their ethnicity and whether they were born in the United States. The prescreening also included an attention check. Consistent with the sample we requested from Instantly, only individuals who selected that they were native-born Latinos and who passed the initial attention check ($n = 354$) proceeded to the survey. Of these, 307 completed the survey, 283 of whom correctly responded to a second attention check embedded near the end of the survey, and thus comprised of our final sample ($M_{age} = 34.25$, $SD = 12.46$; 68.6% female).

Measures. Primary measures were assessed in the order described below, unless otherwise specified.

Political Conservatism was measured as in Study 1a ($\alpha = .83$).

Next, participants responded to measures assessing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice (presented in randomized order), as well as measures assessing dehumanization and prejudice (also presented in randomized order). The order of the block containing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice and the block containing dehumanization and prejudice was counterbalanced.

Meta-Dehumanization (Trump) was measured by using five items adapted from Kteily et al. (2016) assessing the extent to which participants felt dehumanized by Donald Trump (e.g., “Donald Trump sees people from Latino background as sub-human”; “Donald Trump thinks of people from Latino background as animal-like”; see Supplemental Materials for full scale). Responses were assessed on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale ($\alpha = .96$).

Meta-Dehumanization (Republicans) was measured using the same five items used to assess Trump meta-dehumanization, but here referring to Republicans (e.g., “Republicans see people from Latino background as sub-human”; $\alpha = .96$).

Meta-Prejudice (Trump). To distinguish feelings of being dehumanized from feelings of being *disliked* by Trump, we also assessed meta-prejudice using five items adapted from Kteily et al. (2016; for example, “Donald Trump doesn’t like people from Latino background much”; see Supplemental Materials for full scale; $\alpha = .96$).

Meta-Prejudice (Republicans) was assessed using the same five items used to assess Trump meta-prejudice, but

with reference to Republicans (e.g., “Supporters of the Republican Party feel cold toward people from Latino background”; $\alpha = .94$).

Blatant Dehumanization (Trump) was assessed as in Studies 1a and 1b, using a composite of the (reverse coded) standardized rating of Trump on the Ascent scale ($M = 50.64$, $SD = 38.61$), as well as the standardized average of ratings of Trump on a series of (here, seven) animalistic traits ($\alpha = .79$; $M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.30$).

Blatant Dehumanization (Republicans) was assessed as for Trump, but here with reference to supporters of the Republican Party: (reverse-scored) Ascent scale ratings ($M = 34.57$, $SD = 31.33$); animalistic trait ratings ($\alpha = .71$; $M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.09$). Participants were also asked to provide Ascent ratings for the ingroup and several other groups (see Supplemental Table 5), and animalistic trait ratings for the ingroup.

Prejudice (Trump and Republicans) was assessed as in Studies 1a and 1b, here using (reverse-scored) feeling thermometer ratings. We computed prejudice separately for Donald Trump and supporters of the Republican Party. We also had feeling thermometer ratings for the same groups assessed on the Ascent scale.

Next, participants responded to questions assessing emotional hostility toward Trump and Republicans, punitiveness toward Trump and support for policies against him, and anti-Republican Party attitudes. These questions were presented in randomized order. Finally, participants expressed their support for various political candidates.

Emotional Hostility (Trump and Republicans) was assessed by asking participants to report the extent to which they felt a number of emotions—“Anger,” “Disgust,” “Contempt,” “Revulsion,” “Respect,” and “Compassion”—separately for Donald Trump and supporters of the Republican Party. The last two emotions were reverse coded. Responses were provided on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much so*) scale (Trump: $\alpha = .71$; Republicans: $\alpha = .71$).

Anti-Trump Policy Support was assessed by asking participants to indicate the extent to which they endorsed four separate actions targeted at Trump (e.g., “Donald Trump should be banned from appearing on any Latino media platforms, such as Univision”; “I support a boycott of Donald Trump’s businesses by those in the Latino community”; see Supplemental Materials for full scale). Responses were provided on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale ($\alpha = .91$).

Punitiveness Toward Trump was assessed by asking participants to indicate the extent to which they agreed with seven statements reflecting a desire for Trump to suffer greatly (e.g., “It would give me great pleasure if Donald Trump got seriously sick”; “If I could, I would spit in the face of Donald Trump”; “Donald Trump deserves to rot in hell”; see Supplemental Materials for full scale). Responses were provided on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale ($\alpha = .92$).

Anti-Republican Party Attitudes were assessed with four items (e.g., “I would never vote for the Republican Party”; “It would give me great pleasure if the Republican Party fell apart entirely”; see Supplemental Materials for full scale). Responses were provided on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale ($\alpha = .88$).

Candidate Support. As in prior studies, we examined support for the political candidates who were most prominent at the time of the study on a 1 (*do not support at all*) to 7 (*strongly support*) scale. Targets included Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, Scott Walker, Rand Paul, and Mike Huckabee.

