September 11, 2001:
Two quasi-experiments on the influence of threats on cultural values and cosmopolitanism

Miguel R. Olivas-Luján
Anne-Wil Harzing
Scott McCoy

Version January 2004

Dr. Anne-Wil Harzing
University of Melbourne
Department of Management
Faculty of Economics & Commerce
Parkville Campus
Melbourne, VIC 3010
Australia

Email: anne-wil@harzing.com
Web: www.harzing.com

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001:
TWO QUASI-EXPERIMENTS ON THE INFLUENCE OF THREATS ON CULTURAL VALUES AND COSMOPOLITANISM

Miguel R. Olivas-Luján
Department of Management
ITESM – Monterrey Campus
Av. E. Garza Sada 2501 Sur
C.P. 64849, Monterrey, NL, MÉXICO
Tel: +52 81 8328 4090
Fax: +1 413 280 7210
Email: mrolivas@itesm.mx

Anne-Wil Harzing
Department of Management
University of Melbourne
Parkville 3010, AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 3 8344 3724
Fax +61 3 9349 4293
Email: harzing@unimelb.edu.au

Scott McCoy
School of Business
College of William and Mary
P.O. Box 8795
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795
Tel: +1 (757) 221-2062
Fax: +1 (757) 221-2937
Email: Scott.McCoy@business.wm.edu

27 January, 2004

1

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001:
TWO QUASI-EXPERIMENTS ON THE INFLUENCE OF THREATS ON CULTURAL VALUES AND COSMOPOLITANISM

ABSTRACT

This article investigates whether the September 11 attack had an impact on cultural values and the level of cosmopolitanism of US university students. Extending a model proposed by Esses, Dovidio & Hodson (2002), we hypothesize a positive effect on the cultural dimensions of collectivism and hierarchy/power distance and a negative effect on cosmopolitanism. Our results – drawn from two separate quasi-experimental studies – support the two latter hypotheses. In addition, supplementary analyses showed that, after the September 11 attack, students exhibited a tendency to trade in variety, adventure and challenge for security and stability in their ideal job after graduation. Implications for management and for cross-cultural management research are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

After the planes hit the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11 2001, many people asked themselves whether the world would ever be the same again. Just months after the attacks, airports throughout the world showed signs that indeed, the world has changed in a number of ways. However, behavioral changes, while most evident, are usually an effect of other, more subtle changes in attitudes, emotions, values, and beliefs that are much harder to detect, let alone measure. In this article, we investigate whether this traumatic event had an impact on some cultural values and the level of cosmopolitanism of US university students. Using an extension to the model originally designed by Esses et al. (2002) to predict a change of attitudes towards immigration, the next section introduces three specific hypotheses with regard to changes in levels of collectivism, cosmopolitanism and hierarchy/power distance. A change in these values might have important consequences for the practice of cross-cultural management.

To a large extent, the literature on cross-cultural management is based on what we call "the cultural stability assumption". In other words, norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors (the building blocks of culture) have been assumed to be quite stable. The newest edition of Hofstede's landmark study contains several pages that build the case for stability of cultural values (Hofstede, 2001, p. 34-36). Adler's widely utilized Intercultural Organizational Behavior book also mentions the fact that cultural values have not been found to vary through time (Adler, 2002, p. 52). A third argument to support the existence of this assumption comes from a recent critique on the construct of "Cultural Distance" (Kogut & Singh, 1988). Shenkar expresses his disapproval of the use of such construct, among other reasons, because of the "Illusion of Stability" (Shenkar, 2001, p. 523), or the assumption that cultural values do not change over time. Indeed, there is ample and convincing evidence to the argument that culture is very stable, very slow to change, but even Hofstede's recent work concedes that "extremely dramatic outside events" (p. 36) could potentially "invalidate" his country dimension index scores.

This statement begs the question: "what kind of 'extremely dramatic outside events' could possibly invalidate (or at least qualify) the scores that have been extensively used in the past quarter-century in the fields of Cross-cultural Management, Cross-cultural Psychology, Management Anthropology, among others?" (cf. Søndergaard, 1994). The implications of such a change in the way we perceive cultural dimensions can be quite momentous for our field: as Søndergaard (1994) initially documented and Hofstede (2001, pp. 461-466) described in more detail, literally thousands of articles in refereed journals from diverse disciplines have cited this work, frequently using the scores calculated at the end of the 1960s as a basis for empirically-supported findings. To the extent that such events have occurred in the countries included in such research, some of those findings could be cast into doubt!

But the work based on Hofstede's value dimensions is not alone in its reliance upon the "cultural stability assumption." Other cultural value paradigms such as Schwartz's Cultural Value Inventory (Schwartz, 1992; 1999) or Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998)'s "seven dimensions" are also immersed in this assumption that culture does not change or if it does, it is only slowly. Clearly, the need to test or question this assumption is pressing. To our knowledge, this is the first time that a scientific effort to expose how one such "extremely dramatic outside event" could affect cultural values *in measurable magnitudes* has been attempted.

Two quasi-experimental, originally unrelated studies that were used to test these hypotheses are described after the literary review section, including the individual-study and convergent results. A discussion section concludes the article, including supplementary analyses that suggest slight, yet measurable changes in the type of ideal job preferred by students in our sample. This final section also discusses implications of our investigation for managers and for cross-cultural management researchers.

THE INFLUENCE OF THREATS: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

In their recent article, Esses et al. (2002) linked findings from the fields of Social Psychology and Group Conflict to create a model that helps understand how immigration attitudes may have been affected after the September 11 terrorist attacks. Based on the well-established finding that even minor perceptual threats to a group are followed by phenomena such as in-group favoritism, authoritarianism, out-group bashing, and strategies to protect their social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Gartner & Dovidio, 2000), Esses and her colleagues explain the powerful consequences of the attack from a social-psychological perspective. They propose that, aided by the news media, the attack had the effect of provoking corresponding psychological threats, cognitive assessments, and emotional reactions within the United States –and even Canada. More notably, they convincingly argue that this reaction to the attack in turn has evolved into group conflict (both at the more material, Realistic/Instrumental and at the less tangible, Value/Symbolic levels), an increased shared or social identity, increased levels of stereotyping and of perceived homogeneity of others, and higher authoritarianism within these North American countries (see the left side of Figure 1; the box titled "Impacts on Work-Related Values" is our conceptual extension that drives the model tested in this research).

