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Dehumanization of Uncivil Behaviors: Insights into Lack of Humanness and Racial Belonging

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Abstract: Humans are social creatures who need to respect certain norms and practice social responsibility for the well-being of everyone, but many people transgress these norms. Behaving uncivilly may lead to the transgressor being seen as someone unable to live in society and not as human as others. However, not all transgressors are perceived and evaluated equally. The purpose of this research was to verify the relationship between incivility and lack of humanness, and identify how racial belonging influences the perception of uncivil transgressors. In three studies ($N = 450$), we wanted to confirm the association between (in)civility with blatant and covert dehumanization and explore how the racial belonging of uncivil agents may affect the way they are perceived. Results show that the agents who behave uncivilly are dehumanized blatantly and covertly (Study 1). Additionally, White uncivil agents are perceived and evaluated more harshly than Black uncivil agents by people of their same racial group (Study 2a). Additionally, Black uncivil agents were dehumanized less than White uncivil agents by people of their same racial group (Study 2b). Our findings confirm the relationship between incivility and lack of humanness and show a racial bias is present in the application of social norms.

Keywords: civility; dehumanization; race; infrahumanization; social norms

1. Introduction

Living in society implies interacting with others. This interaction impacts our well-being and can provide a sense of community and belonging. The importance of social norms that describe socially appropriate behaviors and proscribe inappropriate ones for a given social unit has been made evident for our survival and to sustain a healthy interaction between strangers in our society (Lofland 1998; Sherif 1936). Coexistence in a society greatly relies on the civility of its members. Mutual respect, courtesy, and consideration for others are fundamental principles that contribute to maintaining a harmonious and prosperous environment. What makes this possible are the social norms of civility. Civility is a concept that evolved with time (Elias 1939). It refers to a type of ethical behavior that includes courtesy, manners, good citizenship, and concern for the welfare of the members of one's community (Forni 2002). In this sense, behaviors such as picking up dog droppings or giving up one's seat on the bus are examples of civil behavior. However, civility is more than that. Drawing upon the insights of Shils (1997), civility can be understood as the foundational social virtue that upholds the fabric of society, marked by its emphasis on respect for individual dignity, the embrace of diversity and pluralism, and the adherence to societal norms that ensure peaceful coexistence. According to Shils, civility necessitates a balance between individual autonomy and the collective good, fostering an environment where mutual respect and tolerance prevail despite inherent differences among individuals. This virtue is pivotal in facilitating social cooperation and maintaining order transcending mere politeness to encompass a deep-seated commitment to the common welfare, ensuring that diverse communities can thrive together in harmony and mutual understanding.

Through this lens, civility emerges not only as a personal ethic but as a crucial component of societal infrastructure, indispensable for the sustainability of civil society (Shils 1997).

People usually follow and respect these social norms of civility, but sometimes people behave uncivilly, transgressing these social norms. In this context, intriguing questions arise about how people respond to those who transgress social norms of civility. Will they be rejected? Will they be seen as less human than others?

In this research, our objective is to examine this topic closely and determine whether and how people dehumanize those who exhibit uncivil conduct. Furthermore, given that these norms are intricately tied to social interaction and these interactions involve a sense of group belonging, we are interested in exploring whether the consequences for transgressors vary based on race, a critical variable in group division. Specifically, we will investigate how people perceive and evaluate members of their own racial group in comparison to those from different racial backgrounds. These analyses will allow us to shed light on the complex dynamics that can emerge in a diverse society and identify how these dynamics affect the perception and treatment of those who deviate from civil norms.

Uncivil behaviors are considered one of the most important factors of urban stress, posing a threat to those affected (Phillips and Smith 2003; Robin et al. 2007). Uncivil behaviors not only have negative effects on the quality of life of recipients and observers of such behaviors but also on those who perform them. As the ones who are committing a social norm transgression, they may face consequences. Different studies have shown that, when faced with negative events, people trigger rapid evaluative responses that have a strong effect on interpersonal perception (Van Berkum et al. 2009). Transgressors not only are frequently subjected to some form of disapproval, or reproach (Brauer and Chaurand 2010; Brauer and Chekroun 2005; Nugier et al. 2009), but in some violent cases can also be considered immoral and even dehumanized (Kelman 1973).

Being considered human seems like an understatement for people; however, not everyone is considered as equally human. Certain traits and behaviors can promote or undermine the humanness of people. In this sense, Haslam (2006), proposed that civility is one of the uniquely human traits, that is, civility helps to separate humans from animals. It is a trait that requires learning in the context of a developed society with norms aimed at respecting the well-being of others. For this reason, he considers that the lack of civility is a manifestation of coarseness and archaism more typical of primitive individuals. These individuals do not carry the same moral weight as other humans, so they may be animalistically dehumanized (Saminaden et al. 2010).

It may seem extreme, but dehumanization is a common process in our daily lives and does not apply only to violent conflicts; dehumanization can also occur in interpersonal contexts (Bastian et al. 2014; Leyens et al. 2000). Bastian and Haslam (2010) found that victims of ostracism saw their perpetrators as less human when they were asked to recall a situation in which a person socially excluded them in contrast to the memory of everyday interaction with another person. Being dehumanized may influence how others perceive those dehumanized as worthy of moral concern or not, and how they may be blamed or even praised for their actions (Bastian et al. 2011). Therefore, it is necessary to study the relationship between incivility and lack of humanness, since uncivil behaviors are carried out daily, and people can use them as a guide that shapes their perception of others, leading to a negative outcome. In this sense, Rodríguez-Gómez et al. (2021) studied the automatic associations between civil and uncivil behaviors with humans' and animals' symbols and observed that uncivil behaviors are more associated with humans. However, in another study, Rodríguez-Gómez et al. (2022) also observed that agents of civil, moral, uncivil, and immoral behaviors were given traits that differed in human uniqueness and human nature.

The differences in uniquely human traits and human nature traits are widely observed in dehumanization research. However, it is not the only measure of dehumanization in social psychology. The ascent of man measure provided by Kteily et al. (2015) is a blatant measure of dehumanization that represents better the equivalence between dehumanization and animalization and shows its anchoring in the timeline marked by the evolution of

the human species. More interestingly, the measure of the ascent of man correlates with the infrahumanization measures, a more covert way of considering that the other is less human than we are. Specifically, the Infrahumanization Theory posited by Leyens et al. (2001) showed that we attribute to outgroups fewer secondary emotions compared to ingroups. This theory distinguishes between two types of emotions. Primary emotions, such as joy and anger, are basic and not only seen in humans but also animals, and secondary emotions, such as humility and guilt, which are longer lasting and involve cognition, morality, evolution, memory, and an active, rather than reactive, role of the person (Leyens et al. 2001). This measure does not deny complete humanity to those who carry out counter-normative acts, but simply attributes to them reduced humanity, considering them primitive human beings rather than animals (Leyens 2009). This may be more compatible with civility since they are not norms that appeared out of nowhere, defining a clear distinction between people. They are a set of social norms that are linked with the evolution of human beings and change with the advancement of our societies (Elias 1939). Furthermore, incivilities are often considered as minor transgressions. Behaving uncivilly is still human (Rodríguez-Gómez et al. 2021) but it may take away certain human traits (Rodríguez-Gómez et al. 2022). With this in mind, the purpose of our first study is to verify the relationship between incivility and lack of humanness with both measures of blatant and covert dehumanization.

As stated, behaving uncivilly may lead to dehumanization, and being dehumanized is a serious concern. However, not all transgressors are perceived nor evaluated equally, thus certain people will not face the same consequences for their transgressions. Hart and Morry (1997) found that the same behavior can be interpreted differently depending on the individual performing it, suggesting that individuals' perceptions and evaluations of behavior are influenced by factors beyond the behavior itself, taking into account that social norms are rules that guide people's behavior in each society or group and define what is acceptable and how the members should behave (Cislaghi and Heise 2018). Given the strong communal nature of social norms, it is necessary to consider the significance of ingroup–outgroup distinctions in shaping social evaluations and behaviors (Marques et al. 1988).