We also had a measure of social dominance orientation (Ho et al., 2015), which we did not include in the analyses because it was not available in the other studies (also it did not change any of the conclusions reported below). We also included a number of exploratory measures: perceptions of the degree of overlap between Trump and the Republican Party, endorsement of the idea that Latino Americans should stick together to achieve gains, and questions assessing whether Latinos cared more about being liked or respected. These items are beyond the scope of the current manuscript and are not discussed further.

Results

Variable descriptives and intercorrelations can be found in Supplemental Tables 6a and 6b.

As in Kteily et al. (2016), we first conducted a factor analysis on the items assessing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice to examine whether these two constructs were indeed distinct. We did this separately for the items focusing on (meta-perceptions about) each of Trump and the Republican Party. Consistent with earlier work (Kteily et al., 2016), we observed that meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice produced two (correlated) factors. With respect to Trump, the first factor (eigenvalue = 7.53; 75% of variance explained) reflected meta-prejudice and the second factor (eigenvalue = 1.13, 11.31% of variance explained) reflected meta-dehumanization. With respect to the Republican Party, the first factor reflected meta-prejudice (eigenvalue = 7.40, 74% of variance explained) and the second factor (eigenvalue = 1.01, 10.05% of variance explained) reflected meta-dehumanization. For both targets, we observed no cross-loadings across factors (using a factor pattern loading cutoff of .30).⁵

We next examined mean levels of meta-prejudice and meta-dehumanization with respect to each of Donald Trump and the Republican Party. With respect to Donald Trump, we observed high levels of meta-prejudice ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.66$) and meta-dehumanization ($M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.85$). With respect to the Republican Party, meta-prejudice ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.58$) and meta-dehumanization ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.78$) were slightly lower than it was true for Donald Trump ($ps < .001$). Moreover, for both targets, levels of meta-dehumanization were (unsurprisingly) lower than levels of meta-prejudice (ps

< .001). Nevertheless, levels of meta-dehumanization were still above the scale midpoint with respect to both targets, Trump: $t(256) = 8.46, p < .001$; Supporters of Republican Party: $t(279) = 2.19, p = .03$, suggesting that Latino residents of the United States, on average, felt that they were heavily dehumanized by both targets.

We were centrally interested in examining the extent to which meta-dehumanization was associated with hostile attitudes and intentions toward the “offending” targets (Trump and Republicans), controlling for meta-prejudice and political conservatism. To that end, we conducted a separate series of multiple regression analyses, separately for each of the targets. Specifically, when examining attitudes about Donald Trump, we regressed each of our (Trump-specific) outcome measures (e.g., prejudice toward Trump; punitiveness toward Trump) on our scales assessing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice with respect to Trump. When examining attitudes about the Republican Party, we similarly regressed each of our (Republican Party-specific) outcome measures (e.g., prejudice; anti-Republican Party attitudes) on our scales assessing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice with respect to the Republican Party. As in previous studies, we controlled for political conservatism in all of our analyses.

Beginning with Donald Trump (see Table 5), we observed that Latino residents of the United States who felt dehumanized by Donald Trump were more likely to themselves dehumanize and report feeling emotionally hostile toward Trump, and more likely to support anti-Trump policies such as endorsing boycotts of his businesses. The same was (independently) true for meta-prejudice, which was associated with each of these outcomes, as well as with anti-Trump prejudice. When it came to especially punitive attitudes toward Trump (such as hoping that he got seriously ill), meta-dehumanization was a significant predictor, whereas meta-prejudice was not significantly associated. Meta-dehumanization played a similarly important role with respect to the Republican Party (see Table 6). Latino residents of the United States who felt dehumanized by the Republican Party were more likely to themselves dehumanize supporters of the Republican Party, feel emotionally hostile toward them, and express attitudes such as hoping that the Republican Party fell apart. In sum, then, we observed strong support among Latino residents of the United States for the idea that feeling dehumanized by a target is associated with hostile attitudes and intentions toward that target.

Examining members of majority groups, Kteily et al. (2016) observed that part of the association between feeling dehumanized and aggressive outcomes such as punitiveness and emotional hostility was indirect, mediated via outgroup dehumanization and outgroup prejudice. That is, their analyses suggested that part of the reason that those who feel dehumanized by a target endorse hostile actions toward that target is that they are more likely to dislike and dehumanize them. We examined the same process here among our minority Latino participants. Specifically, we examined whether meta-dehumanization and our hostile outcome measures were

indirectly linked via each of dehumanization and prejudice, controlling for meta-prejudice and conservatism (see Figure 2 for an example). Again, we did this separately for each of our targets (i.e., Donald Trump and the Republican Party). Analyses were conducted using Hayes’ (2013) PROCESS macro (Model 4) with 10,000 bootstrap resamples. Results of these analyses can be found in Tables 7 and 8.

