The Cultural Grounding of Personal Relationship: Enemyship in North American and West African Worlds

Glenn Adams
University of Kansas

Three studies investigated the implicit constructions of reality associated with cultural differences in enemyship (personal relationship of hatred, malice, and sabotage). Results of interview (Study 1; \( N = 98 \)) and questionnaire (Study 2; \( N = 166 \)) research indicated that enemyship was more prominent among Ghanaian participants than among U.S. participants. Additional evidence located a potential source of these differences in different constructions of relationship. Responses linked the prominence of enemyship to constructions of relationship as inherent, enduring connection (interdependent models). Responses linked the sense of freedom from enemyship to constructions of relationship as the discretionary product of atomistic selves (independent models). An experiment among Ghanaian participants (Study 3; \( N = 48 \)) provided evidence that increasing experience of inherent connection can be sufficient to increase accessibility of enemyship. Results help to illuminate the cultural grounding of personal relationship and other phenomena that are typically invisible in mainstream theory and research.

Keywords: Enemies, Ghana, malice, hatred, Africa

... for it may happen that your most intimate of friends
Can turn out the most treacherous of friends
Actually at the helm plotting your downfall;
At the helm of the mechanics planning your death.
There is no man without an enemy. (Kyei & Schreckenbach, 1975, pp. 72).

The above passage appears in a collection of poems written by a Ghanaian author and inspired by a common sight in many settings throughout West Africa: slogans painted on trucks and taxis (Field, 1960). The theme of this passage—a concern about enemies in intimate spaces—is not limited to vehicle slogans but also features prominently in material artifacts, cultural practices, and social discourse of many West African worlds. Painted vehicle slogans are just one manifestation of broadly distributed representations about enemyship: a personal relationship of hatred and malice in which one person desires another person’s downfall or attempts to sabotage another person’s progress (Wiseman & Duck, 1995).

The prominence of this theme across diverse West African worlds is remarkable because it is at odds with the constructions of reality that prevail across North American worlds and the discipline of psychology. These constructions of reality assume that “normal” people in “normal” circumstances do not have enemies, especially not among friends or other intimate spaces. From this perspective, a concern about personal enemies to the degree expressed in the preceding passage seems like paranoia or some other distortion of enemy-free reality.

Taking these observations as a point of departure, this article describes three studies in a program of research that uses the topic of enemyship to investigate a broader process: the cultural grounding of personal relationship. Rather than treat the prominence of enemyship in West African worlds as a form of distortion, this research investigates the particular constructions of reality that foster and afford this experience. At the same time, rather than assume that the relative absence of enemyship from North American experience is “just natural,” this research also investigates the particular constructions of reality that foster and afford this experience.

Although it takes the form of a cross-cultural comparison, this research deviates from the prevailing practice of cross-cultural psychology. The prevailing practice is to begin with a well-documented phenomenon from mainstream psychology and then investigate variation in this phenomenon along context-general, etic dimensions of culture like individualism–collectivism. In contrast, the present research compares more context-sensitive, emic perspectives informed by ethnographic fieldwork (Pike, 1954; cf. Berry, 1969). It starts with observations in West African settings and builds on these observations to illuminate the typically invisible constructions of reality that underlie relationship experience—
not only in West African worlds but also in North American worlds and the discipline of psychology.

The Prominence of Enemyship in West African Worlds

Given the invisibility of enemyship as a topic in social psychology, the field research on which this study is based was not motivated by an intention to study enemies. Instead, the topic suggests itself as one becomes immersed in West African worlds in which enemyship is a prominent feature. What tends to be prominent in these worlds are not overt acts or explicit declarations of enemyship. Instead enemyship is built into everyday worlds as a prominent social representation (Moscovici, 1984; see also Deaux & Philiogène, 2001) or cultural model (Holland & Quinn, 1987; see also D’Andrade & Strauss, 1992; Markus & Kitayama, 2003; Morris, Menon, & Ames, 2001; Shore, 1996) that people can appropriate to make sense of their own or other people’s experience. How is enemyship “built into everyday worlds”? The following sections describe everyday features of diverse West African worlds that make real the prominence of enemyship.

Cultural Products

The vehicle slogans noted earlier are one example of how the theme of enemyship is built into everyday worlds (Field, 1960). Other examples include calendar art (Adams & Dzokoto, 2003), letters to the editor (Bastian, 1993), video entertainment (Meyer, 1998), and popular songs with titles like “Fear Your Neighbor” (Bleek, 1975) or lyrics like “It is your friend who holds you down while your enemy slaughters you” (B. Awalu, personal communication, February 13, 1999). A particularly noteworthy set of examples are the popular stickers shown in Figure 1. One finds these stickers—and their materialized theme of suspicion about harm in intimate spaces—prominently displayed throughout the West Africa region on bicycles, shop windows, and students’ notebooks.

Besides these explicit representations, enemyship is implicit in another class of cultural products variously called amulets, juju, or medicine. People often report that they display these products as a warning to malicious enviers or as a material prayer for protection from potential saboteurs (Kirby, 1986; Masquelier, 1993). However even when people report reasons that are apparently unrelated to enemyship (e.g., decoration), their actions result in worlds in which these products—and the theme of enemyship that is implicit in them—are prominent features.

Figure 1. Social representations of enemyship given material form in popular stickers. Stickers like these are common on shop windows, dashboards of taxis, and student notebooks.

Cultural Practices

In addition to cultural products, the prominence of enemyship is implicit in cultural practices. One example is infant seclusion, a practice whereby mother and child remain indoors without visitors for 7 days after birth as a precaution against harm from envious observers (e.g., Jackson, 1989, pp. 76; Oppong, 1973; Riesman, 1986). Another example is the practice of divination. In situations of misfortune, it is common for people in many West African settings to consult diviners who apply a variety of mystical techniques in an attempt to identify the source of misfortune. The sources that this process proposes typically fall into regular categories, one of which is mischief of personal enemies (e.g., Kirby, 1986; Mendonsa, 1982).

Especially noteworthy in relation to enemyship are a set of practices referred to in English as sorcery, juju, or witchcraft. Although the specifics of these phenomena vary across cultural settings, the unifying theme is the belief that people can harm each other through supernatural means. These phenomena intersect with enemyship in two general ways. In one direction, people who suspect enemyship fear sorcery as a means through which enemies will express their hatred and malice (Assimeng, 1989; Geschiere, 1997; Jackson, 1975; Tait, 1963). In the other direction, people who suspect sorcery attribute it to their enemies: people from whom they suspect hatred, malice, and ill will (Evans-Pritchard, 1976/1937, pp. 33). In either case—and regardless of whether one believes in the efficacy of supernatural attacks (see Appiah, 1992, pp. 188)—the prominence of sorcery in everyday discourse contributes to worlds in which enemyship is a frequent theme.

Discourse About Domestic Life

In addition to discourse about sorcery, enemyship is built into West African worlds in everyday discourse about domestic life. Many languages include versions of proverbs—such as “if an insect bites you, it comes from inside your clothes” or “hated comes from the house”—that emphasize the danger of malicious harm in close, interpersonal spaces (e.g., Dolphyne, 1996). These include the most intimate of interpersonal spaces, family. Although ideological prescriptions about family life in many West African settings emphasize harmony and cheerful obedience, everyday talk often emphasizes the potential for discord, hatred, and the “dark side of kinship” (Geschiere, 1997, p. 11).

The reasons for the emphasis on discord become apparent when one considers the circumstances of domestic life. People in West

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1 The word translated as slaughter refers to the act of slitting an animal’s throat to prepare it for sacrificial offering.

2 Although the concepts of enemyship and sorcery intersect, they are conceptually distinct. On one hand, local understandings suggest that people engage in sorcery for reasons unrelated to interpersonal hatred (e.g., the desire to obtain wealth; Dzokoto & Adams, 2005). On the other hand, local understandings suggest that attacks of enemies are not limited to supernatural means like sorcery, but also can occur through more ordinary means (e.g., slander or betrayal of secrets). The extent to which enemyship and sorcery phenomena are empirically distinct is a question for which the present study provides relevant data. For comprehensive discussions of sorcery-like phenomena in African settings, see Assimeng (1989), Evans-Pritchard (1976/1937), or Geschiere (1997).
African settings are generally coresident with a larger set of kin than are people in the worlds that inform social–psychological theory and research. This set includes not only what one might call “extended” family, but also cases of polygamous marriage where multiple wives of the same man, plus these women’s children, can reside in the same compound. Combined with smaller supplies of everyday resources, the result is that—valued or not—everyday life in many West African settings entails the experience of interdependence. People in many West African settings share food from a common bowl, share sleep in a common bed, and inhabit rooms that are six times more densely populated than those inhabited by their counterparts in mainstream American settings (Ingoldsby & Smith, 1995, pp. 417). Tensions are likely to arise in such situations, despite ideologies of harmony, and local realities are less likely than in mainstream American settings to afford separation or escape from these tensions (Bohannan, 1971; Karanja, 1987).

Discourse about domestic relationship highlights the construction of enemyship that is a prominent in many West African worlds. Rather than a distortion of enemy-free reality, everyday worlds promote an experience of enemyship as an inherent fact of social existence. It is not limited to political actors or intergroup conflict but is part of normal relations inside the community.

The Near Absence of Enemyship From North American Psychology

The prominence of enemyship in many West African worlds contrasts with the perspective of psychological science, from which the topic of personal enemies is relatively absent (cf. Femlee & Sprecher, 2000; Wiseman & Duck, 1995). Searches of the PsycInfo database regularly produce one-tenth the number of citations for keywords related to enemy and hatred than they do for friend and love. Moreover, most citations for enemy do not refer to personal relationship, but instead refer to ethnic conflict, warfare, or other intergroup phenomena (cf. Rieber, 1991; Silverstein & Holt, 1989). Even when citations do refer to personal relationship, they typically use enemy loosely to refer to cases of mere dislike or as the contrast for a primary focus on friendship (e.g., Ebbesen, Kjos, & Konecni, 1976). Only rarely do citations for enemy refer to the present topic: personal relationship of hatred, malice, and sabotage.

Does the construction of enemyship that prevails in psychological science resonate with the experience of people in the North American worlds in which most research is based? Evidence is mixed. On one hand, the few studies that investigate the experience of personal enemies indicate that the phenomenon is not entirely absent. In an interview study among adults in Southern California settings, Wiseman (1989) found that only “a small percentage of participants claimed they had no enemies” (as cited in Wiseman & Duck, 1995; see also Holt, 1989).