Extensive research has been done regarding group belonging with dehumanization and infrahumanization. It has been demonstrated that ethnocentric perceptions towards outgroups can lead to the dehumanization of individuals from these groups (Haslam and Loughnan 2014). In this sense, if behaving uncivilly leads to dehumanization, will this dehumanization differ between transgressors from different groups? Per definition, social norms of civility are aimed towards the well-being of the whole society, and everyone should commit to them equally, thus when people behave uncivilly, they ought to be judged in the same way. However, this may not happen. As stated by Shils (1992), incivility is not merely a lapse in manners or decorum but a deeper societal ailment, fostered by an excessive focus on self-interest. He argued that when individuals or groups prioritize their own ambitions, desires, and political allegiances over the collective well-being, the fabric of civility—which is predicated on mutual respect, understanding, and concern for the common good—begins to fray. This prioritization of self-interest often manifests in a relentless pursuit of power, where the acquisition and maintenance of influence become ends in themselves, rather than means to achieve broader societal goals. In such a climate, the search for power can exacerbate incivility, as the competitive dynamics between differing interests intensify, leading to a breakdown in the essential cooperative and empathetic engagements that underpin a civil society.

The insights provided by Edward Shils on incivility, self-interest, and the pursuit of power offer a valuable lens through which to examine the historical and ongoing imbalance of power between different racial groups, particularly between Black and White communities. Race is not just a difference in color, but a social creation grounded in power relations. Historically, systemic racism has entrenched disparities in power, resources, and opportunities, disproportionately affecting Black individuals and other people of

color. These disparities are not only economic and political but also deeply rooted in social perceptions and interactions. Countless researchers observed that advantaged majority groups often engage in the dehumanization of marginalized minorities (Bain et al. 2009; Boccato et al. 2008; Goff et al. 2008; Saminaden et al. 2010; Vaes and Paladino 2010). In the case of racial minorities, historically there is a higher likelihood of criminalization and infrahumanization, with a particular tendency to infrahumanize Black individuals (Viki et al. 2006). In this sense, minorities, and especially those from Black racial backgrounds, usually face more dehumanization. This discrimination ranges from blatant forms where they are directly called apes, to subtle forms where they are considered as lesser individuals that are incapable of emotional regulation and self-control (Goff et al. 2008; Gray et al. 2007; Wittenbrink et al. 1997). When considering the dynamics of incivility within this context, the imbalance of power critically shapes the way behaviors are perceived and evaluated along racial lines. Actions deemed uncivil from individuals within the historically marginalized group can often be magnified or interpreted through the lens of existing stereotypes and biases, leading to harsher judgment or consequences compared to similar behaviors from their White counterparts. This differential perception and evaluation is reflective of broader societal biases that associate power and privilege with Whiteness, thereby affording individuals within that group a broader latitude of acceptable behavior.

The relationship between race and incivility has been studied before. It has been observed that incivility in the workplace can manifest as discrimination, contributing to the reinforcement of existing power dynamics (Cortina 2008; Cortina et al. 2013; Gabriel et al. 2018; Marchiondo et al. 2018). It has been observed that members of dominant groups, historically White, may engage in such behaviors, which serve to maintain and even deepen the power disparities at work. This, in turn, aggravates the challenges that marginalized groups encounter, thus maintaining and possibly intensifying the inequalities that are already present (Cortina 2008; Cortina et al. 2001; McLaughlin et al. 2012). However, studies were mostly focused on the experience of incivility and the results were not fully consistent between different studies. Additionally, the majority of the research has been done in organizational contexts or in situations where other social variables such as professional roles, authorities, or political stances have a high impact (Cortina et al. 2001; Cortina et al. 2002; Kern and Grandey 2009; Milam 2010). With this in mind, it is still unclear if this racial dehumanizing tendency is also present regarding daily social norm transgressions that are carried in general contexts. In this sense, we aim to explore the relationship between race and incivility with everyday uncivil behaviors, specifically, with descriptions of uncivil agents that vary in their racial belonging and how this can affect the way people from their same or another race perceive and evaluate them.

2. Study 1

With the first study, we wanted to verify the relationship between civility and humanness with both measures of blatant and covert dehumanization. The representation of what is human has a wide range in the evolutionary scale and being dehumanized does not necessarily mean being an animal, but just seen as being less evolved than human. Prior research observed that since civility is a uniquely human trait (Haslam 2006), those who usually perform civil behaviors are given traits higher in human uniqueness (Rodríguez-Gómez et al. 2022). We sought to further expand the research on the dehumanization of uncivil agents with more blatant measures, such as the Ascent of Man (Kteily et al. 2015), and more covert measures, such as the Infrahumanization scale (Leyens et al. 2001). Specifically, we want to analyze how the perceived humanness of the agent who behaves civilly or uncivilly varies with his behaviors. We expect uncivil agents to be dehumanized both blatantly, by being seen as closer to an animal than a human (Hypothesis 1a), and covertly, by being seen as less capable of experiencing secondary emotions (Hypothesis 1b).

2.1. Method

2.1.1. Participants

A total of 145 undergraduate students (71 females, 74 males) from Spain participated in this study (*Mage* = 21.90; *SDage* = 7.67; Range = 18–55). The students were awarded course credit for participating. G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al. 2007) suggested we would need 144 participants to detect a medium effect size (*f* = 0.30) with 90% power (*α* = 0.05).

2.1.2. Materials and Procedure

A survey with six situations (civil, neutral, and uncivil) and four questions (civility of the behavior, civility of the agent, primary and secondary emotions, and humanness of the agent) for each situation was created and distributed online. After giving informed consent, the participants viewed and rated the six situations, which were presented in random order.

Civil, uncivil, and neutral situations. Two civil situations ("You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you notice a man who is offering to carry a heavy bag for an elderly lady" and "You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you notice a man who is helping to push a broken car") and two uncivil situations ("You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you notice a man who is kicking a bin" and "You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you notice a man who is throwing a cigarette butt to the ground") were selected from Rodríguez-Gómez et al. (2022) *Mcivility* = 4.75; *SDcivility* = 0.13 for civil behaviors and *Mcivility* = 1.29; *SDcivility* = 0.50 for uncivil behaviors (*t*(2) = 34.94; *p* = 0.001). In addition, two neutral situations were added ("You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you notice a man who is putting on his jacket" and "You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you notice a man who is looking at his watch"). We asked the participants to answer four questions for each situation.

Civility of the behavior (as control). To verify that the participants evaluated the behaviors according to their degree of civility, they were asked to rate the civility of the behaviors (e.g., "at what point do you think the behavior "kicking a bin" should be placed?") on a 7-point scale with endpoints labeled 1 = "very uncivil" and 7 = "very civil".

Civility of the agent. Participants were asked to rate the civility of the agent ("If you were asked to what extent you thought that man kicking a bin is uncivil/civil, at what point on the following scale would you place him?") on a 7-point scale with endpoints labeled 1 = "very uncivil" and 7 = "very civil". We expected to find clear differences between the situations in the civility of the behaviors and the civility of the agent in line with the behavior.

Primary and secondary emotions. Participants indicated on a 5-point scale with endpoints labeled 1 = "not at all" and 5 = "a lot" to what degree the agent of the behavior would experience certain emotions ("If you were to comment on his behavior, to what extent do you think this man would feel the following emotions?"). We chose four primary emotions (anger, pleasure, joy, and displeasure) and four secondary emotions (guilt, shame, humility, and excitement) from the study of Rodríguez-Pérez et al. (2014). Both types of emotions were selected so that the primary ones were scored less human (*M* = 3.29; *SD* = 1.3) than the secondary ones (*M* = 5.63; *SD* = 0.35; *t*(6) = 3.52; *p* = 0.013; *d* = 1.33, 95% CI [0.26, 2.35]). In addition, it was sought that there were no differences in valence (*M* = 4.26; *SD* = 2.8 for primary emotions and *M* = 3.74; *SD* = 2.3 for secondary emotions, *t*(6) = 0.288; *p* = 0.783; *d* = 0.11, 95% CI [−0.64, 0.85]). The internal consistency for the primary emotions was *α* = 0.75 and *α* = 0.78 for the secondary emotions. We expected to observe differences in the emotions attributed to the agent, since civil agents attributed more secondary emotions than primary emotions, and uncivil agents the exact opposite.