Consistent with Kteily et al. (2016), but here with members of minority groups, we observed support for significant indirect effects from meta-dehumanization to hostility via dehumanization across all outcome measures, for both targets (i.e., Trump and the Republican Party). For example, part of the link between feeling dehumanized by Trump and endorsing punitive attitudes toward him (e.g., saying one would spit on him if they could) was accounted for by participants’ own dehumanization of Trump. Similarly, dehumanization of the Republican Party accounted for part of the link between feeling dehumanized by the Republican Party and outcomes like saying that one would never vote for them (i.e., anti-Republican Party attitudes). In contrast, we found no evidence of indirect effects from meta-dehumanization to our outcome measures via prejudice, for either target.

Finally, as an exploratory analysis, we assessed the extent to which feeling dehumanized by Donald Trump and the Republican Party was associated with candidate support (see Supplemental Tables 7a and 7b). We observed that feeling dehumanized by Trump and supporters of the Republican Party was positively correlated with support for Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders (i.e., the Democratic nominees). Feeling dehumanized by Trump was also associated with less support for him. The only other significant associations were (unexpected) modest positive correlations between feeling dehumanized by supporters of the Republican Party and support for Rand Paul and Scott Walker.⁴

Discussion

In sum, the results of Study 2a show that Latino residents of the United States—one of the groups regularly on the receiving end of dehumanizing rhetoric in the United States during the 2016 election cycle—perceived that their group is strongly dehumanized in the eyes of Republicans, especially Donald Trump. Moreover, this perception had important consequences: Meta-dehumanization was associated with a range of aggressive reactions, including emotional hostility and endorsement of punitive measures, such as hoping that the Republican Party falls apart and wishing Trump harm. Furthermore, we found support for the idea that part of the link between feeling dehumanized by a target and support for hostile responses toward them was mediated by participants’ own dehumanization of the “offending” target, consistent with prior work among majority group members (Kteily et al., 2016). In Study 2b, we examined similar questions among a subset of people who have also been on the receiving end of hostile rhetoric during the presidential primary season: Muslims.

Table 5. Simultaneous Regressions Predicting Attitudes Toward Donald Trump in Study 2a.

	Prejudice R ² = .26		Blatant dehumanization R ² = .34		Emotional hostility R ² = .36		Anti-Trump policy support R ² = .43		Punitiveness toward Trump R ² = .22	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Political conservatism	-.33***	[-0.44, -0.22]	-.17**	[-0.27, -0.07]	-.12*	[-0.22, -0.02]	-.02	[-0.12, 0.08]	.12*	[0.01, 0.23]
Meta-prejudice	.39***	[0.24, 0.56]	.39***	[0.23, 0.53]	.42***	[0.27, 0.55]	.41***	[0.27, 0.54]	.14	[-0.02, 0.30]
Meta-dehum.	-.09	[-0.25, 0.07]	.16*	[0.02, 0.31]	.18*	[0.03, 0.32]	.28***	[0.14, 0.42]	.36***	[0.20, 0.52]

Note. CI = confidence interval.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 6. Simultaneous Regressions Predicting Attitudes Toward Republicans in Study 2a.

	Prejudice R ² = .23		Blatant dehumanization R ² = .24		Emotional hostility R ² = .28		Anti-republican party attitudes R ² = .46	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Political conservatism	-.38***	[-0.49, -0.28]	-.22***	[-0.32, -0.11]	-.08	[-0.19, 0.02]	-.01	[-0.10, 0.08]
Meta-prejudice	.25**	[0.08, 0.41]	.10	[-0.07, 0.26]	.20*	[0.05, 0.36]	.23***	[0.10, 0.37]
Meta-dehum.	-.01	[-0.17, 0.15]	.33***	[0.17, 0.49]	.34***	[0.18, 0.49]	.49***	[0.35, 0.62]

Note. CI = confidence interval.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

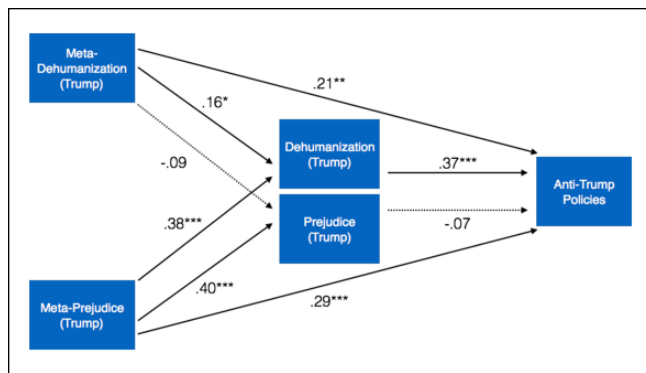


Figure 2. Path model examining perceptions among Latino residents of the United States, showing the link between feeling dehumanized by Donald Trump and supporting anti-Trump policies via dehumanization of and prejudice toward Trump in Study 2a, controlling for meta-prejudice and political conservatism (not shown).

Note. Numbers reflect standardized β coefficients. Dashed paths are non-significant.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Study 2b

Method

Participants. As in earlier studies, we aimed to collect a large sample of participants; this time through snowball sampling.