Insert Figure 1 about here

Support for their model is offered tentatively but credibly, through anecdotes and illustrations of the changes in behavior and discourse that the news media and websites published by groups that advocate a higher degree of control and restraint of immigration policies. Since publication of the Esses et al. article, more supporting evidence may be found in all ports of entry into the USA – both air and land terminals –, and in changes that the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has been instituting since the promulgation of the USA Patriot Act of 2001 (Patriot Act, 2001). Clearly, societal behaviors (arguably the ultimate indicator of attitudinal changes) in the United States have changed drastically since the terrorist attacks.

The right side box of the model includes our extension to Esses' and colleagues' model. Essentially, our extended model posits (1) a link between social identity and collectivism, (2) a relationship between stereotyping and homogeneity and cosmopolitanism, and (3) a final link between authoritarianism and hierarchy orientation/power distance. For the sake of simplicity, only the direct relationships expected between these constructs have been made explicit; however, interactions between these constructs should be expected.

SOCIAL IDENTITY AND COLLECTIVISM

As expressed above, a well-documented finding in social psychology, the so-called "in-group bias," links threats to a collective identity with coping mechanisms such as in-group favoritism and out-group bashing (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Said differently, when members of a threatened group feel that their social identity cannot support their collectively-based self-esteem, they tend to show preferential treatment toward individuals they consider as part of their group, while simultaneously degrading members of the group that threatens them. Gartner & Dovidio (2000) recently reviewed the literature that provides robust evidence to this effect.

Widely publicized assaults on Arab-Americans, Sikhs, and Muslims provide extreme anecdotal evidence to the point that the threat was perceived and that there was out-group bashing in the United States as a reaction to the September 11 attacks. In addition, the slogan "United we stand" was adopted as another reaction, this one highlighting the enhanced salience of Americans' collective identity. The increased salience of a social identity for the threatened group – in this case, the USA, which has traditionally been considered among the most individualistic of cultures (cf. Hofstede, 2001) – should be accompanied by an amplified consciousness of the "we" as "Americans".

Paraphrasing Markus and Kitayama (1991)'s conceptualization of collectivism, the definition of the "self" for US citizens should be more strongly a function of their nationality after September 11 than it was before. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) explained collectivism[1] as "a primacy of the goals and welfare of the laterally extended group" (p. 19). Triandis (1995) defined collectivism as "a social pattern consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as parts of one or more collectives..." and individualism as "a social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of collectives..." (p. 2). It is apparent that the attacks should take Americans from their well-known "rugged individualistic" position of loose links to another view of themselves where they see themselves as a component of the US collective; their level of collectivism should be stronger as a reaction to the terrorist attacks. Therefore, the following testable hypothesis is offered:

Hypothesis 1: The September 11 attack has led to an increase in the level of U. S. Americans' collectivism.

STEREOTYPING/HOMOGENEITY AND COSMOPOLITANISM
Another widely supported inference from the field of Inter-group Conflict in Social Psychology is the phenomenon that in-group members tend to view members of the out-group as homogeneous – as in "all of them are cut with the same scissors" – and in negative, stereotypical ways – "they want to hurt us;" the out-group heterogeneity effect (Brewer, 1993; Esses et al., 2002; Hogg, 2001). This effect is the tendency for people to perceive out-group members as more homogeneous (less variable, more similar to one another) than in-group members; the latter are perceived as diverse, helpful, and as allies, while the former are viewed as less cooperative, trustworthy, or honest, and potentially (or actually) dangerous. Again, post-September 11 hatred reactions toward individuals that simply *looked* like Arabs (even if their dress or their appearance actually denoted membership in other, unrelated groups, like the Indian Sikh) offer supporting anecdotal evidence to the argument that members of the perceived out-group were mentally homogenized and stereotyped as dangerous. The influence of the threat appears to "influence social cognitive processes in critical ways" (Esses et al. p. 74).

These processes run counter to a more fine-tuned and sophisticated view of the world that we have called Cosmopolitanism, and is consistent with Kleingeld & Brown's (2002) characterization that "all human beings, regardless of... affiliation, do (or at least can) belong to a single community, and that this community should be cultivated." Members under competing circumstances (cf. Judd & Park, 1988) have an incentive to ignore any societal or rational tendencies toward cosmopolitanism; as they compete for common resources – or, in this case, for perceived physical security – they will mentally divide human beings in an attempt to identify friends and foes, thus giving up the notion of a "single community." Individuals that might otherwise be tolerant of divergent views and lifestyles are likely to exhibit less cosmopolitanism – that is, more provincial attitudes and behaviors – under threatening circumstances. Consequently:

Hypothesis 2: The September 11 attack has led to a decrease in the level of U.S. Americans' cosmopolitanism.

AUTHORITARIANISM AND HIERARCHY ORIENTATION/POWER DISTANCE
Authoritarianism is a personality trait that involves increased allegiance to authority and hostility to deviant individuals (Altemeyer, 1988; Doty, Peterson and Winter, 1991; Sales, 1972, 1973). Analyses of secondary data have shown that during years of greater threat and uncertainty (measured with economic, social and political indicators), authoritarian (vs. non-authoritarian) church membership increases (Sales 1972, 1973). In addition, other indicators of authoritarian tendencies – e.g., increased percentages of city budgets for police departments, better election results for conservative politicians, similar to the ones just occurred in November of 2002 when the conservative Republican Party swept the more liberal Democratic Party in the United States – have also been documented (Doty et al, 1991; McCann, 1999). A more recent example that adds anecdotal sup-

port to Esses et al. (2002)'s argument that authoritarianism increased as a result of the terrorist attacks is the ease with which the "Patriot Act of 2001" was approved by the US Congress a few weeks after September 11; it is quite unlikely that many of the exceptions it allows to long-established individual rights (e.g., unconstrained detention of terrorism suspects without evidence that would be customary in other contexts) would have been approved under different circumstances.

