

Beyond Politics: Authoritarianism and the Pursuit of Leisure

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ABSTRACT. Psychologists know a lot about the political and ideological correlates of people scoring high on authoritarianism. However, psychologists have less knowledge about such people's everyday pursuits. In the present study, the authors examined authoritarian interest in film, live events, music, and reading. A predictable pattern of correlates emerged. For example, authoritarians enjoyed activities in which physical conflict was prominent, whereas authoritarians tended not to like entertainment that offered introspection. In general, the present results were consistent across 2 samples ($N = 120$, $N = 90$). Although men and women had significantly different preferences on over 0.5 of the leisure pursuits (e.g., men enjoyed action films more than did women), there were no significant gender differences in the magnitudes of correlates with authoritarianism. In general, leisure interests appeared to be partly manifestations or expressions of authoritarian tendencies.

Key words: authoritarianism, film, leisure, music

RESEARCH ON AUTHORITARIANISM has a long history in personality and social psychology. Brown (1965, chapter 10) and Winter (1996, chapter 7) have published two reviews of the construct. Read together, these textbook chapters provide researchers with a comprehensive overview of the major measurement and conceptual issues that surround authoritarianism. The research in those summaries and the careful empirical work of Altemeyer (1981, 1988, 1996) demonstrated that authoritarianism remains a viable psychological construct. Researchers can conceptualize *authoritarianism* as the covariation of submissiveness to authority, aggressiveness towards those opposed by authority, and a

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concern with conventionality. It also contains elements of anti-intraception and a general intolerance of ambiguity.

Since the publication of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), psychologists have established many of the political correlates of authoritarianism with a special focus on the social values associated with the construct. Two recurring correlates of authoritarianism are prejudice against out-group members and uncritical support for authority figures. Authoritarianism seems to organize people's beliefs no matter what kind of political system they live under. For example, as shown by McFarland and his colleagues (McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina, 1993; McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap, 1992; McFarland, Ageyev, & Djintcharadze, 1996), authoritarians in Russia and the United States share many of the same prejudices (e.g., against Jews, women, those with HIV). However, the Russian authoritarian person dislikes capitalism and its attendant philosophies, whereas his or her U.S. counterpart dislikes communism and its attendant philosophies. It appears that authoritarianism produces in the authoritarian person strong support for the existing economic and political system in which he or she grows up and condemnation of systems that are opposed by his or her society.

Findings about the nonpolitical correlates of authoritarianism have supplemented those on the political correlates. For example, people scoring high on authoritarianism are more likely than those scoring low to be religious fundamentalists (Hunsberger, 1995), punitive parents (Peterson, Smirles, & Wentworth, 1997), and willing to discriminate against others in a job situation if such discrimination is sanctioned by an authority (Petersen & Dietz, 2000). In addition, authoritarianism is negatively correlated with the openness-to-experience cluster of the Five-Factor Model of Personality (Butler, 2000). Such findings are interesting because they indicate the possibility that authoritarianism not only is an ideological and political belief system but also organizes how authoritarians interact with others and experience life daily.

In recent research from the present authors' own lab, we have focused increasing attention on the nonpolitical correlates of authoritarianism. Thus, we found that university-age students who scored high on authoritarianism were less interested than those who scored low in exploring aspects of personal identity and in selecting majors in the social sciences and humanities (Peterson & Lane, 2001). Also, authoritarianism influenced the kind of dating relationships that participants desired, with college-age women who are high on authoritarianism expressing preferences for male partners who were masculine and conventional (Duncan, Peterson, & Ax, 2003). In the same study, we found in a sample of midlife women that the participants who were more authoritarian and who were fully employed struggled harder when juggling family and work responsibilities than the participants who were less authoritarian and who were fully employed. We suggested that women who score high on authoritarianism

are more likely to experience parenthood and work as mutually exclusive (Duncan et al., 2003). Findings like these indicated the possibility that authoritarianism is related to developmental themes such as identity, intimacy, and occupational role.

This previous work on the nonpolitical correlates of authoritarianism began to unpack the subjective experiences of authoritarians. In the present study, we continued this line of research by examining the leisure activities that college students who scored high on authoritarianism enjoyed. This focus on everyday pursuits extends the nomological network of authoritarianism. Moving away from the analysis of politics and values allows a more fully realized portrait of the authoritarian personality. It is important for researchers to flesh out this portrait because authoritarianism—especially during times of privation—can lead to participation in repressive social movements (e.g., Duncan, 2006). Identifying entertainment options that authoritarians avoid or prefer might suggest ways to break down authoritarian thinking.