A link to our survey was initially distributed via the mailing list of a non-governmental organization serving Muslim residents of the United States. Participants were offered a US\$5 online gift card for their participation, and were encouraged to pass along the survey link to other Muslim residents of the United States they knew. Data collection was stopped after the response rate slowed down. Of the 233 Muslim respondents, 203 completed the survey. We restricted our sample to participants who correctly answered an attention check question embedded within the survey ($N = 124$ participants; $M_{age} = 29.92$, $SD = 9.22$; 58.1% female). Primary conclusions were not affected if participants who failed the attention check question were included in the analyses.

Measures. Primary measures were assessed in the order described below, unless otherwise specified.

Political Conservatism was measured as in Study 2a ($\alpha = .80$).

Next, participants responded to measures assessing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice (presented in randomized order), as well as measures assessing dehumanization. The order of the block containing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice and the block containing dehumanization was counterbalanced.

Meta-Dehumanization (Trump) was measured as in Study 2a ($\alpha = .94$).

Meta-Dehumanization (Americans) was measured as for Donald Trump, but here with respect to non-Muslim Americans

Table 7. Unstandardized Indirect and Direct Effects of Meta-Dehumanization on Anti-Trump Attitudes and Policy Support via (a) Dehumanization and (b) Prejudice in Study 2a, Controlling for Meta-Prejudice and Political Conservatism.

	Emotional hostility	Anti-Trump policy support	Punitiveness
Indirect effect (dehumanization)	.04 [0.005, 0.09]	.06 [0.005, 0.14]	.05 [0.007, 0.11]
Indirect effect (prejudice)	-.01 [-0.05, 0.007]	.01 [-0.005, 0.04]	.03 [-0.01, 0.08]
Direct effect	.11 [0.01, 0.20]	.21 [0.08, 0.35]	.28 [0.12, 0.44]

Table 8. Unstandardized Indirect and Direct Effects of Meta-Dehumanization on Anti-Republican Party Attitudes and Policy Support via (a) Dehumanization and (b) Prejudice in Study 2a, Controlling for Meta-Prejudice and Political Conservatism.

	Emotional hostility	Anti-republican party attitudes
Indirect effect (dehumanization)	.06 [.03, .12]	.05 [.01, .10]
Indirect effect (prejudice)	-.00 [-.03, .02]	-.00 [-.03, .03]
Direct effect	.18 [.07, .29]	.41 [.29, .54]

(e.g., “Non-Muslims Americans think of people from Muslim background as sub-human”; $\alpha = .92$).

Meta-Prejudice (Trump) was assessed as in Study 2a ($\alpha = .94$).

Meta-Prejudice (Americans) was assessed using the same five items as for Donald Trump, but with reference to non-Muslim Americans ($\alpha = .93$).

Blatant Dehumanization (Trump) was assessed using ratings of Trump on a series of the same seven animalistic traits as in Study 2a ($\alpha = .83$). We also included animalistic trait ratings of the ingroup. We did not have animalistic trait ratings of non-Muslim Americans, nor did we have Ascent scale ratings for any groups.

Next, participants responded to items assessing anti-Trump policy support and feelings of integration into the United States, presented in randomized order.

Anti-Trump Policy Support was assessed as in Study 2a, with items adapted for relevance to Muslims (see Supplemental Materials for full scale; $\alpha = .74$).

Integration Into United States was assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement with a range of five items designed to capture the extent to which they felt integrated into, and happy in, the United States: “As a Muslim, I feel integrated into the mainstream of American society”; “As a Muslim, I feel like an important part of the American social fabric”; “As a Muslim, I feel that if I work hard, I can succeed in American society”; “As a Muslim, I feel proud to be a part of America”; and “As a Muslim, I feel disenchanting with life in America.” Responses were provided on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale ($\alpha = .71$).

Next, participants responded to items assessing their perceived and desired overlap with Americans, as well as their belief in the idea of a clash of civilizations. These items were presented in randomized order.

Perceived Overlap was assessed by providing participants with a series of seven images, each with a small circle, labeled “you,” and a larger circle, labeled “group,” in progressively closer arrangement with each other (adapted from the inclusion of ingroup in Self scale; Wright, Aron, & Tropp, 2002); participants chose the image that best represented their relationship to Americans, on a scale of 1 (*distant*) to 7 (*full overlap*). Separately, participants filled out the same item for the ingroup (computing perceived overlap as a difference score yielded similar conclusions).

Desired Overlap was assessed using the same images presented for perceived overlap, but here with instructions to indicate how close/integrated they would *like to be* with Americans. Separately, participants filled out the same item for the ingroup (computing desired overlap as a difference score yielded similar conclusions).

Belief in Clash of Civilizations was assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement with the following statement: “How strongly do you agree or disagree with the idea that there is an inherent ‘clash of civilizations’ between the values of the West and the values of Islam?” Responses were provided on a 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*) scale.