The nature of the Authoritarianism phenomenon has resulted in a scholarly literature that is based on analyses of archival data; it is simply impossible (in addition to unethical) to orchestrate an experiment in which a national group is placed under a credible threat, to measure levels of authoritarianism before and after the threat is perceived, controlling for the influence of all potential risks toward generalizability. However, a quasi-experimental approach (Cook and Campbell, 1979) could offer added support to this claim if measurements of this acceptance of authority (or to similar phenomena) from the appropriate samples happen to be collected before and after a threat occurs.

In fact, at the organizational level, authoritarianism might have a parallel manifestation in the construct of "Power Distance" or acceptance of hierarchy. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's Hierarchy orientation (cf. Kirkman and Shapiro, 2001), as well as Hofstede's (1980) Power Distance, refer to the extent to which inequalities within organizations are acceptable within the focal collectivity. Individuals in organizations located in equalitarian countries such as Austria, Denmark, Israel, etc. score very low on this dimension, whereas those located in Malaysia, Guatemala, or the Philippines, where people are expected to be different in accordance with their position in the formal hierarchy score highly on these constructs. Individuals in post-9/11 United States should not only have increased acceptance of Authoritarianism at the societal level, but also at the organizational level. Following the discussion above, hypothesis 3 is as follows:

Hypothesis 3:   The September 11 attack has led to an increase in the level of US Americans' hierarchy orientation/power distance.

METHOD

The next two sections will discuss the methods and results of the two studies that we used to test our hypotheses. Two features of our tests of the hypotheses above are worth highlighting. First, we have been able to utilize quasi-experiments, also known as "naturally occurring experiments." This research design provides a large degree of control against external validity threats when compared to archival studies. They also offer a greater potential for generalizability and realism than experimental designs (cf. Campbell & Stanley, 1963). No research design is perfect, so, we will discuss some of the limitations before the concluding section.

The other powerful feature of our tests is the use of triangulation (Jick, 1979; Scandura & Williams, 2000). As Jick (1979) reports, triangulation in research is an analogy taken from navigation and military strategy about the use of "multiple reference points to locate an object's exact position" (p. 602). Scandura & Williams (2000) reviewed the use of triangulation in Management research, and mention the following types of triangulation: Research strategy (using various research designs), Setting for data collection (affecting external validity), and Sources of data (multiple sources being preferred to single ones). This paper is fortunate to rest on two studies that were not originally designed to test its hypotheses, nevertheless offer convergent support for one of them. The measurements used were designed by different researchers, yet have been widely used in reputable sources in scientifically valid ways. Other assets include the facts that the respondents are from various settings, that one of the studies is longitudinal in nature, and the other enjoys the benefit of a large sample. In fact, this research responds to Scandura & Williams' call for more use of triangulation strategies, as their findings were critical of the "apparent lack of preoccupation

with *any* type of validity" (emphasis original, p. 1261). By using two originally unrelated studies that focused on different topics and used different measures for the constructs under investigation in this paper, we are able to provide a more reliable test of our hypotheses. Finally, these two studies are complementary in terms of the constructs they included, so that taken together, the two studies allow us to test all three hypotheses crafted above.

STUDY 1

METHOD

Data collection and sample

Data were collected as part of larger scale research project that investigated whether the language of a questionnaire impacts on the way participants respond (see self-reference, 2002a/b). Respondents were third or final year university students[2] studying Business Administration or Business & Management and questionnaires were completed in class. Data from two universities in the US – the University of Virginia and the University of Pittsburgh – were collected as an English-speaking control group. Students in this control group only received a questionnaire in the English language.

Although this was not part of the original design, data for Virginia happened to be collected before 9/11 (in April 2001), while data in Pittsburgh were collected in December 2001, about 3 months after the event. Further data from the same universities were collected late March/early April 2002, about half a year after the event, to test - by means of a longitudinal, quasi-experimental design (Cook and Campbell, 1979) - whether the effects were enduring. Each of the samples included a substantial number of international students, but our comparisons are limited to US-American business students (students born in the US and having English as their mother tongue). Table 1 summarizes the demographics of the four samples. Even though we had tried to match the samples as closely as possible - we surveyed business students from two public universities in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States -, the age and gender distribution differed significantly across the samples, so both will be included as control variables in our analysis.

Apart from the age and gender distribution, students would appear to be very comparable across the samples. One part of the questionnaire asked students for their reasons to choose particular electives (e.g. "because I can get a high mark for it" or "because I am interested in the subject"). Out of the eight reasons only two showed any significant differences across the four samples and in both cases this involved only two of the samples (Virginia April 2001 and Pittsburgh April 2002 for "because I like the lecturer" and Pittsburgh December 2001 and Virginia March 2002 for "because my friends are choosing it") differing significantly from each other.[3] Therefore, there do not seem to be any systematic differences between the four samples.

Insert Table 1 about here

Measures

With regard to the two cultural values (collectivism and hierarchy) we used a revised version of the Cultural Perspective Questionnaire (Maznevski, DiStefano, Gomez, Noorderhaven & Wu, 2002), which is based on the culture framework presented by Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961). Because of constraints in terms of questionnaire length, we chose to focus on only two of the six cultural dimensions that have been put forward by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck: Activity and Relationships, each with three variations. Only the Relationship dimension is part of this study. Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck clearly identified individuals as the "holders" of the preference for variations and the cultural pattern as defined by the aggregation of individuals' preferences. We can therefore make

hypotheses and test them at the individual level of analysis, aggregate measures to develop descriptions of cultures, and examine variance both within and between samples.

The three types of naturally occurring Relationships among humans are *individualism, collectivism,* and *hierarchy.* In the *individualism* variation, individuals consider their most important responsibility to be to and for themselves and their immediate family. In *collectivism,* the main responsibility is to and for a larger group of people, such as an extended family or work group. With the *hierarchy* variation, it is accepted that power and responsibility are unequally distributed, with those having power over others also having responsibility for them. In this study, the focus of our attention is on two of the relationship variations: collectivism and hierarchy.