On the other hand, even when people in North American worlds do report enemies, they tend to do so in ways that reveal a construction of enemyship as abnormal. For example, Wiseman and Duck (1995) report that participants in Wiseman’s (1989) study often attributed enemyship to the enemy’s pathological obsession or immaturity. Participants described a feeling of surprise, not merely about the identity of the enemy, but also about the very possibility of enemyship. They often reported depressed self-esteem because they felt powerless to resolve the apparently abnormal situation, and they held themselves somehow responsible for its persistence.

Whether or not people in North American worlds typically report enemies, research suggests that they can sometimes experience themselves to be the target of malice under certain conditions. Anecdotal reports suggest that Americans experienced a stronger sense of themselves as the target of enemies in the weeks following the September 2001 terrorist attacks. In addition, situations that promote experience of oneself as the object of other peoples’ attention—like distinctiveness, evaluative scrutiny, or uncertainty about social standing—tend to promote “paranoid cognition” and the belief that one is the target of enemies (Fenigstein & Vanable, 1992; Kramer, 1994, 1998). Still, the more general sense implicit in labels like paranoid cognition is that enemyship experience is not quite normal.

Implicit Models of Self and Relationship

How is one to explain apparent differences in the experience of enemies? Treating the prominence of enemyship as the phenomenon that requires explanation, most accounts imply that the source of these differences lies in something pathological about West African worlds. For example, noting its association with practices like sorcery, some observers propose that the prominence of enemyship is a manifestation of ignorance or superstition (see Jahoda, 1969, 1970). Noting its association with the concept of paranoia, other accounts propose that the prominence of enemyship reflects collective psychopathology (Parin, Morgenthaler, & Parin-Matthey, 1980). In contrast, the present research considers the less pathologizing possibility that differences in the prominence of enemyship reflect more neutral differences in prevailing models of self and relationship.

Theory and research in a variety of disciplines have emphasized the extent to which psychological experience in contemporary North American worlds is rooted in individualist, atomistic, or independent selfways (Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997; cf. Baumeister, 1987; Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swindler, & Tipton, 1985; Dumont, 1970; Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1990; Roland, 1988; Shweder & Bourne, 1984). These constructions of reality locate self in the internal properties of inherently separate particles. They frame interpersonal connection as a discretionary and often tenuous arrangement of more basic, unconnected selves (Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990).

In contrast, writers have used phrases like relational (Piot, 1999; Shaw, 2000) or interdependent (Adams & Dzokoto, 2003; Fiske et al., 1998; Markus et al., 1997) to describe the selfways that are implicit in social discourse and material reality of diverse West African worlds. Rather than internal properties of bounded entities, these constructions of reality locate self-experience in preexisting
fields of relational force (Gyekye, 1992; Jackson, 1982). Rather than separate particles, they promote an experience of inherent connection, not only to other people (living and dead), but also to place, spiritual forces, and a sense of built-in order (Fiske, 1991; Geschiere & Gugler, 1998; Kirby, 1986; Riesman, 1986; Tengan, 1991).

Participant observation and a review of ethnographic literature suggest a link between these relational or interdependent selfways and the prominence of enemyship in West African worlds. At first, this hypothesis may seem paradoxical, especially because prevailing conceptions associate interdependence with collectivist values of harmony or self-effacing cooperation (Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000; Dion & Dion, 1988; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). On the basis of these prevailing conceptions, one might suppose that enemyship would be less prominent among self-effacing, interdependence-minded West African collectivists than self-promoting, independence-minded North American individualists. The key to this apparent paradox is to understand concepts like relational or interdependent to refer not to value orientations or prescriptive beliefs about how things should be, but instead to constructions of reality or descriptive beliefs about how things are. Understood in this way, there are at least three interrelated bases for a hypothesized link between differences in enemyship and locally prevalent models of self and relationship.

Objective Self-Awareness

One basis for this hypothesized link concerns objective self-awareness (Duval & Wicklund, 1972): experience of self as the object of other people’s attention. Theory and research on the cultural grounding of self have suggested that the experience of objective self-awareness manipulated by social psychologists in laboratory settings mimics a more enduring attention to self as the objects of other’s attention that characterizes worlds where interdependent models of self and relationship are prominent (Cohen & Gunz, 2002; Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999). In turn, research in social psychology has linked the experience of objective self-awareness (and the related concept of public self-consciousness) to a manifestation of enemyship experience, “paranoid” cognition (Fenigstein, 1984; Fenigstein & Vanable, 1992; Kramer, 1994, 1998). To the extent that interdependent selfways do promote objective self-awareness, they may also promote experience of enemyship.

Openness to Interpersonal Influence

Another basis for this hypothesized link concerns the experience of interpersonal influence. Besides connotations of cooperation, self-effacement, and pursuit of harmony, interdependent selfways may promote a sense of openness to interpersonal influence that includes the potential for enemyship. In the words of one authority, “[t]he common African understanding of the person, which perceives the self as connected to forces and entities outside it, carries considerable risks and dangers of its own” (Riesman, 1986; pp. 77). In contrast, to the extent that more independent selfways promote the experience of interpersonal separation, they may afford a sense of insulation from unwanted interpersonal influences like enemyship.

Constructions of Relationship

A third basis for the hypothesized link concerns implications of different selfways for different models of relationship (Adams & Dzokoto, 2003). The relatively interdependent selfways that prevail in many West African worlds promote the experience of inherent connection in fields of relational force. This experience of connection implies models of relationship—including negative forms like enemyship—as a more-or-less inevitable fact of social life. In contrast, the experience of inherent separation associated with independent selfways implies models of relationship as a discretionary product or effortful creation (Bellah et al., 1985). These models afford a default sense of freedom from enemies, except in rare instances where people expend effort to build and maintain negative connections. To emphasize this link between different selfways and local constructions of relationship, the following discussion refers to interdependent (and independent) models of self and relationship.

Overview of the Present Research

This article reports three studies that investigate the cultural grounding of enemyship. Study 1 used an open-ended interview method to explore the depth of differences in enemyship. It attempted to determine whether the prominence of enemyship in West African discourse reflects a relatively superficial difference in definitions or instead reflects a more profound difference in the construction and experience of social reality. Study 2 used a written survey method to further investigate both cultural differences in experience of enemyship and their hypothesized link to different models of self and relationship. Study 3 provided an experimental test of this hypothesized link. Specifically, it considered whether increased experience of connection or interdependence can be sufficient to produce differences in experience of enemyship.

Before describing these studies, it is important to note the definition of culture that informs this research. I define culture as explicit and implicit patterns of historically derived and selected ideas and their embodiment in institutions, practices, and artifacts (see Adams & Markus, 2001, 2004; based on Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952, pp. 357). This definition deemphasizes the association of culture with group and instead locates it in more diffuse models or social representations. From this perspective, labels like North American and West African do not refer to monolithic entities. Instead, they refer to the dynamic, diffuse patterns that form the common ground for experience in the diverse worlds associated with these labels. Similarly, the labels independent and interdependent are best interpreted, not as overly reified categories, but instead as a rough dimension of variation in constructions of self and social reality (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). The goal of the present research was to trace the implications of this dimension for experience of personal relationship.

Study 1

Study 1 took the form of a semistructured, ethnographic-style interview. Although the interview method is not common in the field of social psychology, it is an advisable first step when an
investigator compares the experience of a phenomenon across different cultural worlds (Greenfield, 1997). Rather than assume that one’s conceptualization of a phenomenon generalizes across contexts, it is important to explore local experience of the phenomenon. What do people mean when they say that they have enemies? Do they refer to serious hatred or mere dislike? Do they refer to cases of mutual hatred or unreciprocated hatred? The interview method—characterized by an open-ended format, attention to local meaning, and minimal imposition on participants’ responses—is ideal for answering such questions.

Despite the exploratory outlook of the study, field observations and ethnographic literature made it possible to articulate some initial hypotheses. A first hypothesis was that differences in material representations and social discourse about enmity orship would have a parallel in psychological experience. That is, one can expect the prominence of enmity in self and social perception to be more evident and regarded as more normal among participants in West African settings than among participants in North American settings.

Another set of hypotheses addressed the idea that differences in enmity orship reflect broader differences in implicit models of self and relationship. One hypothesis was that, reflecting the relative prominence of interdependent selfways, participants in West African settings would be more likely than participants in North American settings to describe an experience of relationship (including enmity) as an inevitable fact of social existence. A second hypothesis was that, reflecting the relative prominence of independent selfways, participants in North American settings would be more likely than those in West African settings to describe an experience or relationship (including enmity) as the discretionary product or voluntary creation of inherently separate selves. The corollary to these hypotheses was that, across cultural settings, the tendency to describe relationship as an inevitable fact of social existence (rather than discretionary product) would be positively associated with the experience of enmity.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited alone or in groups of 2 or 3 people from settings in the West African country of Ghana (n = 48) and the San Francisco Bay area of the United States (n = 50). They included (a) 29 nonstudent adults in the San Francisco Bay area (48% women); (b) 21 students at an elite university located in the San Francisco Bay area (67% women); (c) 10 nonstudent adults in Accra, the capital city of Ghana (40% women); (d) 10 students at the University of Ghana, located near Accra (40% women); (e) 19 nonstudent adults in the relatively rural Upper East Region of northern Ghana (42% women); and (f) 9 students at the Navrongo campus of the University for Development Studies, located in the Upper East Region (22% women).

Interview Prompts and Procedure

Interviewers approached potential participants in public spaces (i.e., markets, parks, transportation centers, and student unions) through the medium of English. To determine potential participants, the interviewer randomly selected a number, y, and then invited every yth person or group that they encountered to participate in a recorded interview about friends and enemies. More than 90% of individuals who were approached agreed to participate.

Researchers conducted the interviews in English, the official language of Ghana and language of instruction in both Ghanaian and American schools. After an initial, standard set of questions concerning friendship (Adams & Plaut, 2003), the interviewer conducted the enemy portion of the study. To begin, the interviewer asked participants whether or not they had enemies, first without specifying a definition and then according to a definition derived from preliminary field research in Ghanaian settings: “Are there people who hate you, personally, to the extent of wishing for your downfall or trying to sabotage your progress?” These prompts served as indicators of personal experience of enmity. Next, the interviewer asked participants to describe how they would respond to the discovery that someone in their local environment hated them and took them as an enemy. This prompt served as an indicator of behavioral intentions regarding enmity. Finally, the interviewer asked participants to evaluate two hypothetical enemies? first a person who denied having enemies (no enemies person) and then a person who was certain that he or she was the target of hatred, malice, and sabotage from unidentified enemies (hidden enemies person). These prompts served as a social perception task involving enmity. When participants finished responding, the interviewer thanked them for their input, debriefed them about the purpose of the study, and offered to discuss any questions they might have about the research.