Next, participants responded to items assessing their emotional hostility:

Emotional Hostility was assessed by asking participants to indicate how much “anger” and “disgust” they felt when they thought about how they were perceived by non-Muslim Americans ($r = .69, p < .001$). We also assessed how much they felt “Frustrated,” “Hopeful,” “Loving,” and “Grateful.” Because these items did not reflect emotional hostility clearly, they were not included, but a composite using all six items (with the last three items reverse coded) yielded consistent conclusions.

Next, participants responded to items assessing their support for violent collective action and their willingness to report terrorism to law enforcement, presented in randomized order:

Support for Violent Collective Action was assessed by giving participants the following prompt:

In the 1960s, African Americans were faced with two main approaches to gaining civil rights, each supported by two of the most famous leaders in American history: Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X. On the one hand, King advocated active non-violent resistance, and on the other hand, Malcolm X advocated resistance to White aggression “by any means necessary.” How strongly do you support each of these approaches to support Muslim civil rights in the U.S. today?

Participants indicated their approval for “King’s nonviolent approach” and “Malcolm X’s ‘by any means necessary’ approach” on separate 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*completely*) scales. In order to assess support for violent (vs. non-violent) forms of collective actions, we computed a difference score, subtracting endorsement of the Martin Luther King approach from endorsement of the Malcolm X approach.

Willingness to Report Terrorism was assessed by asking participants to indicate their endorsement of four items reflecting their willingness to cooperate with American authorities to report suspicious activities in their neighborhoods. The first two items were “How willing are you to cooperate with the police to prevent terrorism?” and “How willing are you to report terrorism-related risks?” The second two items were preceded by the following prompt, intended to capture some of the real-world tradeoffs involved in reporting terrorism:

Tipping off American law enforcement about suspicious activity related to terrorism poses risks to Muslims in the U.S.: the suspicion could represent a legitimate threat, so reporting could save lives. But the suspicion also may be nothing, which would leave the community open to an over-reaction by law enforcement.

Subsequently, participants were asked “In general, how willing are you to cooperate with American authorities to prevent terrorism” and “If you had a mild suspicion about a fellow Muslim in your community who might be a threat, how likely would you be to report a potential risk to law enforcement?” Responses were provided on a 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much so*) scale ($\alpha = .87$).

Finally, we included exploratory items assessing perceived overlap between the views of Donald Trump and each of Americans as a group and the Republican Party, support for the Republican Party, and endorsement of the idea that Muslim Americans should stick together to achieve gains. These items were not part of our main analyses for this manuscript and are not discussed further.

Results

Variable descriptives and intercorrelations can be found in Supplemental Tables 8a and 8b.

As in Study 2a, we conducted factor analyses on the items assessing meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice, separately for each of our two targets (Trump and non-Muslim Americans). Consistent with the results of Study 2a, we observed that meta-dehumanization and meta-prejudice produced two separate (correlated) factors for each target: With respect to Trump, the first factor (eigenvalue = 6.69; 67% of variance explained) reflected meta-dehumanization and the second factor (eigenvalue = 1.45, 14.5% of variance explained) reflected meta-prejudice. With respect to non-Muslim Americans, the first factor (eigenvalue = 5.87, 59% of variance explained) reflected meta-prejudice and the

second factor (eigenvalue = 1.86, 18.6% of variance explained) reflected meta-dehumanization. For non-Muslim Americans, we observed no cross-loadings across factors (using a factor pattern loading cutoff of .30). For Donald Trump, one item from the meta-prejudice factor (“Donald Trump doesn’t like people from Muslim backgrounds much”) also loaded weakly (factor pattern loading = .38) on the meta-dehumanization factor but was not included in computing the meta-dehumanization composite.

We next examined mean levels of meta-prejudice and meta-dehumanization with respect to each of Donald Trump and non-Muslim Americans. Beginning with Donald Trump, we observed high levels of meta-prejudice ($M = 6.15$, $SD = 1.27$) and meta-dehumanization ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.45$). With respect to non-Muslim Americans, meta-prejudice ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 1.31$) and meta-dehumanization ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.45$) were lower than it was true for Donald Trump ($ps < .001$). Moreover, for both targets, levels of meta-dehumanization were (unsurprisingly) lower than levels of meta-prejudice ($ps < .001$). Nevertheless, levels of meta-dehumanization were still at or above the scale midpoint in both cases, non-Muslim Americans: $t(123) = .30$, $p = .77$; Trump: $t(123) = 12.73$, $p < .001$, suggesting that, on average, our sample of Muslims residents in the United States felt strongly disliked and dehumanized by both Trump and non-Muslim Americans more broadly.

As in Study 2a, we were centrally interested in examining the extent to which meta-dehumanization was associated with hostile views toward the “offending” targets. To that end, we conducted a series of multiple regression analyses separately for each target, regressing our outcome variables on meta-dehumanization, controlling for meta-prejudice and political conservatism.

Beginning with Donald Trump (see Table 9), we observed that Muslims who felt dehumanized by Trump were significantly more likely to themselves dehumanize Trump and significantly more likely to endorse anti-Trump policies. This was true beyond both political conservatism and feeling *disliked* by Trump, which was itself associated with more dehumanization but was not significantly associated with anti-Trump policy support. Moreover, consistent with the analyses in Study 2a, we observed a significant indirect link between meta-dehumanization and anti-Trump policy support via dehumanization of Trump (unstandardized indirect effect = .09, 95% CI = [0.01, 0.21]).