Each of the variations was measured with 7 single-sentence items[4] and respondents were asked to record their strength of agreement with each, on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To reduce response bias from proximity of items, items for each variation within a particular dimension were randomly distributed. However, to preserve a logical structure to the questionnaire and to reduce the length of individual sections of the questionnaire, "Activity" items and "Relationship" items were included in separate sections. Scale reliability analysis showed that although the reliability of the Relationship Hierarchy scale was reasonable (Cronbach's alpha: 0.68)[5], the reliability of the Relationship Collectivism scale for these samples was unacceptably low (Cronbach's alpha: 0.54). A factor analysis showed that although the Hierarchy scale was unidimensional, the Collectivism scale was not: individual items loaded on two different factors that each consisted of a mix of Collectivism and Individualism items. We therefore decided to discard the Collectivism scale for study 1.

Cosmopolitanism was included as a control variable in the original study's design and was measured with eight items specifically designed for the study. Special care was taken to construct items that would be relevant to the population in question: university students (e.g. "I really enjoy trying out food from different countries," "I prefer foreign pop music to pop music from Britain or America," "I consider myself a citizen of the world and would like to work in other countries than my home country after finishing my studies"). Two of the eight questions in this scale were excluded for this study, since they dealt with knowledge rather than attitude ("I know a lot about religions other than my own") or did not involve either explicit or implicit interaction with foreign nationals ("I read foreign novels in their original language just for pleasure"). As such, they were expected not to be subject to as much change as the other questions. Reliability of the cosmopolitanism scale was adequate (Cronbach's alpha: 0.75).

RESULTS

We tested our hypotheses using linear regression analysis with dummy variables for the different sample groups (Virginia April 2001 = 0 and Pittsburgh December 2001 = 1 for a comparison of the immediate effect and Virginia April 2001 = 0 and Pittsburgh/Virginia 2002 = 1 for the delayed effect). As indicated above age and gender were included as control variables. Table 2 reproduces the results of our analysis.

Insert Table 2 about here

Hypothesis 2 predicted that September 11 would have a negative impact on the level of cosmopolitanism exposed by US students. As Table 2 shows, this was supported for both the immediate effect and the delayed effect. Although declining scores were recorded for all but the pop music item, the items that were most affected were "I have many friends who were born in other countries" and "I prefer foreign movies to movies from Britain or America."

Finally, Hypothesis 3 predicted that September 11 would have a positive impact on the importance of the relationship hierarchy dimension. As Table 2 shows this was supported for both the immediate effect and the delayed effect, although the delayed effect was not as strong as the immediate effect. Although increasing scores were recorded for all items, the items that were most

affected were "A hierarchy of authority is the best form of organization" and "The hierarchy of groups in a society should remain consistent over time."

STUDY 2

METHOD

Data collection and sample

Data were collected as part of larger scale research project that investigated the effects of national culture on the acceptance and use of online teaching tools. Data were collected at several universities around the world, but only those from the University of Pittsburgh were used in this paper. Respondents used in this analysis were third or final year university students studying Business Administration and questionnaires were completed in a required undergraduate class.

Although this was not part of the original design, data for the pilot study of the above mentioned research project in Pittsburgh was collected before 9/11 (in March 2001), while data in Pittsburgh for the main study were collected in October 2001, about 1 month after the event. Each of the samples included a substantial number of international students, but our comparisons are limited to US-American business students (students born in the US and having English as their mother tongue). Table 1 summarizes the demographics of the two samples. Because we surveyed business students from the same university and in the same required undergraduate course, the age and gender distribution did not differ significantly across the samples.

Measures

With regard to the two cultural values (collectivism and power distance) we used measures of national culture from Dorfman & Howell (1988), which is based on the culture framework presented by Hofstede (1980). Dorfman and Howell's instrument measures individual's cultural orientation. We can therefore make hypotheses and test them at the individual level of analysis, aggregate measures to develop descriptions of cultures, and examine variance both within and between samples. We factor-analyzed all items from Dorfman & Howell's four scales (even though we only use two) and the results are four distinct dimensions with no significant cross-loadings, as intended by the scale designers. Running for only items for each separate dimension, all items load on one dimension. The scales below were then found to be uni-dimensional.

Individualism describes the relationship between the individual and the group. It refers to the extent that individuals' self-interests are prioritized over the concerns of the group. In cultures that rank low on individualism (high on collectivism), individuals tend to see themselves as members of a group; this group to which they belong is a main source of their identity and the unit to which they owe lifelong loyalty (Hoecklin, 1995). The opposite is true for cultures scoring high on individualism (low on collectivism). The scale used was adopted from a study by Dorfman and Howell (1988). The six-item Likert scale was used exactly as it appeared in the original study. Scale anchors ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Scale reliability was quite acceptable (Cronbach's alpha: 0.81)

Power distance (PD) is "a measure of the interpersonal power or influence between [a superior] and [a subordinate] as perceived by the [subordinate]" (Hofstede, 1991, p.71). The PD dimension refers to the extent to which inequality, often as in hierarchy or a "pecking order," is seen as an existing reality. Essentially, it is the degree to which individuals accept that their boss has more power than they have and that the opinions and the decisions of their boss are correct due to the mere fact that s/he is the boss. Employees will try to reduce the power distance and bosses will try to maintain or enlarge it. In low PD cultures, employees feel inequity should be minimized, whereas in high PD cultures, employees feel an order of inequity should exist. This six-item Likert scale was also adopted from Dorfman and Howell's (1988) study, and ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Scale reliability was also adequate (Cronbach's alpha: 0.76).

9

We tested our hypotheses in this study with ANOVA. As indicated above, age and gender were not significantly different across these two samples, so controlling for these variables was not needed. Table 2 reproduces the results of our analysis. Our first hypothesis that predicted an increase in the level of collectivism was not supported and in fact the level of collectivism declined slightly, but not significantly. Hypothesis 2 could not be tested, as Dorfman and Howell (1988) does not include the cosmopolitanism dimension. Hypothesis 3 predicted that September 11 would have a positive impact on the importance of the power distance dimension. As Table 2 shows, this hypothesis was strongly supported.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our results show support for two of the three hypotheses. The threat originated by the September 11 attacks has led to a decrease in the level of cosmopolitanism displayed by US university students and an increase in their level of hierarchy/power distance. In contrast, the level of collectivism did not display any change. The model, as proposed by Esses et al. (2002) to predict immigration attitudes, would therefore seem to have the potential to predict a more general change in attitudes. Our results show that September 11 has had an important impact on some of the norms and values of students in the USA.