Interviewers

I conducted some interviews in all research settings. Two women (one European American and one African American) conducted the remaining American interviews. A Ghanaian man conducted the remaining Ghanaian interviews. Research assistants were not informed of specific hypotheses.

Preliminary, within-setting analyses of all outcomes yielded no evidence that interviewer identity influenced participants’ responses. This provides some assurance that differences reported in the results section are not a function of different interviewers.

Interview Type

Roughly half of the participants (21 of 50 Americans and 28 of 48 Ghanaians) completed the interview in groups of 2 or 3 people. The rationale for this procedure was consistent with the emic perspective of the study: to create an interactive exchange that would elicit more discussion about local constructions of reality than would interviews with a lone participant (cf. Morgan, 1996). A preliminary analysis of all variables including interview type as a factor in the design revealed no main effects or interactions with cultural setting. This provides some assurance that observed differences are not due to different proportions of interview types across cultural settings.

One potential drawback of group interviews is the nonindependence of participant-level observations and the corresponding question of appropriate unit of analysis. However, results do not change as a function of analysis at the level of session or individual participant. Accordingly, I report results at the participant level, in part for ease of presentation but also because people within group interviews often expressed contradictory ideas that were difficult to code at session level.

Coding Scheme and Procedure

The interview coding scheme consisted of two types of measures. The first type (see Table 1) required coders to make categorical judgments about participants’ responses. Some measures of this type referred to specific interview prompts. Coders made dichotomous judgments of whether or not participants answered “yes” to the question, “Do you have enemies?”; claimed to be the target of enemies given the operational definition; regarded the hypothetical, no enemies target as naive or foolish; and regarded the hypothetical, hidden enemies person as paranoid or abnormal. Other measures of this type referred to the interview as a whole.
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Table 1
Description of Dichotomous Coding Measures and Tests of Cross-National Differences (Study 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding measure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Ghana (%)</th>
<th>U.S. (%)</th>
<th>$\chi^2(1, N = 98)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have enemy</td>
<td>Answers “yes” to the question “Do you have enemies?”</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.33*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target of enemy</td>
<td>Claims to be target of enemyship given specified definition (e.g., “Definitely, because some people just don’t want your existence at all.” [GH])</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19.78***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid</td>
<td>Regards the hidden enemies target as abnormally suspicious (e.g., “I would think they were paranoid.” [US])</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15.60***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naive</td>
<td>Regards the no enemies target as foolish or naive (e.g., “I think that person has lost his senses.” [GH])</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12.55***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supernatural</td>
<td>Mentions supernatural forms of harm (e.g., “Maybe he is a witch, and if he hates you, he will wish ill against you spiritually.” [GH])</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup</td>
<td>Constructs enemies as group phenomenon (e.g., “There are people who consider us political enemies just because of our nationality.” [US])</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.96**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given/inevitable</td>
<td>Implies model of relationship as inherent connection (e.g., “Yes, [I have enemies] because human beings are social beings.” [GH])</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12.06***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product of choice</td>
<td>Implies model of relationship as discretionary product (e.g., “That’s up to me to decide and I choose not.” [US])</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24.41***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. GH indicates that the example is from responses of a Ghanaian participant; US indicates that the example is from responses of an American participant.

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

Coders made dichotomous judgments of whether or not, over the course of the entire interview, participants invoked an intergroup conception of enemyship; spoke about relationship as an inevitable fact of social life; or spoke about relationship as a discretionary, manufactured product. In addition to these dichotomous judgments, coders indicated which of four categories—(a) confront the person, (b) seek protection, (c) change one’s behavior to avoid the person, or (d) ignore the person and do nothing—best captured participants’ responses to the indicator of behavioral intentions regarding enemyship.

The second type of measure (see Table 2) required coders to rate participants’ responses on 5-point Likert scales. Two measures required coders to rate participants’ responses on a scale from −2 (extremely negative) to 2 (extremely positive) in terms of their implicit evaluations of no enemies and hidden enemies targets. A third measure required coders to use a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much) to rate the extent to which, over the entire interview, participants’ remarks suggested that they were the target of enemyship and experienced enemyship as a discretionary product.

Two students (an African American woman and a European American woman) applied the coding scheme to transcripts of tape-recorded interviews to yield the results reported below. Both coders were unaware of hypotheses, and no explicit indication of sex, nationality, or student status appeared on the transcripts. For measures requiring categorical judgments, percent agreement between coders—determined by calculating the number of times the two coders made the same judgment over all eight measures for all 98 cases—was 84%. In the remaining instances, judgments of a third coder (a Ghanaian woman attending an American university) served to resolve disagreements. Interrater reliability for the three scale measures ranged from $r = .78$ to $r = .88$ ($M = .84$). The mean of the two coders’ ratings for each measure provided the data for analyses that follow.

Results and Discussion

Although the primary purpose was to investigate differences between North American and West African settings, the design of the study included two factors—sex and university student status—that could also influence enemyship experience. To the extent that interdependent constructions of self are more prominent among women and nonstudents than among men and university students (e.g., Cross & Madson, 1997; Greenfield et al., 2003), one might hypothesize that enemyship would be more prominent among the former than among the latter. In order to test for effects of sex and student status, it was necessary that I include these variables along with cultural setting as categorical predictors of the each coding measure. When coding measures took the form of scale ratings, the appropriate statistical technique was analysis of variance (ANOVA). When coding measures took the form of dichotomous judgments, the appropriate technique was log-linear analysis, for which partial associations between combinations of

Table 2
Description of Scale Ratings and Tests of Cross-National Differences (Study 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Ghana</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>$F (1, 90)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enemyship rating</td>
<td>To what extent do responses imply that participant is target of enemyship?</td>
<td>3.82 (0.92)</td>
<td>2.40 (1.22)</td>
<td>36.45***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enemy person</td>
<td>How positive are remarks about the hidden enemies target?</td>
<td>0.05 (1.10)</td>
<td>−0.46 (0.94)</td>
<td>6.42**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No enemies person</td>
<td>How positive are remarks about the no enemies target?</td>
<td>−0.57 (1.13)</td>
<td>0.28 (1.08)</td>
<td>16.32***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Table entries are means of coders’ ratings; standard deviations are in parentheses.

*p < .01. **p < .001.
categorical predictors and the dichotomous outcome variable are analogous to main effects and interactions in factorial ANOVA (Marascuilo & Busk, 1987). Because of the large number of statistical tests, I set a relatively conservative criterion of $\alpha = .01$ for reporting effects. With one exception (noted later), analyses revealed no effects of sex or student status that met this criterion, either as main effects or in interactions with cultural setting. Results of these analyses as a function of cultural setting appear in Table 1 for dichotomous judgments and Table 2 for scale ratings.\(^5\)

Besides evaluating hypotheses about cultural differences, a second purpose of the study was to provide a context-sensitive, emic perspective on the experience of enmyship in West African and North American worlds. In pursuit of this objective, the discussion that follows includes extensive quotations from participants. Rather than evidence in support of hypotheses, the purpose of these quotations is to help illuminate differences documented by more conventional means.

**Prominence of Enmyship in Personal Experience**

Do differences in material representations and social discourse about enmyship have a parallel in personal experience? Coding measures addressed this question in three ways. First, coders rated the extent to which participants’ responses indicated the experience of being a target of personal enemies. The ANOVA for these ratings revealed the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $F(1, 90) = 36.45, p < .01, \eta^2 = .337$, plus an orthogonal effect of student status, $F(1, 90) = 7.42, p < .01, \eta^2 = .276$. Coders rated the experience of enemyship to be more prominent among Ghanaian participants ($M = 3.88, SD = 0.92$) than among American participants ($M = 2.40, SD = 1.22$) and among nonstudents ($M = 3.38, SD = 1.31$) than among students ($M = 2.69, SD = 1.16$).

Second, coders judged whether participants answered “yes” (rather than “no” or “don’t know”) to the question “Do you have enemies?” As hypothesized, the percentage of participants who answered “yes” to this question about having enemies was larger in Ghanaian settings (48%) than in American settings (26%). Log-linear analyses indicated that this effect of cultural setting was marginally significant (with the criterion of $\alpha = .01$), $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 4.33, p < .05$, Cohen’s $w = .210$.

Third, coders judged whether participants answered “yes” to the question about being the target of enemies. As hypothesized, the percentage of participants who answered “yes” was greater across Ghanaian settings (71%) than in American settings (26%). Log-linear analyses indicated that only this effect of cultural setting was significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 19.78, p < .01$, Cohen’s $w = .449$.

A comparison of these measures indicates that Ghanaian participants were more likely to report being the target of enmyship (71%) than to report having enemies (48%). McNemar $\chi^2(1, N = 48) = 11.00, p < .01$. There are two points to note about this pattern. First, a possible interpretation of this pattern is that having enemies implies greater responsibility or participation in enmyship than does merely being the target. Although Ghanaian participants were somewhat reluctant to claim participation in enmyship, they were more likely to claim to be an unwilling target, in part because of a prevailing sense that a person bears little responsibility for others’ hatred. In contrast, remarks of many American participants (discussed later) imply that a person does bear some responsibility for being the target of enemies. As a result, they were equally as likely to deny being the target as they were to deny having enemies.

Second, this pattern convincingly addresses a trivializing explanation for cultural differences in the prominence of enmyship. According to this explanation, differences in the tendency to claim enemies may arise from differences in the definition of enemy rather than differences in the construction and experience of social reality. That is, people in Ghanaian settings may claim enemies more frequently than people in American settings, not because they have a more prominent experience of hatred and malice, but instead because they use the word enemy in a more liberal fashion to refer to relationships of mere dislike. If this were the case, then specifying a conservative definition of enemy should reduce the cultural difference. In contrast, results indicated that the more conservative definition increased the cultural difference. In other words, any ambiguity that exists in the absence of a definition for enemy tends to understate cultural differences in enmyship rather than produce superficial differences in talk about enmyship.

**Reaction to Discovery of an Enemy**

As an indicator of the extent to which differences in the experience of enmyship extend to behavioral intentions, interviewers asked participants to describe how they would act if they were to discover that they were the target of hatred, malice, and sabotage from people in the community. Responses to this prompt fell into four main categories: confront the person, seek protection, modify one’s behavior to avoid the person, or ignore the person and do nothing. The corresponding distribution of responses appears in Table 3. Log-linear analysis of this distribution indicated only the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $\chi^2(3, N = 89) = 13.99, p < .01$, Cohen’s $w = .396$.