Meta-dehumanization with respect to non-Muslim Americans was similarly predictive of outcomes (see Table 10). Controlling for conservatism and meta-prejudice, feeling dehumanized by non-Muslim Americans was associated with feeling less integrated into the United States, more emotional hostility, greater support for violent over non-violent forms of collective action, and perhaps most consequentially, lower willingness to report potential terrorist activity to law enforcement. Meta-dehumanization was also associated with perceiving and wanting less overlap with other

Table 9. Simultaneous Regressions Predicting Attitudes Toward Donald Trump in Study 2b.

	Blatant dehumanization		Anti-Trump policy support	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Political conservatism	-.12*	[-0.24, -0.00]	.07	[-0.08, 0.22]
Meta-prejudice (Trump)	.40***	[0.24, 0.56]	.12	[-0.08, 0.31]
Meta-dehumanization (Trump)	.40***	[0.24, 0.55]	.53***	[0.33, 0.72]

Note. CI = confidence interval.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Americans and a greater belief in the idea that there is a fundamental clash between Islam and Western culture, but these associations were not statistically significant in zero-order terms (see Supplemental Table 8b), and thus likely to reflect suppressor-variable effects. In contrast to meta-dehumanization, feelings *disliked* by non-Muslim Americans tended to be weakly correlated or uncorrelated with outcomes in zero-order terms (see Supplemental Table 8b), and had little unique association with the outcome measures controlling for conservatism and meta-dehumanization.

Because we did not measure participants' dehumanization of Americans in this study, we could not examine whether it mediated part of the link between meta-dehumanization and support for outcomes. At the same time, our inclusion of the measure of participants' sense of their integration into the United States allowed us to examine another theoretical proposition. Specifically, previous work has suggested that feeling marginalized or alienated from society is associated with emotional hostility and support for more extreme political ideology and behavior. For example, feeling disconnected from Dutch society was associated with radical beliefs in a sample of Muslim youth in the Netherlands (Doosje, Loseman, & van den Bos, 2013; see also Lyons-Padilla et al., 2015). We reasoned that individuals who felt that they were seen as less than fully human by Americans might come to feel less integrated into the American mainstream, which might then predict their endorsement of more extreme attitudes.

Based on this reasoning, we examined the indirect effect from meta-dehumanization to each of emotional hostility, support for violent collective action, and willingness to report terrorism via participants' sense of integration. We again used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro (Model 4) with 10,000 bootstrap resamples, and controlled for meta-prejudice and political conservatism. Results of this analysis can be found in Table 11. Consistent with our reasoning, we observed significant indirect effects from meta-dehumanization to each of the outcome measures we considered via (lower) feelings of integration (see Table 11).⁵

Finally, whereas Study 2a included only native (i.e., U.S.-born) Latino residents of the United States, Study 2b included both native ($n = 71$) and non-native Muslim residents of the United States ($n = 53$). Despite the relatively small sub-samples, we conducted supplementary analyses for exploratory purposes, in which we investigated differences in mean levels of meta-dehumanization and in the relationship between

meta-dehumanization and our outcome variables as a function of native/non-native status. We observed that native and non-native American Muslims expressed equivalent mean levels of meta-dehumanization with respect to Donald Trump, and the relationship between feeling dehumanized by Trump and the relevant outcome measures was not moderated by native versus non-native status. In contrast, native-born Muslim residents of the United States felt significantly more dehumanized by majority Americans than did non-native Muslims. Moreover, on average, this meta-dehumanization was significantly more strongly associated with outcomes for native-born versus non-native Muslims, for whom several of the relationships were non-significant (see Supplementary Materials for full results). We return to this point in the General Discussion.

Discussion

In sum, the evidence in Study 2b converged strongly with the results from Study 2a: As with Latino residents of the United States, we observed that Muslim residents felt heavily dehumanized, both by Donald Trump and by non-Muslim Americans. Those who felt dehumanized by Trump were more likely to reciprocally dehumanize him, a relationship that also accounted in part for the link between meta-dehumanization and the endorsement of anti-Trump policies. Feeling dehumanized by non-Muslim Americans was similarly predictive of consequential responses (particularly among native-born Muslims), including a sense of marginalization, greater emotional hostility, more support for violent collective action, and less willingness to report terrorism to law enforcement agencies. In line with prior work highlighting the role of feelings of marginalization in contributing to radicalization, we observed that marginalization accounted for part of the relationship between meta-dehumanization and the hostile outcome measures. Notably, in contrast to meta-dehumanization, feeling *disliked* by non-Muslim Americans was generally unassociated with hostility.

General Discussion

Four studies highlight the significant consequences of overt dehumanization. Replicating and extending prior work, we found that majority Americans blatantly dehumanized both Muslims and Mexican immigrants, and that the degree of

Table 10. Simultaneous Regressions Predicting Attitudes Among Muslim Americans in Study 2b.