An interesting question would be whether the impact in other countries would be equally strong. Unfortunately, it was infeasible to replicate the "pre-post design" in the other countries included in our two original studies, but for Study 1 we did collect a small sample (n=40) in the UK in October 2001, after collecting our main sample in February 2001. The UK is the country that – apart from the United States – lost most citizens during the September 11 attacks (Reid, 2001). It has also been victimized by terrorist attacks (e.g., Lockerbie) and was involved in the war against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Therefore, the UK is perhaps the country that would be most likely to share the impacts and effects of the September 11 attack. A comparison of both the variables included in the hypotheses and the additional variables included in Table 3, however, showed that there were no significant differences between the pre- and post-September 11 samples. Although 9/11 has certainly changed many aspects of our lives, it does not seem to have affected student values in countries outside the USA, the direct target of the threats.

Our data, however, do allow us to make several post-hoc analyses that might shed further light on the impact of dramatic events on cultural values. First, the results with regard to Collectivism were not as expected. However, we might wonder whether collectivism is an adequate measure of social identity in the context of our study, given that it does not explicitly refer to one's collective identity as US-Americans. The questionnaire we used in Study 1 included a question that might be more directly related to collective or social identity. In this study we also asked students to rate characteristics associated with their ideal job after graduation ("In choosing your ideal job, how important would it be to you to…"). One of the 18 characteristics was "serve your country", a question that might be more directly related to collective or social identity. We would expect a higher level of collective identity to translate in a higher willingness to serve the country and hence would expect this to be a more important ideal job characteristic after September 11. As Table 3 shows, this question showed a significant difference in the expected direction for both the immediate effect and the delayed effect. After September 11, having a job that allowed them to serve their country was more important to US students. Although we should be careful to draw conclusions based on single items, this finding gives some indication that the collective identity of US Americans was positively influenced by the 9/11 events –as suggested by the Esses et al (2002) model and reviewed above.

Above we mentioned that the questionnaire we used in study 1 included a list of 18 characteristics of an ideal job. For thirteen of those, September 11 did not seem to have a significant effect. However, as can be seen in Table 3, there seems to be a tendency in our student sample to

de-emphasize variety, adventure and challenge in their ideal job and prefer more security and stability. This tendency is understandable given both the economic insecurity and the insecurity and uncertainty about the future more generally (Esses et al. 2002) following the September 11 attack. With one exception, the delayed effects are equally or more significant than the immediate effects, suggesting a certain level of permanency of these changes. Study 1 also showed that the delayed effect for cosmopolitanism was more significant than the immediate effect, while the reverse was true for relationship hierarchy. In combination, these results might suggest that while – as discussed above – a change in cultural values might have been temporary, the change in behavior might be more persistent. Below, we'll discuss the managerial implications of these behavioral changes.

Insert Table 3 about here

Our results showed a significant increase in the level of Hierarchy and Power Distance and a significant decrease in the level of Cosmopolitanism. All three constructs showed acceptable and similar levels of reliability for both the pre- and post samples and were uni-dimensional in both samples. The respective increase and decrease was present for each of the individual items used to measure the constructs in question. We can therefore be confident of both the construct validity and the observed change.

The fourth construct used in this study - Collectivism - showed less consistency in measurement. As indicated above, the reliability of the Collectivism scale in Study 1 was found to be unacceptable and the construct was found not be uni-dimensional. However, when we performed separate factor analyses for the samples before and after 9/11, uni-dimensionality and a reasonable level of reliability (Cronbach's alpha: 0.63) appeared to be present for the pre 9/11 sample, but not for the post 9/11 samples. Post 9/11 the individual items for Collectivism and Individualism were spread over different factors. So even though we did not find significant a change in the level of Collectivism (or Individualism), we cannot discard the possibility that dramatic events have a de-stabilizing effect on factor structures.

It should also be noted that testing the seven individual questions originally designed to measure Collectivism in Study 1 did not yield any significant differences. This is consistent with the lack of significant differences for the Collectivism scale in Study 2. At least two explanations could explicate the consistency of these findings: It is possible then that Collectivism is a dimension that is more resilient to change than Hierarchy or Power Distance, even in spite of extremely dramatic events – at least for the US culture, which prides itself as a nation of "rugged individualism." Perhaps other cultural dimensions like Power Distance are more "malleable," more subject to disruptions, because of the fundamental nature of the dimension, than dimensions like Collectivism. In other words, Collectivism might be a much more stable dimension than Power Distance *across* all national cultures. It is also possible that some dimensions are more (or less) "plastic" than others, as a function of how central (or peripheral) or how appreciated (or loathed) they are *for the focal culture*. The case at hand provides an excellent example: Individualism is a cultural dimension that is very much appreciated in the USA, while (exhibiting a low) Power Distance is more peripheral to the US national identity. It is likely that the malleability of these dimensions might be the inverse in other cultures; for example, Power Distance is a dimension that many Latin Americans would consider a desirable cultural trait, but contradicting preferences might be found toward Individualism.

Another possibility is that (as Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier, 2002 have suggested) Collectivism and Individualism are not opposite ends of a continuum, but two separate, yet related cultural dimensions. To the extent that the scales utilized have measured Individualism instead of Collectivism, it is possible that our findings are the result of sub-optimal instrumentation. Clearly, this calls for additional research on the dimensionality of these constructs.

11

Some comments about the characteristics of our research design are in order. On the one hand, quasi-experimental designs, also often called "naturally occurring experiments," offer a larger degree of control against external validity threats - vis-à-vis archival studies - in addition to a greater potential for generalizability and realism - when compared to experimental designs (cf. Campbell and Stanley, 1963). On the other hand, it may be argued that neither the sample nor the design was originally tailored for the research questions and subsequent findings. Given the many calls (if not criticisms) to make their work relevant that researchers receive from university administrators, students, and the media, we feel that this research is a reasonable illustration of how relevant academic inquiries may be in the face of events such as the September 11 attacks. We feel that our credibility as researchers is enhanced when we use our tools to expose the effects that deceivingly distant events may have on people's minds and attitudes that have been proven important for the workplace. Finally, the need to react promptly to societal events and uncover statistically significant findings from relationships that were not originally hypothesized, yet are consistent with solidly documented theories is not a small or easily achievable feat.