To the extent that American participants feel insulated from unwanted relational influence, one can hypothesize that they should feel greater freedom than Ghanaian participants to ignore or do nothing in response to the threat of enemies. The last row of Table 3 provides the data with which to evaluate this hypothesis. The percentage of participants whose responses indicated that they would ignore or do nothing was greater in American settings (43%) than in Ghanaian settings (11%). Log-linear analysis of the corresponding dichotomous outcome revealed that this cultural difference was significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 89) = 10.52, p < .01$, Cohen’s $w = .344$.

\(^5\) Variation in the number of participants across analyses in Studies 1 and 2 indicates cases in which participants declined to respond to an item or did so incorrectly.
Social Perception

Additional interview prompts considered whether differences in the experience of enemyship extended to social perception. Interviewers asked participants for their impression of hypothetical targets who (a) claimed to have hidden enemies (the modal pattern among Ghanaian participants) and (b) claimed to have no enemies (the modal pattern among American participants).

Hidden Enemies Person

First, coders rated the evaluation implicit in participants’ remarks about the hidden enemies target. The ANOVA for these ratings revealed only the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $F(1, 90) = 6.42, p < .01, \eta = .259$, indicating that Ghanaian participants regarded the hidden enemies target more positively than did American participants. In fact, mean ratings for participants in each setting fell on opposite sides of the neutral midpoint, that is, on the positive side of the scale for Ghanaian participants ($M = 0.05, SD = 1.10$), but on the negative side for American participants ($M = -0.46, SD = 0.94$).

Closer examination of the content of participants’ responses helps to reveal the source of American participants’ negativity toward the hidden enemies target. American participants tended to regard the hidden enemies target in pathologizing terms that resonated with a construction of enemyship as the product of people or circumstances that are not quite normal. Indeed, 20% of American participants (but no Ghanaian participants) used the word paranoid to describe this person. For example, an American participant reported that

> I would think they were paranoid, unless there was some reason—like if they explain it to me and they have a legitimate reason. But if they think that there is just some random person out there who is out to harm them, I think that is a bit strange.

More generally, coders judged whether or not each participant regarded the hidden enemies target as abnormally suspicious. Log-linear analyses of these dichotomous judgments revealed only the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $\chi^2(1, N = 96) = 12.55, p < .01, \text{Cohen’s } w = .362$. The percentage of participants who regarded the no enemies target as naive or foolish was greater in Ghanian settings (50%) than in American settings (18%).

No Enemies Person

A different pattern emerged for coders ratings of the evaluation implicit in participants’ remarks about the no enemies target. The ANOVA for these ratings again revealed only the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $F(1, 90) = 16.32, p < .01, \eta = .392$, this time indicating that American participants regarded the no enemies target more positively than did Ghanaian participants. Mean ratings for students in each setting again fell on opposite sides of the neutral midpoint, that is, on the positive side of the scale for American participants ($M = 0.28, SD = 1.08$), but on the negative side for Ghanaian participants ($M = -0.57, SD = 1.13$).

Closer examination of the content of responses helps to reveal the source of Ghanaian participants’ negativity toward this target. Although Ghanaian participants often indicated that one should not dwell on the possibility of enemyship, they also tended to indicate that it was foolish to believe that one was free from enemyship. In the words of a Ghanaian participant, “You cannot go out and say you don’t have enemies. You cannot be sure. Even your best friend, somebody who might be close, might be your enemy.”

Another Ghanaian participant was even more emphatic: “She’s a big liar. She doesn’t want to accept that she has. Even Jesus Christ had enemies. Who are you? If you want to live in fools’ paradise, fine. But as for me . . . I know I have enemies.”

More generally, coders judged whether or not each participant regarded the no enemies target as naive or foolish. Log-linear analyses of these dichotomous judgments revealed only the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $\chi^2(1, N = 96) = 12.55, p < .01, \text{Cohen’s } w = .362$. The percentage of participants who regarded the no enemies target as naive or foolish was greater in Ghanaian settings (50%) than in American settings (18%).

Potential Sources

Besides differences in the prominence of enemyship, an equally important purpose of the present research was to investigate potential sources of these differences. Particularly interesting are potential sources for which the present results provide little or no support.

Supernatural or natural? One explanation for the prominent concern with enemies in West African worlds links it to beliefs in sorcery and other forms of supernatural harm. However, log-linear analyses for this outcome revealed no evidence for this explanation. The tendency to mention supernatural harm was no greater among Ghanaian participants (4 of 48, or 8%) than among American participants (3 of 50, or 6%). Rather than supernatural forms of harm, Ghanaian participants mentioned relatively ordinary phenomena like gossip, revealing secrets, or betrayal.

Collective or interpersonal? Another explanation for the prominent concern with enemies in West African worlds links it to the experience of self in terms of collective entities engaged in intergroup conflict. Although this explanation resonates with stereotypes that associate African worlds with tribalism and ethnic violence, coders noted an intergroup sense of enemies in only 6 participants, all of whom were American (see Szalay & Mir-Djalali, 1991). Log-linear analysis indicated that this effect of cultural setting was significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 7.96, p < .01, \text{Cohen’s } w = .285$; however, the low frequency of intergroup responses means that one should interpret this significance test with caution.

If not competing out-groups, then who did Ghanaian participants have in mind when they claimed enemies? One participant spoke about hatred from an older brother:

Yes I have enemies, of course. I have a wife and children and grandchildren now. The one who was born before me hasn’t . . . In my father’s house, he is there. He hasn’t brought forth, even though
he will call me his child, and I have a wife, and children, and grandchildren. You think this man will be happy and nice to me?

Another participant spoke about hatred from a senior male relative:

I was born alone in my father’s house—no sister, no brother. But there was my senior father who wished to see my downfall, didn’t want me to prosper, always speaking badly to me. . . . I know that he is my enemy, so I don’t go there.

Examples like these suggest that the potential enemies Ghanaian participants have in mind are not members of competing outgroups, but instead people—neighbors, friends, and even relatives—who reside in close, in-group spaces. Rather than intergroup relationship and collectivist forms of interdependence, their responses associate enemypship with interpersonal relationship and relational forms of interdependence (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Cross et al., 2000).

**Implicit Models of Self and Relationship**

Instead of something pathological about West African settings (like superstition or tribalism), the present research considers the possibility that differences in the prominence of enemypship are associated with larger, more neutral differences in models of self and relationship.

**Interdependent models:** Relationship as inherent connection. As an indicator of interdependent models, coders judged whether or not participants’ responses suggested an experience of relationship as given or inevitable. Log-linear analysis of these judgments revealed only the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 12.06, p < .01$, Cohen’s $w = .351$. The percentage of participants whose responses implied models of relationship as given or inevitable was greater among Ghanaian participants (73%) than among American participants (38%).

Table 4 displays quotes from Ghanaian participants that both illustrate this construction of relationship as inherent connection and suggest how this construction may be linked to the prominent experience of enemypship. As these quotes suggest, Ghanaian participants did not necessarily claim enemies on the basis of inherent connection to the target. Ghanaian participants often stressed that they did not reciprocate enemypship. As a participant put it, “I am a God-fearing person. You say you hate me, you don’t like me. I will give everything to God. You are my enemy? I don’t hate you for that.”

American participants did not necessarily claim to reciprocate enemypship. However, resonating with more independent models of relationship as a discretionary product, their responses often implied an experience of enemypship as something for which the target was somehow responsible. For example, one participant noted that, “I think [having enemies] is up to the individual. If someone dislikes me then they can, but that does not make them my enemy. That is up to me to decide and I choose not.” Another participant was even more emphatic.

To have an enemy, like it is too much work to have somebody you hate and who hates you. . . . I cannot quite understand how someone would make an enemy, or you know, why one would continue to interact with somebody who one did not like.

Table 4 displays additional quotes from American participants that illustrate this pattern.

The tendency to imply a construction of relationship as the discretionary product of more basic, autonomous selves served as an indicator of independent models of relationship. Log-linear analysis of coders’ judgments for this indicator revealed only the hypothesized effect of cultural setting, $\chi^2(1, N = 98) = 24.41, p < .01$, Cohen’s $w = .499$. The percentage of participants whose responses implied a construction of relationship as a discretionary product was greater among American participants (48%) than among Ghanaian participants (6%).
Hypothesized link to enemyship experience. The preceding analyses provide evidence of hypothesized cultural differences in implicit models of self and relationship. What about the hypothesized link between these models and the experience of enemyship? To address this question requires analyses that examine the association between models of relationship and enemyship experience, controlling for the common influence of cultural setting.

Coders’ judgments of interdependent and independent models were negatively correlated, $\phi(98) = -0.401, p < .01$ (for Ghanaian participants, $\phi[48] = -0.340, p < .01$; for American participants, $\phi[50] = -0.230, p < .12$). To create a single measure of implicit models of relationship (IMR), I assigned values of $-1, 0$, or $1$ for cases in which paired judgments of independent and interdependent models were $1$ and $0, 1$ and $1$, or $0$ and $1$, respectively. Scores on this measure coded the tendency to construct relationship as inherent connection ($1$) rather than discretionary product ($-1$). The mean score for Ghanaian participants ($M = 0.67, SD = 0.56$) was on the interdependent side of the scale. The mean score for American participants ($M = -0.10, SD = 0.81$) was on the independent side of the scale. The three-way ANOVA of IMR scores indicated that only this main effect of cultural setting was significant, $F(1, 90) = 31.45, p < .01, \eta^2 = .309$.

I then regressed coders’ ratings of the extent to which participants’ remarks implied enemyship on IMR scores and an indicator of cultural setting (U.S. = 0, Ghanaian = 1). When cultural setting was the sole predictor, its bivariate relationship with enemyship ratings was highly significant: $\beta = 0.55, t(96) = 6.51, p < .01$. When cultural setting and IMR scores were simultaneous predictors, the independent contribution of cultural setting to prediction of enemyship ratings was smaller but remained significant: $\beta = 0.32, t(95) = 3.82, p < .01$. More important, the independent contribution of IMR scores to prediction of enemyship ratings was also significant: $\beta = 0.48, t(95) = 5.67, p < .01$. Independent of cultural setting, participants whose remarks implied relatively interdependent models of relationship (as inherent connection) showed greater evidence of personal enemyship than did participants whose remarks implied relatively independent models of relationship (as discretionary product).

Summary

Results of Study 1 provide strong support for the hypothesis that differences in material representations and social discourse about enemyship extend to personal experience. Participants from diverse Ghanaian settings were (a) more likely to claim enemies, (b) less likely to indicate that they would ignore a newly discovered enemy, (c) less favorably inclined toward a person who claimed to have no enemies, and (d) more favorably inclined toward a person who claimed to be the target of hidden enemies than were participants in American settings.