Humanness of the agent. The Ascent of Man measure (Kteily et al. 2015) was adapted for the fourth question. Participants responded on a 0–100 scale, where 0 = "animal" and 100 = "human", where they were to place the agent ("When you see the man kicking the bin, ideas about that man probably come to your mind. If you had to summarize them

at one point on an animal-human scale, where would you place the image that you have formed?"). To balance the tendency to humanize (move the horizontal slider from 0 to 100) and the tendency to dehumanize (move the horizontal slider from 100 to 0), the scale was anchored at the point corresponding to 50. We expected differences in the degree of humanness, with civil agents perceived as more human than uncivil agents.

Finally, once they had answered the questions for the six situations, they were asked two memory questions to check their attention to the survey ("What did one of the men break?" and "What did one of the men push?").

2.1.3. Data Analysis

SPSS program 25 version was used for the analyses. A significance level of 0.05 was set. Descriptive statistics were calculated, and repeated measures ANOVA was carried out to verify the degree of civility of the situations and agents presented. An ANOVA 2×3 with primary and secondary emotions was conducted to observe the attribution of emotions to the agents depending on their behaviors. Finally, an analysis of differences between pairs of agents was used to observe the perceived humanness of the agents depending on their behavior.

2.2. Results and Discussion

Manipulation Check. To check the effectiveness of the experimental manipulation, we carried out a repeated measures ANOVA to verify the degree of civility of the situations presented. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences ($F_{(2,144)}$ = 995.73; $p < 0.001$; η^2_p = 0.874); the contrast between the variables taken two by two confirmed that the civil behaviors (M = 6.63; SD = 0.59) were perceived as significantly more civil than the uncivil behaviors (M = 1.92; SD = 1.00; $t_{(144)}$ = 44.10; $p < 0.001$, d = 3.66, 95% CI [3.20, 4.11]). The neutral behaviors (M = 5.12; SD = 1.14) obtained a significantly different score from both the civil ($t_{(144)}$ = 15.78; $p < 0.001$; d = 1.31, 95% CI [1.09, 1.53]) and the uncivil behaviors ($t_{(144)}$ = 26.77; $p < 0.001$; d = 2.22, 95% CI [1.92, 2.53]).

Civility of the agent. The analysis showed significant differences ($F_{(2,144)}$ = 682.06; $p < 0.001$; η^2_p = 0.826). The subsequent contrast showed that the civility attributed to agents of civil behaviors (M = 6.49; SD = 0.68) was significantly greater than that attributed to agents of uncivil behaviors (M = 2.17; SD = 1.19; $t_{(144)}$ = 35.50; $p < 0.001$; d = 2.95, 95% CI [2.57, 3.32]). In addition, agents of neutral behaviors (M = 5.08; SD = 1.16; $p < 0.001$) were also rated significantly differently from both civil ($t_{(144)}$ = 15.26; $p < 0.001$; d = 1.27, 95% CI [1.05, 1.49]) and uncivil agents ($t_{(144)}$ = 20.92; $p < 0.001$; d = 1.73, 95% CI [1.48, 1.99]).

Infrahumanization and dehumanization of the agent. More interesting concerning our hypothesis is the attribution of humanity to the agent of the behaviors. The first covert measure of infrahumanization using primary and secondary emotions was analyzed by an ANOVA of 2 (primary emotions vs. secondary emotions) by 3 (type of behavior: civil behaviors vs. uncivil vs. neutral). First, we observed that there is a similar number of primary and secondary emotions (M = 2.09 vs. M = 2.08, respectively, $F < 1$); however, there was a main effect of the variable type of behavior ($F_{(2,144)}$ = 159.83; $p < 0.001$; η^2_p = 0.526). Specifically, participants gave more primary and secondary emotions to the agent who behaved civilly (M = 2.32; SD = 0.42) and uncivilly (M = 2.32; SD = 0.47) than the agent who behaved neutrally (M = 1.62; SD = 0.57). In addition, and more relevant to our hypothesis, there was a significant interaction between the two variables ($F_{(2,144)}$ = 146.23; $p < 0.001$; η^2_p = 0.504).

As seen in Figure 1, there is a significant difference in the emotions attributed to the agents depending on their behaviors. The primary emotions which are basic and not only seen in humans but also animals, and secondary emotions which are longer lasting and more linked to humans since they involve cognition, morality, and evolution, were attributed unequally depending on the behaviors. The analysis of the simple effects in the interactions showed that the agent of uncivil behaviors was attributed fewer secondary emotions (M = 2.05; SD = 0.61) than the agent of civil behaviors (M = 2.60; SD = 0.45),

$t(144) = 9.96$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 0.827$, 95% CI [0.64, 1.02]. The agent of uncivil behaviors was attributed more primary emotions ($M = 2.59$; $SD = 0.56$) than the agent of civil behaviors ($M = 2.04$; $SD = 0.50$, $t(144) = 10.45$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 0.868$, 95% CI [0.68, 1.06]). Also, in contrast with the civil agent who was attributed more secondary emotions than primary emotions ($t(144) = 15.54$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 1.29$, 95% CI [1.07, 1.51]), and the uncivil agent who was attributed more primary than secondary emotions ($t(144) = 9.11$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 0.76$, 95% CI [−0.57, 0.94]), in the neutral agent, there were no differences between primary emotions ($M = 1.64$; $SD = 0.62$) and secondary emotions ($M = 1.59$; $SD = 0.57$; $t(144) = 1.83$; $p = 0.070$).
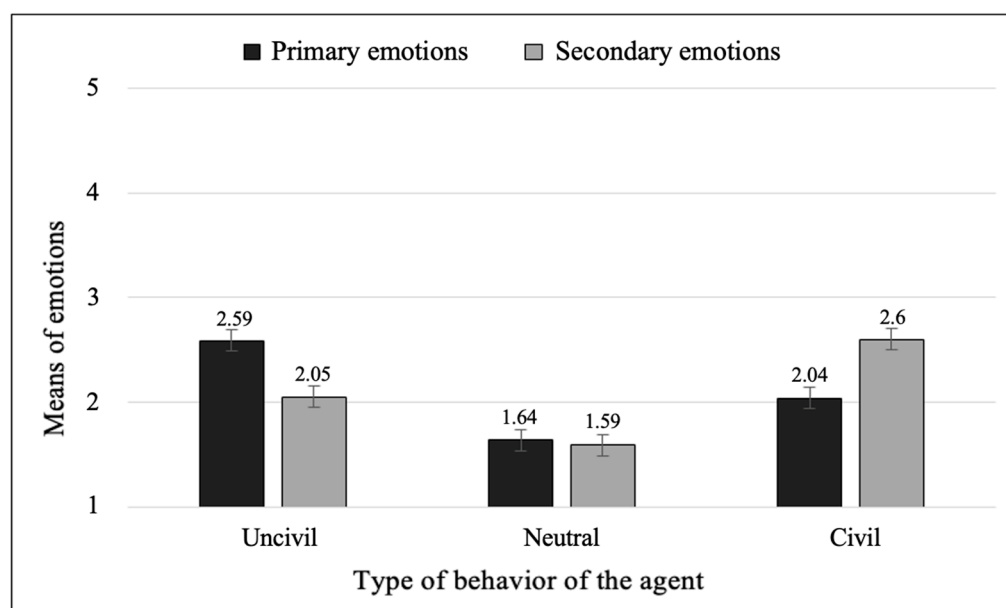

Figure 1. Primary and secondary emotions attributed to the agents of civil, neutral, and uncivil behaviors.