LIMITATIONS OF OUR STUDY

There are two important drawbacks to our research design. First, Study 2 was conducted only one month after September 11. This was a time when both the media and social interactions were still dominated by this dramatic event, and hence respondents might have answered in uncontrollable ways. However, the results from our Study 1 show that some of the effects found in Study 2 were still present 3 months and 6 months after the event respectively. Although without a continued longitudinal design we cannot claim that these effects are permanent, Study 1 shows that they did persist after the nation had returned to some level of normalcy. A second drawback of our design is our focus on students rather than managers. Younger undergraduate students might be assumed to be more impressionable than older more mature managers. However, it would have been extremely difficult to conduct a study with managers and have pre- and post samples as well-matched as our student samples. Additionally, this might be one instance in which Mook (1983)'s concern that "A misplaced preoccupation with external validity" (p. 379) is likely to discard useful research that offers valuable insights even if their generalizability to other contexts is not so necessary. In fact, Triandis et al. (2001) have suggested that, with respect to culture, student samples are not too distant from managerial ones.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Our discussion of managerial implications is speculative in nature as we have not been able to formally test any of these implications. This being said, we suggest the following potential implications of our results. First, decreasing levels of cosmopolitanism might influence management in (multinational) corporations in several ways. At a personal and team level, it might complicate the group dynamics in multi-cultural teams and it might influence the willingness to be part of such teams. This might reduce the ability of MNCs to benefit from multi-cultural diversity. At a company level a lower level of cosmopolitanism might lead to a declining interest in (particular) overseas markets and a renewed focus on the home market. This would further reduce the transnationality of US MNCs.[6]

Higher levels of hierarchy/power distance, as well as an increased preference for a "forcible approach" to solving organizational problems might impact on the type of leadership that is preferred within organizations. The US has been characterized by a preference for participative leadership (see e.g. Den Hartog, House, Hanges and Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1999). Changing values might lead employees to prefer a more directive style of leadership, where leaders chart desirable actions and take responsibility for them, potentially in detriment of employee empowerment and bottom-up initiatives.

Changes in the ideal type of job preferred by future corporate employees and more notably the preference for stability, structure and security over adventure, variety and challenge might also have important implications for (multinational) companies. It might become more difficult to interest employees in high-risk entrepreneurial type of jobs, which might impact on the company's potential to innovate. In combination with the reduced level of cosmopolitanism, the reduced preference for unstructured situations and increased preference for stability and security might also lead to a decline in willingness to accept international assignments. Since international assignments are often a crucial part of a MNC's international strategy (see e.g. Harzing, 2001a/b), a lack of candidates for these positions might compromise its ability to implement this strategy.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH

Finally, the results of this investigation have two essential implications for cross-cultural research. First, as stated in the introductory section, fundamental cultural norms and values such as Kluck-hohn & Strodtbeck's Relationship dimension and Hofstede's Power Distance dimension have been assumed to be relatively stable (Hofstede, 2001, p. 34; Adler, 2002, p. 52). If important events such as the September 11 attacks would have an enduring impact on some of the country's norms and values, this puts the use of established data on cultural norms and values that have been collected before any such events in question. However, our data show that only one of the three variations of the two cultural dimensions included in Study 1 and one of the four cultural dimensions in Study 2 had a significant difference even after an event as traumatic as the September 11 attack. It is indicative though, that in both studies this concerns the same dimension. Our original studies' conclusions with regard to the level of Relationship Hierarchy or Power Distance in the USA in comparison to other countries would certainly be different depending on whether we used a pre- or post-September 11 USA sample. However, we must remark that the difference in hierarchy/power distance became smaller over time. In Study 1, the 2002 scores moved back closer to the pre-September 11 scores. Furthermore, the difference for Study 2, whose post sample was collected only one month after the event was larger than the difference for Study 1, whose post sample was collected three months after the event. Thus, our results might also be interpreted to lend support to the claims of stability in cultural norms and values. The "cultural stability assumption" perhaps should be conceptualized not as an unchangeable rock, immune to shocking events like the ones in this research, but as a palm tree, whose trunk bends under the strength of the typhoon, yet returns to its previous position when the hurricane passes. An alternative view would be to see the change in values in response to September 11 as a reflection of value trumping to a change in context (Osland & Bird, 2000).

A second, and potentially more important, implication for cross-cultural research is that our investigation reinforces the notion that the <u>timing</u> of data collection in cross-national studies is a crucial decision. Even variables that might be relatively stable over time (such as cultural norms and values) might experience short-term fluctuations caused by events such as the September 11 attack, while factor structures might become unstable, as suggested by our results in Study 1. To our knowledge, this is the first time that a scientific attempt to expose how "extremely dramatic outside events" could affect cultural values *in measurable ways* has been exerted. Sadly, while these events have fortunately been rare in the United States' territory, many other countries are not as blessed (e.g., Israel, Palestine, Ireland, Colombia, Spain, Indonesia, Russia, etc.). Since it is impossible to predict events of this nature, cross-cultural researchers should ensure that data in different countries are collected within the shortest possible timeframe. If this is not possible - which unfortunately is the case in most international projects - researchers should give due consideration and acknowledgement to any events that might have influenced responses of samples separated by time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

REFERENCES

Adler, N.J. (2002): *International dimensions of organizational behavior.* 4th ed. Cincinnati, OH: South-Western.

Altemeyer, B. (1988): *Enemies of freedom: Understanding right-wing authoritarianism.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Brewer, M.B. (1993): Social identity, distinctiveness, and in-group homogeneity. *Social Cognition* vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 150-64.