Authoritarianism and Leisure Pursuits

Because the present study was somewhat exploratory, we focused on four types of activities that collectively more-or-less engage all U.S. citizens at some level: movies, live entertainment, music, and reading. Although there is no reason to expect a relationship between authoritarianism and consumption of any of these leisure pursuits in general, we do expect a relationship between authoritarianism and subcategories of each superordinate domain.

Five components of authoritarianism seem most likely to influence the kinds of activities that authoritarians will prefer. First, Adorno et al. (1950) showed very early in their research that authoritarianism was linked with ethnocentrism. Hence, authoritarians in the United States should prefer entertainment that is indigenous to the United States (e.g., country music) rather than entertainment that is imported from elsewhere (e.g., foreign films). Second, authoritarians can be aggressive towards those perceived to be members of out-groups (e.g., Whitley & Lee, 2000). Thus, those people scoring high on authoritarianism might enjoy activities where aggressive competition against others is rewarded (e.g., watching team sports). Third, as discussed by Brown (1965) and Winter (1996), those who score high on authoritarianism seem more reluctant to think deeply about themselves than those who score low. Authoritarians oppose what is imaginative and prefer to stay grounded in what is objective rather than what is subjective. This tendency should appear as a distinct preference for leisure experiences that focus on the objectively defined world rather than personal contemplation (e.g., reading books about science rather than books of poetry). Fourth, under some conditions, authoritarians tend to be mentally rigid (e.g., Schultz, Stone, & Christie, 1997). Hence, those persons scoring high on authoritarianism should dislike leisure pursuits in which irony and ambiguity exist (e.g., art house films). Fifth, authoritarians are submissive to

in-group leaders and tend to conform (e.g., see Altemeyer, 1996, pp. 34–35). Thus, authoritarians may be reluctant to dismiss activities that their peers seem to particularly enjoy (e.g., popular music).

We developed the following specific hypotheses for all four activities under investigation.

Authoritarianism and Film Genres

Authoritarians should distinctly prefer loud, sensationalistic action movies that do not give them much time for contemplation. Similarly, as we discussed above, because of their ethnocentric nature, authoritarians should not enjoy foreign films. In contrast, comedies are probably unrelated to scores on authoritarianism. Although what people find funny is clearly an individual difference variable, almost everyone enjoys laughing. Romantic comedies and dramas are also socially acceptable to most people and should not be related to scores on authoritarianism. The film genres of science fiction and fantasy are harder to classify. On the one hand, science fiction and fantasy films tend to be speculative and imaginative. On the other hand, many of these films are plot driven (like an action movie) and not character driven. Nonetheless, the imaginative aspect of such films will probably not appeal to authoritarians.

Authoritarianism and Live Entertainment

Like action movies, live sporting events do not allow viewers much time for contemplation. The goal of most spectator sports is not to advance a player's character (youth sports notwithstanding) but to overcome an opponent physically. This focus on one team's mastery over another team should be very appealing to authoritarians. On the other hand, authoritarians should be uninterested in live classical music events (e.g., symphony, opera). The classical music that has survived in repertory for hundreds of years can arouse deep, contemplative emotions in listeners. Also, although authoritarians are invested in maintaining the cultural status quo, their interest in doing so tends to be rooted in the traditions of their own country. Thus, U.S. authoritarians should express little interest in the foreign composers who make up most of the classical repertory. Authoritarians should also be uninterested in live poetry readings. Not only can poetry arouse emotions, poets often introduce ambiguity into their work. Live theatre should be relatively unappealing to authoritarians. Unlike most television, repertory plays are not interrupted by commercials and often encourage the audience members to reflect on their own lives or on changing or controversial social conditions (e.g., *Death of a Salesman* [Miller, 1949] as a metaphor for lost dreams or as a commentary on post-World War II America). On the other hand, comedy, dance, and (popular) music concerts should be relatively unrelated to scores on authoritarianism. Most adolescents enjoy

contemporary music, comedy, and dance, and authoritarian youth are unlikely to buck the status quo in these areas.