The second blatant measure of dehumanization obtained with a scale with the ends anchored in animal (0) and human (100) also showed significant differences between the agents of the three types of behaviors ($F(2,144) = 245.49$; $p < 0.001$; $\eta^2_p = 0.630$).

As seen in Figure 2, there is a significant difference in the perceived humanness of the agents depending on their behavior. The analysis of differences between pairs of agents showed that the agent of civil behaviors was perceived to be significantly more human ($M = 94.40$; $SD = 9.35$) than the agent of uncivil behaviors ($M = 56.44$; $SD = 26.73$; $t(144) = 16.27$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 1.35$, 95% CI [1.12, 1.58]).

The agent of neutral behaviors ($M = 91.05$; $SD = 13.88$) differed significantly from both the civil agents ($t(144) = 3.31$; $p = 0.001$; $d = 0.28$, 95% CI [0.109, 0.440]) and the uncivil agents ($t(144) = 16.62$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 1.38$, 95% CI [1.15, 1.61]). That is, neutral agents are more human than uncivil agents but less human than civil agents.

These findings are in line with our hypothesis. The agent was more dehumanized and considered closer to animals than to humans when he performed non-civil behaviors than when he performed civil behaviors. And civil agents are more capable of experiencing secondary emotions than uncivil agents.
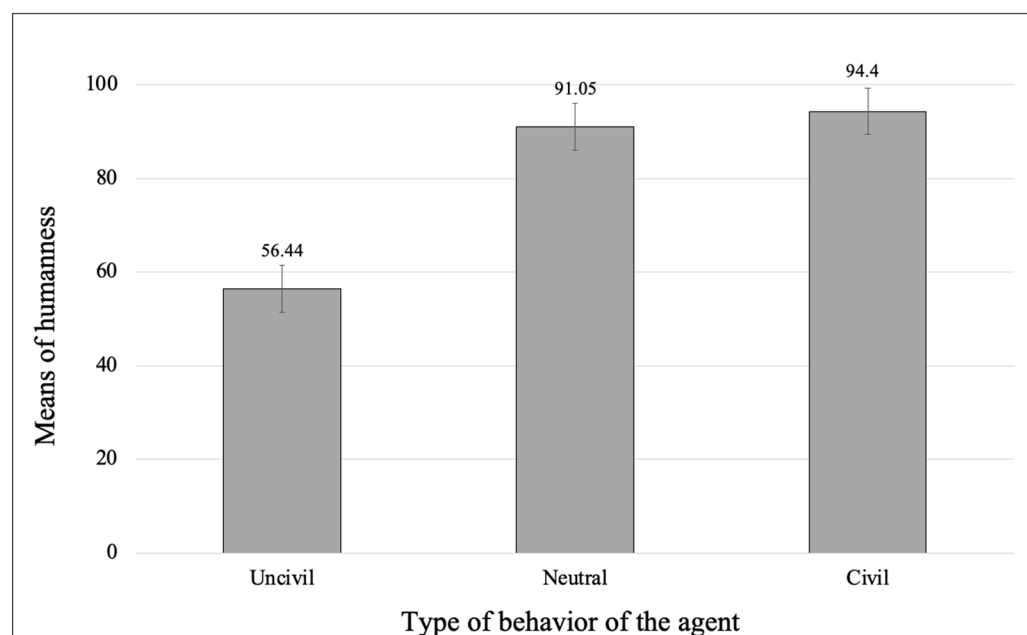
Figure 2. Humanness of the agent of civil, neutral, and uncivil behaviors.

3. Study 2a

In study 2a, we wanted to explore how uncivil agents are perceived and evaluated based on their racial belonging. Specifically, we wanted to examine if White people will perceive and evaluate uncivil agents more harshly if these transgressors are from another racial group than from their same racial group.

Incivility has a huge racial factor; it can serve as a means for sexism and racism in organizations (Cortina 2008) and is often known as racial incivility or microaggressions (Harris 2017; Harris and Linder 2018; Harwood et al. 2018). In this sense, previous research observed that people from racial minorities are often subjected to incivility (Ong 2021). Employees of color report higher levels of incivility towards them and in this category, people from Black-related racial backgrounds are impacted by selective incivility at multiple levels (Ozturk and Berber 2022). Being discriminated against can trigger the dehumanization of the ones who enact the discriminating behavior; not only can the victim dehumanize the perpetrator, but even bystanders can also dehumanize the perpetrator as a means of regulation that is often seen in violent conflicts. In this case, it is even more salient given the historical tendency to dehumanize people with Black racial backgrounds (Kendi 2016; Viki et al. 2006). This places importance on researching the issue of racial bias in everyday incivilities. What makes that incivility possible? Why is no one outraged by the uncivil transgressors? Is the bias present not only on the ones that receive incivility but also on how the transgressors are perceived based on their race? With this in mind, we expect to find differences in the perception and evaluation of White and Black uncivil agents. Specifically, we expect White participants to be harsher on Black transgressors, considering their behaviors as more uncivil (Hypothesis 2a), feeling more moral outrage (Hypothesis 2b), and dehumanizing them more (Hypothesis 2c) than White transgressors of incivilities with whom they are more lenient.

3.1. Method

3.1.1. Participants

A total of 143 undergraduate students (76 females, 67 males) from Spain, whose racial belonging is defined as White, participated in this study (*M*age = 20.34; *SD*age = 2.02; Range 18–29). The students were randomly assigned to each experimental condition and were awarded course credit for participating.

This study followed a single factor between-subjects design with the independent variable being the racial belonging of the agent with two levels (White vs. Black). Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions. In the first condition (n = 75), they answered a questionnaire with a White male uncivil agent, whereas it was a Black male uncivil agent in the second condition (n = 68). Three dependent variables were assessed in each condition: incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and dehumanization of the agent. G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al. 2007) suggested we would need 140 participants to detect a medium effect size (f = 0.25) with 90% power (α = 0.05).

3.1.2. Materials and Procedure

We created two online surveys with 3 uncivil situations each and 3 questions (incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and dehumanization of the agent) for each situation.

Uncivil situations vignettes. Three uncivil situations ("Damaging the street furniture", "throwing the cigarette butt on the ground", and "Not picking up dog droppings") were presented to the participants. The uncivil situations were extracted from the pretest study of Chen-Xia et al. (2022). An illustrator transformed all the written behaviors into pictures, and the uncivil pictures were also revised by the authors of said pretest. These illustrations were presented in such a way that the same behavior was performed by a White male agent in the vignettes of the first condition and by a Black male agent in the vignettes of the second condition. In addition, to avoid any doubt, each illustration was accompanied by a legend that identified what the agent was doing (e.g., "You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you see that there is a White/Black man who does not pick up his dog´s droppings") (see Appendix A).

Incivility of the behavior. After they saw the vignette and read each situation, they were asked to rate the incivility of the behavior on a 7-point scale with endpoints labeled 1 = "a little uncivil" and 7 = "very uncivil". We expect participants to give higher rates of incivility when they are presented with a Black agent performing the uncivil behavior.

Moral outrage. We adapted the indicator of moral outrage from Moisuc et al. (2018). We asked the participants to rate how intensely they would feel fear, disdain, frustration, anger, sadness, disgust, and shame on a 7-point scale with endpoints labeled 1 = 'not at all intensely' and 7 = 'very intensely'. The internal consistency of the responses to these items in the three situations was equal to α = 0.91. We expect participants to experience more moral outrage when they are presented with a Black uncivil agent performing it.