Campbell, D.T. and Stanley, J.C. (1963): *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Cook, T.D. and Campbell, D.T. (1979): *Quasi-experimentation: Design & analysis issues for field settings.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Dorfman, P. W. and J. P. Howell (1988): "Dimensions of National Culture and Effective Leadership Patterns: Hofstede Revisited." *Advances in International Comparative Management* vol. 3, pp. 127-150.

Doty, R.E., Peterson, B.E., and Winter, D.G. (1991): Threat and authoritarianism in the United States, 1978-1987. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* vol. 61, pp. 629-640.

Esses, V.M.; Dovidio, J.F.; and Hodson, G. (2002): Public Attitudes Toward Immigration in the United States and Canada in Response to the September 11, 2001 "Attack on America", *Analysis of Social Issues and Public Policy,* vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 69-85.

Gaertner, S.L. and Dovidio, J.F. (2000): *Reducing intergroup bias : the common ingroup identity model,* Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Hartog, D.N. den; House, R.J.; Hanges, P.J.; Ruiz-Quintanilla, S.A.; and Dorfman, P.W. (1999): Culture specific and cross-culturally generalizable implicit leadership theories: are attributes of charismatic/transformational leadership universally endorsed?, *Leadership Quarterly,* vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 219-256.

Harzing, A.W.K. (2001a): "Of bears, bumble-bees and spiders: The role of expatriates in controlling foreign subsidiaries", *Journal of World Business,* vol. 36, no. 4, pp. 366-379.

Harzing, A.W.K. (2001b): "An analysis of the functions of international transfer of managers in MNCs", *Employee Relations,* vol 23, no. 6, pp. 581-598.

Hoecklin, L. (1995): *Managing Cultural Differences Strategies for Competitive Advantage.* Cambridge, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company

Hofstede, G. (1980): *Culture's consequences, international differences in work-related values.* Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Hofstede, G.H. (2001): *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations.* 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hogg, M.A. (2001): Self-categorization and subjective uncertainty resolution: Cognitive and motivational facets of social identity and group membership. In J.P. Forgas, K. Williams, and L. Wheeler (eds.). *The social mind: Cognitive and motivational aspects of interpersonal behavior* (pp. 323-349). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Jick, T. D. (1979): Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Science Quarterly,* vol. 24, pp. 601-629.

Judd, C.M. and Park, B. (1988): Outgroup homogeneity: Judgments of variability at the individual and group levels. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* vol. 54, pp. 778-788.

Kemmelmeier, M. et al. (2003): Individualism, Collectivism and Authoritarianism in Seven Societies, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology,* vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 304-322.

Kirkman, B.L. and Shapiro, D.L. (2001): The impact of cultural values on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in self-managing work teams: The mediating role of employee resistance. *Academy of Management Journal,* vol. 44, no. 3, pp. 557-569.

Kleingeld, P. and Brown, E. Cosmopolitanism - Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy [Web Page]. 2002 Jun 28; http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2002/entries/cosmopolitanism/, Accessed 2003 Apr 15.

Kluckhohn, F.R. and Strodtbeck, F.L. (1961): *Variations in value orientations*. Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson & Company.

Kogut, B., and Singh, H. (1988): The Effect of National Culture on the Choice of Entry Mode. *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 19 no. 3, pp. 411-432.

Markus, H.R. and Kitayama, S. (1991): Culture and self: Implications for cognition, emotion and motivation. *Psychological Review,* vol. 98, pp. 224-253.

Maznevski, M.L., DiStefano, J.J., Gomez, C.B., Noorderhaven, N.G., and Wu, P.-C. (2002): Cultural Dimensions at the Individual Level of Analysis: The Cultural Orientations Framework, *The International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 275-298.

McCann, S.J.H. (1999): Threatening times and fluctuations in American church memberships. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* vol. 25, no.3, pp. 325-336.

Mook, D. C. (1983): In defense of external validity. *American Psychologist*, vol. 38, pp. 379-387.

Osland, J.S.; Bird, A. (2000): "Beyond sophisticated stereotyping: Cultural sensemaking in context", *Academy of Management Executive*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 65-79.

Oyserman, D., Coon, H.M. and Kemmelmeier, M. (2002): Rethinking Individualism and Collectivism: Evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin,* vol. 128, no. 1, pp. 3-72.

"Patriot Act of 2001" (2001): Retrieved November 13, 2002 from web site: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=107_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ056.107

Reid, T.R. (2001): Victims from around the world: People from more than 50 countries died in blasts. *The Washington Post,* September 18, p. A01.

Sales, S.M. (1972): Economic threat as a determinant of conversion rates in authoritarian and nonauthoritarian churches. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* vol. 23, pp. 420-428.

Sales, S.M. (1973): Threat as a factor in authoritarianism: An analysis of archival data. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 44-57.

Scandura, T. A., and Williams, E. A. (2000): Research methodology in management: Current practices, trends, and implications for future research. *Academy of Management Journal,* vol. 43, no. 6, pp. 1248-1264.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992): Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. P. Zanna (ed.). *Advances in experimental social psychology*, vol. 25 (pp. 1-65). New York: Academic Press.

Schwartz, S. H. (1999): A theory of cultural values and some implications for work. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 23-47.

Selfreference (2002a)

Selfreference (2002b)

Shafiro, M.V.; Himelein, M.J. and Best, D.L. (2003): Ukrainian and U.S. American Females: Differences in Individualism/Collectivism and Gender Attitudes, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 297-303.

Shenkar, O. (2001): Cultural Distance Revisited: Towards a More Rigorous Conceptualization and Measurement of Cultural Differences. *Journal of International Business Studies,* vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 519-535.

Søndergaard, M. (1994): Hofstede's consequences: A study of reviews, citations and replications. *Organization Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 447-456.

Tajfel, H., and Turner, J.C. (1979): An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W.G. Austin and S. Worchel (eds.). *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-48). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Thomas, D.C. and Au, K. (2002): The Effect of Cultural Differences on Behavioral Responses to Low Job Satisfaction, *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 309-326.

Triandis, H.C. (1995): *Individualism & collectivism*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Triandis, H.C. and 15 co-authors (2001): Culture and deception in Business Negotiations: A Multilevel Analysis. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 1 (1), 73-90.

Trompenaars, A., and Hampden-Turner, C. (1998): *Riding the waves of culture: understanding cultural diversity in global business,* 2nd ed. New York : McGraw Hill.