Authoritarianism and Musical Tastes

The music industry has many different genres that appeal to a spectrum of listeners. Country music and Christian music are probably the two most popular genres for authoritarians. Country music is indigenous to the United States and often celebrates traditional gender roles and aspects of Americana (e.g., the Western). Christian music is clean-cut and celebrates religiousness, which should appeal to fundamentalist authoritarians. Although jazz is also indigenous to the United States, probably most authoritarians will dislike it because of its origins with African American musicians from the South and its reliance on improvisation and flexible rhythmic structure. People who are more authoritarian should not appreciate Rap and Latino music. As we argued above, authoritarians should also dislike classical music because of its roots in foreign countries and the opportunities that lengthy musical passages allow for contemplation. On the other hand, rock-and-roll music and light-popular music should be unrelated to authoritarianism. On the one hand, the extravagant behavior of some rock-and-roll music and pop-music artists may irritate authoritarians. However, both genres are popular with young adults, and young authoritarians will not want to disidentify with these two musical forms because doing so would set them apart from peers.

Authoritarianism and Reading Interests

Because reading is a nonsensationalistic activity that typically leads to contemplation, authoritarianism may be negatively related to the reading of books in general. However, students are required to read, and college-educated individuals read more than those without college degrees. Because of authoritarian interest in the real world, they probably would enjoy biography and factual texts about history and science. They should not enjoy art and poetry books because full appreciation of them often requires a level of subjective interpretation and an ability to tolerate ambiguity. Literary fiction is a bit harder to classify. Classic literature can come from any part of the globe and requires that the reader immerse himself or herself into the imaginative conceptions of the author and the world that the author creates. For these reasons, literature in general and science fiction and fantasy in particular will probably be unappealing to students who are more authoritarian. Books about romance and self-help should also be uninteresting to authoritarians because such books delve specifically into human emotions and psychology. On the other hand, comic books, horror stories, and humorous fiction are probably equally appreciated by students who are more authoritarian and those who are less authoritarian.

Method

Participants

Participants in Sample 1 were men ($n = 45$, 38%) and women ($n = 75$, 62%) who were enrolled in an introductory psychology course at a large public university in the U.S. Midwest. Participants in Sample 2 were women ($N = 90$, 100%) who were enrolled in an introductory psychology course at a private, single-gender liberal arts college on the East coast of the United States. Each participant provided us with informed consent before we gave him or her a survey. After completing the survey but before leaving the testing session, participants picked up a debriefing form that described the general goals of the present study. Participants at both schools received course credit for completing the survey.

The students in Sample 1 were mostly 1st-year students (46%) and sophomores (36%), although there were juniors (15%) and some seniors (3%). Students in Sample 2 were younger: 88% were 1st-year students, 10% were sophomores, and 2% were juniors. In terms of ethnicity, the samples were somewhat matched. In Sample 1, the students indicated their ethnicity as follows: 75% White, 9% Black, 13% Asian American, 3% Latino, and 2% other. (These percentages add up to more than 100% because students could mark multiple categories.) In Sample 2, the students indicated their ethnicity as follows: 73% White, 9% Black, 6% Asian American, 7% Latino, and 10% other.

Authoritarianism

We assessed authoritarianism with Altemeyer's (1998) 20-item Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale. The 20-item RWA scale is a shorter version of Altemeyer's (1996) 30-item measure. Participants rated each item on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly agree*). Altemeyer phrased 10 items in the authoritarian direction (e.g., 'Our country will be great if we honor the ways of our forefathers, do what the authorities tell us to do, and get rid of the "rotten apples" who are ruining everything'), whereas he phrased 10 items in the nonauthoritarian direction (e.g., "Our country *needs* free thinkers who will have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many people"). Cronbach's alpha for the 20-item RWA scale was .91 for Sample 1 and .93 for Sample 2.

Students in Sample 1 ($M = 59.81$, $SD = 19.60$) scored significantly higher on the RWA scale than did students in Sample 2 ($M = 46.10$, $SD = 19.37$), $t(208) = 5.10$, $p < .05$. This difference in the two samples was not attributable to the circumstance that all of Sample 2 was women, because men and women in Sample 1 had nearly identical RWA means ($M_s = 59.96$ and 59.72 , respectively). Because of the discrepant RWA scores, we analyzed Sample 1 and Sample 2 separately rather than combine them into a single sample.