	Integration $R^2 = .10$		Perceived overlap $R^2 = .09$		Desired overlap $R^2 = .07$		Belief in clash of civilizations $R^2 = .14$		Emotional hostility $R^2 = .20$		Support for violent collective action $R^2 = .11$		Willingness to report terrorism $R^2 = .07$	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Political conservatism	-.03	[-0.20, 0.15]	-.24**	[-0.41, -0.06]	-.16	[-0.34, 0.02]	.25***	[0.08, 0.42]	-.14	[-0.31, 0.02]	.15	[-0.02, 0.33]	-.12	[-0.30, 0.06]
Meta-prejudice (Americans)	-.11	[-0.31, 0.10]	.08	[-0.13, 0.28]	.16	[-0.05, 0.37]	-.27*** ^a	[-0.47, -0.07]	.06	[-0.13, 0.25]	-.19	[-0.40, 0.01]	.00	[-0.21, 0.21]
Meta-dehum. (Americans)	-.24*	[-0.44, -0.04]	-.22** ^a	[-0.42, -0.01]	-.23** ^a	[-0.43, -0.02]	.25** ^a	[0.05, 0.45]	.39***	[0.20, 0.58]	.34***	[0.13, 0.54]	-.22*	[-0.43, -0.01]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

^aIndicates a relationship that was not significant in zero-order terms, and thus, is best interpreted as a suppressor-variable effect.

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

Table 11. Unstandardized Indirect and Direct Effects of Meta-Dehumanization on Hostile Attitudes via Feelings of Integration Into American Society in Study 2b, Controlling for Meta-Prejudice and Political Conservatism.

	Emotional hostility	Support for violent collective action	Willingness to report terrorism
Indirect effect	.04 [0.001, 0.14]	.19 [0.03, 0.45]	-.08 [-0.20, -0.01]
Direct effect	.38 [0.17, 0.59]	.51 [0.10, 0.92]	-.12 [-0.30, 0.06]

blatant dehumanization was uniquely associated with support for exclusionary policies proposed by Donald Trump and some of his Republican peers. Although our correlational data cannot establish causality, they are consistent with the idea that support for some of the Republican candidates (and Trump in particular) comes not despite their dehumanizing rhetoric but in part because of it. Given the substantial support that Trump received (sealing the Republican nomination and receiving a record number of votes in the nomination process), our results emphasize the significant notion that overt intergroup attitudes persist—and may be on the rise—in contemporary society (see also Forscher, Cox, Graetz, & Devine, 2015).

Our analyses with Latino and Muslim residents of the United States illuminate the potential consequences of these trends. Among each group, we observed high levels of meta-dehumanization that were separable from (though correlated with) feeling disliked. Critically, feeling dehumanized was associated with particularly hostile responses: For example, Latinos who reported feeling dehumanized by Trump were more likely to dehumanize him, want to see him personally suffer and endorse hostile actions such as spitting in his face. Among Muslims, feeling dehumanized was associated with favoring violent over non-violent collective action and less willingness to report suspicious activities to law enforcement.

Thus, dehumanization has dual and mutually reinforcing consequences for the prospects of intergroup conflict: Those who dehumanize are more likely to support hostile policies, and those who are dehumanized feel less integrated into society and are more likely to support exactly the type of aggressive responses (e.g., violent vs. non-violent collective action) that may accentuate existing dehumanizing perceptions. Practically, these findings suggest that the “vicious cycle” of dehumanization and meta-dehumanization makes society less safe for both majority and minority group members, and suggest that the calls by Trump and Cruz to make Americans safer by imposing policies like databases to track Muslims are likely to backfire. Theoretically, these results importantly extend prior work on meta-dehumanization among advantaged group members (Kteily et al., 2016) by examining meta-dehumanization among minority group targets for the first time. Documenting the full “vicious cycle,” we show that minority group members are indeed dehumanized, that they readily perceive it, and that—despite their disadvantaged status and relative disempowerment—they respond with hostility of their own.

Moreover, our findings (Study 2a) suggest that, as with majority groups, part of the link between meta-dehumanization

and hostility is mediated by reciprocal dehumanization of the “offending” targets. Our results in Study 2b further suggest the role of a mediator that may be unique to minority groups: Specifically, we observed that Muslims who felt dehumanized reported feeling less integrated into the mainstream of the United States, which predicted outcomes such as their support for violent collective action and their unwillingness to report suspicious activities to law enforcement. This finding is consistent with prior work, documenting the link between marginalization and radicalization among (minority) Muslims (e.g., Doosje et al., 2013; Lyons-Padilla et al., 2015), and suggests that meta-dehumanization may be an important antecedent. Because we did not have both of these measures in either of our minority samples, future work should simultaneously consider how reciprocal dehumanization and feelings of marginalization might link meta-dehumanization to hostility.