In addition, results provide some evidence linking differences in the experience of enemyship to broader differences in models of self and relationship. Ghanaian participants were more likely than American participants to imply an experience of relationship as inherent connection, a tendency that was positively associated with enemyship experience across settings. Conversely, American participants were more likely than Ghanaian participants to imply an experience of relationship as discretionary product, a tendency that was negatively associated with enemyship experience across settings.

Although results of the present study suggest strong associations between cultural setting, relationship models, and enemyship experience, there are limitations to this evidence that complicate interpretation of the results. One limitation is that evidence comes indirectly from coders’ judgments rather than directly from participants’ responses. This raises the possibility that observed associations between cultural setting, relationship models, and enemyship outcomes are more a reflections of coders’ interpretations than participants’ experience. Another limitation is that participants’ responses necessarily emerged in the context of a dialogue between interviewer and participants. Although interviewers were trained to behave in a standard fashion, the interactive nature of the interview context increased the potential for the researcher to exert subtle influence on participants’ responses.

In Study 2, I attempted to address these limitations by investigating cultural differences in enemyship, using the method of a written questionnaire. One benefit of this method was to permit greater standardization in the administration of procedures, which reduced opportunities for researchers to exert subtle influences on participant responses. Another benefit of this method was to permit analyses based more directly on participants’ responses. This permitted an examination of the relationship between models of relationship and experience of enemyship that were based more directly on participants’ experience rather than coders’ judgments.

Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to permit a more controlled test of hypotheses explored in Study 1. The first hypothesis was again that the prominence of enemyship would be more evident in questionnaire responses of Ghanaian participants than in responses of American participants. The second hypothesis again concerned a

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6 If one includes the Cultural Setting × IMR interaction term in the model, results indicate that it makes a marginally significant contribution to the prediction of enemyship scores, $\beta = 0.21, t(94) = 1.78, p < .08$. To interpret this pattern, I regressed enemyship ratings on IMR scores separately within each cultural setting. Although the relationship between IMR scores and enemyship ratings was stronger among Ghanaian participants, $r = .69, t(46) = 6.47, p < .01$, than American participants, $r = .41, t(48) = 3.31, p < .01$, it was nevertheless significant in both settings. Results reported in the text are similar whether or not the interaction term is present in the model.

7 A further question is whether cultural differences in IMR mediate cultural differences in enemyship ratings. Results described in this paragraph are consistent with a mediation account, and a Sobel’s (1982) test confirms that a mediation path running from cultural setting through IMR scores to enemyship ratings is highly significant, $z = 3.92, p < .01$. However, parallel analyses indicate that results of Study 1 are also consistent with the alternative account that enemyship ratings mediate the cultural difference in IMR scores. Because the design of the study provides no basis for preferring one mediational account over the other, the more parsimonious conclusion is simply that differences in enemyship ratings are associated with different models of relationship in ways that are independent of cultural setting. Logistic regression analyses of dichotomous outcomes—indicating whether or not participants claimed enemies—yielded parallel results. Details of these analyses are available from the author.
possible link between cultural differences in enmyship and models of relationship, this time measured by participants’ responses instead of coder’s ratings.

Method

Participants

Participants were students from introductory psychology courses at the University of Ghana (n = 82; 45% women) and the same North American university as in Study 1 (n = 84; 57% women). Researchers approached students in classroom settings through the medium of English and invited them to complete a written survey. For the American sample, the survey was part of a larger questionnaire packet regularly administered to introductory psychology students. The psychology department at the University of Ghana does not conduct a parallel practice, so students in this setting completed only the present survey.

Materials and Procedure

Materials were printed in English. Participants completed materials outside the classroom and returned them to researchers (who were lifetime residents of the respective settings) after 1 week.

Friend and enemy items. The first items instructed participants to report the number of friends they had; to indicate whether or not they had enemies (defined, as in Study 1, as “people who hate you, personally, to the extent of wishing for your downfall or trying to sabotage your progress”); and to indicate whether they had more, the same, or fewer friends and enemies than others around them. The primary focus was the enemy items and, specifically, whether cultural differences in enmyship would emerge in a questionnaire format. However, the friend items provided an opportunity to explore larger differences in the construction and experience of relationship. Independent models of self and relationship may promote relatively open forms of friendship that allow a person to “make friends” with many people (Adams & Plaut, 2003; Carrier, 1999; Wierzbicka, 1997). In contrast, interdependent models may promote relatively exclusive forms of friendship that stress interpersonal obligations (Janoff-Bulman & Leggatt, 2002; Markus, Curhan, Ryff, & Palmersheim, 2002).

To the extent that Ghanaian students inhabit worlds where interdependent models of relationship are prominent, they should report fewer friends than American students (Adams & Plaut, 2003).

Other outcomes. Additional items were adapted from interview prompts in Study 1. One item instructed participants to imagine learning that someone in their everyday environment took them as an enemy. Respondents indicated which of four options—confront, ignore, avoid, or seek protection—best described their likely response to this discovery. The other items constituted a social perception task. The instructions described four target individuals: a person who claimed to have no friends, a person who claimed “many friends—like 30,” a person who claimed to have no enemies, and a person who reported being the target of hidden enemies. Respondents rated these individuals along five bipolar dimensions (wise–foolish, abnormal–normal, bad–good, naive–sophisticated, and healthy–unhealthy), using a 7-point scale with zero (0) as the midpoint.

Relationship symmetry. A final set of items provided a means to measure implicit models of relationship. These items instructed participants to consider three pairs of targets: men or women, children or adults, and “the rich” or “the poor.” Respondents indicated which member of each pair had (a) more friends and (b) more enemies than the other member. To the extent that participants select one member of a pair (e.g., women) as having more friends but the other member (e.g., men) as having more enemies, their responses suggest high symmetry and constructions of relationship—positive or negative—as a given fact of social existence (i.e., interdependent models).

If the symmetry items serve as a measure of relationship models, then one can use these items to test the hypothesized link between models of relationship and the experience of enmyship. The hypothesis was not only that symmetry scores should be higher for Ghanaian students than for American students, but also that symmetry scores should be positively associated with tendencies to claim enemies even when controlling for the influence of cultural setting.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary analyses indicated that participant sex had no effect on responses in Study 2, either as a main effect or in interaction with university setting. Consequently, the analyses that follow are tests of the difference between students at the two universities.

Reports of Friends and Enemies

Replicating results of Study 1, a greater percentage of Ghanaian students (79%) than American students (17%) claimed to be the target of enemies, z = 8.17, p < .01, φ = .625. Likewise, suggesting differences in the social desirability of claiming enemies, the percentage of participants who claimed fewer enemies than others around them was greater among American students (73%) than among Ghanaian students (44%), z = 3.67, p < .01, φ = -.296. These patterns suggest that the results of Study 1 are not a methodological artifact of the interview procedure. Instead, differences in the tendency to claim enemies were equally strong in the more controlled context of a written questionnaire.

Parallel differences emerged for the items about friendship. Because many participants (25%) gave non-numerical responses (e.g., “a lot” or “hundreds”), it was necessary to treat reported numbers of friends as a categorical variable. The median response of Ghanaian participants (10 friends) served as a criterion to split cases into few friends (less than 10) and many friends (greater than or equal to 10) categories, with responses like “a lot” included in the many friends category. Consistent with research that documents a tendency for people in contemporary American settings to claim relatively large numbers of friends and other social partners (Adams & Plaut, 2003; Wheeler, Reis, & Bond, 1989; Wierzbicka, 1997), the percentage of participants in the many friends category was greater among American students (92%) than among Ghanaian students (56%), z = 5.43, p < .01, φ = -.408. Analyses for the comparison item yielded similar results. Suggesting differences in the social desirability of having many friends, the percentage of participants who claimed more friends than others around them was greater among American students (44%) than among Ghanaian students (23%), z = 2.84, p < .01, φ = -.224.

Probable Response to Discovery of an Enemy

An initial analysis confirmed a difference in the overall distribution of responses to the enemy-discovery item, χ²(3, N = 171) = 11.14, p < .02 (see Table 5). The more specific question of interest concerned whether or not participants indicated that they would ignore the enemy. Replicating results of Study 1, the percentage of students who chose the ignore option was greater
among American students (54%) than among Ghanaian students (30%), \( z = 3.10, p < .01, \phi = -.234 \). The majority of American students felt free to ignore the possibility of enemyship, but this possibility was a more serious concern for Ghanaian students.

**Social Perception**

Participants rated four hypothetical targets: people who claimed no friends, many friends, no enemies, or hidden enemies. To analyze these data, I created a measure of positivity toward each of the four targets by computing the mean of each respondent’s ratings over the five judgment dimensions (reverse coded in the case of wise–foolish and healthy–unhealthy). Cronbach’s \( \alpha \) for these ratings ranged from .60 to .80 (\( M = .72 \)). Mean composite ratings appear in Table 6.

A \( 2 \times 4 \) (Cultural Setting \( \times \) Target) ANOVA on these mean ratings, with cultural setting as a between-subjects factor and target as a within-subjects factor, revealed the predicted Cultural Setting \( \times \) Target interaction, \( F(3, 492) = 16.46, p < .01 \). Independent tests of the cultural difference in mean ratings for each target aid interpretation of this interaction. These tests revealed predicted cultural differences for all except the many friends target, \( t(164) = 1.39, p = .17 \). American students rated the no friends and hidden enemies targets more negatively than did Ghanaian students, \( t(164) = 1.91, p = .058, r = -.150, \) and \( t(164) = 5.89, p < .01, r = -.422, \) respectively. In contrast, American students rated the no enemies target more positively than did Ghanaian students, \( t(164) = 2.86, p < .01, r = .214 \) (see Table 6 for means and standard deviations).

The range of mean ratings was greater for American students (from \(-1.22 \) to \( 0.66 \)) than for Ghanaian students (from \(-0.75 \) to \( 0.38 \)). This pattern suggests that, rather than different judgments, results could reflect different response styles (Hui & Triandis, 1989). Although Ghanaian students and their American counterparts may perceive targets similarly, the former may have been less willing than the latter to deviate from the neutral midpoint of the response scale.

The main source of evidence against this alternative explanation is a parallel set of analyses. Besides the ANOVA reported above, the response instrument afforded a categorical interpretation. For each target, one can compare the percentages of participants whose mean ratings fell on the positive side of the neutral midpoint (see Table 6). Results of these analyses appear on the right side of Table 6. These analyses are not affected by the extremity of responses and provide equally strong evidence of cultural differences in judgments of targets.