Leisure Pursuits

We measured Leisure pursuits with items that we designed especially for the present study. The Appendix shows a complete list of items. In the survey, we grouped leisure items into four superordinate categories: film, live entertainment, music, and reading interests. In generating items for each of the categories, we tried to cover all of the major content areas that might appeal to young people. For example, to develop the reading categories, we visited a bookstore chain to see how books were organized according to content. Some sections of the store were mostly irrelevant to college students (e.g., children's books), and we excluded them from the list. In the end, the items in the Appendix seem fairly comprehensive, but clearly it is possible that we missed some brands of entertainment within each of the superordinate categories.

Before rating each item, participants read the following text: "Below you will find several categories representing styles (or genres) of entertainment. We want to know what styles most interest you. Please rate each style using the following scale." Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*I very much dislike this style*) to 5 (*I very much like this style*).

As the Appendix shows, film genres included content such as romantic comedy, art house, and science fiction. Live entertainment involved events such as ballet, concerts with popular musicians, and sport events. Musical tastes included such kinds as country, classical, and new age. Finally, reading interests included genres such as horror, romance, and biography.

Participants' interests in genres within categories may overlap (e.g., people who like science fiction films may be favorably disposed towards fantasy films). Thus, we factor analyzed the items within each of the four categories of entertainment to group them into related content. This reduced the total number of variables. We used Sample 1 for the factor analysis because it contained both men and women. We examined the relationship between the factored leisure items and authoritarianism by using bivariate correlations.

Social Class as a Confound

Before the results, a comment about social class membership is in order. It may very well be that some entertainment options are related to social class. For example, because of the high cost of tickets, it is possible that those people from more wealthy backgrounds have more exposure to the opera than do those from less wealthy backgrounds. This increased exposure may facilitate the enjoyment of opera. Because past research has indicated that authoritarianism has negative relationships with social class (e.g., see Winter, 1996, for a discussion of this topic), social class is a potential confound. To control for social class, in the present study we analyzed all of our correlational data by partialing out the effects of social-class membership. In the survey, respondents indicated their class back-

ground (1 = *working class*, 2 = *lower middle class*, 3 = *middle class*, 4 = *upper middle class*, 5 = *wealthy*). Together, students in Sample 1 indicated an average background between middle class and upper-middle class ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.75$). Students in Sample 2 together also indicated a background of middle class to upper-middle class but individually came from slightly more diverse economic backgrounds ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.90$). The partial correlations were virtually identical to the bivariate correlations in Tables 1–4. Thus, participants' social-class memberships did not affect the relationship between authoritarianism and leisure pursuits in Samples 1 and 2.

Results

Film Genres

We factor-analyzed 11 film genres according to a principal components analysis. The Appendix shows those film genres. After an examination of the scree plot and eigenvalues, we extracted five orthogonal factors that accounted for 75% of the total variance. After rotation, Factor 1 consisted of foreign films and art house films (24% of the variance). Factor 2 consisted of romantic comedy, drama, and romance films (18%). Factor 3 consisted of action, martial art, and war films (13%). Factor 4 consisted of science fiction and fantasy films (11%). Factor 5 consisted of comedy films (8%). We computed item means for the film genres loading on each factor. Table 1 shows the factored film genres in alphabetical order.

In Sample 1, comedy was the most popular film genre ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.55$, for men and women together). The *dramedy* films—romance, romantic comedy, and drama films—were the next most popular ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.77$), although a *t* test shown in Table 1 indicated that women enjoyed them much more than did men. Action films—including war and martial arts films—were the third most popular ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.71$), although a *t* test showed that men liked this genre more than did women. Science fiction and fantasy films were the fourth most popular genre ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 0.90$), with men reporting significantly more interest than did women. Art house and foreign films were the least popular genre ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 0.91$), with no gender difference. In Sample 2, respondents liked comedy most of all ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.79$), then *dramedies* ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.68$), then art house and foreign films ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 1.04$), then science fiction and fantasy ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 0.84$), and then action ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 0.73$) least of all.