Despite the advances made by this work, it should be noted that our findings relied on convenience samples and were correlational in nature. Future work should replicate these patterns with more representative samples of Latino and Muslim Americans, and consider experimentally manipulating meta-dehumanization and meta-humanization to determine causality.⁶ Kteily et al. (2016) showed that priming Americans with the idea that Muslims humanized Americans increased Americans’ own humanization of Muslims. It may be similarly possible to reduce the association between meta-dehumanization and aggression among Muslims and Latinos in the United States by highlighting, for example, the fact that Trump supporters represent only a subset of all Americans, or emphasizing the fact that many Americans (including prominent Republicans) have disavowed Trump precisely because they consider him bigoted toward minority groups.

From a theoretical perspective, more work is needed to understand the mediators and moderators of the link between meta-dehumanization and aggression. We reasoned that minority group members might respond aggressively to feeling dehumanized because meta-dehumanization represents a stark social identity threat that they would seek to rectify. Future work could examine this mechanism by directly assessing individuals’ sense of being offended and seeking to restore the standing of their group. It is also likely that not all minority group members will respond to meta-dehumanization aggressively: For example, minority group members who have lower collective self-esteem or perceive the social system as more legitimate may respond to feeling dehumanized by distancing themselves from the ingroup, rather than reciprocating on its behalf. Notably, although not a central feature

of our theorizing, supplemental analyses revealed an interesting pattern suggestive of a potential moderator worth exploring further: Whereas native- and non-native-born Muslims in Study 2b responded equivalently to feeling dehumanized by Donald Trump, Muslims born in the United States were more likely (vs. non-natives) to respond to feeling dehumanized by majority Americans with hostility (see Supplemental Materials for details).⁷ Although speculative, it may be that those who are born in the United States have a greater *expectation* than those born elsewhere (and who many not be U.S. citizens⁸) that they will be treated by the rest of their society as fully human. Learning that they are nevertheless dehumanized might then be particularly likely to provoke aggression. Future work should consider assessing the extent to which meta-dehumanization represents an expectancy violation.

Finally, although we focused here on the aggressive responses of minorities who felt dehumanized, it is important to examine other ways in which minority group members might be affected by meta-dehumanization. Some research in the interpersonal context has suggested, for example, that those who are socially excluded experience this exclusion as painful and may subtly dehumanize not only their ostracizer but also themselves (Bastian & Haslam, 2010, 2011). Consistent with this, it is noteworthy that several members of the Latino and Muslim communities have described feeling “hurt” by Trump’s remarks (e.g., Hernandez, 2016), a response that deserves further empirical attention.

Conclusion

Much of the discussion emanating from the 2016 Trump campaign for the U.S. Presidency has centered on the importance of protecting Americans’ safety. Frequently, this has been paired with rhetoric framing Mexican immigrants and Muslims in animalistic terms to highlight the threat they pose. Our research suggests that dehumanizing statements about minority groups such as Mexican immigrants and Muslims may help promote support for hostile policies targeted at these groups, but by making them feel dehumanized, they also further the very danger they purport to safeguard against.

Authors’ Note

The two authors contributed equally to this manuscript.

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Notes

1. Excluding this item did not affect any of the conclusions.
2. Note that including infrahumanization in the analyses does not alter the results.
3. We used .3 as a cutoff based on a desire to conduct a relatively conservative test of the separation of the two factors in our factor analyses (i.e., we set a low threshold for reporting any cross-loading across factors). Although there is a debate about what constitutes a very low factor loading, many (e.g., Field, 2005; Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988; MacCallum, Widaman, Preacher, & Hong, 2001) advocate factor pattern loadings as high as .60 or .70, and others (e.g., Stevens, 1992) suggest factor loadings of at least .40 to be interpretable.
4. We did not control in these analyses for meta-prejudice and conservatism because doing so tended to cause suppressor-variable effects.
5. Because neither meta-dehumanization nor meta-prejudice was significantly correlated with perceived overlap, desired overlap, or belief in the clash of civilizations (see Supplemental Table 8b), we did not consider these variables as potential mediators in our analyses. When we nevertheless controlled for their associations with each of integration and the outcome variables, we observed that the indirect effects via integration on support for violent collective action and willingness to report terrorism became marginally significant (i.e., 90% confidence intervals did not include 0). On the other hand, the indirect effect on emotional hostility became non-significant. Given that this model includes a large number of variables with a relatively small sample size, it would be worth reexamining among a larger sample.
6. Although causal claims are limited by the correlational nature of our data, it is worth noting that there is little reason to think that Muslims and Latinos would have felt dehumanized by Trump prior to the statements associated with his candidacy (and indeed, the decision of Univision, the leading Spanish-language network, to drop Trump’s Miss Universe pageant was explicitly framed as responses to his rhetoric).
7. We thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this analysis.
8. Because our measure simply asked participants whether or not they were born in the United States, we cannot determine precisely what proportion of the non-native participants were non-citizens (i.e., immigrants) versus naturalized citizens. Future work should assess citizenship/immigration status in addition to place of birth.

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