Cultural differences in the variance of rating responses provide additional evidence against a response-style explanation. Despite a larger range of means, the variance of ratings for each target was smaller among American students than among Ghanaian students (see Table 6). Levine’s tests confirmed these differences in variance for each target, \( F(1, 164) > 17.00, ps < .001 \). The combined pattern of more extreme mean ratings but smaller variance implies, not a greater tendency to respond extremely, but instead greater consensus among American students than among Ghanaian students. This difference in consensus makes sense if one considers that Ghanaian students simultaneously inhabit not only worlds (associated with the adjective Ghanaian) where relatively independent models of relationship are prevalent, but also worlds (associated with university settings; Aguilar, 1999; Greenfield et al., 2003) where relatively independent models are prevalent. As a result, Ghanaian students may respond to items about relationship from more diverse points of reference than do American students.

**Relationship Symmetry Items**

Instances of symmetry occur in cases where participants judged the same member of a pair (e.g., women) to have both more friends and more enemies than the other member of the pair (e.g., men). The sum of such instances across all three target pairs served as a relationship symmetry score for each participant. The distribution of these scores was approximately normal and covered the possible range (from 0 to 3). As hypothesized, symmetry scores were higher for Ghanaian students (\( M = 1.60, SD = 0.87 \)) than for American students (\( M = 1.05, SD = 0.87, t(168) = 4.13, p < .01, r = .30 \)).

Results for this measure suggest different models of relationship. Ghanaian students appeared to understand being relational in an ontological sense as immersion in the world of connection. They considered which member of each pair is more relational in

Table 5

| Anticipated Responses to the Discovery of an Enemy (Study 2) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Response        | Ghana (%)       | U.S. (%)        |
| Confront        | 23              | 20              |
| Seek protection | 26              | 11              |
| Avoid           | 21              | 15              |
| Ignore or do nothing | 30          | 54              |

Table 6

| Participants’ Responses to People Who Claim Various Relationship Patterns |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Target pattern           | Mean valence rating | Percent giving positive rating |
|                         | U.S.           | Ghana          | \( t(164) \) | U.S. | Ghana | \( \chi^2(1, N = 166) \) |
| No friends               | -1.08 (0.66)    | -0.75 (1.42)   | 1.91        | 5    | 28    | 16.52*** |
| Many friends             | 0.66 (1.01)     | 0.38 (1.56)    | 1.39        | 71   | 55    | 4.89*    |
| No enemies               | 0.41 (1.00)     | -0.17 (1.57)   | 2.86**      | 58   | 40    | 5.43*    |
| Hidden enemies           | -1.22 (0.81)    | 0.04 (1.78)    | 5.89***     | 4    | 49    | 44.19*** |

Note. Entries on the left side of the table refer to the mean valence (and standard deviation) of ratings for each target. Entries on the right side of the table refer to the percentage of participants in each sample whose ratings for a particular target fell on the positive side of the neutral midpoint (0).

* \( p < .05 \). ** \( p < .01 \). *** \( p < .001 \).
this sense and then indicated this member as having both more friends and more enemies than the other, less relational member. In contrast, American students appeared to understand having more friends, but fewer enemies, than the other, less relational member. Taking symmetry scores as an indicator of implicit models of relationship, I conducted a logistic regression analysis to examine the hypothesized link between models of relationship and the tendency to claim enemies. When cultural setting was the sole predictor, its bivariate relationship with the tendency to claim enemies was highly significant, Wald’s $\chi^2(1, N = 170) = 55.30$, $p < .01$, indicating that the odds of claiming enemies were 18.61 greater for Ghanaian participants than for American participants. When cultural setting and symmetry scores were simultaneous predictors, the direct effect of cultural setting was still significant (although the odds ratio was smaller, $\psi = 15.75$), Wald’s $\chi^2(1, N = 170) = 47.15$, $p < .01$. More important, the contribution of relationship-symmetry scores to prediction of enemyship tendencies was also significant, Wald’s $\chi^2(1, N = 170) = 6.47$, $p < .02$, indicating that—independent of cultural setting—the odds of claiming enemies were 1.81 times greater for participants with high symmetry scores than for participants with low symmetry scores. To the extent that symmetry scores tap implicit models of relationship, this result provides evidence for the hypothesized link between models of relationship and enemyship experience.8

Summary

Results of Study 2 replicated results of Study 1 using a different procedure and response format. Resonating with the prominence of enemyship in social discourse and material representations of diverse West African worlds, Ghanaian students typically claimed to be the target of enemies, thought it unwise to ignore the threat of enemies, and did not regard a hypothetical person who claimed hidden enemies any more negatively than they regarded a hypothetical person who claimed to have no enemies. In contrast, American students rarely claimed to be the target of enemies, felt free to ignore the possibility of enemies, and did regard a hypothetical person who claimed hidden enemies more negatively than they regarded a hypothetical person who claimed to have no enemies. The strength and consistency of these patterns across two studies with different samples and procedures provide compelling evidence of cultural differences in enemyship.

In addition, results of Study 2 also provide some evidence that differences in the prominence of enemyship are linked to broader differences in models of self and relationship. Ghanaian participants tended to score high on the measure of relationship symmetry (suggesting relatively interdependent models of relationship as inherent connection), and high symmetry scores were associated across settings with the tendency to claim enemies. American participants tended to score low on the measure of relationship symmetry (suggesting relatively independent models of relationship as discretionary product; Bellah et al., 1985; Miller et al., 1990), and low symmetry scores were associated across settings with the tendency to deny having enemies. Although results of Studies 1 and 2 indicate a link between implicit models of relationship and the experience of enemyship, they do not address the nature of this link. The explanation implicit in the preceding discussion is that different models of relationship promote differences in enemyship. However, an equally plausible alternative is that causal force flows in the opposite direction, such that differences in the experience of enemyship promote different models of relationship.

Yet another alternative is that differences in both enemyship experience and models of relationship are otherwise unrelated products of an unmeasured third variable. A particularly likely candidate for a “third variable” is the experience of poverty and economic hardship. Of the 15 countries in the West Africa region, only 3—Côte D’Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria—are not on the United Nations list of 49 Least Developed Countries (United Nations, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, 2004). The prevalence of poverty may promote both local varieties of interdependent self and the experience of enemyship (Foster, 1961, 1965; Mullings, 1984; Piot, 1999; Shaw, 2000). In support of this possibility, evidence indicates that the experience of enemyship is stronger among people in more impoverished settings (e.g., Northern Ghana) than less impoverished settings (e.g., former students of the University of Ghana). However, this evidence also suggests that any effect of poverty on enemyship experience is not the consequence of individual differences in wealth. Instead, the effects of poverty operate as a cultural force that applies to both rich and poor inhabitants of a setting, regardless of their individual wealth or poverty (Adams, Anderson, & Mensah, 2005).

In any case, evidence for a causal link between models of relationship and enemyship experience requires experimental tests in which the investigator manipulates the experience of connection and then observes the consequences for enemyship experience. Study 3 provides such a test.

Study 3

At first, the use of experimental methods to test hypotheses about cultural differences may seem difficult, especially when one defines culture as membership in monolithic groups. In that case, it would seem impossible to manipulate culture, except in cases of “bicultural” people who are members of two or more cultural groups (see Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000). In contrast, the present studies are based on a conception of culture as patterns (Adams & Markus, 2001, 2004). From this perspective,

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8 As in Study 1, one might ask whether symmetry scores mediate the cultural difference in the tendency to claim enemies. Results described in this paragraph are consistent with a mediational account, and a Sobel’s (1982) test confirms that a mediation path running from cultural setting through symmetry scores to the tendency to claim enemies is significant, $z = 2.16$, $p < .05$. However, a parallel analysis again indicates that results of Study 2 are also consistent with an alternative account—namely, that the tendency to claim enemies mediates the cultural difference in symmetry scores. (Details of these analyses are available from the author.) Because the design of the study provides no basis for preferring one mediation account over the other, the more parsimonious conclusion is simply that differences in enemyship experience are associated with different models of relationship, independent of any common influence of cultural setting.
people are not members of a single cultural group but instead inhabit worlds constituted by a multitude of cultural patterns that vary in accessibility across situations. Besides avoiding problems of stereotyping and reification, this conception renders culture amenable to experimental manipulation. That is, one can test hypotheses about the source of observed cultural differences by manipulating the cultural models or social representations thought to underlie those differences (Hong et al., 2000).

Accordingly, Study 3 had two steps. The first step was to temporarily influence the implicit models of self and relationship that were prominent in the experimental setting. The second step was to observe the effects of this manipulation on a subsequent measure of enmeshy experience. The primary hypothesis was that increased experience of relationship as inherent connection would be sufficient to cause an increased experience of enmeshy.

Method

Participants

Participants were 48 students at the University of Ghana (50% women). A Ghanaian researcher approached students in campus settings and invited them, through the medium of English, to complete a written instrument. Participants completed the study in either individual or small-group sessions.

Procedure

The materials consisted of a two-page written instrument. One page of the instrument was a word-completion task. Participants received a page with 19 word stems that they were to complete with letters to make standard English words (see Appendix). Eleven stems afforded completion as enmeshy-relevant words (e.g., E _ _ _ ECT for enemy). Eight stems afforded completion as interdependence-relevant words, including three words associated with connection (e.g., CO _ _ ECT for connect), three words associated with kinship (e.g., FA _ _ Y for family), and two words associated with nonkin relationship (e.g., FRI _ _ _ for friend).

The other page of the instrument, with the words social embeddedness printed at the top, was a two-item questionnaire designed to increase accessibility of interdependent models of self and relationship. The first item on this page was designed to increase one aspect of interdependent models, the experience of inherent connection:

There is a saying that no person is an island. Every person is part of a community and is connected to other people. In the space provided below, please discuss two ways in which this saying applies to you. That is, what are two ways in which you, personally, are unavoidably or inescapably connected to other people?

The second item was designed to increase another aspect of interdependent models—experience of self as the object of other peoples’ attention (see Cohen & Gunz, 2002; Heine et al., 1999).

One consequence of inhabiting a social world is being the focus of other people’s attention. Please discuss two ways in which you are the focus of other people’s attention.

An order manipulation provided a means to test the primary hypothesis. For half of the participants, assigned at random to the interdependence condition, the connection questions preceded the word-completion task. For the remaining participants, the connection questions followed the word-completion task. The hypothesis was that the tendency to create enmeshy-relevant words would be greater among participants who performed the word-completion task after the connection questions (i.e., interdependence condition) than among participants who performed the word-completion task before the connection questions (i.e., control condition).