Table 1 also shows correlations between authoritarianism and the film genres. As we hypothesized, the students who were more authoritarian enjoyed action movies and disliked art house and foreign films across Sample 1 and Sample 2. There was no relationship between authoritarianism and interest in comedies. The women who were more authoritarian in Sample 1 disliked science fiction and fantasy films, $r = -.28$, $p < .05$, but the men who were more

TABLE 1. Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for Film Genres and Authoritarianism

Film genres	Sample 1				Effect size	Sample 2				Correlation with authoritarianism			
	Men		Women			Women		Sample 1		Sample 2		Men & women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Action	3.70	0.69	3.05	0.61	5.29**	.48	2.77	0.73	.37**	.28**	.28**	.17*	
Art house & foreign	2.68	0.84	2.52	0.95	0.90	.08	3.36	1.04	-.36**	-.26**	-.30***	-.49***	
Comedy	4.54	0.62	4.66	0.50	1.11	.10	4.34	0.79	.01	-.14	-.08	.08	
Romance, romantic comedy, & drama	3.24	0.70	4.09	0.61	7.02**	.54	4.05	0.68	.07	-.07	.00	.31**	
Science fiction & fantasy	3.38	0.94	2.80	0.81	3.51**	.31	2.80	0.84	-.02	-.28**	-.16	.00	

Note. For Sample 1, $N = 120$ ($n_{men} = 45, n_{women} = 75$). For Sample 2, $N = 90$ (women). Sample size may decrease for any given correlation because of missing data.
 * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 2. Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for Live Entertainment and Authoritarianism

	Sample 1				Effect size	Sample 2				Correlation with authoritarianism			
	Men		Women			Women		Sample 1		Men		Women	
	M	SD	M	SD		M	SD	t	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Live entertainment	3.01	0.97	3.12	0.98	0.59	.05		-.06	-.09	-.08	-.27**		
Classical	3.16	0.71	3.94	0.68	6.04***	.48		.01	-.12	-.10	-.06		
Dance & music	2.40	0.81	2.79	1.08	2.07**	.19		-.23	-.09	-.14	-.43***		
Poetry readings	4.16	1.21	3.95	0.98	1.04	.10		.50***	.27**	.31**	.36***		
Sports	4.01	0.67	4.24	0.69	1.71	.16		-.29**	-.32**	-.31***	-.22**		
Theatre & comedy													

Note. For Sample 1, $N = 120$ ($n_{\text{men}} = 45$, $n_{\text{women}} = 75$). For Sample 2, $N = 90$ (women). Sample size may decrease for any given correlation because of missing data.

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

TABLE 3. Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for Musical Tastes and Authoritarianism

Music tastes	Sample 1				Effect size	Sample 2				Correlation with authoritarianism					
	Men		Women			Women		Men	Women	Men	Women	Sample 1		Sample 2	
	M	SD	M	SD		M	SD					Men	Women	Men	Women
Christian	1.84	1.13	2.28	1.09	.19	2.16	1.29	.48***	.46***	.45***	.38***				
Classical & jazz	3.33	0.94	3.31	0.76	.01	3.47	0.77	-.28*	-.12	-.19**	-.24**				
Country	1.96	1.13	2.68	1.26	.28	2.39	1.19	.02	.21*	.15	.25***				
Ethnic	3.12	0.95	3.51	0.76	.23	3.34	0.80	-.03	.15	.06	.14				
Folk	2.26	0.98	2.32	0.97	.03	2.87	1.12	-.16	-.33**	-.27**	-.20*				
Light popular	3.21	0.87	3.56	0.69	.22	3.30	0.75	.15	.28***	.21**	.24***				
Rock & roll	3.68	0.66	3.39	0.87	.19	3.39	0.84	.07	-.12	-.07	.14				

Note. For Sample 1, $N = 120$ ($n_{\text{men}} = 45$, $n_{\text{women}} = 75$). For Sample 2, $N = 90$ (women). Sample size may decrease for any given correlation because of missing data.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 4. Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for Reading Interests and Authoritarianism

	Sample 1				Effect size	Sample 2				Correlation with authoritarianism			
	Men		Women			Women		Men & women		Sample 1		Sample 2	
	M	SD	M	SD		M	SD	M	SD	Men	Women	Men	Women
Reading interests	2.58	0.99	3.32	0.98	4.04***	.35	3.77	0.88	0.88	-.08	-.16	-.12	-.32***
Art & poetry													
Biography, history & science	2.70	0.86	3.07	0.81	2.41**	.22	3.19	0.82	0.82	.24*	.00	.09	.00
Comics, horror, humor & mysteries	3.36	0.64	3.43	0.70	0.52	.05	3.25	0.68	0.68	.02	-.15	-.09	.08
Literature & fiction	3.77	0.89	4.03	0.83	1.60	.15	4.28	0.70	0.70	-.29**	-.26***	-.27**	-.42***
Romance & self-help	2.16	0.92	3.03	1.01	4.75***	.43	2.87	1.02	1.02	.17	.13	.13	.28**
Science fiction & fantasy	3.17	1.16	2.77	0.92	2.10**	.19	2.78	1.02	1.02	-.04	-.16	.06	-.10