UNCTAD (2002) *World Investment Report. Transnational Corporations and Export Competitiveness,* New York/Geneva: United Nations.

Table 1: Demographics of the four samples

Study 1	Virginia April 2001	Pittsburgh December 2001	Virginia March 2002	Pittsburgh April 2002
Number of respondents	46	61	85	107
% of male students	46%	67%	56%	53%
Average age	20.5	22.6	21.1	21.6

Study 2	Pittsburgh March 2001	Pittsburgh October 2001
Number of respondents	210	210
% of male students	60%	57%
Age	18-24 88.6%	18-24 94.3%
	25-32 11.4%	25-32 5.7%

Table 2: Test of the hypotheses

Study 1

Variable	Hypothesized effect of 9/11	Mean Before 9/11 (n=46)	Mean December 2001 (n=61)	Mean 2002 (n=192)	Hypothesis supported?	Signif. of immediate effect	Signif. of delayed effect
Cosmopolitanism	Negative	3.29	2.99	2.98	Yes	0.024*	0.003**
Relationship Hierarchy	Positive	2.55	2.84	2.68	Yes	0.006**	0.075†

Study 2

Variable	Hypothesized effect of 9/11	Mean Before 9/11 (n=210)	Mean October 2001 (n=210)	Hypothesis supported?	Signif. of effect[1]
Collectivism	Positive	4.63	4.53	No	0.257
Power Distance	Positive	2.73	3.08	Yes	0.000***

*** p < 0.000, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, † p < 0.10, 1-tailed when difference was in expected direction

Table 3: Change in preference for ideal job characteristics

Importance of ideal job characteristics	Mean Before 9/11 (n=46)	Mean December 2001 (n=61)	Mean 2002 (n=192)	Direction of effect	Signif. of immediate effect	Signif. of delayed effect
Serve your country	2.46	3.00	2.92	Positive	0.016*	0.006**
Have an element of variety and adventure in the job	4.37	4.08	4.18	Negative	0.060†	0.138
Have challenging work to do	4.02	3.84	3.74	Negative	0.178	0.018**
Have security of employment	3.83	4.48	4.13	Positive	0.000***	0.005**
Work according to clear and stable rules and regulations	2.67	2.98	3.11	Positive	0.203	0.006**

*** p < 0.000, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, † p < 0.10, all 2-tailed

Influences of Threats on Culture
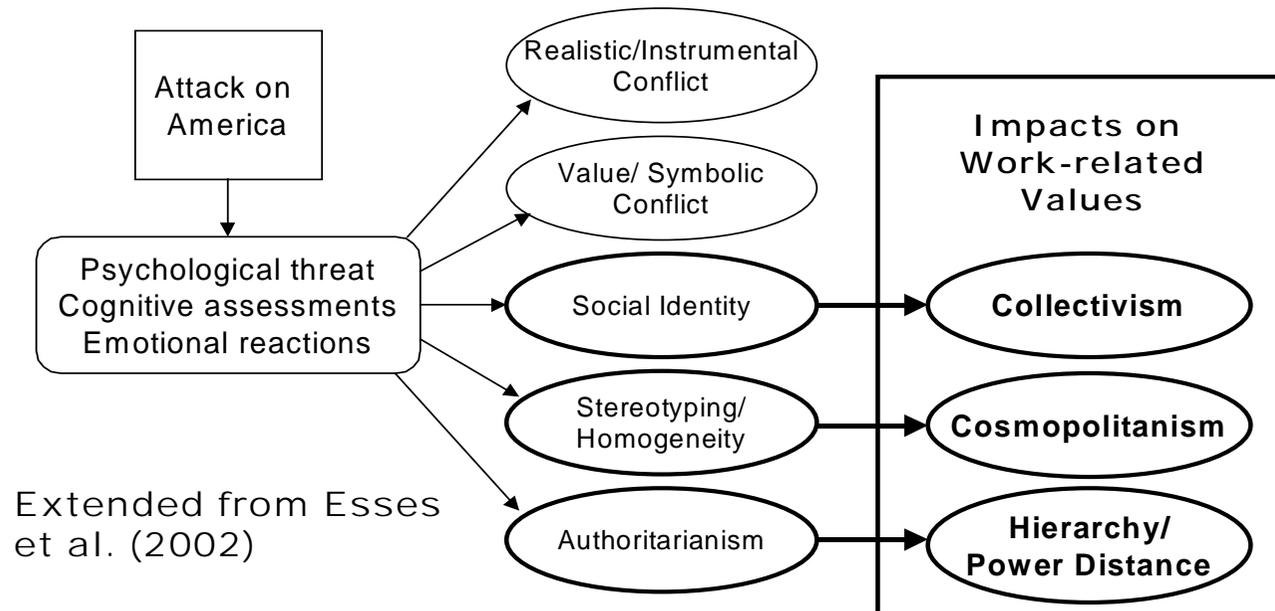
[1] Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck originally used the term "Collateral orientation"

2 When studying culture, differences between students and other samples, such as managers, tend to be unimportant (Triandis et al. 2001) and hence students can be used as a good approximation of the general survey population in management studies.

3 It is important that this was not due to the type of questions. A comparison of these questions across the 25+ countries included in the original study produced highly significant differences (F-values from 6.939 to 36.861, all $p < 0.000$)

4 Sample questions for the dimensions are: "People should satisfy their own needs before they think of others' needs" (Relationship individualism), "Good team members subordinate their own interests to those of the team" (Relationship collectivism), "People at lower levels in an organisation should not expect to have much power" (Relationship hierarchy).

5 One of the items that had a low item total correlation was removed and the scale was based on six items.

[6] A comparison the transnationality index (the average of foreign assets to total assets, foreign sales to total sales and foreign employment to total employment) of the home economies of the world's top 100 TNCs (UNCTAD 2002) shows that this index is much lower for the US (43.0%) than for the European Union (67.1%) and Canada (82.9%). The share in the total of foreign assets of top 100 TNCs for the US has declined from 35.9% in 1995 to 28.1% in 2000, while the EU's share has increased from 43.8% to 53.0%.