Results and Discussion

Preliminary analyses indicated that sex had no effect on responses in Study 3, either as a main effect or in interaction with the manipulation. Consequently, the analyses that follow are tests of the difference between participants in the interdependence and control conditions. Because hypotheses were directional, all significance tests refer to one-tailed probabilities.

Manipulation Check: Experience of Interdependence

The frequency with which participants created interdependence-relevant words, calculated across all eight target stems, provided a means to test the effectiveness of the experimental manipulation. As intended, the frequency of interdependence words was marginally greater in the interdependence condition \((M = 2.88, SD = 0.90)\) than in the control condition \((M = 2.42, SD = 1.35)\), \(t(46) = 1.39, p < .09, r = .20\). Follow-up analyses indicate that this pattern was mainly due to the frequency of kinship words \((family, home, and kin)\), which were marginally greater in the interdependence condition \((M = 0.96, SD = 0.62)\) than in the control condition \((M = 0.63, SD = 0.82)\), \(t(46) = 1.58, p = .06, r = .23\). There was no effect of the manipulation on interdependence words related to connection and nonkin relationship, \(ts(46) < 1\).

Enmeshy Experience

The frequency with which participants created enmeshy-relevant words, calculated across all 11 target stems, provided a measure of enmeshy accessibility. In support of the primary hypothesis, the frequency of enmeshy words was greater in the interdependence condition \((M = 2.88, SD = 1.45)\) than in the control condition \((M = 1.83, SD = 1.71)\), \(t(46) = 2.27, p < .02, r = .32\). This result provides evidence of a causal link between the interdependent models of relationship (as inherent connection) and the experience of enmeshy. Increasing the experience of inherent connection can be sufficient to promote accessibility of enmeshy.

Relationship of Interdependence to Enmeshy

Further evidence for a link between experience of connection and accessibility of enmeshy comes from multiple regression analyses. A first analysis considered experimental condition, interdependence frequency, and their interaction term as simultaneous predictors of enmeshy accessibility. Results of this analysis indicated that the effect of the manipulation was no longer significant, \(β = -0.31, t(44) < 1\); instead, only the Condition \(×\) Interdependence interaction approached statistical significance, \(β = 0.72, t(44) = 1.74, p < .09\).

A second set of parallel analyses substituted the three subcategories of interdependence words (i.e., connection, kinship, and nonkin relationship) for the overall interdependence category. These analyses revealed that the pattern for the overall interdependence category was mainly a function the kinship subcategory. With experimental condition, kinship frequency, and their interac-
tion term included as predictors of enemyship accessibility, the effect of the experimental manipulation was no longer significant, $\beta = 0.15, t(44) < 1$; instead, only the Condition × Kinship interaction was significant, $\beta = 0.72, t(44) = 2.93, p < .01$.

To interpret this interaction, I regressed enemyship accessibility on kinship frequency separately for each experimental condition. Among participants in the interdependence condition, the bivariate relationship between kinship and enemyship was positive and significant, $\beta = 0.52, t(44) = 2.86, p < .01$. For participants in the control condition, this bivariate relationship was negative in direction, but not significant, $\beta = -0.29, t(44) = -1.44, p = .17$.

This pattern indicates that participants who were induced to think about relationship as inherent connection not only showed evidence for greater accessibility of words related to kinship and enemyship, but also showed evidence for a more positive association between concepts of kinship and enemyship. In other words, the effect of the manipulation was not simply a quantitative increase in the accessibility of relationship, but instead a qualitative change in the meaning of relationship. The manipulation appeared to promote a relatively interdependent model of relationship as inherent connection, a model in which both kinship bonds and enemyship were prominent and associated concepts.

**Summary**

Study 3 provides evidence that the experience of relationship as inherent connection (associated with interdependent models of self and relationship) can be sufficient to increase the experience of enemyship; however, it is important to recognize limitations of this evidence.

First, the present study measured the effect of an experimental manipulation on relatively subtle, nonreactive measures of interdependence and enemyship experience: accessibility of concept-relevant words. The decision to use relatively nonreactive measures was a deliberate strategy made especially appropriate by circumstances of the present study (in particular, the relatively inconsequential nature of the manipulation set against the background of more enduring, locally embedded cultural models). It remains a task for future research to determine the boundaries of this effect. For example, it is not clear that the effects of a subtle manipulation like the one used in the present study would extend to more consciously considered judgments like scale measures of interdependence or claims to be the target of enemies.

A second limitation is that the study included only Ghanaian students. Again, the decision to limit the sample in this way reflects a deliberate strategy: specifically, the expectation that the experimental manipulation of cultural models would be most successful among a population, like Ghanaian university students, for whom multiple models of relationship appear to be prominent and well articulated (see Study 2). It remains unclear whether the identical procedure would yield the same results among a sample of middle-class, North American students, for whom interdependent models of self and relationship tend to be less well articulated.

Indeed, even if the present manipulation of interdependence increased accessibility of enemyship-relevant words among middle-class, North American students, there remains the question of whether it would produce other patterns noted in the present study. The expectation of identical results assumes a context-general, etic model of interdependence that has similar patterns of association across cultural worlds. However, results of the present study may reflect context-specific, emic models of interdependence that are prominent in various West African worlds. Certain features of these models—like ideologies that emphasize the centrality of kinship bonds and the possibility of enemyship within these bonds—may be absent from the interdependent models that are available for manipulation in North American worlds.

Finally, it is important to note a limitation of experimental evidence. Like experiments in general, the present study provides evidence of proximal causal possibility: that increased experience of interdependence can sometimes be sufficient to temporarily increase accessibility of enemyship. Despite the rhetoric of experimental design (see Potter, 1997; Reicher, 1997), it would be inappropriate to extrapolate from this evidence and conclude that interdependent models of relationship are the primary, distal cause of enemyship experience in West African worlds. Instead, more likely candidates for primary cause lie in enduring features of these worlds like the legacy of the slave trade (Ferme, 2001; Shaw, 2000) or the collective experience of economic hardship (Mullings, 1984; see also Foster, 1961, 1965). Evaluating these potential sources of the prominence of enemyship requires methods other than experiments.

**General Discussion**

The present research had two main purposes. The first purpose, reflected in the design of Studies 1 and 2, was to investigate the extent of cultural differences in the experience of enemyship. The second purpose was to investigate the constructions of reality that underlie observed differences in the experience of enemyship.

**Cultural Differences in Experience of Enemyship**

With respect to the first purpose, results of Studies 1 and 2 provide strong evidence that differences in material representations and social discourse about enemies extend to personal experience. Across diverse samples and different response formats, there was an almost categorical difference. Ghanaian participants typically claimed that they were targets of enemies; American participants typically denied that they were targets of enemies.9

Likewise, the results provide consistent evidence that differences in enemyship experience are not limited to claims about enemies but also extend to behavioral intentions. When asked to describe their probable reaction to the discovery of an enemy, Ghanaian participants tended to indicate that they would actively avoid the enemy or seek protection. In contrast, conveying the

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9 Because participants do not constitute probability samples of Ghanaian or American societies, one should exercise caution before extrapolating results to these larger entities (and especially before extrapolating results to even larger entities like West African or North American “cultures”). However, it bears repeating that the purpose of this study was not to define enduring tendencies of larger societal entities. Instead, the purpose was to outline different constructions of reality—whatever their distribution—and then examine their association with enemyship experience. From this perspective, the focus of the study is not West African or North American entities, but instead the cultural patterns (i.e., selfways and models of relationship) that are prominent in geographic spaces associated with those labels.
sense that people are insulated from the effects of enemyship in normal situations, American participants in both Studies 1 and 2 were more likely than their Ghanaian counterparts to indicate that they would ignore the person and do nothing.

Finally, results suggest that differences in the experience of enemyship extend to social perception. Although American participants tended to regard a hypothetical person who claimed to have no enemies positively, Ghanaian participants tended to regard this person negatively and were more likely than American participants to describe the person as naive or foolish. Similarly, although Ghanaian participants tended to regard a hypothetical person who claimed to have hidden enemies positively, American participants tended to regard the person negatively and were more likely than Ghanaian participants to describe the person as paranoid or abnormally suspicious.

The Banality of Enemyship in West African Worlds

Because of prevailing inclinations to portray African experience in pathological terms, it is important to place these differences in perspective. Although the present research provides evidence for the prominence of enemyship, it would be misleading to imply that every person in West African settings is chronically obsessed with enemies. Some people in some circumstances—a person suffering from misfortune, a migrant from rural areas prospering in the city, a student preparing for an examination or contest—may become acutely concerned about potential malice from hidden enemies (cf. Assimeng, 1989; Field, 1960; Geschiere & Gugler, 1998; Winthrob, 1973). However, for most people in most cases, the prominence of enemyship is a fairly unremarkable fact of life. Although they may assume the existence of people who seek their own and others’ downfall, most people in most circumstances do not suffer undue anxiety because of this belief (cf. Evans-Pritchard, 1976/1937, pp. 19, for a similar point). One knows that enemies exist and modifies one’s behavior accordingly as a routine way of being. One refrains from boasting, takes care not to incite envy, exercises caution about friends, is a sufficiently good relative, and provides whatever assistance one can to people who ask, in part to avoid becoming a target of enemies but mainly because these habits are part of what it means to be a good person.

Denial of Enemyship in (North) American Worlds

Similarly, even though the majority of people in the American settings considered here reported that they do not have personal enemies, it does not mean that enemyship is entirely absent from these settings. Once sensitized to the notion of personal enemyship, people can conclude (as did some American participants during debriefing) that perhaps they do have enemies after all. Rather than definitive evidence that people in American settings are entirely free from enemies, results suggest that the form of personal enemyship investigated in the present study does not have the same reality that it has in many Ghanaian settings. Enemyship is not made routine in everyday ways of being, it is not a default expectation, and it does not exist as a ready-made schema to interpret events. Instead, the common-ground construction of reality—one that also informs scientific imagination—is that normal people in normal situations are typically free from the possibility of unwanted connections like enemyship. People apply this back-ground knowledge to construct events as nonenemyship and thereby perpetuate freedom from enemyship as a viable reality.

Another possibility is that, instead of being absent from North American worlds, enemies are experienced in ways that were not addressed in the present research. The present research is based on a definition of enemyship—hatred, malice, and sabotage from close, intimate spaces—that emerges from fieldwork in West African settings. However, results of Study 1 tentatively suggest that, to the extent that people in North American worlds imagine enemies, they may be likely to do so in terms of intergroup conflict or hatred from outsiders rather than animosity in close relationships (see Adams, Anderson, & Adomu, 2004; Szalay & Mir-Djalali, 1991). It follows that if one were to frame questions about enemies in terms of intergroup conflict, one might observe a greater proportion of American participants who claim enemies (although it is also likely that participants would emphasize that there was “nothing personal” about this intergroup hatred and malice).