Note. For Sample 1, $N = 120$ ($n_{men} = 45$, $n_{women} = 75$). For Sample 2, $N = 90$ (women). Sample size may decrease for any given correlation because of missing data.
 * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

authoritarian in Sample 1 and the women who were more authoritarian in Sample 2 did not. Unexpectedly, the women who were more authoritarian in Sample 2 liked the dramedy films, $r = .31$, $p < .05$, whereas the men and women who were more authoritarian in Sample 1 did not appear to like or dislike such films.

Live Entertainment

The factor analysis for the live events uncovered five factors that accounted for 79% of the variance. Factor 1 was an eclectic mix of dance and music: ballet, concerts with popular musicians, musical theatre, and modern dance (35% of the variance). Factor 2, theatre and comedy, consisted of live comedy, comedy theatre, and dramatic theatre (17%). Factor 3, a classical category, consisted of opera and the symphony (10%). Factor 4 consisted of live sporting events (8%). Factor 5 consisted of poetry readings (8%).

In Sample 1, respondents enjoyed theatre and comedy most ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 0.70$) and then live sporting events ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.07$), and there were no gender differences in either of those categories. Participants rated dance and music as enjoyable ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.82$). However, as the left half of Table 2 shows, women had a significantly greater interest than men. Participants were rather neutral about classical performances ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.98$). Participants slightly negatively evaluated poetry readings ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.01$), but men disliked them more than did women.

In Sample 2, the women most enjoyed theatre and comedy ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.68$; just as did participants in Sample 1). However, in Sample 2, participants favored dance and music ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.68$) second and sporting events ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.19$) third. Participants favored poetry readings ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 1.05$) fourth and live classical events ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.84$) fifth and least. However, participants in Sample 2 rated all of these kinds of events favorably.

The right half of Table 2 show correlations between the live events and authoritarianism. As we hypothesized, in both Sample 1 and Sample 2, scores on authoritarianism were positively correlated with interest in watching sports. In contrast, in both samples, authoritarianism was negatively correlated with interest in theatre and comedy. Poetry readings were also negatively correlated with authoritarianism as we expected, but significantly so in Sample 2 only. The same pattern of negative correlations characterized authoritarianism and interest in classical events. Finally, as expected, authoritarianism was uncorrelated with interest in dance and music.

Musical Tastes

The principal components analysis for musical styles resulted in a five-factor solution that accounted for 65% of the total variance. We labeled Factor 1 as

light popular, and it consisted of musical soundtracks, new age, and pop music (20% of the variance). Factor 2 could be labeled as *ethnic music* and consisted of rhythm and blues, hip-hop, and Latin music (14%). Factor 3 (13%) was rock and roll and consisted of modern rock, classic rock, and heavy rock. Factor 4 consisted of classical and jazz music (10%). Factor 5 consisted of both country music and folk music (8%). These two styles of music had almost equal factor loadings on Factor 5 (.78 and .74, respectively). However, because authoritarianism was significantly correlated in the opposite direction for country music and folk music, we decided to keep these two styles as separate categories rather than combine them. Furthermore, Christian music did not load on any factor, although researchers could argue for its inclusion in the light-popular factor, Factor 1, where it had a loading of .50.

Among Sample 1 respondents, the most popular genres of music were rock and roll ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.82$), light popular ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.79$), and ethnic ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.87$). As the t tests in Table 3 show, men enjoyed rock and roll music more than did women, and women preferred light-popular and ethnic music more than did men. Participants rated classical and jazz music as fourth most popular ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.85$). Participants in Sample 1 rated country music ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 1.28$), folk music ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 0.97$), and Christian music ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 1.12$) as slightly unlikable. According to t tests, men disliked country and Christian music more than did women.

Participants in Sample 2 liked classical and jazz music the most ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.77$), and then they liked rock and roll ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.84$), ethnic ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.80$), and light-popular music ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.75$), in that order. These participants were somewhat negative about folk music ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.12$). And, like participants in Sample 1, they tended to dislike country ($M = 2.39$, $SD = 1.19$) and Christian ($M = 2.16$, $SD = 1.29$) music.