Dehumanization of the agent. The dehumanization measure applied by Chen-Xia et al. (2022) was used in the fourth question. Participants responded in a 0–100 horizontal slide question, where 0 = "human" and 100 = "animal", where they will place the image they formed about the agent. We expect White participants to dehumanize the uncivil transgressor more when they are from a Black racial background than when they are from their same racial background (White).

We collected data using a self-administered online questionnaire through the Qualtrics platform. We generated an electronic reference for each survey and distributed it randomly to students through the virtual campus. After giving informed consent, the participants viewed the 3 uncivil situations in a random order and responded to the questions for each situation. We asked the participants to pay attention and look at each situation carefully, and for each situation, we asked them to rate the incivility of the behavior portrayed in the situation. We also told them to rate the extent to which they would feel certain emotions when facing that situation, and finally, they rated the agent on a human to animal scale. At the end, the participants had the opportunity to give their students information if they wanted course credits.

3.1.3. Data Analysis

SPSS program 25 version was used for the analyses. A significance level of 0.05 was set. Descriptive statistics were calculated, and a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out for participants' ratings of incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and

dehumanization of the agent, with racial belonging of the agent (White vs. Black) as a fixed factor.

3.2. Results and Discussion

We carried out a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) for participants' ratings of incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and dehumanization of the agent, with racial belonging of the agent (White vs. Black) as a fixed factor.

Incivility of the behavior. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences ($F(1,141) = 8.618$; $p = 0.004$; $\eta^2_p = 0.058$) based on the racial belonging of the agent. White participants who saw the uncivil behavior performed by a White male agent ($M = 5.74$; $SD = 1.08$) rated it higher in incivility than those who saw the behavior performed by a Black male agent ($M = 5.13$; $SD = 1.38$).

Moral outrage. The results regarding moral outrage showed the same significant pattern ($F(1,141) = 7.421$; $p = 0.007$; $\eta^2_p = 0.050$); White participants indicated higher moral outrage when facing an uncivil White male ($M = 4.66$; $SD = 1.06$) than when facing an uncivil Black male ($M = 4.13$; $SD = 1.27$).

Dehumanization of the agent. The ANOVA (one-way) of the racial belonging (White vs. Black) with dehumanization as the dependent variable showed no differences between the two conditions ($F(1,141) = 0.013$; $p = 0.908$; $\eta^2_p = 0.00$). White participants dehumanized White uncivil transgressors ($M = 48.68$; $SD = 24.61$) to the same extent as Black uncivil transgressors ($M = 48.18$; $SD = 26.14$)

To sum up, these results are not in line with our hypothesis and are even contrary to what we expected. White participants were harsher on uncivil transgressors depending on their racial background. However, they were not harsher on Black transgressors, but instead were more critical towards the White transgressors from their same racial background, perceiving more incivility in their behaviors and experiencing more moral outrage.

It seems that the tendency to dehumanize people from Black racial backgrounds more than those from White racial backgrounds in situations of conflict is not present in the case of everyday incivilities. Furthermore, it seems that when these communal social norms are transgressed, White participants are more critical towards transgressors from their same racial group. This finding may be related to the communal nature of social norms and the "Black Sheep" effect (Marques et al. 1988) that has been observed in the context of intergroup dynamics where individuals are more sensitive to transgressions committed by ingroup members, leading to increased social control over them. As civility norms are socially based, shared, and present in most societies but also distinct in each of them, the people from each society may not subject everyone to respect these norms in the same degree. Here, it seems that white participants are harsher with uncivil people when they are from their own racial group; however, it is still necessary to examine if the same happens with participants from other racial groups.

4. Study 2b

In study 2b, we wanted to test if the pattern of racial bias observed in study 2a is also present in other racial groups. Specifically, we carried the same study but with Black participants. Given the previous results, we expect to find differences in the perception and evaluation of White and Black uncivil agents by Black participants. Specifically, following the previous results, we expect Black participants to be harsher on Black transgressors, considering their behaviors as more uncivil (Hypothesis 2d) and feeling more moral outrage (Hypothesis 2e), whereas in the case of dehumanization, we expect no differences (Hypothesis 2f).

4.1. Method

4.1.1. Participants

A total of 162 participants (78 females, 84 males) from the Prolific platform, whose racial belonging is defined as Black, participated in this study (*Mage* = 26.35; *SDage* = 4.85;

Range 20–43). Participants were randomly assigned to each experimental condition and were awarded economic retribution for participating.

This study followed a single factor between-subjects design with the independent variable being the racial belonging of the agent with two levels (White vs. Black). Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions. In the first condition (n = 81), they answered a questionnaire with a White male uncivil agent, whereas it was a Black male uncivil agent in the second condition (n = 81). Three dependent variables were assessed in each condition: incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and dehumanization of the agent. G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al. 2007) suggested we would need 140 participants to detect a medium effect size ($f = 0.25$) with 90% power ($\alpha = 0.05$).

4.1.2. Materials and Procedure

The same materials and procedures from Study 2a were applied. We created two online surveys with 3 uncivil situations each and 3 questions (incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and dehumanization of the agent) for each situation.

Uncivil situations vignettes. Three uncivil situations ("Damaging the street furniture", "throwing the cigarette butt on the ground", and "Not picking up dog droppings") were presented to the participants. The uncivil situations were extracted from the pretest study of Chen-Xia et al. (2022). An illustrator transformed all the written behaviors into pictures, and the uncivil pictures were also revised by the authors of said pretest. These illustrations were presented in such a way that the same behavior was performed by a White male agent in the vignettes of the first condition and by a Black male agent in the vignettes of the second condition. In addition, to avoid any doubt, each illustration was accompanied by a legend that identified what the agent was doing (e.g., "You are walking down the street and when you turn the corner you see that there is a White/Black man who does not pick up his dog´s droppings") (see Appendix A).

Incivility of the behavior. After they saw the vignette and read each situation, they were asked to rate the incivility of the behavior on a 7-point scale with endpoints labeled 1 = "a little uncivil" and 7 = "very uncivil". We expect participants to give higher rates of incivility when they are presented with a Black agent performing the uncivil behavior.

Moral outrage. We adapted the indicator of moral outrage from Moisuc et al. (2018). We asked the participants to rate how intensely they would feel fear, disdain, frustration, anger, sadness, disgust, and shame on a 7-point scale with endpoints labeled 1 = 'not at all intensely' and 7 = 'very intensely'. The internal consistency of the responses to these items in the three situations was also $\alpha = 0.91$. We expect participants to experience more moral outrage when they are presented with a Black uncivil agent performing it.

Dehumanization of the agent. The dehumanization measure applied by Chen-Xia et al. (2022) was used in the fourth question. Participants responded in a 0–100 horizontal slide question, where 0 = "human" and 100 = "animal", where they will place the image they formed about the agent. We expect no differences following the result of study 2a.

We collected data using a self-administered online questionnaire through the Qualtrics platform. We generated an electronic reference for each survey and distributed it randomly through the Prolific platform to people who identified themselves as Black. After giving informed consent, the participants viewed the 3 uncivil situations in a random order and responded to the questions for each situation. We asked the participants to pay attention and look at each situation carefully, and for each situation, we asked them to rate the incivility of the behavior portrayed in the situation. We also told them to rate the extent to which they would feel certain emotions when facing that situation, and finally, they rated the agent on a human to animal scale.

4.1.3. Data Analysis

SPSS program 25 version was used for the analyses. A significance level of 0.05 was set. Descriptive statistics were calculated, and a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out for participants' ratings of incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and

dehumanization of the agent, with racial belonging of the agent (White vs. Black) as a fixed factor.

4.2. Results and Discussion

We carried out a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) for participants' ratings of incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and dehumanization of the agent, with racial belonging of the agent (White vs. Black) as a fixed factor.

Incivility of the behavior. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences ($F(1,160) = 5.771$; $p = 0.017$; $\eta^2_p = 0.035$) based on the racial belonging of the agent. The Black participants who saw the uncivil behavior performed by a White male agent ($M = 5.52$; $SD = 1.04$) rated it higher in incivility than those who saw the behavior performed by a Black male agent ($M = 5.07$; $SD = 1.34$).