In this respect, it is relevant to note that the procedures of Studies 1 and 2 posed questions about enemies in the context of questions about friends. The intention behind this design feature was to ease into the potentially uncomfortable topic of enemyship by first considering the more comfortable topic of friendship. However, this design feature may have had the unintended effect of “priming” the concept of relationship, and therefore a relational construction of enemyship. If the procedure were to pose questions about enemies in the context of questions about intergroup conflict, the cultural difference in tendency to claim enemies might decrease or even reverse.

In any case, it bears repeating that the point of the present research is not to propose a universal, standard definition of enemyship and then claim some settings to be more enemyship-prone than others according to this definition. Rather than impose a definition of enemyship that masquerades as context-general conception (i.e., an imposed etic; cf. Berry, 1969), the present research considers more context-specific, emic perspectives on the experience of enemyship. The point of the studies is to illuminate a qualitative difference in the experience of personal relationship and then to investigate the particular constructions of reality that underlie this difference.

Potential Sources of Enemyship Differences

Once one has documented the extent of cultural differences in enemyship, the question becomes what to make of these differences. Foreign observers are inclined to regard the prominence of enemyship in West African worlds as a pathological distortion of enemy-free reality. Results of the present research cast doubt on such accounts.

Ignorance and superstition? Because enemyship in West African settings is often associated with “supernatural” phenomena like sorcery, observers sometimes regard the prominence of enemyship as an indication of ignorance or superstition (for criticisms of this perspective, see Ciekawy & Geschiere, 1998; Comaroff & Comaroff, 1993; Geschiere, 1997; Meyer, 1998). Without denying that belief in supernatural harm affords the experience of enemies (e.g., by increasing the number of conceivable means for attack), interview responses of Ghanaian participants in Study 1 indicate that one cannot equate the prominence of enemyship.
ship with beliefs in supernatural harm. Even though the majority of Ghanaian participants claimed to be the target of enm

Likewise, if the prominence of enmship were entirely the product of ignorance, then one might expect belief in the prominence of enmship to decrease with education, scientific training, or increased participation in "modern" spaces. Although there was some evidence in the Study 1 that the experience of enmship was more prominent among nonstudents than among students, it nevertheless remained prominent among Ghanaian participants in university settings and other modern spaces (see also Assimeng, 1989; Geschiere, 1997; Jahoda, 1970). The prominence of enmship in these spaces casts doubt on explanations that refer to ignorance and superstition.

Collective psychopathology? Results of the present research also cast doubt on explanations that associate enmship with collective psychopathology (e.g., Field, 1960; Parin et al., 1980). Specifically, results suggest that the prominence of enmship in Ghanaian settings does not fit two defining features of psychopathology: statistical abnormality and discomfort. The experience of enmship is not statistically abnormal; instead, it is endorsed by the majority of participants in the Ghanaian settings considered in this research. Moreover, participants did not express undue discomfort about the possibility of enmship. Without minimizing its threat or potential danger, they instead tended to regard enmship as a relatively unremarkable fact of social existence.

Tribalism? Finally, results of the present research cast doubt on explanations that attribute the prominence of enmship to tribalism or intergroup conflict. Rather than intergroup conflict and collectivist forms of interdependence, interview responses of Ghanaian participants suggest that the prominent concern with enemies refers to interpersonal conflict and relational forms of interdependence (cf. Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Cross et al., 2000). Indeed, the only people who spontaneously invoked an intergroup conception of enemies were American participants (see also Adams et al., 2004; Szalay & Mir-Djalali, 1991).

Implicit models of self and relationship. Rather than ignorance, paranoia, tribalism, or some pathological distortion of reality, results of the present research link the prominence of enmship in diverse, West African worlds to a more neutral force: interdependent selfways and associated models of relationship as an inherent fact of human existence. Evidence for this link is not limited to a single source. Instead, it comes from a variety of sources, including explicit remarks of interview participants (Study 1), correlations among measures derived from coders' ratings of interview participants' responses (Study 1), correlations among measures obtained directly from participants' questionnaire responses (Study 2), and differences in the accessibility of enmship as a result of an experimental manipulation (Study 3). The consistency of this evidence, triangulated across studies with diverse procedures, adds weight to the conclusions to which it points.

The characterization of interdependent models as a neutral force deserves further comment. Even if the prominent experience of enmship is not the reflection of individual pathology, one might still characterize it as a form of social pathology if it fosters harmful consequences like suspicion, distrust, hoarding, secrecy, and witch hunts (Ardener, 1993; Foster, 1961; Jackson, 1975; Tait, 1963). Without denying that the prominence of enmship has such harmful consequences, the present research frames them as the dark side of more neutral constructions of reality that also have their bright side. In other words, rather than frame the prominence of enmship as unambiguous evidence of social pathology, the present research locates this phenomenon in models of self and relationship that have both positive and negative aspects.

The corollary to this explanation is that one should hesitate before trumpeting the apparent absence of enmship among American participants as evidence of superior social evolution. Although a benefit of North American worlds may be to grant people freedom from enmship, their dark side lies in the potential for social isolation (Baumeister, 1997). As Bohannan (1971) notes about patterns of household structure in Tiv (a community in Nigeria) and American settings,

[j]t should not be assumed that any one form of household has only disadvantages. . . . American households allow Americans to 'be themselves.' [Their] disadvantages are borne by children who lack a sufficiently large range of role models and by old people who have become 'obsolete' for householding purposes. Tiv households, on the other hand, provide maximum security by 'spreading the personal regard' . . . They allow not for individualism but rather for assurance of membership and support. (pp. 55)

In a concise statement of the negative consequences afforded by these different cultural patterns, Bohannan suggests that, “Americans get lonely. Tiv get bewitched [i.e., experience themselves to be the target of enemies]” (p. 55)

"Denaturing" Psychological Experience in North American Worlds

The preceding section emphasizes one contribution of the present research: to provide a less pathologizing explanation for the prominence of enmship in West African worlds. This explanatory focus resonates well with the constructions of reality that inform scientific imagination in the discipline of psychology. However, this focus also reveals a subtle bias. It treats the prominence of enmship in West African worlds as a deviant phenomenon that requires explanation, but implies that the sense of freedom from enmship in North American settings is normal, unremarkable, and without need of explanation.

This bias becomes clear during debriefing of participants in West African settings. Rather than ask why it is that people think they have enemies, people in West African settings often wonder why it is that American participants think that they are free from enemies. After all, American settings are characterized by conspicuous affluence, racial tension, an ideological emphasis on free-market competition, an aggressive foreign policy, and other features that would seem to foster enmship.

Is it not obvious to people in these settings that they are the targets of enemies?

From this perspective, an equally important contribution of the present research is to “denature” the sense of freedom from enmship that prevails in North American worlds. Rather than the
pure expression of context-free human nature, the present research suggests that this pattern is itself the product of particular constructions of reality: namely, independent models of relationship as the discretionary product of inherently insulated selves. By turning the analytic lens back to denature experience in North American worlds, the present research helps to illuminate other, typically invisible gaps in psychological theory and research.

**The Dark Side of Personal Relationship**

One such gap is the absence of enemship—and the dark side of personal relationship in general (see Rook & Pietromonaco, 1987; Spitzberg & Cupach, 1998)—as a topic in social psychology. The present research suggests that this gap is not a coincidence but instead reflects the grounding of psychological science in independent selfways (Adams et al., 2004; Gergen, Gulerce, Lock, & Misra, 1996; Markus & Kitayama, 1994). Because these selfways promote an experience of relationship as a discretionary product, they promote an experience of hatred, malice, and sabotage as the antithesis of relationship rather than relational phenomena in their own right. In contrast, one suspects that the dark side of relationship might receive greater attention if psychological science were grounded in the interdependent selfways that are prominent across diverse West African worlds. These models of self and relationship promote an experience of negative connection as a routine feature of everyday life that few people, including psychologists, can afford to ignore.

**The Dark Side of Interdependence**

Given the tendency to regard concepts like collectivism or interdependence in terms of universal dichotomies (Hermans & Kempen, 1998), claims about an association of enemship and interdependence are likely to raise questions about the boundaries of this association. Does the prominence of enemship extend to varieties of interdependent self that are prominent in East Asian settings (e.g., Heine, 2001), that exist among women in North American settings (e.g., Cross & Madsen, 1997), or that are made temporarily accessible among participants in laboratory experiments (e.g., Hong et al., 2001)?

Although this remains an interesting question for future research, a definitive answer lies beyond the scope of the present study. Rather than an imposed-etic dimension of interdependence that applies equally across cultural worlds, the emic perspective of the present research considers local varieties of interdependence—associated with a sense of inherent connection to kin (Studies 1 and 3; see also Geschiere, 1997; Meyer, 1998), the historical legacy of the slave trade (Ferme, 2001; Piot, 1999; Shaw, 2000), belief in sorcery (Assimeng, 1989), or extreme economic hardship (Foster, 1965; Mullings, 1984)—that promote the prominent experience of enemship in diverse West African worlds. Any association of enemship with these varieties of interdependence may reflect the particularities of West African experience rather than a context-general law.

Even so, the present research helps to illuminate a second gap in theory and research: the dark side of interdependence. To date, research on the cultural grounding of self has tended to emphasize positive manifestations of relational interdependence. Research on enemship directs attention to potentially negative aspects of relational interdependence.

**The Cultural Grounding of Personal Relationship**

Finally, the present research helps to illuminate a process that is typically neglected in psychological science: the cultural grounding of personal relationship. Rather than pure expressions of context-free human nature, patterns of relationship observed in contemporary North American worlds—not only the sense of freedom from enemies, but also an open approach to friendship (Adams & Plaut, 2003), teenage separation from family (Bellah et al., 1985; Riesman, 1992), or the experience of romantic love (Beall & Sternberg, 1995; Dion & Dion, 1988)—may also have their roots in particular constructions of reality. A comprehensive science requires greater attention to the cultural and historical grounding of personal relationship not only when describing “other cultures,” but especially in the more typical case of mainstream research—conducted among North American undergraduates and reported in the most prestigious journals of the field—in which this process tends to remain invisible. The present research is intended as a step toward this more culture-conscious science.

**References**


Appendix

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<tr>
<th>Word stem</th>
<th>Target word</th>
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