The right half of Table 3 shows correlations between authoritarianism and musical tastes. As expected, authoritarianism was positively correlated with interest in Christian music across both Sample 1 and Sample 2. Authoritarianism was also positively correlated with interest in country music, albeit only for the women in the samples. In contrast, interests in classical and jazz music and folk music were negatively correlated with authoritarianism. Interest in rock and roll was uncorrelated with authoritarianism. It was slightly unexpected that interest in ethnic music was also uncorrelated with authoritarianism. Finally, light-popular music was positively correlated with authoritarianism.

Reading Interests

We factor analyzed responses to the 15 reading-interest prompts. We extracted a six-factor solution that accounted for 69% of the variance. Factor 1 included biographies, history books, and science books (22% of the variance). Factor 2 included literature and fiction (13%). Factor 3 included science

fiction and fantasy (12%). Factor 4 was a fairly mixed group of light reading: comic books, mysteries, horror, and humor (9%). Factor 5 included romance and self-help books (8%). Factor 6 included (a) art or photography and (b) poetry books (6%).

In Sample 1, the most popular factor for participants was the literature and fiction group ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.85$). The second most popular factor was the light-reading group ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.67$). The third most popular factor was the group of art or photography and poetry books ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 1.03$). However, as a *t* test in Table 4 shows, women enjoyed such books more than did men. Participants were fairly neutral about the group of science fiction and fantasy books ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.02$), although men enjoyed them more than did women. Participants were also fairly neutral about the group of biographies, history books, and science books ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 0.84$). However, women enjoyed such books more than did men. Participants liked least the group of romance and self-help books ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 1.06$), and men especially disliked them. In Sample 2, participants liked literature and fiction books the best ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.70$). Next were art or photography and poetry books ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 0.88$) and the light-reading books ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.68$). Sample 2 women were rather neutral about biographies, history books, and science books ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.82$). They were slightly negatively disposed towards romance and self-help books ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.02$); and science fiction and fantasy books ($M = 2.78$, $SD = 1.02$). As the right half of Table 4 shows, the correlations between authoritarianism and reading preferences were somewhat low. The students from Sample 1 and Sample 2 who were more authoritarian disliked reading literature and fiction, but the only other significant correlations occurred in Sample 2. The women in Sample 2 who were more authoritarian disliked looking at books of art or photography and poetry, but they were more inclined than their less authoritarian peers to read romance and self-help books.

Discussion

Authoritarianism is not just related to beliefs about politics and the social order. It is also related to leisure interests. In the present study, there was a predictable pattern of correlates between authoritarianism and entertainment choices. In general, higher scores on authoritarianism were related to (a) more interest in watching physical conflict (e.g., action movies, sporting events), (b) more interest in listening to music with innocuous themes (e.g., Christian, country, and light-popular music), (c) less interest in experiencing entertainment that encouraged introspection (e.g., art, fiction, literature, and poetry), and (d) less interest in intellectual or foreign entertainment (e.g., foreign and art house films, classical and jazz music). In addition, participants who were more authoritarian disliked folk music, live theatre, and comedy. Why are these findings important?

Extending Research on Authoritarianism

The past 55 years of research indicates the possibility that authoritarianism is relevant across cultures and time periods. Researchers have come a long way in understanding how aggression, submission, conventionality, anti-intraception, and intolerance for ambiguity can intertwine to direct intra- and intergroup relations to destructive ends. Recent world events show that authoritarian behavior and attitudes are not going away any time soon. Authoritarians include members of democratic societies in the West and members of Islamic societies in the Middle East. However, it is clear that there is a lot left for psychologists to learn about the authoritarian personality. What kind of human beings are authoritarians outside of the political and ideological realms? What personal interests do they have?

The answers to such questions are emerging and make clear that authoritarians are embedded within their own societies. Focusing on authoritarians' interests in the nonideological realms allows psychologists to understand authoritarianism at a deeper level, to see that it is not solely an abstract ideological construct but a part of people's everyday lives. Authoritarianism is related to the things that individuals enjoy daily. Knowing that may help researchers break down authoritarian thinking. For example, interest in sporting events is associated with authoritarianism. However, some parents of young children in the United States who are currently enrolled in youth sports know that winning is de-emphasized. Rather than treating the opponent as an out-group, some coaches have developed strategies to model fair play and equal opportunity within teams. Presumably such strategies lead children to become invested in sports for fun. In turn, such a foundation should allow players when older to deal better with authoritarian themes that arise in sports (e.g., when team solidarity leads to unwarranted hostility towards an opponent).