Moral outrage. The results regarding moral outrage showed no differences ($F(1,160) = 2.409$; $p = 0.123$; $\eta^2_p = 0.015$); Black participants indicated moral outrage when facing an uncivil White male ($M = 3.86$; $SD = 1.08$) to the same extent than when facing an uncivil Black male ($M = 3.58$; $SD = 1.22$).

Dehumanization of the agent. Interestingly, the ANOVA (one-way) of the racial belonging (White vs. Black) with dehumanization as the dependent variable showed significant differences between the two conditions ($F(1,160) = 11.693$; $p = 0.001$; $\eta^2_p = 0.068$). Specifically, Black participants dehumanized White uncivil transgressors ($M = 45.56$; $SD = 26.37$) more than Black uncivil transgressors ($M = 31.12$; $SD = 27.39$).

These results do not align with the results obtained in study 2a nor the hypothesis stated after them, but in this case, they do align with ingroup bias literature as Black participants are more lenient towards transgressors that are from their same racial group. However, it is necessary to discuss the results from studies 2a and 2b together to gain a clearer understanding of the cause.

4.3. Additional Analyses Were Carried Out Taking into Account the Data from Studies 2a and 2b

Between-subjects ANOVA of 2 (Racial belonging of the participant: White vs. Black) $\times$ 2 (Racial belonging of the agent: White vs. Black) were carried with each dependent variable (incivility of the behavior, moral outrage, and dehumanization).

Incivility of the behavior. Results obtained regarding the incivility of the behavior show a significant difference based on the racial belonging of the transgressor (see Figure 3).
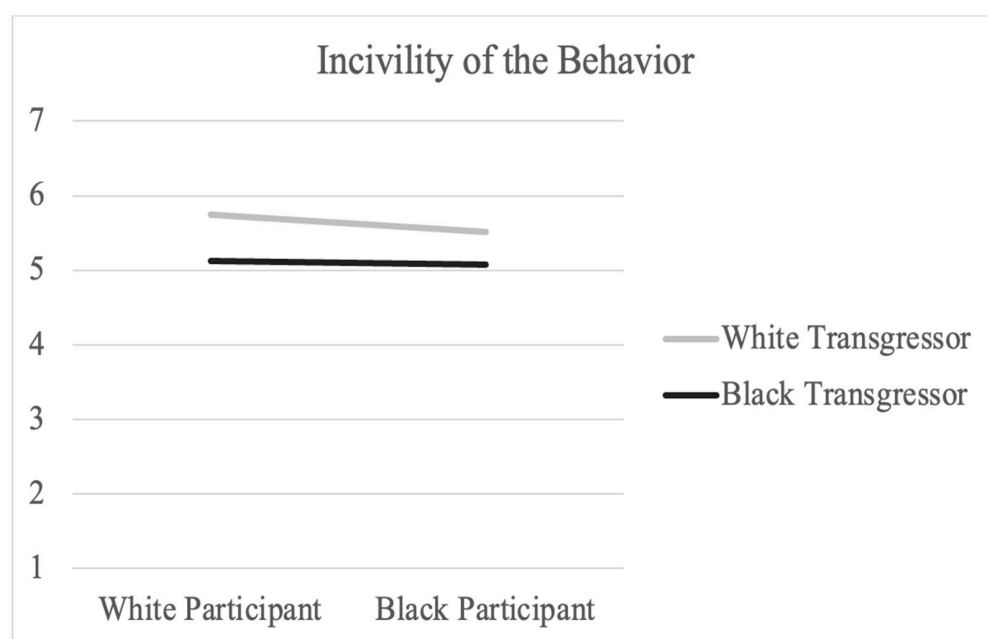

Figure 3. Incivility of the behavior based on racial belonging.

Participants both from White racial belonging and Black racial belonging perceived the behavior as more uncivil after they saw a White transgressor performing it (see Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1. Incivility of the behavior by racial belonging.

	F	*p*	$\eta^2{}_p$
Racial belonging of the participant	1.05	0.306	0.003
Racial belonging of the transgressor	14.395	0.000 ***	0.046
Interaction	0.300	0.584	0.001

Note. Effects were reported as unstandardized values. *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 2. Means and standard deviations for incivility of the behavior by racial belonging.

	White Transgressor		**Black Transgressor**	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
White Participant	4.66	1.06	4.13	1.27
Black Participant	3.86	1.08	3.58	1.22

Moral Outrage. Results obtained regarding moral outrage show a significant difference based on the racial belonging of the participant and of the transgressor (see Figure 4).
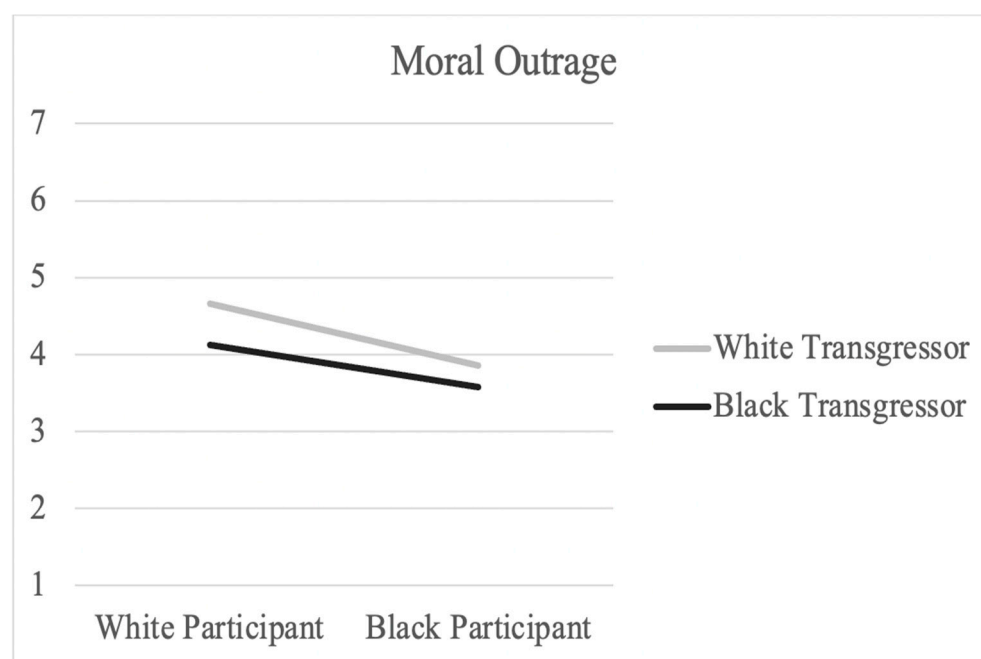
Figure 4. Moral outrage based on racial belonging.

Participants both from White racial belonging and Black racial belonging were more morally outraged after they saw a White transgressor. Additionally, White participants reported significantly higher moral outraged than Black participants (see Tables 3 and 4).

Dehumanization. Results obtained regarding dehumanization show a significant difference based on the racial belonging of the participant, the racial belonging of the transgressor, and their interaction (see Figure 5).

Table 3. Moral outrage by racial belonging.

	F	p	η^2_p
Racial belonging of the participant	26.242	0.000 ***	0.080
Racial belonging of the transgressor	9.327	0.002 **	0.030
Interaction	0.883	0.348	0.003

Note. Effects were reported as unstandardized values. ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 4. Means and standard deviations for moral outrage by racial belonging.

	White Transgressor		Black Transgressor	
	M	SD	M	SD
White Participant	4.66	1.06	4.13	1.27
Black Participant	3.86	1.08	3.58	1.22
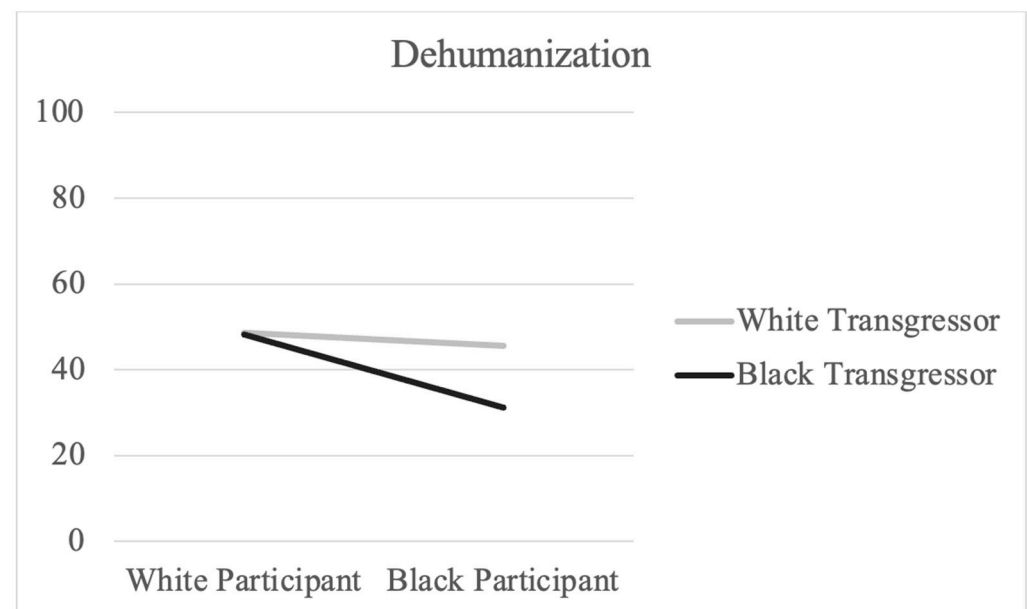
Figure 5. Dehumanization based on racial belonging.

In a closer look, White participants dehumanize more than Black participants, regardless of the racial belonging of the transgressor. Additionally, White transgressors are more dehumanized than Black transgressors. However, this last difference is mainly attributed to the Black participants being more lenient towards Black transgressors, dehumanizing them less than White transgressors whom they dehumanize to the same extent as White participants (see Tables 5 and 6).

These results offer a more comprehensive look regarding the data. It is not simply that White transgressors are more dehumanized by Black participants. Instead, Black participants are more lenient when dehumanizing Black transgressors. A possible reason for this will be analyzed later in the general discussion.

Table 5. Dehumanization by racial belonging.

	F	p	η^2_p
Racial belonging of the participant	11.279	0.001 **	0.036
Racial belonging of the transgressor	6.175	0.014 *	0.020
Interaction	5.391	0.021 *	0.018

Note. Effects were reported as unstandardized values. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 6. Means and standard deviations for dehumanization by racial belonging.

	White Transgressor		Black Transgressor	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
White Participant	48.67	24.61	48.18	26.14
Black Participant	45.56	26.37	31.11	27.39

5. General Discussion

The objective of this research was, on one hand, to determine how people dehumanize those who exhibit uncivil conduct and, on the other, to explore how people perceive and evaluate transgressors from their own racial group in comparison to those from different racial backgrounds.

The first study aimed to examine the relationship between civility, humanness, and dehumanization using measures of both blatant and covert dehumanization. Dehumanization does not necessarily imply being seen as an animal but rather being perceived as less evolved humans, as previous research has suggested (Haslam 2006). Building upon existing literature, we sought to expand our understanding of the dehumanization of uncivil individuals by employing the blatant Ascent of Man measure (Kteily et al. 2015) and the covert Infrahumanization scale (Leyens et al. 2001).

Our results showed that people perceive agents of uncivil behaviors as less capable of experiencing secondary emotions, less human and closer to animals than agents of civil behaviors. These results are in line with the theory posited by Leyens et al. (2001) and can serve as a bridge of understanding for the humanization of incivilities found with more drastic measures. It has been observed that uncivil norm violations are still associated with human traits and agency, which place them closer to humans and further from animals (Rodríguez-Gómez et al. 2022). However, in this study, we find that uncivil transgressors, though still human, are less human than people who behave civilly or just neutrally, both blatantly and even covertly impacting people´s perception regarding their ability to experience certain secondary emotions.

Now, if uncivil and impolite behaviors lead to being seen as less human and are associated differently with emotions, will all agents of uncivil actions be equally dehumanized? Will all agents provoke the same emotions in those who observe them? To test this second aim, we carried out study 2a and 2b.

Study 2a investigated how people's perceptions and assessments of uncivil agents vary depending on what race they identify with. It has been seen that the same behavior carried by different people can elicit different reactions (Hart and Morry 1997). In the case of incivilities, this is also present. Previous research observed that employees of color and Black individuals are victims of racial incivilities (Ong 2021; Ozturk and Berber 2022). This may be caused by a bias in the perception and evaluation of the transgressor who enacted the uncivil behavior towards them, which is why we expected White participants to be harsher on Black transgressors, considering their behaviors as more uncivil (Hypothesis 2a), feeling more moral outrage (Hypothesis 2b), and dehumanizing them more (Hypothesis 2c) than White transgressors of incivilities with whom they are more lenient. However, our results showed the exact opposite. In study 2a, White participants were more critical towards the transgressors when they were from their same racial background, perceiving more incivility in their behaviors and experiencing more moral outrage, though they did not dehumanize the White transgressor more than the Black transgressor. This led us to think that as civility is a type of social norm with a strong communal component, a "Black Sheep" effect may be present (Chekroun and Nugier 2005; Marques et al. 1988). This effect that has been widely observed in the context of intergroup dynamics shows that individuals are more sensitive to transgressions committed by ingroup members.

To confirm this, we carried out the same study but with Black participants (Study 2b), which did not confirm our hypothesis. We took into consideration the results of both studies together and observed that though both White and Black people perceived behaviors as

more uncivil and were more outraged when they were enacted by a White transgressor than a Black transgressor, more differences were observed regarding the racial belonging of the participant. Specifically, White people in general report more outrage towards incivilities than Black people, but they will not dehumanize differently because of it. White people in general dehumanize incivilities more than Black people, but they dehumanize both Black and White transgressors equally. Instead, Black people dehumanized the Black transgressor less than the White transgressor. However, it is not that White transgressors were more dehumanized by people from Black racial backgrounds. White transgressors were dehumanized to the same extent by the participants regardless of their race, but Black participants were more lenient toward Black transgressors. This situation shows that there may be a component in the behavior that is affecting its evaluation and interacting with a stereotypical racial trait. A very similar situation has been observed in gender-biased incivilities. Previous research that studied male and female participants' perception and evaluation of male and female uncivil transgressors observed that though uncivil transgressors are dehumanized equally regardless of their gender, the lack of stereotypically feminine traits in uncivil behaviors is what predicted this dehumanization (Chen-Xia et al. 2022). In this sense, the masculinity/femininity perceived in the transgressors may be influencing the participants and making them more lenient towards people who were less feminine from the start (more masculine). When someone behaves uncivilly, certain traits are taken from them. However, the presence of these traits is not equal in all people and can have more or less impact on their identity. Perhaps the more masculine someone is, the less he will be impacted by the loss of feminine traits because of incivilities (Barnett et al. 2005; Chen-Xia et al. 2022). In this sense, women are stereotypically more feminine than men and receive harsher judgments when they behave uncivilly. In the same direction, men who are more feminine may receive harsher judgments when they behave uncivilly than men who are less feminine. In the case of this study, the White participants who evaluated the transgressors from people of their same racial background were from Spain, and the Black participants were from South Africa, the USA, and the UK. The difference in masculinity between those groups is over 20 points in the Hofstede (2001) scale. An explanation for our results may be that race may have a bias in incivilities, but it is the stereotypically masculine and feminine traits of the people from the different races that is causing that difference given the unequal predictions of these traits in dehumanization. This is the case for White transgressors when they are compared to Black transgressors.