Furthermore, the present findings indicate the possibility that authoritarianism is linked to popular culture. Future researchers might profitably investigate how cultural tastes shift in response to perceived threat and presumed authoritarian demand. For example, Peterson and Gerstein (2005) showed that during times of social and economic threat, superhero comic books become more authoritarian, increasing in levels of violence and decreasing in levels of character introspection. (See also Doty, Peterson, & Winter, 1991/2004, and McCann, 1997, 1999, for archival research documenting the link between threat and rises in authoritarianism.) We presume that authoritarianism affects trends in popular culture through market forces, by influencing the kinds of entertainment that individuals purchase during times of low and high societal threat. Documenting the types of interests that authoritarians possess may provide social critics a nonpolitical barometer for assessing a society's movement towards more authoritarian thinking. It is also important to extend this line of research to other countries. In cross-cultural research, it will no doubt be necessary to add leisure interest items that are unique to a particular country and to delete items that do not apply to it.

However, researchers must take some care to enable conceptual replications. For example, in a non-U.S. sample, country music may not appeal to women who are more authoritarian. But, if the present hypotheses hold up cross-culturally, there will be indigenous music in any given country that will replace country music.

In the present study, authoritarian interest in popular entertainment seemed consistent across genders. Although the men in Sample 1 and the women in Sample 1 differed more often than they agreed on how much they enjoyed leisure activities (i.e., 14 out of 23 times), this difference did not seem to result in relationships with authoritarianism along gender lines. In other words, according to z tests, in no cases were the magnitudes of the correlates for Sample 1 men significantly different from the magnitudes of the correlates of Sample 1 women. (The correlates were generally stronger for Sample 2 than for Sample 1, but again the magnitudes of the correlates across samples were generally comparable.) It appears that authoritarianism does not direct leisure activities along stereotypical gender lines. For example, it was not the case that authoritarianism was related to interest in action movies for men but not women. This lack of gender difference in the correlates of authoritarianism is interesting because research has indicated the possibility that authoritarian men and women invest in maintaining the status quo for gender (e.g., Duncan et al., 2003; Duncan, Peterson, & Winter, 1997; Walker, Rowe, & Quinsey, 1993; Whitley & Aegisdottir, 2000). However, it seems that authoritarian concern about gender differences does not influence how men and women who are authoritarian rate leisure activities. Perhaps the lack of gender differences in the correlates of authoritarianism has been partly due to college student samples. The vast majority of participants have been young men and women who were presumably interested in dating members of the opposite gender. At college age, it may be that authoritarian men and women are willing to cross traditional gender roles to signify interest in a relationship (e.g., an authoritarian woman might go to a football game with her boyfriend despite her lack of interest in football). Future researchers could investigate this possibility by asking participants to rate activities that they would enjoy on their own, with a same-gender friend, or with an opposite-gender friend. Researchers might expect individuals who are more authoritarian to more strongly differentiate favorite activities along gender lines when they are alone or with same-gender peers.

Conclusion

The present research extends previous work on a venerable construct by assessing authoritarian persons while they are outside of the political and ideological arena. We examined how authoritarianism operates on an individual at an everyday level by focusing on leisure activities that are current and relevant for a college student sample. In the present work, we began the process of determining the differences between the ways in which individuals who are more authoritarian and those who are less authoritarian enjoy life and pursue happiness.

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APPENDIX
Individual Items That the Authors Used to Assess Leisure Interests

<i>Film genres</i>		
Romantic Comedy	Science Fiction	Foreign Films
Comedy	Fantasy	Art House
Drama	Action and Suspense	War
Romance	Martial Arts	
<i>Live entertainment</i>		
Ballet	Opera	Modern Dance
Theatre (Comedy)	Musical Theatre	Live Comedy
Theatre (Drama)	Symphony	Book or Poetry Readings
Concerts with popular musicians		Live Sports Events
<i>Music interest</i>		
Jazz	Rock (modern)	Rap & Hip-Hop
Country	Rock (classic)	New Age
Classical	Rock (heavy)	Pop
Folk	Latin	Blues
R & B or Soul	Soundtracks or musicals	Christian
<i>Reading interest</i>		
Science Fiction	Horror	Biography or Autobiography
Fantasy	Humor	History
Mysteries	Comic Books	Science
Literature	Self-Help	Poetry
Fiction	Romance	Art or Photography

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