Additionally, the findings, though not fully in line with what was expected, do align with the posited literature. The high general response shown by White participants towards incivilities shows the importance they give to these specific social norms. A civil society is characterized by mutual respect and the common good, but self-interest and the search of power can lead to incivilities, favoring certain groups in a society (Shils 1992). Incivility is often a subtle manifestation of the prevailing power dynamics that have historically advantaged White individuals while disadvantaging Black individuals and other minorities (Cortina 2008). Following this, certain behaviors are usually carried out towards minorities to "keep them in line". This is the unequal incivility usually present in organizations; however, what happens when these uncivil behaviors simply violate the social norm but are not carried out towards another person? In this sense, the results of study 2a make sense since the dominant, usually White, groups have a stronger say regarding these norms that usually tilt in their favor, thus they react more harshly towards their ingroup when they are violating these rules. On the other hand, the results of study 2b are different. Uncivil behaviors are not solely an individual failure on following social norms but can be reflective of entrenched societal values. Incivility becomes a microcosm of the larger societal issue of racial inequity, where the actions of individuals are a performance within a pre-existing structure. Actions deemed uncivil must be understood not in isolation but as part of a continuum that perpetuates and is perpetuated by systemic bias (Cortina 2008). Within this framework, it is posited that the perception and evaluation of incivility are influenced by the actor's racial identity. Due to the systemic privileging of White behavior, similar uncivil

actions may be interpreted and sanctioned differently across racial groups. Such differential perceptions are not random but are consistent with an inclination to maintain the status quo of racial hierarchy. The "Black sheep effect" where individuals are more critical of ingroup members as a form of intra-group policing is insufficient to explain these phenomena in isolation. Instead, this effect must be contextualized within the broader societal patterns of devaluation and dehumanization that Black individuals face. The leniency shown by Black individuals toward their ingroup members who transgress with uncivil behaviors may be partially explained by the complex nature of modern discrimination and the ambivalence of prejudice. The subtleties of incivility and modern forms of discrimination operate within the cognitive and affective realms, often bypassing conscious awareness (Cortina 2008). For Black individuals, there may be an implicit recognition that their group faces systemic barriers, and their response in terms of leniency might reflect an understanding of these pervasive challenges, which affect behavior. Furthermore, the affective reactions that Black individuals have toward their own group, potentially informed by shared experiences and societal pressures, could moderate their responses to uncivil behavior, leading to a less harsh attribution process. This empathetic or protective stance within the ingroup is a nuanced form of resistance against a backdrop of historical oppression and a strategy to uphold group integrity in the face of persistent inequality.

The results of this research suggest four lines of reasoning. First, you can be dehumanized by performing human behaviors. Uncivil behaviors are clearly associated with humans and not animals, but agents are expected to behave as citizens who respect social norms. Thus, if someone does not behave civilly and transgresses these social norms, they will be deprived of humanness. This further expands the knowledge regarding the humanness of civility and incivilities (Rodríguez-Gómez et al. 2021) and also confirms the proposal of the dual model of dehumanization (Haslam 2006), which establishes civility as an exclusively human trait so that observing an uncivil agent will trigger a blatant animalistic dehumanization of this agent. Second, incivilities are linked to a lack of humanness in a variety of forms. This serves to discredit those who understand dehumanization as an all-or-nothing judgment. The fact that agents are perceived as less human while performing counter-normative human behaviors serves to support that dehumanization is understood and measured as a matter of degree (Vaes et al. 2021). In this sense, the uncivil agents would be dehumanized but this dehumanization would not lead to a complete dementalization but to some form of humanity in which certain mental and emotional capacities are necessary to carry out counter-normative actions (Gray and Wegner 2009). Therefore, it is more likely to assume that uncivil people are deprived of some qualities of civility, such as secondary emotions, but without completely depriving them of their minds or status as humans. Third, our results show that it is not only perpetrators who can dehumanize their victims, which is what usually happens so they can be violent towards them more easily. Victims and bystanders can also dehumanize perpetrators of counter-normative actions. Although there are few studies in this line, results point especially to the role that this dehumanizing perception is likely to result in public support for the punitive treatment of offenders (Bastian and Haslam 2010; Myers et al. 2004; Vasiljevic and Viki 2014). This tendency to dehumanize the perpetrator is likely to be a form of self-protection for victims and bystanders (Bastian et al. 2014). Considering the agent of counter-normative behaviors as less human and less capable of certain emotions makes his actions less aversive and easier to bear. And fourth, there is a clear group bias illustrated by racial belonging in the case of civility. Civility is a type of social norm with a heavy communal nature charged with stereotypically masculine and feminine traits. Additionally, most societies form around people who are also stereotyped by their racial belonging. Thus, people have diverse perceptions of and opinions about uncivil agents depending on the race to which they belong and the race of those they observe. Even more, social norms of civility exist to maintain healthy interactions in society; however, the society itself is built upon systemic biases and inequalities that permeate social perceptions and interactions which should be taken into account.

These findings aid in understanding the intricate relationships between perception and assessment in the context of incivilities and identity. It is not just a racial identity, but the stereotypes people may have regarding people from those races and how they interact with the intrinsic traits of civil and uncivil behaviors as well as the existing power imbalance between different social groups.

The results obtained should be considered with caution since there are several limitations of the present work. First, some studies were conducted with undergraduate students. It would be interesting to also replicate them with the general population. Also, a limited range of civil and uncivil behaviors was used. Though selected carefully and statistically contrasted in databases, one may wonder whether our results can be generalized to other civil and uncivil behaviors that occur in daily life (Kawakami et al. 2009). Additionally, the measure of dehumanization used only involves animalistic dehumanization, so it is necessary to expand the research with other measures that relate to humanity differently. So, although the studies had high internal validity, they may lack ecological validity. Additionally, it is necessary to study more racial backgrounds to further contrast and expand our findings, or it would be interesting to see if this difference is also present in descriptions of people where only the mentioned stereotypical traits are manipulated. Still, we can state that when someone behaves in a way that is considered uncivil by the observer, that uncivil agent will be dehumanized by the one looking at him both blatantly and covertly by extracting secondary emotions, and racial belonging plays a determining role in the bias present when perceiving and evaluating uncivil transgressors based on the stereotypes regarding their race.

In conclusion, civil and uncivil behaviors are associated with humanness. However, not all humans are equally human. The humanness attributed to people varies depending on how they behave, and the way we take away humanness from transgressors is influenced by racial stereotypes and their interaction with the characteristics present in uncivil behaviors. This study sheds important light on the relationship between uncivil behavior, humanness, and dehumanization as well as the impact of racial belonging on perceptions and judgments. This study advances our knowledge of the dehumanization of impolite people, the complexity of human nature, and the influence of racial bias on views of civility. Efforts to foster a more equitable society must include a critical examination of how racial prejudices influence the assessment of civility and uncivil behavior, with a commitment to fairness and justice for all individuals, irrespective of their racial background. These results have consequences for how we view and assess people who act uncivilly, which is an everyday occurrence, underscoring the need for more research and thought in both societal and academic contexts.

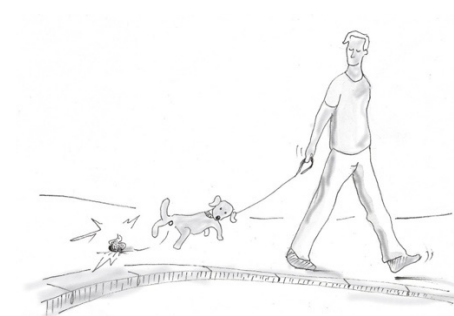## Appendix A. Uncivil Situations

"Damaging street furniture":

"Throwing the cigarette butts on the ground":

"Not picking up dogs droppings":

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